

**BOURCHIER'S HALL
BACK ROAD
TOLLESHUNT D'ARCY
ESSEX**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION AND EXCAVATION



Essex County Council

FIELD ARCHAEOLOGY UNIT

November 2009

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Document Ref.	2064. Burchier's Hall, Back Road, Tolleshunt D'Arcy
Report Issue Date	10/11/2009
Circulation	

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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL
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SUMMARY

Client: Baxter and Company

FAU Project No: 2064

NGR: TL 9442 1167

Planning Application No's: (FUL/MAL/03/00610, LBC/MAL/03/00611, FUL/MAL/06/00895 and LBC/MAL/06/00896)

Site Code: TDBH09

Date of Fieldwork: 19/08/09 – 20/08/09

An archaeological evaluation was conducted at Bourchier's Hall, Back Road, Tolleshunt D'Arcy prior to the construction of an extension to the existing stables block. Bourchier's Hall is located to the east of Tolleshunt D'Arcy and dates to the early 14th century. The hall is situated within a large moated enclosure, which survives now as a series of disjointed ponds. The site contains a number of ancillary buildings some of which have been converted for residential use. The main aims and objectives of the investigation were to establish the presence, nature and extent of any medieval occupation activity and any evidence for the construction of the moat.

One trench was excavated revealing an 18th century ditch overlain by an 18th - 19th century gravel layer. Several layers and a fragmentary section of wall all date to the 19th century and probably relate to the construction and early use of the existing stable block. No medieval finds or features were present.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of an archaeological evaluation and excavation at Bourchier's Hall, Back Road, Tolleshunt D'Arcy, Essex (NGR TL 9442 1167), conducted by Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit (ECC FAU) prior to the construction of an extension to an existing converted stables. Several planning applications were submitted (FUL/MAL/03/00610, LBC/MAL/03/00611, FUL/MAL/06/00895 and LBC/MAL/06/00896) to Maldon District Council and a full archaeological condition was placed on the work following advice from the Essex County Council Historic Environment Management Team (ECC HEM) based on Planning Policy Guidance note 16 (DoE 1990), as the site lies in an area of archaeological significance. The fieldwork was carried out in accordance with a brief issued by ECC HEM (2009) and a written scheme of investigation prepared by ECC FAU (2009), and was monitored by ECC HEM on behalf of the local planning authority.

Bound and digital copies of this report will be supplied to Maldon District Council, ECC HEM and the Essex Historic Environment Record. A digital copy of the report will be uploaded on the online access to the index of archaeological investigations (www.oasis.ac.uk). The site archive and copies of the report will be deposited at Colchester Museum.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 Location, Geology and Topography (Figure 1)

Bourchier's Hall is located to the east of the village of Tolleshunt D'Arcy, off Back Road (see Figure 1). In addition to the hall itself the site contains a number of service and agricultural buildings, some of which have been converted to residential use. The hall is surrounded by mature gardens containing a number of specimen trees.

The bedrock geology of the site comprises Thames Group clay, silt, sand and gravel overlain by a drift geology of river terrace deposits of sand and gravel.

2.2 History and Archaeology

Bourchier's Hall sits within a large moated enclosure, measuring approximately 120m by 100m. The moat, which may have originally been a double-moat, is incomplete now, surviving as a series of disjointed ponds, while the central platform contains the hall itself, the earliest elements of which

date from the early 14th century. The Bourchier family were ascendant in 14th century Essex and the size of the moat is a likely reflection of their power and prestige (EHER 11516-8).

3.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 Aims

The initial aim of the work was to determine the location, extent, date, character, condition and significance of any surviving remains in order to determine the necessity for any further archaeological work.

3.2 Objectives

The specific objectives of the investigation were:

- To investigate the nature and extent of any medieval or post-medieval occupation evidence
- To investigate any evidence of activity predating the construction of the moat

4.0 METHOD

The site was investigated by the targeted excavation of a 7.85m x 1.9m trench along the middle of the extension footprint (Fig. 1, Plate 1). The topsoil and subsoil were stripped using a tracked mini-excavator with a toothless ditching bucket. All identifiable archaeological deposits were investigated and recorded.

The archaeological fieldwork was carried out in accordance with the Institute of Field Archaeologists *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluation* (IFA 1999) and the Association of Local Government Officers' *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003). The ECC FAU uses its own recording system (ECC FAU 2006).

5.0 FIELDWORK RESULTS (Figures 2 and 3)

The excavation revealed an 18th century ditch (11), several 19th century layers, a fragmentary brick wall and evidence of modern site use. Two modern services were present in the south-eastern end of the trench.

Ditch 11, aligned north-east to south-west, was present in the centre of the trench and contained two fills. The upper fill (deposit 12), seen only in plan, consisted of a heavily truncated gravelly silt and did not produce any finds. The lower fill (deposit 7) comprised dark grey silty clay that produced pottery, brick and ceramic tile of 18th century date.

A reddish grey gravel layer (deposit 6) overlay Ditch 11 in the north and central areas of the trench. It was very similar to the upper fill of Ditch 11 (deposit 12). Finds recovered from this layer dated to the 18th and 19th centuries and included a stoneware bottle, ceramic building material and pottery.

A thin layer of gravelly silt, approximately 0.12m thick (deposit 4), was located at the south-east end of the trench, and produced a fragment of post-medieval roof tile and a sherd of press-moulded slipware of 18th to 19th century date. Deposit 4 was partially overlain by wall 10 (Plate 3), running north-north-east to south-south-west, parallel to the converted stables. It appeared to cut the north-eastern edge of Ditch 11, although this could not be ascertained with any certainty. Constructed using 19th century brick and tile and laid irregularly with no bonding, the wall is likely to be a garden boundary or part of an animal pen.

Both layer 4 and wall 10 were sealed by layer 3, which produced 19th century material and had an unclear relationship with layer 5, which it also appeared to partially overlie. Layer 5, which sealed layer 6 beneath, was 0.38m thick and contained 19th century brick fragments and decayed timber.

Layer 8, situated in the north-western end of the trench, overlying layer 5, was 0.4m thick and comprised mixed orange sand and brown clay. Modern brick and tile fragments were present but none were retained.

The latest deposits consisted of modern topsoil (deposit 1) 0.3m thick overlying a layer of clayey silt (deposit 2), 0.5m thick. Layer 9, located in the south-east of the trench, is thought to be associated with a modern post which, although no cut marks were apparent due to root disturbance, was probably cut through Layer 2 and sealed by the topsoil (deposit 1). No finds were recovered from these deposits.

6.0 FINDS

By Joyce Compton

Small groups of finds, all of relatively recent date, were recovered from a total of six contexts. All of the finds have been recorded by count and weight, in grams, by context. Full quantification details can be found in the table below. The finds are described by category, as follows;

Pottery by Helen Walker

A total of thirteen sherds, weighing 311g, was excavated from three contexts, and dates to the 18th and 19th centuries. Ditch 11 produced a sherd of English tin-glazed earthenware, comprising the rim from a hollow ware with a blue-painted band around the top. Its thick glaze suggests an 18th century date. It is accompanied by a post-medieval red earthenware flowerpot base with a drainage hole just above the basal angle. This may well be contemporary with the tin-glazed sherd.

Finds from layer 4 comprise a sherd from press-moulded dish, showing a brown slip background and combed white slip-trailing. It could be as early as mid 18th century, although this type of pottery was still in production in the 19th century.

Sherds of glazed post-medieval red earthenware were recovered from layer 6. The most datable pottery from this layer, however, comprises sherds of Staffordshire-type white salt-glazed stoneware, perhaps from a plate, datable up to the end of the 18th century, and a sherd of modern stoneware bottle that cannot be earlier than 19th century.

Brick and tile

All six contexts produced brick and tile fragments, amounting to 18 pieces, weighing 10.8kg. Roof tile fragments are the most numerous (twelve pieces) but these are not closely datable within the post-medieval period. The bricks and fragments from layers 3, 4 and 5, and from wall 10, are likely to be contemporary and, using the typology in Ryan (1996, 94-6), have been dated to the late 18th and 19th centuries. The brick from layer 6 and the fragment from ditch 11 are less uniform and thus somewhat earlier, probably dating to the 18th century.

Glass

A body sherd from a green wine bottle, with a broad post-medieval date, was recorded in layer 6.

Metalwork

A flat-sectioned iron ring of probable recent date was recovered from layer 3 and an encrusted iron door hinge came from layer 6. Although not intrinsically datable, both are likely to be contemporary with the pottery and the bricks.

Comments on the assemblage

A range of relatively recent finds was recorded. There is nothing in the assemblage which could be earlier than 18th century. No further work is required on any of the material. The ironwork, shell, glass and roof tile has been discarded following recording. The remainder of the finds need not be retained beyond the archiving stage. The retained finds occupy one box.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

The earliest archaeological feature, ditch 11, dated to the 18th century and was overlain by a series of post-medieval layers probably relating to construction and the raising of ground level within the moated enclosure. A 19th century wall was revealed aligned north-north-east to south-south-west, running parallel to the 19th century origin stables, and is likely to have been either a garden boundary of part of an animal pen or similar small structure.

The archaeological work did not reveal any medieval finds or features relating to the construction or subsequent occupation of the site and the focus of activity within the moated enclosure was likely to have been around the house and service buildings that still stand, to the east and south-east. The other areas of the enclosure were possibly used for agricultural purposes including perhaps the corralling of livestock. It is tempting to see the post-medieval ditch encountered during the investigation as indicative of precisely this kind of sub-division or partitioning within what is a particularly large enclosure.

8.0 ASSESSMENT OF RESULTS

The evaluation has demonstrated that no remains of medieval or earlier date are present within the footprint of the extension, with the earliest feature encountered being of late post-medieval date. It is not therefore anticipated that the development will have a significant impact upon the archaeological record and future work in advance of, or during, construction is unlikely to be required.

Acknowledgements

The ECC FAU would like to thank Mr. N. Baxter of Baxter and Company for commissioning and funding the archaeological investigation.

The archaeological fieldwork was undertaken by Trevor Ennis. The report was written by Phillippa Sparrow. The finds were processed, analysed and reported upon by Joyce Compton. The project was managed by Adrian Scruby. The figures were drawn by Andrew Lewsey. The archaeological work was monitored by Maria Medlycott of the Essex County Council Historic Environment Management.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Medlycott, M. 2009	<i>Archaeological Investigation: Bourchier's Hall, Tollesbury</i> ECC HEM Brief.
Scruby, A. 2009	<i>Written scheme of investigation, archaeological evaluation and excavation: Bourchier's Hall, Back Road, Tolleshunt D'Arcy, Essex</i> ECC FAU unpublished report.

APPENDIX 1: FIELDWORK DATA

Context	Feature	Category	Details	Period
1		Topsoil	Firm dark brownish grey clayey silt. Heavily rooted.	Modern
2		Layer	Firm mid grey brown clayey silt.	Modern
3		Layer	Firm grey clayey silt containing bricks.	Post-medieval
4		Layer	Firm dark grey gravelly silt below wall 10.	Post-medieval
5		Layer	Soft dark grey brown silty clay containing decomposed roots and very decayed timber.	Post-medieval
6		Layer	Grey to reddish grey firm gravel overlying Ditch 11.	18 th – 19 th century
7	11	Fill	First fill of Ditch 11. Soft dark grey silty clay.	18 th century
8		Layer	Orange brown sandy clay.	Modern
9		Layer	Orange grey sandy silt. Possibly associated with modern post.	Modern
10		Wall	Line of bricks slightly haphazard, no bonding. Occasional tile beneath.	Post-medieval
	11	Ditch	Ditch 3m+ x 1.6m x 0.4m	18 th century
12	11	Fill	Upper fill of Ditch 11. Truncated. Similar to layer 6.	18 th century.

APPENDIX 2: FINDS

Pottery data

Context	Feature	Count	Weight	Description
4	Layer	1	28	Body sherd
6	Layer	10	188	Base and body sherds
7	11	2	120	Tiny rim sherd and lower wall sherd with prefiring hole
		13	336	

Brick and tile data

Context	Feature	Count	Weight	Description	Date
3	Layer	1	1705	Brick fragment; skim of mortar on lower surface, width 110mm, depth 65mm	19th C
4	Layer	1	128	Roof tile fragment (Discarded)	Post med.
5	Layer	2	3680	Brick fragments; larger has max dimensions 220 x 110 x 65mm; smaller is frogged, depth 65mm	19th C
6	Layer	1	1895	Brick; complete, 210 x 100 x 45-55mm	18th C
		7	525	Roof tile fragments (4/225g discarded)	Post med.
7	11	1	480	Brick fragment, depth 55mm	18th C
		4	270	Roof tile fragments, one overfired (Discarded)	Post med.
10	Wall	1	2110	Sample brick; incomplete, pebble and angular flint inclusions, 230 x 110 x 65mm	18/19th C
		18	10793		
		6	9870	Bricks	
		12	923	Roof tile	

Other finds data

Context	Feature	Count	Weight	Description	Date
3	Layer	1	68	Iron object; flat-sectioned ring, max diameter 50mm, hole diameter 20mm (Discarded)	-
6	Layer	1	1790	Iron door hinge, encrusted with pebbly concretion, length 600mm, thickness 75mm, tapering to 33mm (Discarded)	Post med/modern
		1	122	Shell; oyster, one valve, large example, max length 110mm, max width 110mm (Discarded)	-
		1	24	Glass; green bottle body sherd (Discarded)	Post med.

APPENDIX 3: ARCHIVE INDEX

BOURCHIER'S HALL, BACK ROAD, TOLLESHUNT D'ARCY, ESSEX

Index to the Archive:

File containing:

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Brief for Evaluation
- 1.2 Written Scheme of Investigation for Evaluation

2. Research Archive

- 2.1 Evaluation Report
- 2.2 Analytical Reports
 - 2.2.1 Pottery and Finds Report
- 2.3 Catalogues
 - 2.3.1 Context Finds Record
 - 2.3.2 Pottery Catalogue
 - 2.3.3 Miscellaneous Finds Catalogue

3. Site Archive

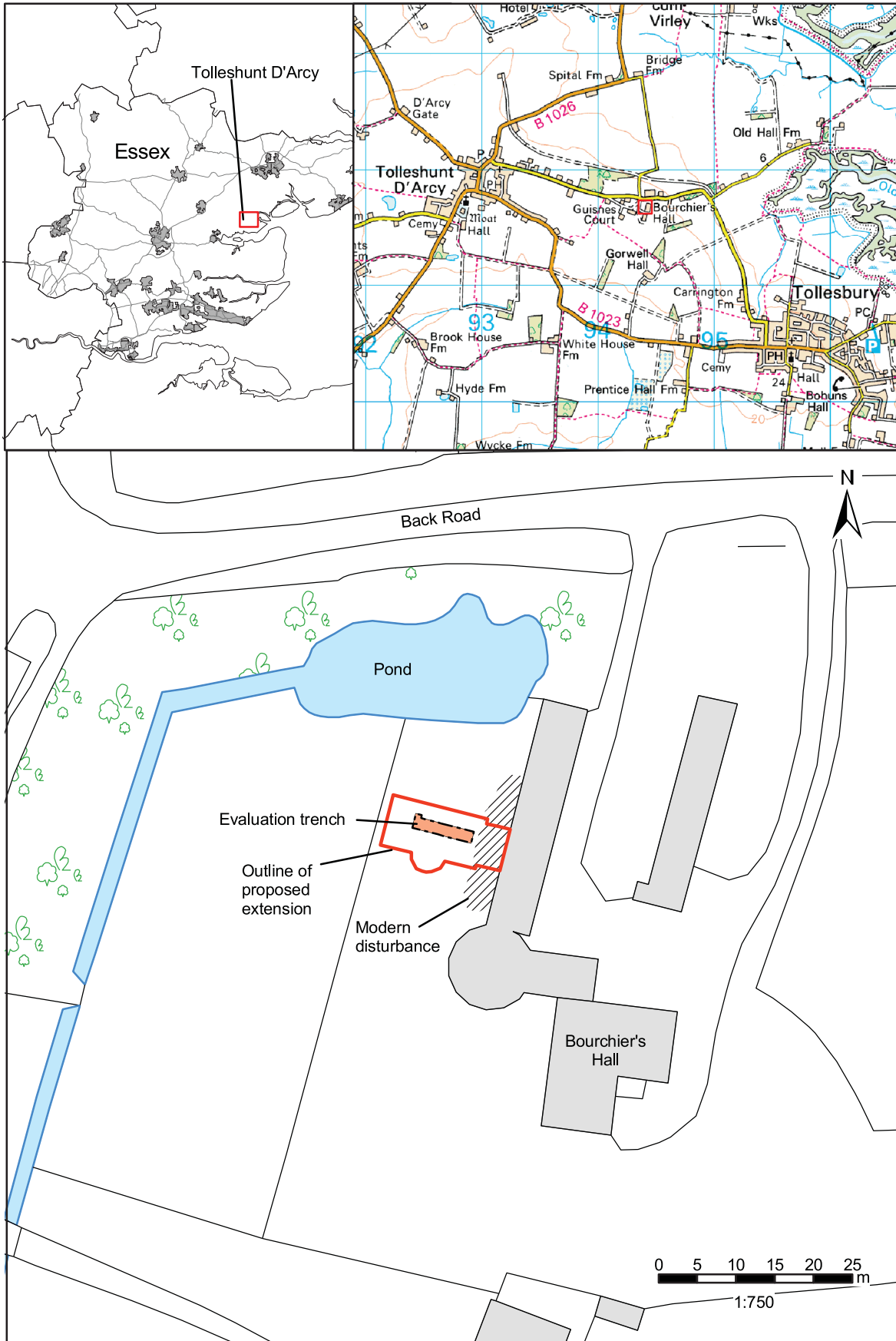
- 3.1 Context Index
- 3.2 Context Record Register
- 3.3 Original Context Records 1 to 12
- 3.4 Plans Register
- 3.5 Sections Register
- 3.6 Levels Register
- 3.7 Photographic Register
- 3.8 Miscellaneous maps and plans

Not in Files:

1 box of finds

APPENDIX 4: EHER SUMMARY SHEET

Site name/Address: Bourchier's Hall, Back Road, Tolleshunt D'Arcy, Essex	
Parish: Tolleshunt D'Arcy	District: Maldon
NGR: TL 9442 1167	Site Code: TDBH09
Type of Work: Archaeological evaluation by trial trenching	Site Director/Group: Trevor Ennis, Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit
Date of Work: 19/08/09 - 20/08/09	Size of Area Investigated: One trench totalling a length of 7.8m x 1.9m (Max.)
Location of Finds/Curating Museum: Colchester Museum	Client: Baxter and Company (Mr. Nigel Baxter)
Further Seasons Anticipated?: No	Related HER Nos.: EHER 11516-8
Final Report: Summary in Essex Archaeology and History	OASIS Ref: essexcou1-65753
Periods represented: Post-medieval and modern	
SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS: <p>An archaeological trial trenching evaluation was conducted prior to the construction of an extension to an existing converted stables to the north-east of Bourchier's Hall, Tolleshunt D'Arcy, Maldon, Essex (Fig. 1). The archaeological work was recommended and monitored by the Essex County Council Historic Environment Management Team and was conducted in accordance with an archaeological condition placed upon planning consent (FUL/MAL/03/00610, LBC/MAL/03/00611, FUL/MAL/06/00895 and LBC/MAL/06/00896). The trench was located within the footprint of the planned extension.</p> <p>Bourchier's Hall is situated c. 1km to the east of the centre of Tolleshunt D'Arcy on the south side of Back Road. The hall sits within a large moated enclosure, measuring approximately 120m by 100m. The moat, which may have originally been a double-moat, is incomplete now, surviving as a series of disjointed ponds, while the central platform contains the hall itself, the earliest elements of which date from the early 14th century (EHER 11516-8).</p> <p>The objective of the evaluation was to determine the presence or absence of any archaeological remains, including any finds or features relating to medieval and post-medieval occupation with a particular focus on any finds or features predating the construction of the moat.</p> <p>The trench was stripped of topsoil and subsoil by a tracked mini-excavator with a broad toothless bucket. A 19th century wall (10) and several make up layers were revealed and possibly relate to the construction of the existing stables structure. An 18th century ditch (Feature 11, Deposits 12 and 7) was overlain by an 18th to 19th century gravel deposit (layer 6).</p> <p>No evidence relating to the medieval occupation of the area and the construction of the moat was identified. The layers within the trench indicate that the site level was artificially raised over a long period and are likely to have been dumps of material produced from site use and alteration over the last two centuries. Some of the layers might be attributable to an early 19th century extension to Bourchier's Hall, noted in the EHER (11518).</p>	
Previous Summaries/Reports:- None	
Author of Summary: Phillippa Sparrow	Date of Summary: October 2009



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Fig.1. Site location

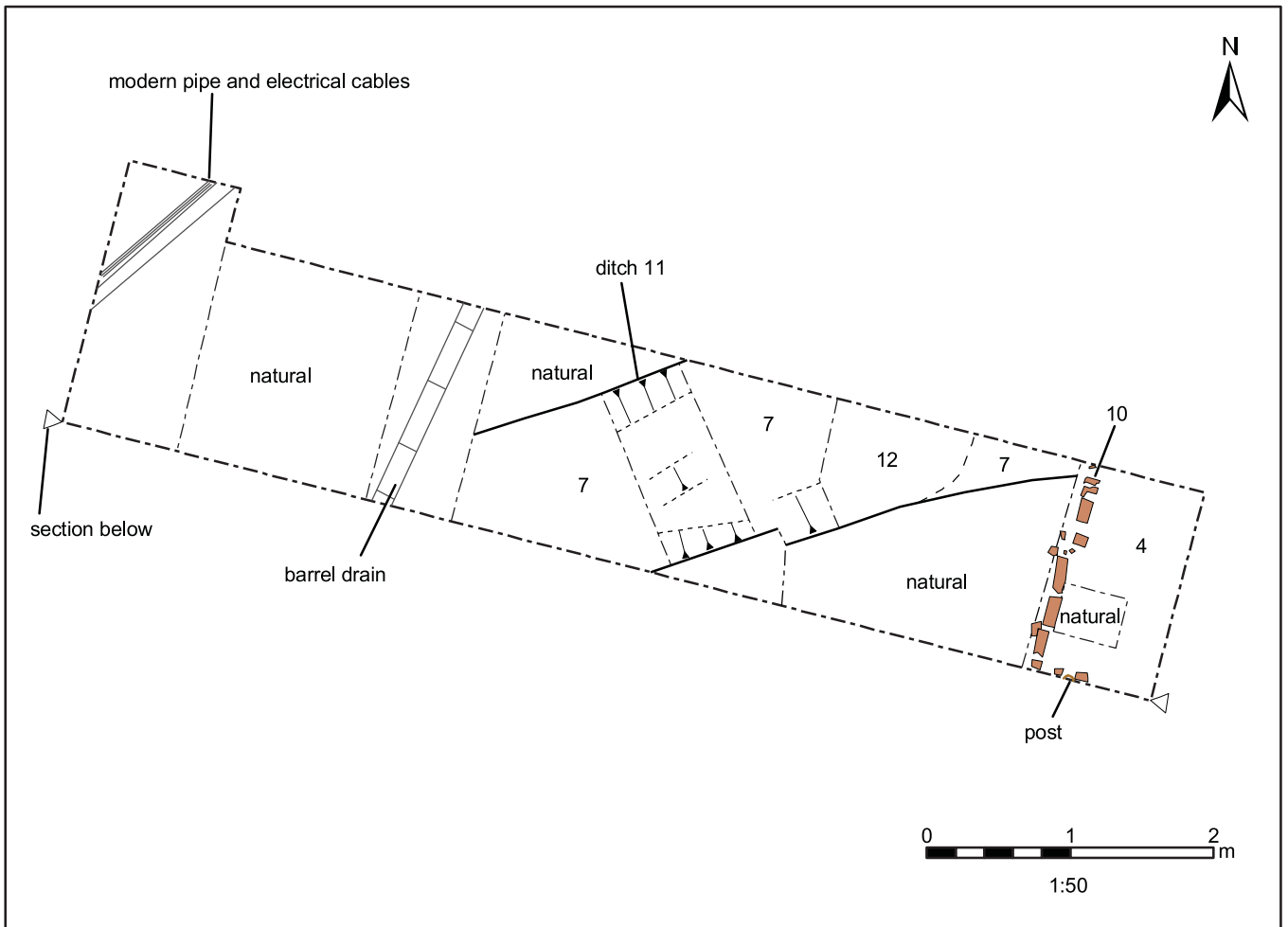


Fig.2. Evaluation trench plan

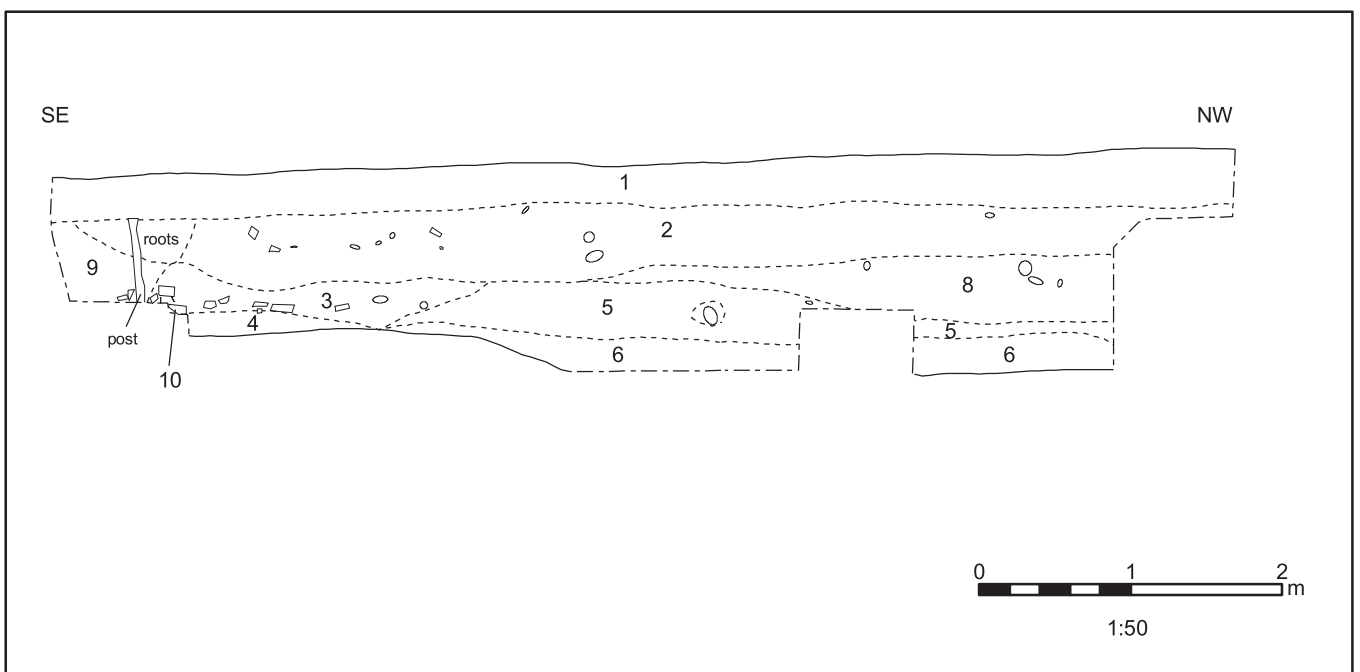


Fig.3. Section



Plate 1: Trench, looking west, 1m scale



Plate 2: Ditch 11 and modern service, looking south, 1m scale



Plate 3: Wall 10, looking south, 1m scale