

Archaeological trial-trenching evaluation at 23 Common Lane, Stock, Essex

January 2014



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

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1 Summary

This site is the former garden of 23 Common Lane, in the centre of Stock. Two evaluation trenches (18m total length) were positioned within the footprint of a new detached house and associated garage.

There were five modern features (pits, foundations, and a well), all associated with the current dwelling.

Despite the discovery of potsherds and kiln debris on the adjacent site, there was no evidence for the Stock pottery industry here (in the form of either loose sherds or kiln debris). This may be due to reduction of site level prior to the construction of the existing building removing early deposits and finds.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the archive report on the archaeological evaluation carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) at 23 Common Lane, Stock, Essex, on 13th January 2014. The work was commissioned by Mr Bill Wright of Silverswan Homes. Post-excavation work was carried out in January 2014.

At the time of the evaluation the site was open and recently cleared garden of No.23, Common Lane. The proposed works involve the demolition of the existing building and the construction of a detached dwelling and associated garage.

Site centre is NGR TQ 6936 9891.

3 Archaeological background (Fig 5)

Pottery manufacture was an important industry in Stock from the 16th to the 19th centuries. The following archaeological background draws on the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) and recent evaluations and excavations by CAT and ECC Field Archaeology Unit.

The discovery of the Stock pottery industry began in 1971, when groups of glazed and unglazed 17th- and 18th-century sherds, glaze-splashed peg-tiles and saggars were discovered in two locations in Stock – on Common Lane and Mill Road (EHER 5391).

In her 1985 publication of the Stock material, Carol Cunningham (1985, 83) quite logically suggested that there was an unlocated kiln site midway between the two groups of finds. This remained the supposition until ECC FAU carried out an evaluation at 71 Mill Road, between the two groups of finds, and found no kiln-related material (Ennis 2007). Therefore, as a result of the 2007 work, it appeared that the 1971 and 1975 finds represented two separate kiln sites.

A third kiln site, found at the Bowling Club site in 1979 (EHER 5507), seems to have been omitted by Cunningham. Here, burnt brick walls and areas of burnt clay are evidence for Stock's only positively identified kiln site (the others being spreads of pottery and kiln debris: Eddy 1980).

In 2011, an evaluation by CAT 300m to the west at 'Pottery House' revealed 15kg of pottery and 3.7kg of broken and glaze-splashed peg-tile fragments dumped in a pit at the rear of the property (CAT Report 598). A kiln must have been located nearby, producing Metropolitan slipware and post-medieval red earthenware in the late 17th and 18th centuries. This 2011 discovery took to four the number of probable kilns in Stock. The glaze-splashed peg-tile fragments from 10, The Paddock are more likely to be debris from the kiln which produced the Common Lane finds, and should not necessarily be regarded as evidence for a fifth Stock kiln site (CAT Report 704).

Recent evaluation at the adjacent site of 10 The Paddock, revealed large quantities of post-medieval pottery, indicating a nearby kiln (EHER 48334: CAT Report 704).

Historical evidence shows that Stock Common, to the east of the development area, was dug for clay for pottery manufacture.

4 Methodology

Place Services of Essex County Council (ECCPS) were consulted by Chelmsford City Council in November 2013 for a planning application. In response to consultation, ECCPS made the following recommendation to the LPA in line with advice given in *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012):

" L2 Implementation of Archaeological Fieldwork Programme

No development including any site clearance or groundworks of any kind shall take place within the site until the applicant or their agents; the owner of the site or successors in title has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work from an accredited archaeological contractor in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in a manner that accommodates the approved programme of archaeological work."

A brief detailing the required archaeological work (an evaluation by trial-trenching) was written by the Place Services officer (Alison Bennett: ECC 2013). All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a WSI (Written Scheme of Investigation) produced by CAT in response to the Place Services brief and agreed with the Place Services officer (CAT 2014).

All fieldwork and reporting was done in accordance with the recognised national standards as defined in IfA 2008a, IfA 2008b, EAA 14, and EAA 24.

5 Aim

The aim of the evaluation was to record and establish the character, extent, date, significance and condition of any remains and deposits likely to be disturbed by the proposed works.

6 Results of the evaluation (Figs 2-4)

This section gives an archaeological summary of the evaluation trenches (T1-T2), with context and finds dating information.

The evaluation trenches were excavated under archaeological supervision using a tracked excavator, through one layer: L1, a re-deposited natural (150mm thick). Removal of L1 revealed natural boulder clay with occasional patches of gravel (L2).

There complete lack of topsoil must be a result of extensive reduction in ground level prior to the construction of the existing dwelling (No 23), and possibly to the removal of an earth on the western site boundary.

The evaluation revealed five modern features: pits F1 and F3, modern foundations F2 and F4, and a well/soakaway F5.

Trench 1: summary

T1, in the northern half of the site, contained two modern features: a pit F1 containing modern pottery (not retained), and a brick foundation F2. The foundation ran parallel to the west wall of the existing dwelling indicating a joined outbuilding possibly a scullery or WC. The trench was excavated directly on to natural ground (L2).

Trench 1 – archaeology.

Feature no	Type	Dated finds	Phase
F1	pit	pottery, brick (not retained)	modern
F2	foundation	brick	modern

Trench 2: summary

T2, in the southern part of the site, contained three modern features: pit F3, brick foundation F4, and a backfilled well or soakaway F5. The inside of F5 had been rendered with cement, suggesting that it is more likely to be a well. Modern pottery was recovered from the upper fills of the pit F3 (not retained). T2 was excavated through re-deposited natural (L1) which had been spread over the site after the removal of the western boundary bank, into natural ground (L2).

Trench 2 – archaeology.

Feature no	Type	Dated finds	Phase
F3	pit	pottery, brick, glass	modern
F4	foundation	brick	modern
F5	well?	brick	modern

7 Finds

As there were no significant archaeological deposits, the finds were not retained.

8 Discussion

The Common Lane evaluation has produced little material of archaeological significance. This is probably because the site was levelled prior to the construction of the existing No 23. The level of this reduction can be seen where the boundary bank on the western side of the site has been removed (Plate 1 below).



Plate 1: western side of site showing reduction in ground level

The features in T1 and T2 were all modern, and associated with the existing cottage. The pits contained pottery dating to the middle of the 20th century. This is probably domestic waste. The brick foundation is from a demolished out-building or lean-to (a former WC?). The brick feature at the southern edge of the plot may have been a soakaway, or (more likely because of its cement lining) a well.

Despite the evaluation of 2013 on the adjacent plot finding post-medieval pottery (84 sherds, 2187g) and glaze-splashed peg-tile fragments with broken-off pot rims (clearly derived from a post-medieval kiln: 7 pieces, 420g: CAT report 704), there were neither loose finds of pottery nor any structural evidence of Metropolitan slipware ware on this site. This absence of kiln material is surprising, but may be due partially or entirely to the reduction in site level which took place prior to the building of the existing cottage.

9 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks Mr Bill Wright of Silverswan Homes for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by Ben Holloway, and fieldwork was carried out by BH, and M Baister. Figures 1-3, 5 are by MB, and Fig 4 by Emma Holloway. The project was monitored for the ECC Place Services by Alison Bennett.

10 References

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

CAT	2014	<i>Written Scheme of Investigation for archaeological trial trenching at 23 Common Lane, Stock, Essex.</i> January 2014
CAT Report 598	2011	<i>Archaeological trial-trenching at 16-20 Mill Road, Stock, Essex.</i> Client report prepared by Adam Wightman and Howard Brooks
CAT Report 704	2013	<i>An archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching at 10, The Paddock, Stock, Essex. May 2013</i> by Adam Wightman and Howard Brooks
Cunningham, C M and Drury, PJ	1985	<i>Post-medieval sites and their pottery: Moulsham Street, Chelmsford</i> , Chelmsford Archaeological Trust Report 5 , Council for British Archaeology Research Report 54 .
Cunningham, CM	1985	'The Stock pottery', in Cunningham and Drury 1985, 83-88
DCLG	2012	<i>National Planning Policy Framework</i> , Department for Communities and Local Government
EAA 14	2003	<i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England</i> , East Anglian Archaeology, Occasional Papers, 14 , ed by D Gurney
EAA 24	2011	<i>Research and archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the East of England</i> . East Anglian Archaeology, Occasional Papers, 24 , by Maria Medlycott
ECC	2013	<i>Archaeological Investigation at 23 Common Lane Stock</i> . Essex County Council Brief, by Alison Bennett
Eddy, MR	1980	'Stock, Bowling Club', in 'Work of the Essex County Council Archaeology Section, 1979 (MR Eddy, editor) Essex Archaeology & History Vol 12, p76
Ennis, T	2007	<i>71 Mill Road, Stock. Archaeological monitoring and recording. ECC Field Archaeology Unit Report 1746</i> , February 2007
IfA	2008a	<i>Standard and guidance for an archaeological field evaluation</i>
IfA	2008b	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i>

11 Abbreviations and glossary

CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CBM	ceramic building material (brick, tile, etc)
context	specific location of finds on an archaeological site
ECC	Essex County Council
EHHER	Essex Historic Environment Record, held by Essex County Council
feature	an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a floor; can contain 'contexts'
IfA	Institute for Archaeologists
modern	from 1800 to nowadays
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
post-medieval	from around 1530 to 1800 AD

12 Archive deposition

The paper and digital archive is currently held by CAT at Roman Circus House, Circular Road North, Colchester, Essex CO2 7GZ, but will be permanently deposited with Chelmsford Museum (accession 2014.01).

13 Contents of archive

Finds: not retained.

Paper record: One A4 wallet containing

Copy of this report
ECC Brief
CAT WSI
Original site record (feature, layer, trench and finds sheets)
Section drawings
Sundries
Photo log and photos on CD

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Distribution list:

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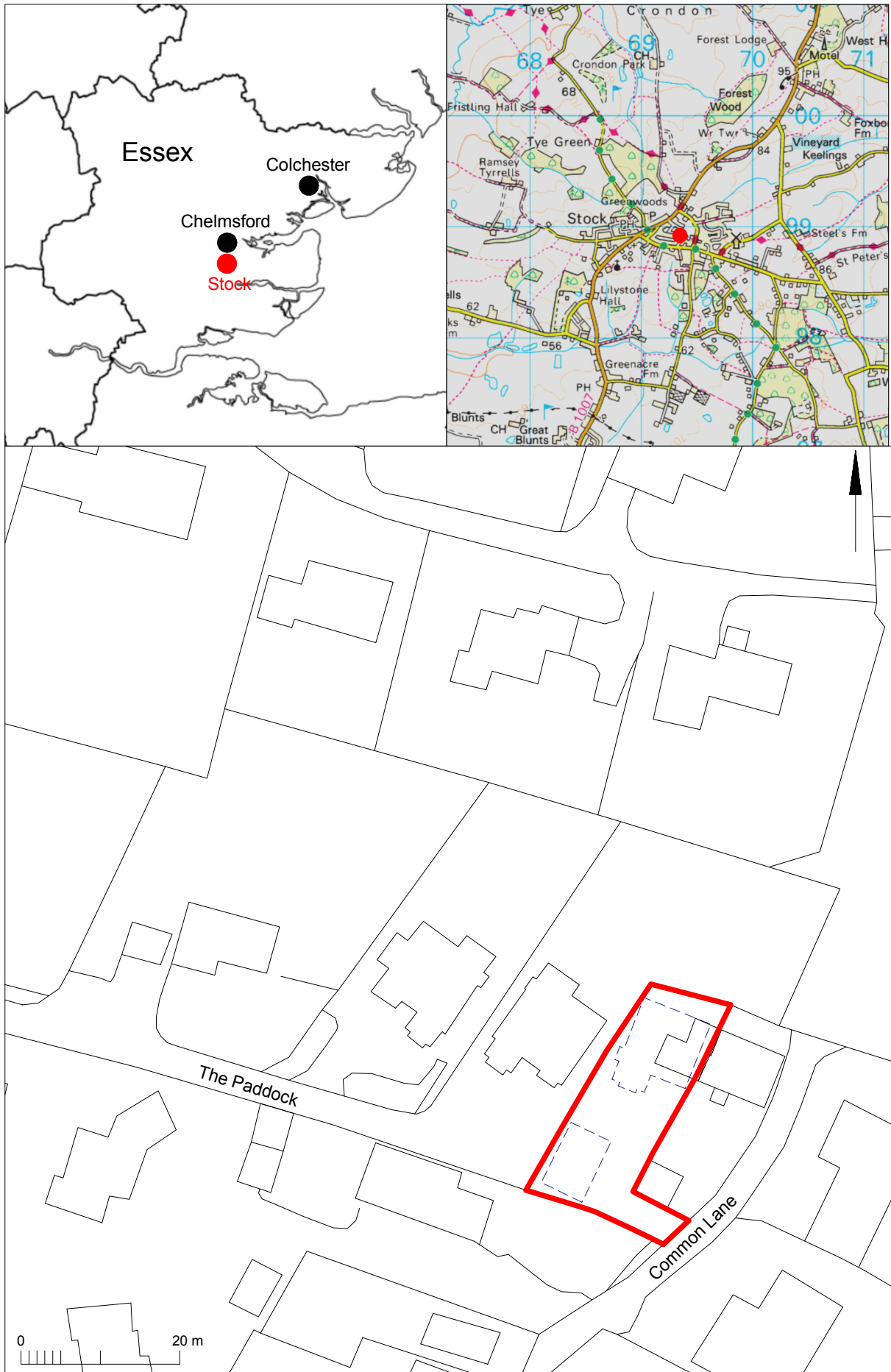


Fig 1 Site location



Fig 2 Evaluation results. Buildings to be demolished shown in red, proposed buildings shown in blue. Also shown is the adjacent CAT evaluation site from 2013.

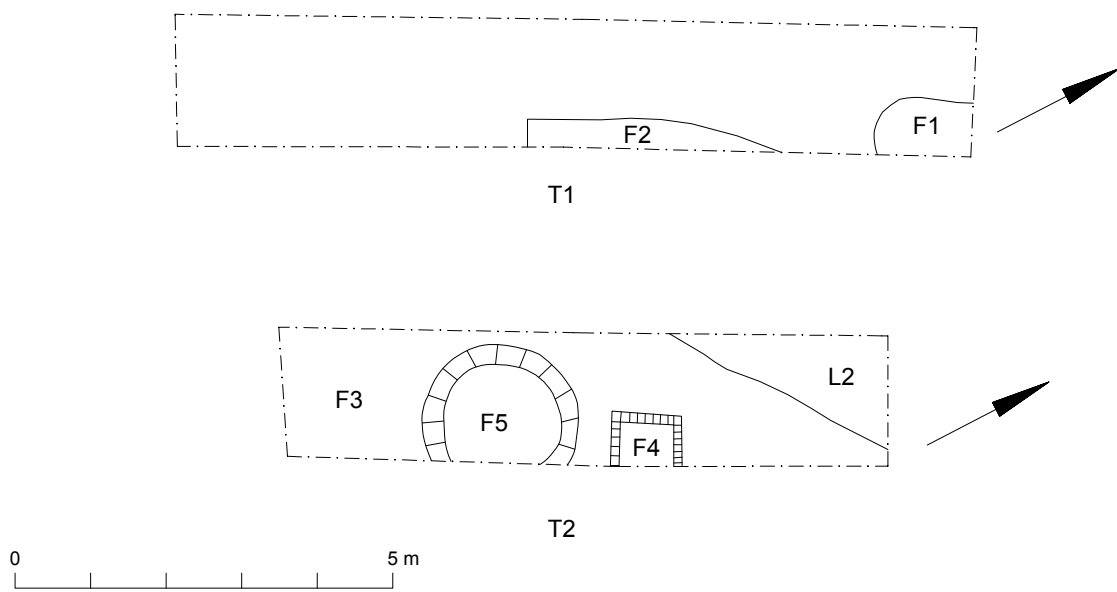


Fig 3 Detailed trench plans.

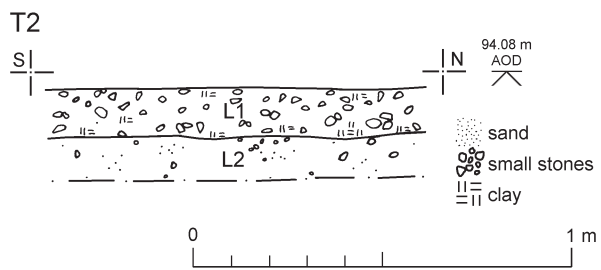


Fig 4 Representative trench section.

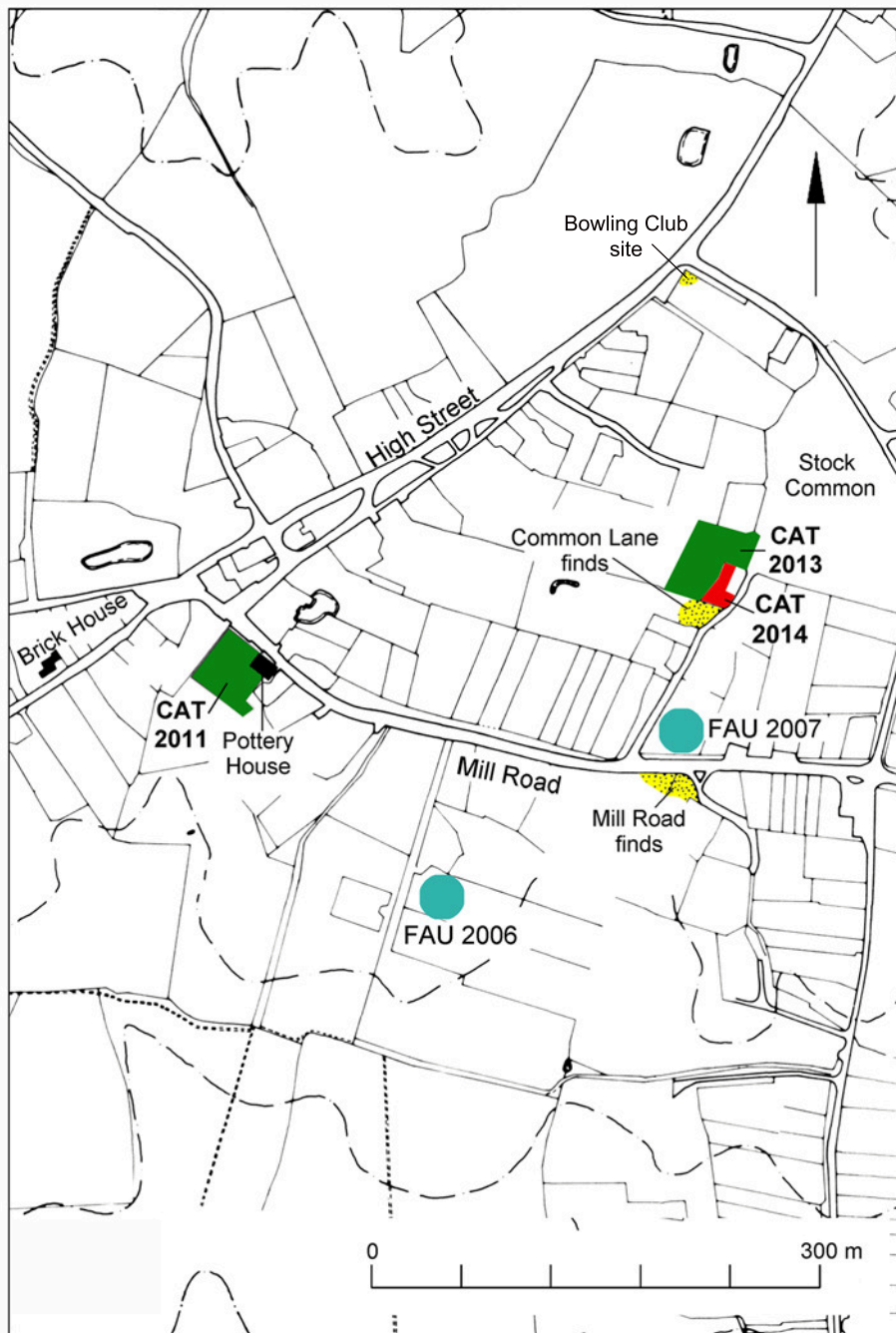


Fig 5 Location of 2014 site, showing previous discoveries of kiln material.

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Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

Summary sheet

Address: 23, Common Lane, Stock, Essex	
Parish: Stock	District: Chelmsford
NGR: TM 0310 7445	Site code: CAT project code – 14/1a HET Code –
Type of work: Evaluation	Site director/group: Colchester Archaeological Trust
Date of work: 13th January 2014	Size of area investigated: 18m (linear)
Location of curating museum: Chelmsford Museum accession code : 2014.01	Funding source: Developer
Further seasons anticipated? No	Related EHER numbers: 5391, 5507, 48334
Final report: CAT Report 749	
Periods represented: Modern	
<p>Summary of fieldwork results:</p> <p><i>This site is the former garden of 23 Common Lane, in the centre of Stock. Two evaluation trenches (18m total length) were positioned within the footprint of a new detached house and associated garage.</i></p> <p><i>There were five modern features (pits, foundations, and a well), all associated with the current dwelling.</i></p> <p><i>Despite the discovery of potsherds and kiln debris on the adjacent site, there was no evidence for the Stock pottery industry here (in the form of either loose sherds or kiln debris). This may be due to reduction of site level prior to the construction of the existing building removing early deposits and finds.</i></p>	
Previous summaries/reports: -	
ECC Place Services officer: Alison Bennett	
Keywords: --	Significance: neg
Author of summary: Ben Holloway	Date of summary: January 2014