

**71 MILL ROAD
STOCK
ESSEX**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING
AND RECORDING**



**Essex County Council
Field Archaeology Unit**

FEBRUARY 2007

71 MILL ROAD

STOCK

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND RECORDING

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND RECORDING

Client: Dalby and Steggles Building Contractors

NGR: TQ 695 988

Site Code: SKMR 06

Oasis No.: essexcou1-23233

Dates of Fieldwork: 5th February 2007

SUMMARY

An archaeological trench was excavated around the east and south sides of the former bungalow at 71 Mill Road, Stock. The trench was located in an area of garden to be subsumed within the enlarged footprint of the new house.

A small number of archaeological features were identified, ranging in date from the prehistoric to the 20th century. The earliest feature was a Late Bronze Age or Early Iron Age gully that continued beneath the footprint of the former bungalow. Although no other remains of a similar prehistoric date were encountered the gully does attest to probable farming and/or settlement in the vicinity at this time.

No features relating to the medieval or post-medieval development of Stock were identified. The only evidence of the Stock pottery industry was one small-sherd of pottery that may be residual in a later feature. No further pottery was recovered from the stockpiled topsoil.

Two pits and a ditch were all of comparatively recent date. Modern iron posts were recovered suggesting that these features may be associated with 20th-century garden activity.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report describes the results of archaeological monitoring and recording at 71 Mill Road, Stock in advance of a housing redevelopment, which entailed the demolition of an existing bungalow and the construction of a new house in its place. The fieldwork was carried out by the Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit (ECC FAU) on behalf of Dalby and Steggles Building Contractors, in accordance with an archaeological brief prepared by the ECC Historic Environment Management team (ECC HEM 2006) and a written scheme of investigation prepared by ECC FAU (2006).

The fieldwork was undertaken in response to an archaeological condition placed on planning consent (CHL 01927/06) by Chelmsford Borough Council following Planning Policy Guidance note 16 on Archaeology and Planning.

The site archive will be deposited in Chelmsford Museum. A digital version of this report will be submitted, along with a project summary, to the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) (<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis>).

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 Topography and Geology (Fig. 1)

The historic village of Stock is located 8km (5 miles) south of Chelmsford, Essex. The village is strung out along the road from Chelmsford to Billericay, with Mill Road extending eastwards from the centre of the village through Stock Common. The site (71 Mill Road) is situated some 400m from the centre of the village at the junction between Mill Road and Common Road.

The bungalow that occupied the site had been demolished and the ground levelled prior to the archaeological investigation. The footprint of the former building comprised compacted brick rubble. The new house will extend up to 5m beyond the former bungalow footprint on both its east and south sides. These areas comprised tarmac pathways and lawn.

The underlying superficial geology comprises gravel, sand and clay of the Stanmore Gravel Formation (BGS Lexicon; www.bgs.ac.uk/lexicon/lexicon_intro.html).

2.2 Archaeological and Historical Background

This background summarises the records of known archaeological remains in the area held in the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER), and in a published account of the Stock pottery industry (Cunningham 1985, 83-8).

Stock does not appear in the Domesday Book of 1086 and the earliest reference to the village is in a document of 1234, when it was known as *Herwardstoc* (Hereward's Stump), later shortened to *Stocke* (Reaney 1935, 269-70).

The site lies outside the area of the medieval and post-medieval village, but dumps of pottery wasters dating mostly to the 17th to 18th centuries have been recovered from the Mill Road area, suggesting the presence of pottery kilns on Stock Common (Cunningham 1985, 83-4 and fig. 49). There is documentary evidence of potters in Stock from 1482 to 1745 (Cunningham 1985, 87-8). Stock pottery is red-fired and comes in a wide range of vessel forms, sometimes with a black glaze. The nearest find spot of Stock pottery is at Thornton Place 150m to the west of the site (EHER 5381).

3.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 General aims

The aim of the archaeological work was to record any archaeological deposits and collect any artefacts exposed by the groundworks for the new house.

3.2 Research objectives

The research objectives for the project were undertaken with reference to those laid out in *Research and Archaeology: a Framework for the Eastern Counties, 2. research agenda and strategy* (Brown and Glazebrook 2000). A highlighted research theme in this document (Brown *et al.* 2000, 46) is the study of medieval and post-medieval trade and industry. A key resource for this study is information resulting from the investigation of pottery production centres and analysis of the distribution of their products.

The specific objective of the investigation was:

- To record any evidence of settlement or activity relating to the medieval and post-medieval village, especially any further evidence of pottery manufacture at Stock in the 16th to 18th centuries

4.0 METHOD

An L-shaped machine trench was excavated around the east and south sides of the former bungalow in the areas where the new house extended beyond it. The trench was continuous except for one break for an existing tarmac access path. The trench varied between 1.5m and 3m in width and was excavated under archaeological supervision using a tracked mechanical excavator fitted with a flat-bladed bucket. This approach was undertaken with the agreement of the client and the monitoring officer after on-site consultation and varied from the method set out in the written scheme of investigation (ECC FAU 2006).

Areas of potential archaeological features were cleaned and hand-excavated, and all finds were collected. All work was carried out in accordance with IFA (Institute of Field Archaeologists) by-laws and guidelines and complied with Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England (Gurney 2003). Standard ECC FAU excavation, artefact collection and recording methodologies were employed throughout.

5.0 FIELDWORK RESULTS (Fig. 2)

The topsoil across most of the evaluation area consisted of dark grey sandy clay silt approximately 0.5m deep. This sealed natural deposits of sand and gravel which varied in colour from reddish brown to light grey. Occasional patches of naturally occurring iron pan were noted within the sand in the south of the trench.

A small number of archaeological features were identified and are described in chronological order below. In addition, a few 20th-century drainage features and an area of modern disturbance were identified (Fig. 2). Context data is presented in Appendix 1.

5.1 Prehistoric

The rounded terminal of a possible east/west aligned gully (6) was excavated to the east of the former bungalow. The fill (7) of the gully contained two large abraded sherds of Late Bronze Age or Early Iron Age pottery.

5.2 Post-medieval

Part of a shallow, flat-bottomed, sub-rectangular pit (8) was also excavated to the east of the former building. The fill (9) contained one small sherd of locally made post-medieval pottery that could tentatively date this feature as post-medieval, but the pottery is more likely to be of residual origin.

5.3 Modern

Pit 8 appeared to be truncated by an east-west aligned linear feature (10), 1.6m wide by 0.16m deep, and probably a small boundary or drainage ditch. One modern piece of iron post (not retained) was removed from the top of this ditch during machine excavation. A second, larger, piece of modern angle-iron post (not retained) was recovered from the top of shallow pit 13 located to the south of the former building. No finds were recovered from either feature during hand-excavation, but they are thought to be modern.

5.4 Undated/Natural

Two undated features, pit 3 and hollow 5, were recorded to the south-west of the former bungalow. Shallow pit 3 continued beyond the excavated area and had been disturbed by modern root activity. Hollow 5 contained light grey clay silt (4) and was only 0.05m deep. It is likely that this represents a natural accumulation of silt within a slight depression.

6.0 FINDS, by Joyce Compton

Finds were recovered from two contexts, and have been recorded by count and weight, in grams, by context. Full quantification details can be found in Appendix 2. The finds are described by category below.

6.1 Prehistoric pottery

Two sherds, weight 34g, of prehistoric pottery were recovered from the fill (7) of gully 6. The sherds are large, but both are abraded. The flint-tempering suggests a date in the Late Bronze Age or Early Iron Age.

6.2 Post-medieval pottery

A single sherd of post-medieval red earthenware was excavated from the fill (9) of pit 8. The sherd is slightly over-fired to a purple-red colour, with a granular texture, and shows a reduced 'skin' on both surfaces. The fabric is consistent with that of pottery manufactured at Stock during the 16th to 18th centuries (Cunningham 1985, 83-8). The fact that the sherd is over-fired may indicate that it is a kiln waster. The Stock pottery industry was of some importance, as documentary evidence shows its products reached as far afield as Hampton Court (Musty 1977, 101-2).

6.3 Comments on the assemblage

Further work on any of the pottery will not be required, although a firm date for the prehistoric pottery could be supplied by the specialist. The finds have been retained in the archive and occupy a small bag.

7.0 DISCUSSION

A small number of archaeological remains were identified during the fieldwork. These range in date from the prehistoric period to the 20th century. The earliest feature, and the only one that can confidently be dated, was a Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age gully (6) that continued beneath the footprint of the former bungalow. Although no other remains of a similar prehistoric date were encountered the gully does attest to probable farming and/or settlement in the vicinity at this time.

No features relating to the medieval and post-medieval development of Stock were identified. The only evidence of the Stock pottery industry was one small sherd of pottery that may be residual in a later feature. No further pottery was recovered from the stockpiled topsoil suggesting that pottery production was unlikely to have taken place in the investigated area. The area of the site forms part of a field on early editions of the Ordnance Survey map (c.1876+).

Pits 8 and 13 and ditch 10 were probably all of comparatively recent date. Modern iron posts were recovered from the top of pit 13 and ditch 10. Although both posts may have been inserted from a higher level it seems probable that the underlying features are of similar date and may be associated with 20th-century garden activity.

8.0 ASSESSMENT OF RESULTS

The fieldwork results indicate that the land adjacent to Mill Road was utilised or settled in the Late Bronze Age or Early Iron Age period. No firm evidence was found for any later activity in the investigation area until the modern period (20th century). Although the site is some distance from the medieval/post-medieval core of the village it was hoped some evidence of the post-medieval Stock pottery industry would be identified. No evidence was forthcoming and it is unlikely that this particular plot of land was directly involved in this industry.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks are due to Mr Brian Dalby for commissioning the fieldwork on behalf of Dalby and Steggles Building Contractors. The archaeological fieldwork was undertaken by Trevor Ennis and Dave Smith of the ECC Field Archaeology Unit. The project was managed by Patrick Allen of ECC FAU and monitored by Pat Connell of ECC HEM.

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APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT DATA

All dimensions given in metres.

Context	Type	Description	Period
1	Layer	Topsoil - dark brownish grey sandy silt, 0.5m thick	Modern
2	Fill of 3	Dark grey sandy silt	Undated
3	Pit	Semi-circular, 0.9m x 0.7m+ x 0.1m deep	Undated
4	Fill of 5	Light grey clayey sandy silt	Undated
5	Hollow	Semi-circular, 2.8m+ x 1m+ x 0.05m deep	Undated
6	Gully	Terminal, 0.7m+ x 0.5m x 0.26m deep	Prehistoric
7	Fill of 6	Dark greyish brown silty sandy clay	Prehistoric
8	Pit	Sub-rectangular, 1.9m+ x 0.72m+ x 0.15m deep	Post-med+
9	Fill of 8	Mid greyish brown sandy clay silt	Post-med+
10	Ditch	Linear, 1.5m+ x 1.6m x 0.16m deep	Modern
11	Fill of 11	Mid greyish brown clayey sandy silt	Modern
12	Fill of 13	Mid-dark brownish grey sandy clay silt	Modern
13	Pit	Semi-circular, 1.3m x 0.9m+ x 0.06m deep	Modern

APPENDIX 2: FINDS DATA

All weights in grams

Context	Feature	Count	Weight	Description	Date
7	6	2	34	Pottery; body sherds, flint-tempered	Prehistoric
9	8	1	2	Pottery; body sherd PMRE	Post-med.

APPENDIX 3: CONTENTS OF ARCHIVE

SITE NAME: 71 Mill Road, Stock

SITE CODE: SKMR 06

Index to Archive:

1. Introduction

- 1.1 ECC HEM Brief
- 1.2 ECC FAU WSI

2. Research Archive

- 2.1 Client Report
- 2.2 Finds Reports

3. Site Archive

- 3.1 Context Record Register
- 3.2 Context Records (1 to 13)
- 3.3 Plan Register
- 3.4 Section Register
- 3.5 1 A4 Section sheet
- 3.6 Levels Register
- 3.7 Trench location plan
- 3.8 Photographic Registers
- 3.9 Site Photographic Record (1 set of Black & White prints, 1 Set of digital images on disk)
- 3.10 Miscellaneous notes/plans

Not in File

2 large plans

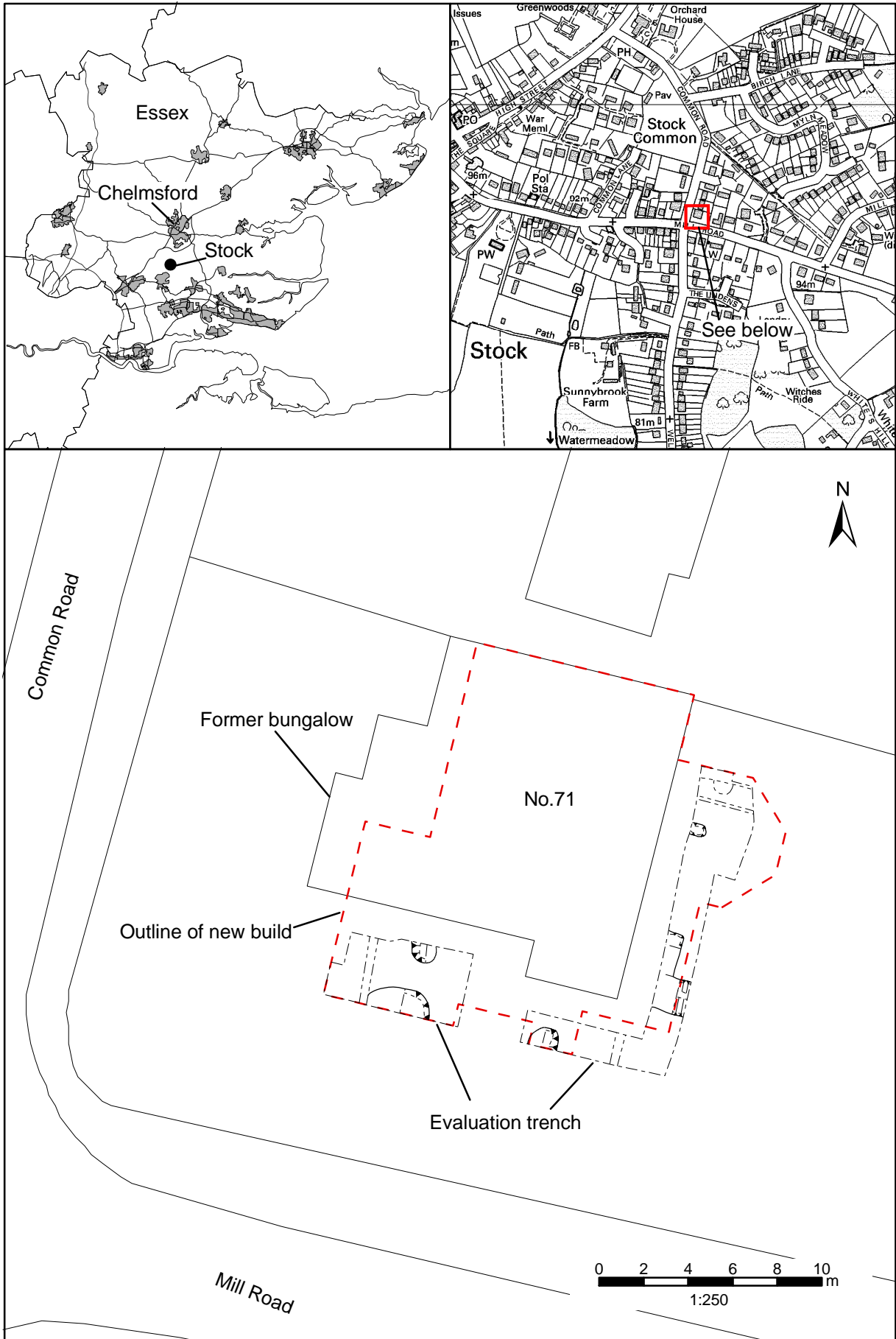
Finds

The finds occupy one small bag

APPENDIX 4: EHER SUMMARY SHEET

EHER SUMMARY SHEET

Site name/Address: 71 Mill Road, Stock, Essex	
Parishes: Stock	District: Chelmsford
NGR: TQ 695 988	Site Code: SKMR 06
Type of Work: Archaeological Monitoring and Recording	Site Director/Group: T. Ennis, ECC Field Archaeology Unit
Date of Work: 5th February 2007	Size of Area Investigated: 52 sq m
Location of Finds/Curating Museum: Chelmsford	Funding source: Dalby and Steggles Building Contractors
Further Seasons Anticipated?: No	Related HER Nos.: 5381
Final Report: EAH round-up	
Periods Represented: Prehistoric, post-medieval	
SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:	
<p>An archaeological trench was excavated around the east and south sides of the former bungalow at 71 Mill Road, Stock. The trench was located in an area of garden to be subsumed within the enlarged footprint of the new house.</p> <p>A small number of archaeological remains were identified, ranging in date from the prehistoric period to the 20th century. The earliest feature was a Late Bronze Age or Early Iron Age gully (6) that continued beneath the footprint of the former bungalow. Although no other remains of a similar prehistoric date were encountered the gully does attest to probable farming and/or settlement in the vicinity at this time.</p> <p>No features relating to the medieval and post-medieval development of Stock were identified. The only evidence of the Stock pottery industry was one small-sherd of pottery that may be residual in a later feature. No further pottery was recovered from the stockpiled topsoil. The area of the site forms part of a field on early editions of the Ordnance Survey map (c.1876+).</p> <p>Pits 8 and 13 and ditch 10 were probably all of comparatively recent date. Modern iron posts were recovered from the top of pit 13 and ditch 10. Although both posts may have been inserted from a higher level it seems probable that the underlying features are of similar date and may be associated with 20th-century garden activity.</p>	
Previous Summaries/Reports: None	
Author of Summary: T. Ennis	Date of Summary: February 2007



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Fig.1. Location plan

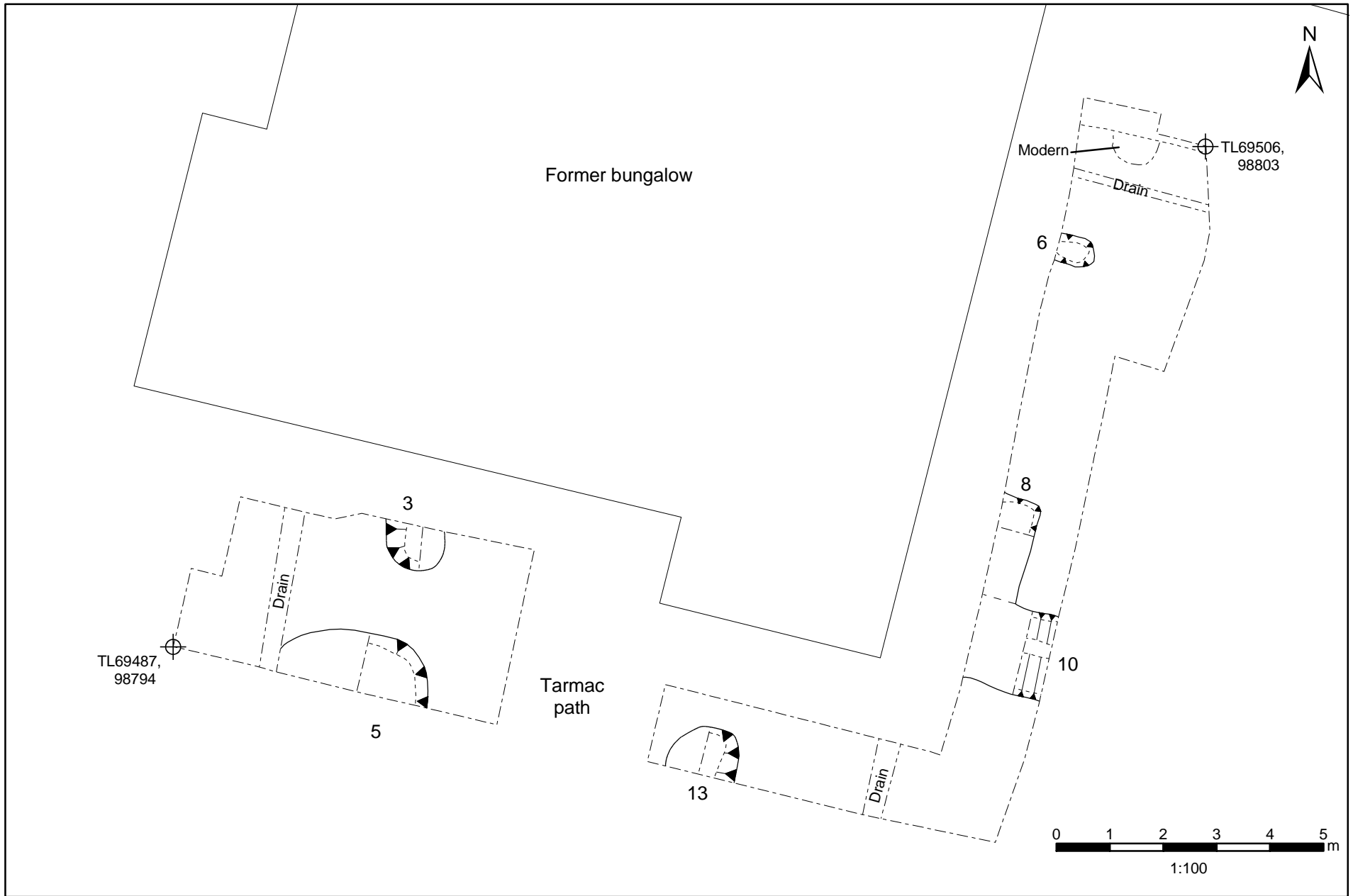


Fig.2. Evaluation trench with excavated features