

Archaeological trial-trenching at 16-20 Mill Road, Stock, Essex

March 2011



report prepared by
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on behalf of **Silverswan development**

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1 Summary

Evaluation by two trenches rear of a property named 'Pottery House' revealed evidence for the production of post-medieval pottery.

A 15kg group of pottery and 3.7kg of broken peg-tile fragments covered in glaze had been dumped in a pit at the rear of the property (presumably after pottery-making had come to an end). The kiln, which produced Metropolitan slipware and post-medieval red earthenware products in the late 17th and 18th centuries, was not located, but must have been nearby.

Other features included the brick foundations and clay floor of the recently-demolished frontage building, two post-medieval post-holes, and two post-medieval pits.

2 Introduction and archaeological background (Fig 1)

- 2.1 This is the archive report on the archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching carried out by the Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) at 16-20 Mill Road, Stock, Essex, on 21st March 2011 (site centre: TQ 6902 9888).
- 2.2 The site of the proposed development (ground floor shop, first floor flat, detached bungalow) occupies a street frontage location on Mill Road to the east of the main crossroads in Stock, and within the historic core and conservation area (Fig 1).
- 2.3 The High Street frontage contains listed buildings of 16th- to 19th-century date. To the south lies the 13th-century village church. Archaeological investigation in an adjacent property revealed a post-medieval kiln and well (EHER 18631). The site lies close to a possible Iron Age enclosure, and until fairly recently a northern boundary ditch of possible Iron Age origin survived in the pasture behind houses in Mill Road (EHER 5382, 9135). Roman finds and settlement features uncovered in the past include a possible Roman cemetery in the form of a large number of burial urns at the nearby Roman Catholic School.
- 2.4 Given the proximity of the site to known archaeological remains, ECC HEM team advised that an evaluation should be completed in advance of planning consent being granted. This advice followed the guidance given in PPS 5 *Planning for the Historic Environment* (DCMS 2010) Policy HE 12.3.
- 2.5 A brief detailing the required archaeological work (archaeological trial-trenching) was written by the HEM officer (HEM 2011). All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a WSI (Written Scheme of Investigation) produced by CAT in response to the HEM team brief and agreed with the HEM team (CAT 2011).
- 2.6 The work was carried out according to standards and practices contained in the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IfA 2008a) and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (IfA 2008b), *Management of research projects in the historic environment* (MoRPHE), and *Standards for field archaeology in the East of England* (EAA 14).

3 Aim

The aim of the evaluation was to determine the presence or absence and significance of any surviving archaeological remains, and record them prior to development. This information would then enable an informed decision to be taken on the preservation or otherwise of any deposits and the need for further work and/or mitigation.

4 Results (Figs 2-5)

Prior to the arrival of archaeologists at the site, the small building fronting Mill Road had been demolished, as had the outbuildings, and all hardstanding had been removed from the areas to be investigated. The width of the new shop building (fronting onto Mill Road) was to be entirely within the footprint of the old building, but the new build would extend back (to the SW) by 4m. Its foundations were to be 500mm-wide concrete strip-foundations around the edge of the building.

For that reason, the 'T' shaped evaluation trench (T1) was positioned over the old and new building footprints. Its NE-SW and NW-SE arms were 6.5m and 5.5m long respectively. The area to the west of the old building (to be covered by an over-croft and brick-paved) was not going to be significantly disturbed, and was therefore not evaluated. T2, aligned NW-SE and measuring 9m long was positioned in the footprint of the new bungalow to be built in the SW corner of the site. Both trenches were 1.4m wide.

Two layers were removed by machine: building debris/tarmac (L1), and accumulated post-medieval soil (L2). This revealed natural L3, in which most of the archaeological features were visible.

This section gives a summary of the excavated sequence from each trench.

Trench 1 (Figs 2, 3, 5)

The removal of 10cm-thick L1 revealed brick foundations of the recently-demolished frontage building, F3 being the frontage wall, and F5 the rear wall. The room defined by F3 and F5 is 3.6m wide. This equates to 11' 8", but was probably intended to be a 12-foot wide room. F5 contained tile fragments with adhering mortar (ie, reused roof tiles). The southern half of this room had no surviving archaeological deposits over natural L3. The northern half of the room had a 20cm-thick clay deposit, possibly a clay floor (L4). This was cut by a brick-rubble foundation (F4) which probably marks the position of an internal dividing wall. The only finds from the clay floor were three pieces of peg-tile. Interestingly, one of these had green glaze on it, which must be a by-product of the nearby kiln. The clay floor must therefore be contemporary with or later than the kiln (late 17th-18th century). There were also two small pits or post-holes F9 and F10, the former dated by a single piece of peg-tile. The rubble foundation F4 contained pieces of broken floor-bricks ('pamment'). It can be inferred from this that the internal wall was a later insertion whose foundation incorporates bits of an earlier brick floor. The general rubbly nature of F4 means it is more likely to have supported a timber ground-plate than a brick wall.

To the south of the house were two intercutting pits, both cutting natural L3. Though undated, they were probably post-medieval and contemporary with the house.

Trench 2 (Figs 2, 4, 5)

A gravel surface L2 was exposed over most of T2. It contained clay tobacco-pipe fragments and peg-tile, and is undoubtedly a gravel yard associated with the frontage properties. It was cut by F1, the pit containing the dump of pottery and kiln debris (see below), and by F2, a brick-lined soakaway. There were also two unnumbered and unexcavated modern service-runs.

5 **Finds** (Figs 6-9: plates 1-6) *by Howard Brooks*

There are two groups of finds. The first is the kiln dump, a group of post-medieval red earthenware (663 sherds, 15.547kg) and 3.7kg of kiln debris (broken peg-tile fragments covered in glaze) from T2 pit F1, which is the main subject of this report. Given the name *Pottery House*, it can reasonably be assumed that the kiln was on (or very close to) this property. The second, from various other contexts, includes brick, tile, clay-pipe, and pottery which, to distinguish it from kiln product, would normally be described as 'consumer product' (56 sherds, 429g: Cunningham (1985a) Fabrics 20, 35, 40, and 45m). This material is listed in table 1 below.

Aims and method

The aim is to provide a classification of the pottery produced on this site to aid comparison with other groups from Stock, and elsewhere. The rim forms present here are compared with those published by Cunningham in her Essex typology (1985a), and in her report on the Stock potteries (Cunningham 1985b), and in John Cotter's (2000) list of the Colchester material (*CAR 7*). There is a little attention to methods of manufacture. A full quantitative analysis has not been attempted, mainly due to budget constraints. The pottery was excavated from the pit in two separate 'contexts' (upper and lower fills of pit F1), but it is clear that this is essentially all one group of material, and it is treated as such here. The most complete examples of the various forms have been drawn and catalogued.

The kiln pottery (Figs 6-9: plates 1, 6, 7)

The pottery consists mainly of undecorated medium and large jars or storage vessels in post-medieval red earthenware (PMRE: as defined by Carol Cunningham's typology of post-Roman pottery in Essex (Cunningham 1985a, 1-16). There were smaller quantities of PMRE plates, some of which have Metropolitan slipware decoration. A notable feature of this group (on 11% of identified rims) is a prominent internal groove.

Vessel form typology

Most of this material is unclassified body sherds (439 sherds, 69% by sherd count and 46% by weight). A smaller proportion consists of 'featured' sherds: four wasters, 117 rim sherds, thirty-five base sherds (seven foot-stand and twenty-eight plain flat bases), twenty-seven handle fragments (mainly plain, flattened oval-shaped strap handles), and twenty-nine 'Metropolitan slipware' decorated body sherds.

The pottery - a visual description

The fabric is well mixed, and contains occasional pale orange-brown pellets 0.5-1.5mm long, and small dark orange grains generally 0.5mm across. The fabric colour is a dull light orange/brown, between Munsell 2.5yr 5/8 red and 5/8 pale red. Fabric colour is generally uniform throughout the thickness of the sherd, and in rare examples the core is grey. The only surface decoration is the Metropolitan slipware decoration on twenty-nine sherds (4% of all sherds by number and 7% by weight). There are no slips. Unglazed sherds account for 6% of sherds and 5% of the group by weight.

The jars (Figs 6, 7, 8)

Jars are the largest component of this group, represented by eighty-three of the 129 rim fragments (and 75% by weight of all rims).

Within the jar category, the most notable and striking sub-group is the large jar with a distinct groove on the inside of the rim (Fig 8.12 –14). There are twelve rims of this type (19% of all rims by weight). There are no parallels for this rim type in the previously-published material from Stock (Cunningham 1985b), or in Cotter 2000 or Jennings 2004. It may therefore be assumed that this rim type is a speciality of the potter(s) working this kiln. Although the rims display some of the characteristics of B2 and E2 rims, further classification with the Cunningham rim-typology is difficult, and is not attempted here.

The commonest jar rims in the Cunningham typology are large jars with hollowed everted rims, ie, her E2 type (Fig 7.9-11). There were thirty-three rims of this type (30% of rims by weight). They are paralleled by previous Stock material, where they account for 26% of jar rims (Cunningham 1985a, 83-5). Next commonest jar rims are type B2. There are twenty-four rims of these (17% of all rims by weight). The third commonest jar rim type is the bead rim (type C1: 10 sherds, 9%: Fig 7.7-8). This is the commonest of the Stock rim-types (Cunningham 1985b, 83-85), but is outnumbered in the current group by flat-topped rims (Fig 6.1-2, 6.6), and hooked rims (Fig 6.3-6.5).

The bowls (Figs 8, 9)

There were twenty-three bowl rims (22% of all rims by weight: and equating to a ratio of one bowl to 3.6 jars). The commonest are flat-topped B2 bowls rims, which are 15% of all rims by weight (Fig 8.15, 9.17-19). Next commonest are C1 bowls, with plain bead rim (seven rims, 6% of all rims by weight). It is interesting to note that these also have a sharp groove on the inside of the rim (Fig 8.16), as in jar rims (Fig 8.12-14, above).

The other vessels (plate 7)

Other vessels include a flanged bowl/dish (Fig 9.20), and seven rim fragments from small cups with plain everted type A1 rims (not illustrated). However, given the small quantity of these fragments, it cannot be assumed that they are kiln product (they may be consumer pottery). The absence of saggars (associated with the production of black wares and found previously at Stock: Cunningham 1985b, 87) probably indicates that no fine black wares were produced here.

Metropolitan slipware (MSW: plate 1)

There are twenty-nine sherds of MSW flanged dishes, with Cunningham type E4 rims which would conform to Davey & Walker 2009 (DW) type E9 rims, where a profile tool has been used to define ridges and grooves on the flange (DW 2009, 55). This is roughly 7% of this kiln's output (by weight). I am obliged to Helen Walker for the observation that this is indistinguishable from Harlow MSW.

Rim decoration is all a single wavy line (as DW fig 37, no 2.1). Wall and central patterns do not survive in large enough pieces to allow comparison with the Harlow examples.



Plate 1: Metropolitan slipware (Fabric 40a).

The kiln debris and evidence of manufacture (plates 2-5)

Apart from the sherds of Metropolitan slipware and the four fragments of wasters (buckled pot bases), evidence for the proximity of a kiln comes in the form of fifty-six peg-tile fragments covered either entirely or partially with green glaze, which is interpreted as run-off from the firing of green-glazed pots. Interestingly, there are no peg-tiles covered with either clear or brown glazes.

Some of the peg-tile (PT) fragments had a bubbled glaze, rather like a lunar landscape (plate 2). This shows that the tiles were heated to a high temperature in the kiln. There are also PT fragments to which adhere small pieces of brick or tile which may have broken off during firing. There are five PT fragments with broken off pot bases which had clearly become stuck to the PTs during firing. This shows that the pots were stacked on peg-tiles in the kiln (plate 3). Some peg-tiles are stuck together by glaze.



Plate 2: peg-tiles with bubbled green glaze and adhering pot fragments



Plate 3: five peg-tile fragments with pot bases adhering.



Plate 4: two wasters, showing scars caused by adhesion to kiln props or peg-tiles



Plate 5: handles



Plate 6: small vessels (cups and small jars)

Catalogue

Fig 6.1 - 2	Jar with flat-topped rim (B2)
Fig 6.3 - 5	Jar with hooked rim (B2)
Fig 6.6	Jar with flat-topped rim, internally hollowed (B2/E2?)
Fig 7.7-8	Jar with bead rim (C1)
Fig 7.9-11	Jar with everted, hollowed rim (E2)
Fig 8.12-14	Large jar with narrow internal groove inside rim
Fig 8.15	Bowl with flat-topped rim
Fig 8.16	Bowl with bead rim with narrow internal groove inside rim
Fig 9.17-18	Bowl with hooked rim
Fig 9.19	Bowl with flat-topped rim
Fig 9.20	Bowl/jar with flanged rim

List of other finds (ie, not kiln material)

D = discarded

Trench 1

F4

Finds number 3

2 bricks, 638g. One floor-brick, frogged: 230x 65+ x 42mm. Worn top surface.
3 peg-tile fragments, 227g, 2 with round peg holes, one with square peg hole. D.
2 floor bricks, 1792g, (1) 203+x115+x42mm, worn surface. Kept. (2) 41m thick, D.
3 bricks, 618g. 'pamments' or floor bricks: one buff fabric 115+ x70+x31mm, 296g. 2 orange fabric with dark grits <2mm, 25mm and 31mm thick, 322g, D.
1 tiny bone scrap, <1g.

F5

Finds number 8

3 peg-tiles, 379g, including curved drain tile, mortar adhering, showing reuse. 2, 130g D.

F9

Finds number 7

1 peg-tile, 6g. D

F11

Finds number 9

1 pan-tile fragment, 141g (not peg-tile).
1 brick corner fragment, 301g, frogged, 60mm thick, D
F11,
1 brick fragment, 37g, crisply-moulded frogged floor brick, as example from F4. 110x ? x21mm. D

L4

Finds number 6

3 peg-tile fragments, 126g. 1 round and 1 square peg-hole. 103g, D. 1 with green glaze, spill from kiln, 23g.

Trench 2

F1

Finds number 1

1 corner of burnt brick, 52g, 55mm thick. Kiln?
4 brick fragments, 285g, D
6 peg-tiles, 215g. D
broken end of buff ceramic wig curler, 8g
1 clay pipe stem fragment, 6g, bore 2.8mm

L2

Finds number 10

1 peg-tile fragment with green glaze, 39g, spill from use as kiln furniture

Finds number 12

2 peg-tiles 46g, D
2 bowl and stem fragments, 12g, bore 2.5mm

6 Site and pottery discussion (Fig 10)

This kiln group increases to three the number of sites in Stock where the discovery of kiln material indicates that presence of a nearby kiln.

The kilns themselves have not been found, and it is not certain how close they are to the 1971 Common Lane and 1975 Mill Road sites (Fig 10). The current site is a little different, in that the name *Pottery House* implies that the kiln was on this plot or very close to it. In confirmation of this, a comparison of the average sherd weight (22.7g) with recently-studied kiln group at Takeley in Essex (14.8g: Walker 2006) means that the sherds have probably not travelled too far from the kiln site before being dumped.

It should be noted that not all sites excavated or evaluated in Stock have produced kiln debris – the two FAU sites (Fig 10) produced no kiln material (Robertson 2006, Ennis 2007). In fact, it was assumed by Cunningham that the 1971 and 1975 discoveries, which are only 120m apart, were debris from the same kiln. However, the absence of kiln products on the 2007 FAU site, which lies between the 1971 and 1975 sites, shows that it is more likely that they were two separate kiln sites.

There is no internal evidence from this site for the date of the kiln's production period, which must be assumed to be the general period of production of Fabric 40a, or the 17th to early 18th centuries.

The kiln material apart, this evaluation revealed the footings and clay floor of a small post-medieval house on the Mill Road frontage. There was a gravel yard to the rear, and a brick soakaway, but the fabric of the house gave no real indication of the presence of a substantial kiln somewhere in the immediate vicinity.

7 Archive deposition

The paper and digital archive is held by the Colchester Archaeological Trust at Roman Circus House, Circular Road North, Colchester, Essex, CO2 7GZ, but it will be permanently deposited with Chelmsford Museum under accession code CHMRE 2011.019.

8 Acknowledgements

CAT would like to thank Bill Wright for commissioning the evaluation. Fieldwork was conducted by Adam Wightman assisted by Chris Lister. The project was monitored by Teresa O'Connor on behalf of Essex County Council Historic Environment Branch.

9 Glossary

CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
context	specific location of finds on an archaeological site
ECC	Essex County Council
EHER	Essex Historic Environment Record, held by the ECC
feature	an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a floor; can contain 'contexts'
HEM	Historic Environment Management Team
IfA	Institute for Archaeologists
layer	distinct or distinguishable deposit of soil
modern	period from the 19th century onwards to the present
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
post-medieval	after Henry VIII to around the late 18th century
saggars	ceramic vessels used to protect delicate pots in kiln
waster	a misfired pot from a kiln

10 References

Note: all CAT reports, except for DBAs, are available online in .pdf format at <http://cat.essex.ac.uk>

- | | | |
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11 Site context list

Context no.	Trench no.	Description	finds no and date
F01	2	post-medieval pit containing kiln dump of sherds and tile fragments with green glaze	1: post-medieval bricks, some burnt; peg-tile (also kiln material); 2: clay pipe stem fragment, bore 2.8mm. (Also, kiln material)
F02	2	brick-built soakaway with modern service feeding into it	
F03	1	unfrogged brick foundation of frontage wall	
F04	1	loose and rubblely foundation of internal wall	3: post-medieval floor-bricks, peg-tiles; tiny bone. 8: floor bricks, ceramic drain
F05	1	unfrogged brick rear wall foundation	
F06	1	post-medieval pit	
F07	1	modern service run	
F08	1	post-medieval pit	
F09	1	post-hole	7: post-med brick/tile
F10	1	post-hole	
F11	1	modern service run	9: pan-tile; frogged brick (post-1850)
L1	both	demolition debris/tarmac crush	
L2	2	post-medieval soil accumulation	10: peg-tile with green glaze (from kiln). 12: peg-tiles; clay pipe bowl/stem frags
L3	both	natural	
L4	1	clay floor?	6: peg-tiles, 1 with green glaze (from kiln).
L5	1	natural (differs from L3)	

12 Contents of archive

Paper archive

One A4 document wallet containing:

Copy of site report (CAT Report 598)
 Specialist finds reports (pottery and tile)
 Context sheets (F1-F11, L1-L5)
 Finds register
 Digital photo record
 Site photographic record on cd
 Copy of the excavation brief issued by ECC HEM.
 Copy of the WSI produced by CAT
 A4 and A3 developer plans
 2 x A3 site plan provided by developer
 Risk assessment
 Attendance register

Not in file

1 A3 section sheet

Finds archive

4 Museum boxes

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Distribution list:

Bill Wright (Silerswan construction)
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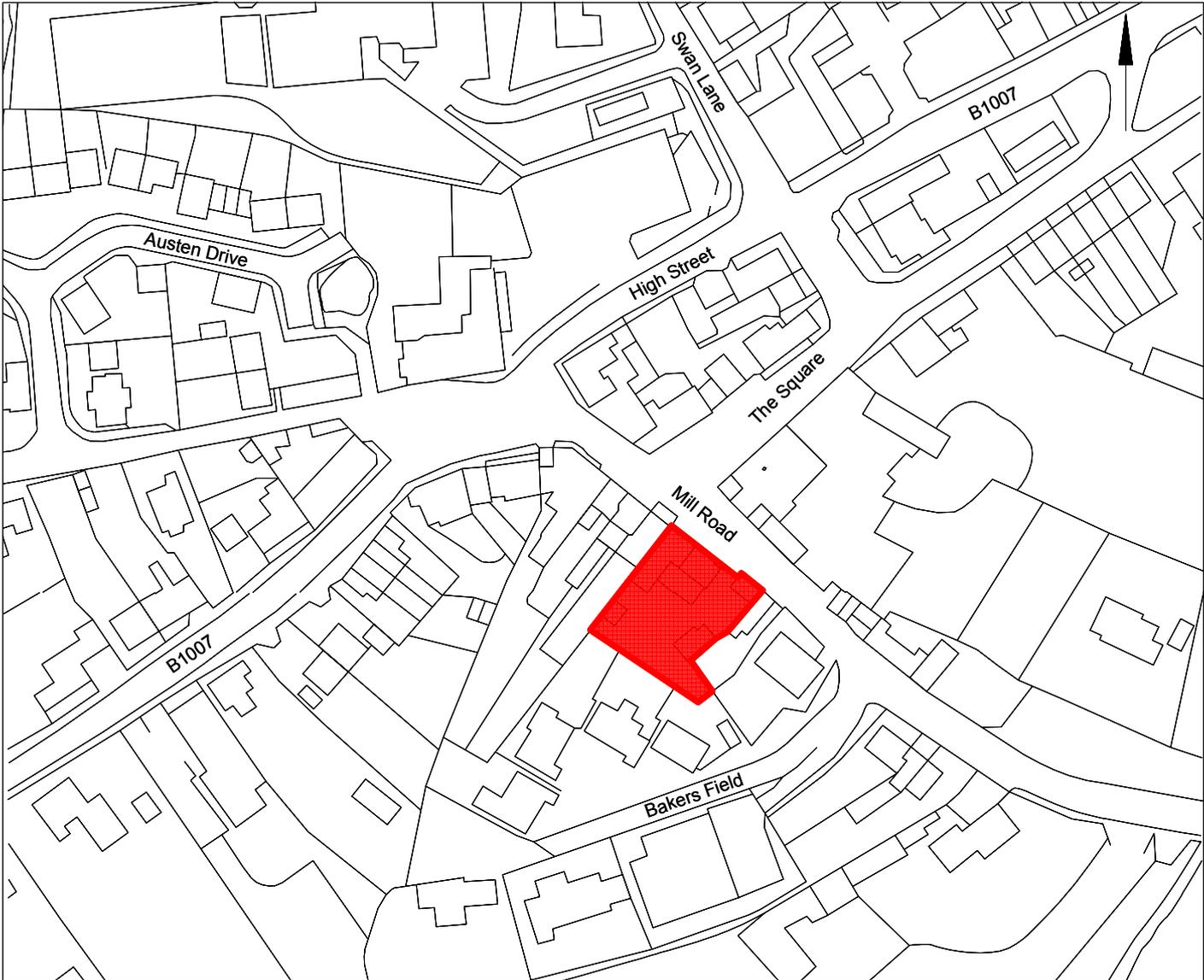
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Fig 1 Site location.





Fig 2 Site outline showing position of T1, T2, and kiln dump. Recently-demolished buildings are shown in grey outline.

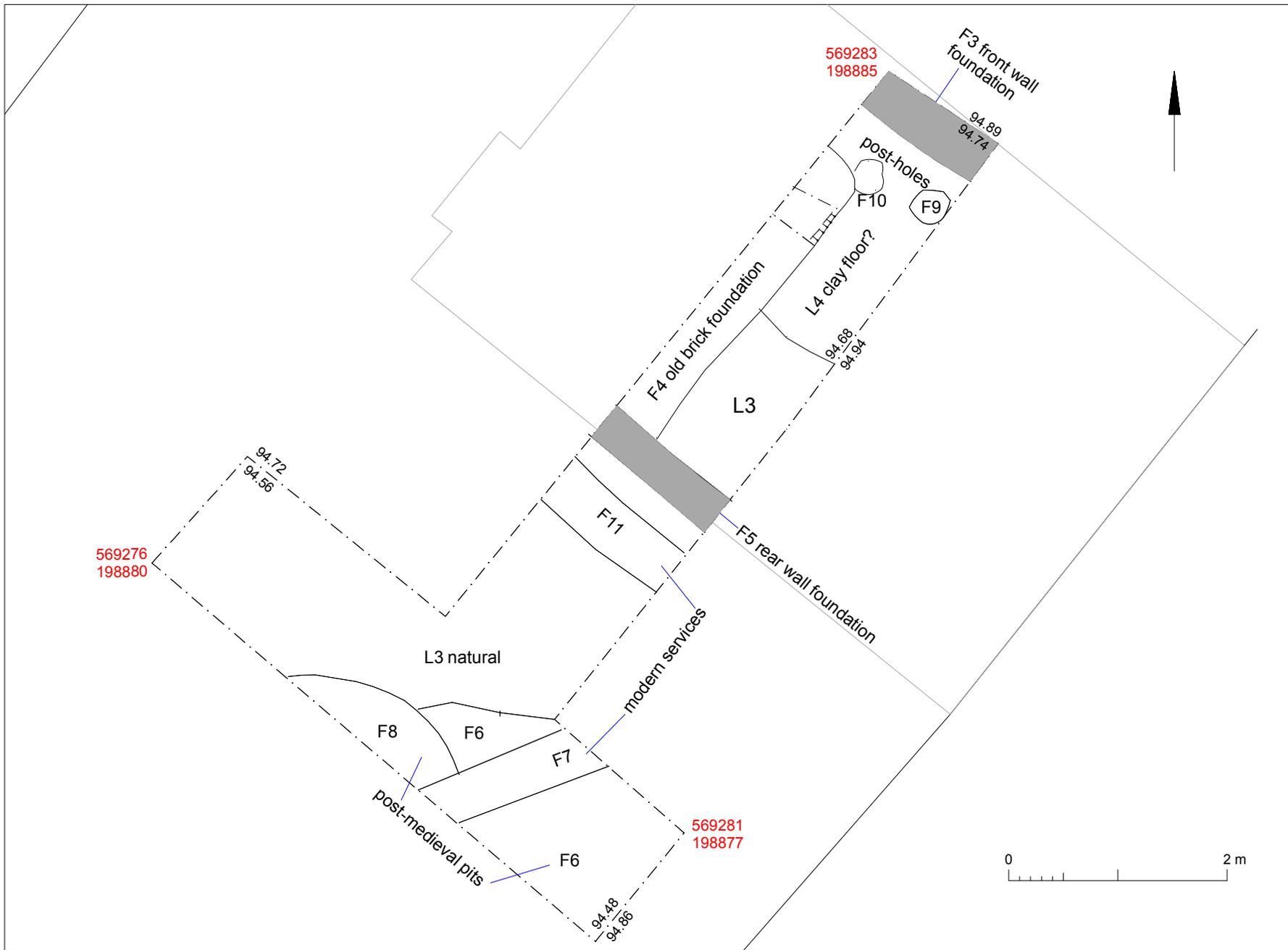


Fig 3 T1 details

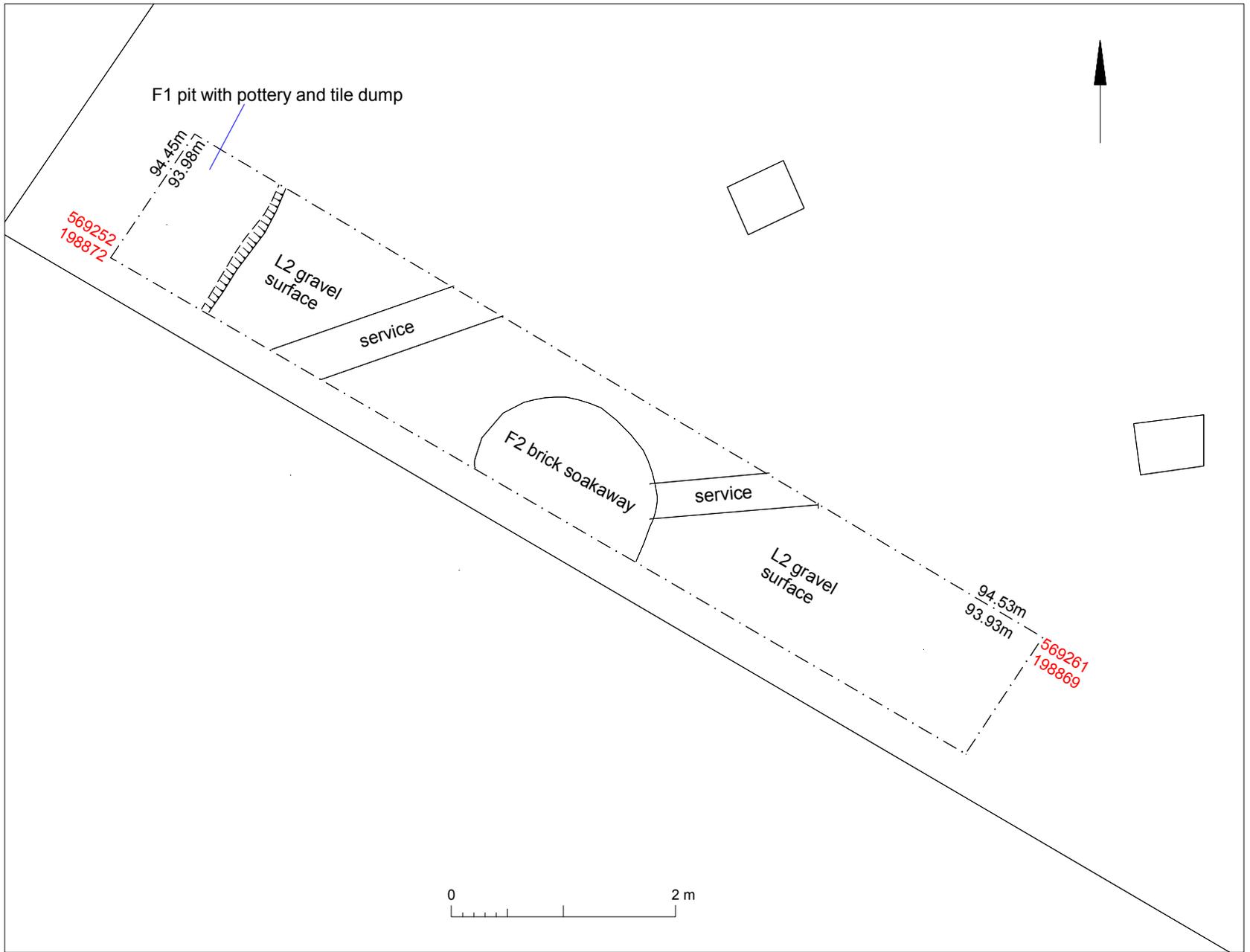


Fig 4 T2 detail

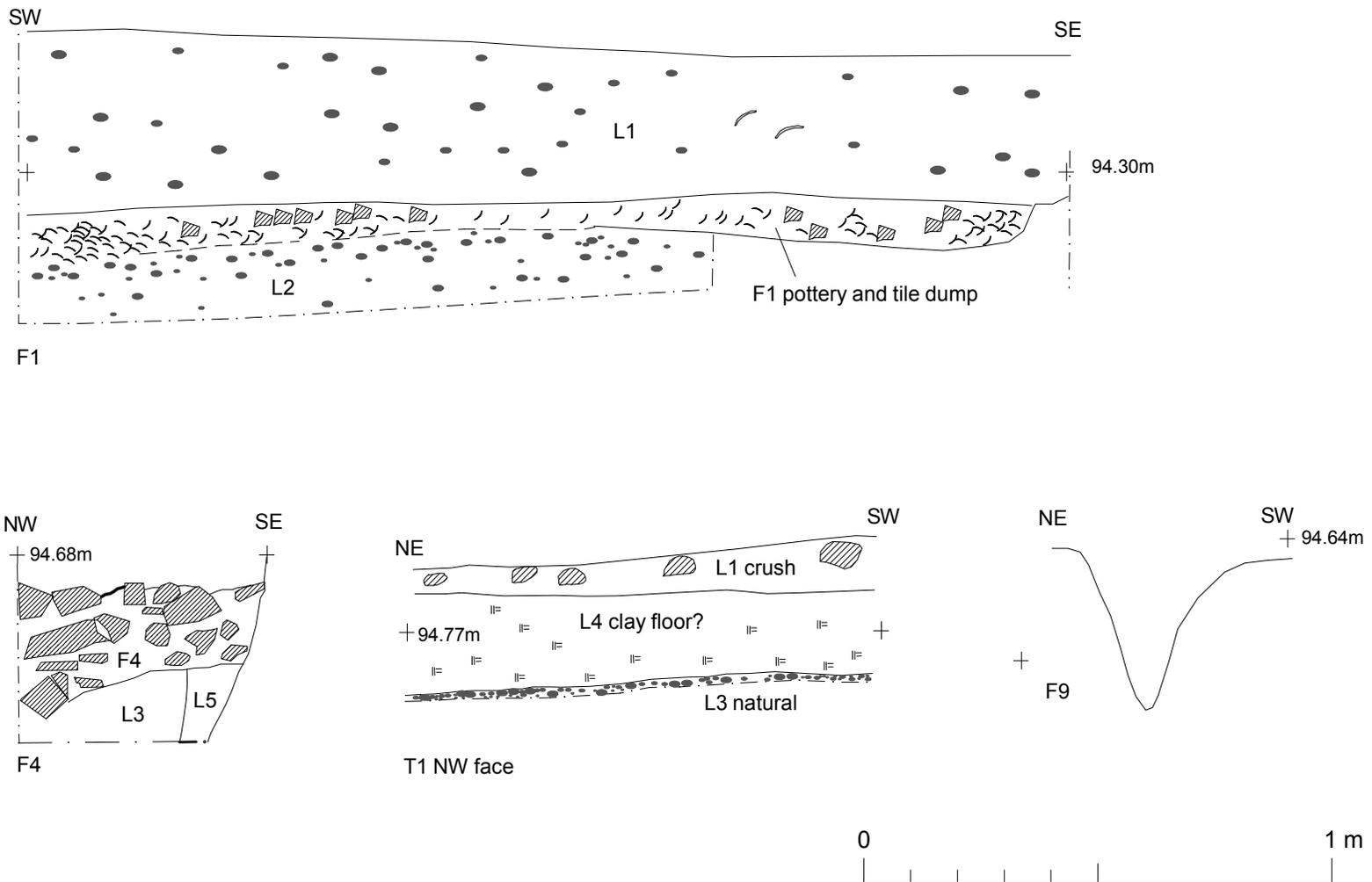


Fig 5 T1, F1 and F4 sections: F9 profile

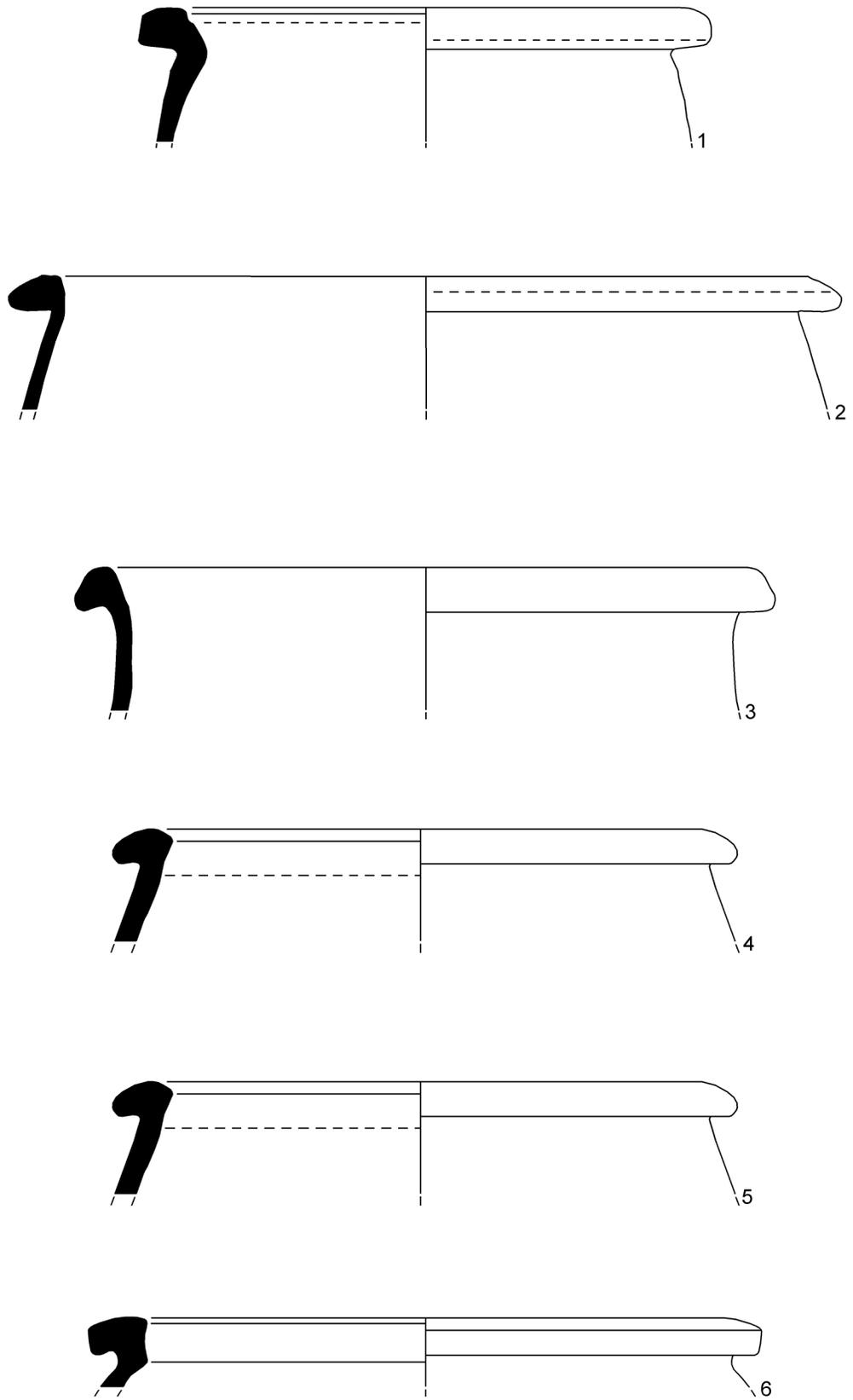


Fig 6 Jars.

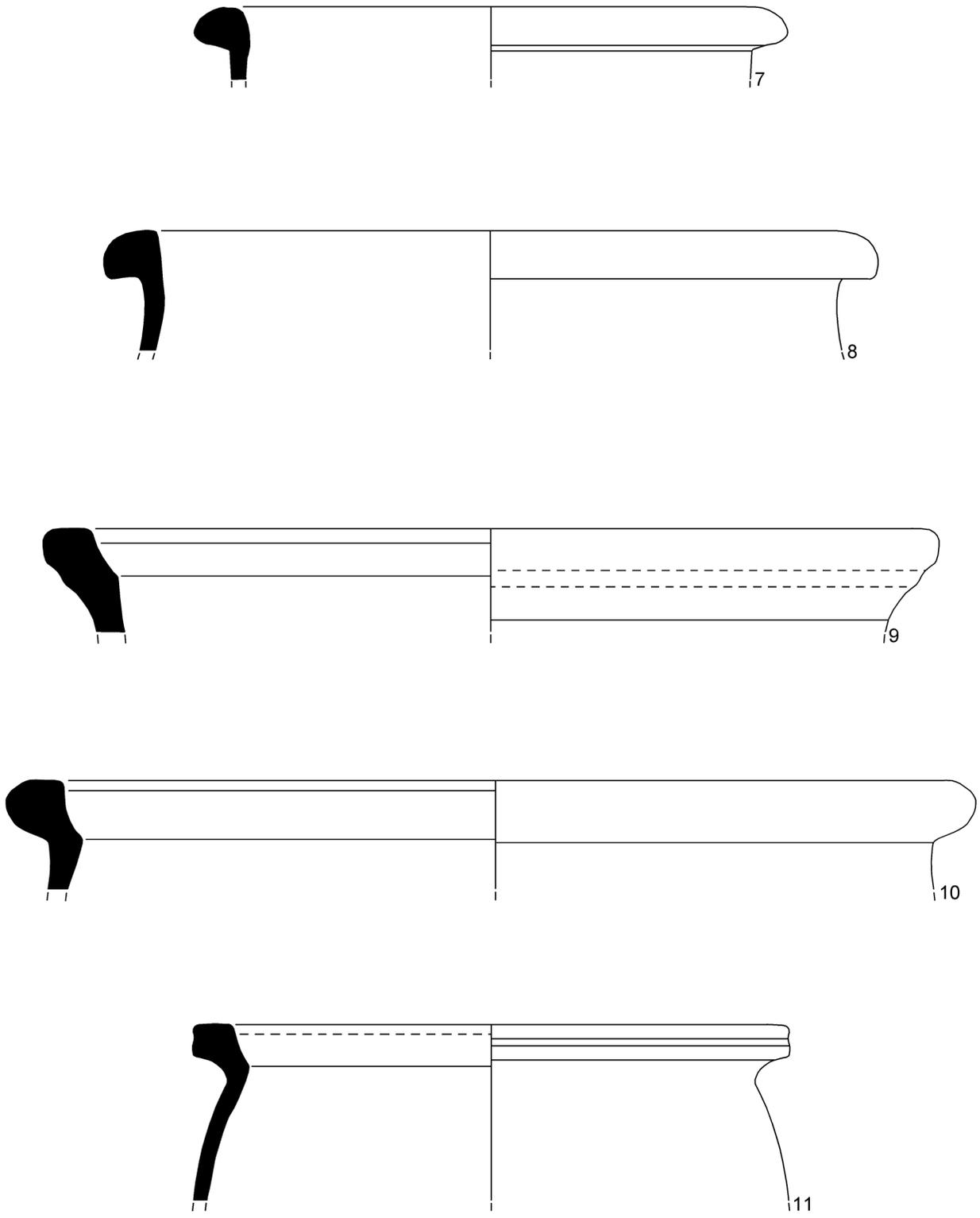


Fig 7 Jars.

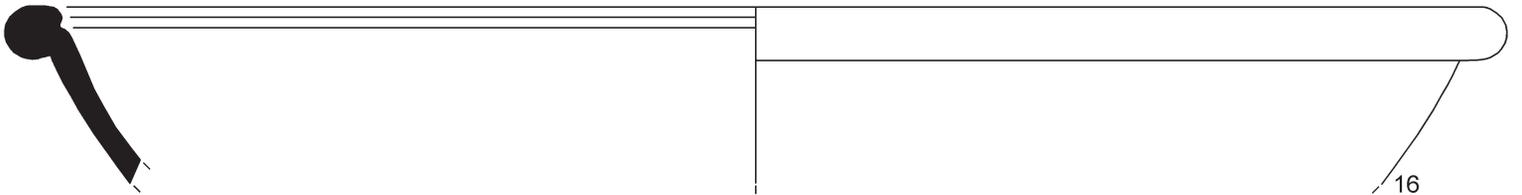
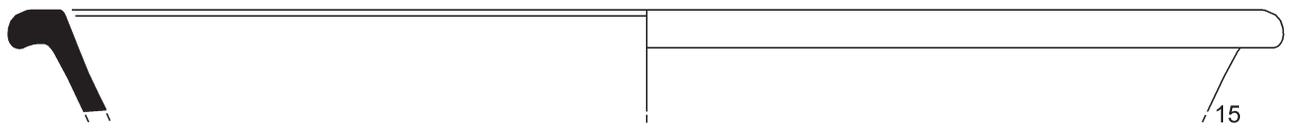
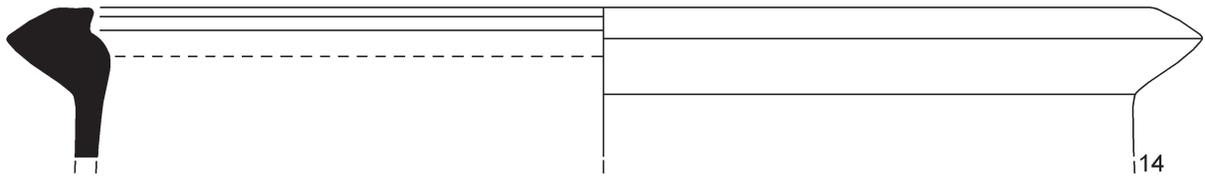
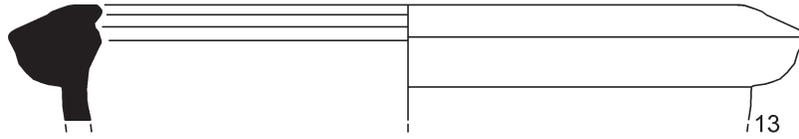
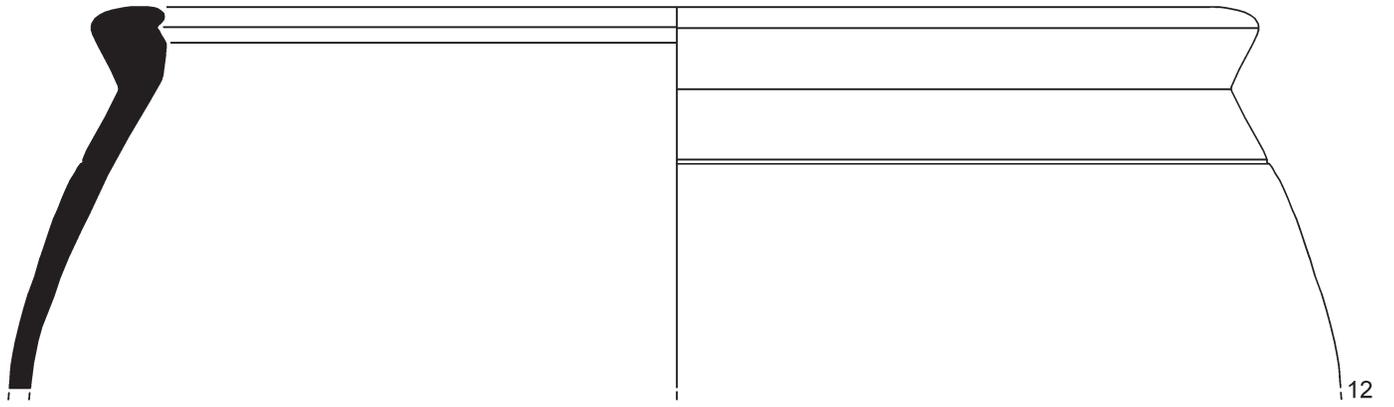


Fig 8 Jar (12), bowls (13-16).

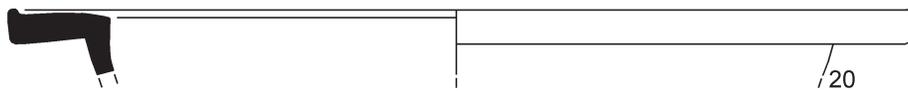
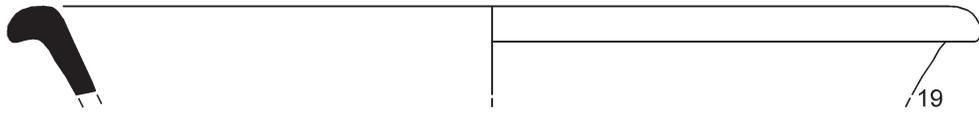
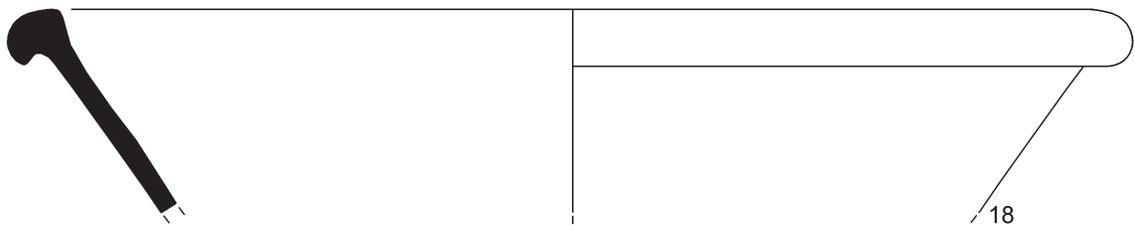
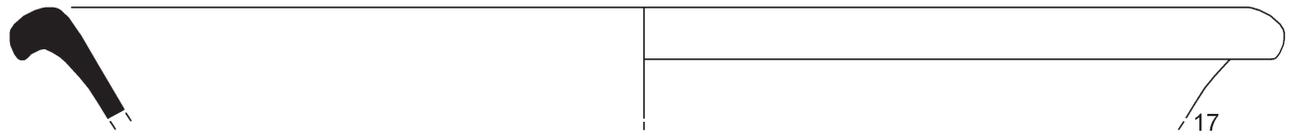


Fig 9 Bowls.

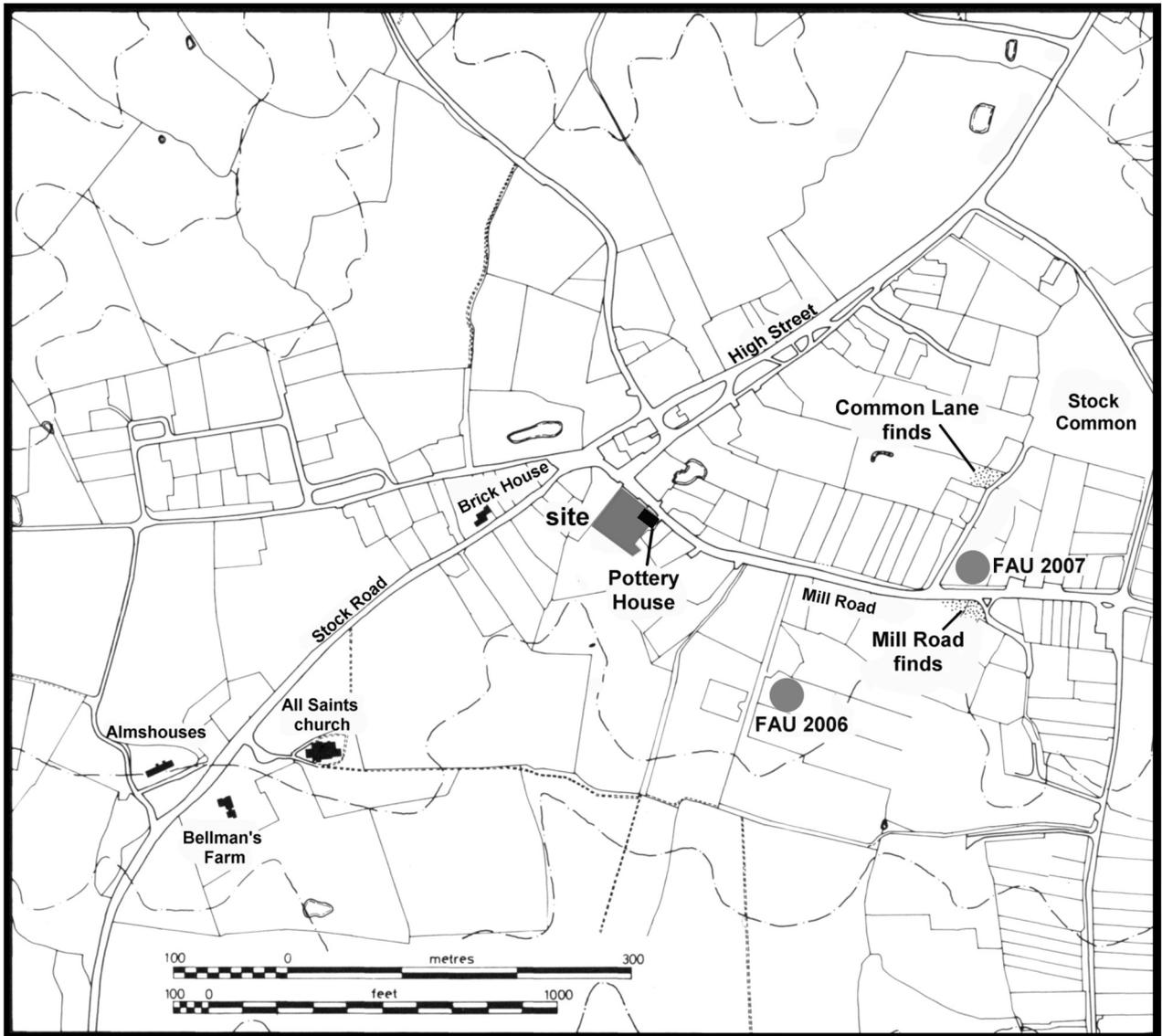


Fig 10 Site location, showing previous discoveries of kiln material.

Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

Summary sheet

Site address: 16-20 Mill Road, Stock.	
Parish: Stock	District: Chelmsford
NGR: TQ 6902 9888	Site code: CAT project – 11/2c HEM project code: SKMR11
Type of work: Evaluation	Site director/group: Colchester Archaeological Trust
Date of work: March 2011	Size of area investigated: Two trenches, total length 20m, in site of 460m ²
Curating museum: Chelmsford & Essex Museum. accession: CHMRE 2010.019	Funding source: Developer
Further seasons anticipated? No	Related EHER nos: 5382, 9135, 18631
Final report: CAT Report 598 and summary in <i>EAH</i>	
Periods represented: post-medieval	
<p>Summary of fieldwork results: Evaluation by two trenches adjacent to <i>Pottery House</i> revealed a pit containing a 15kg group of post-medieval red earthenware and 3.7kg of broken peg-tile fragments covered in glaze (presumably dumped here after pottery-making had come to an end). The kiln, which produced Metropolitan slipware and post-medieval red earthenware products in the late 17th and 18th centuries, was not located, but must have been nearby.</p> <p>Other features included the brick foundations and clay floor of the recently-demolished frontage building, two post-medieval post-holes, and two post-medieval pits.</p>	
Previous summaries/reports: none	
Keywords: post-medieval kiln dump, pottery, tile	Significance: **
Author of summary: Adam Wightman and Howard Brooks	Date of summary: January 2013