Colchester Archaeological Trust

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issued July 2023

Archaeological monitoring at Pleshey Golden Jubilee Playground, Vicarage Road, Pleshey, Essex, CM3 1JG: March-July 2023

CAT project ref.: 2022/12d
ECC code: PVYR23

Archaeological monitoring at Pleshey Golden Jubilee Playground, Vicarage Road, Pleshey, Essex, CM3 1JG: March-July 2023

NGR: TL 66469 14688 (centre)

Scheduled Ancient Monument: EX22 HA 1002191
Scheduled Monument Consent: S00243155

CAT project ref.: 2022/12d
CAT Report 1959

ECC code: PYVR23
OASIS id: colchest3-511555

report prepared by Megan Beale

with contributions from Dr Matt Loughton, Laura Pooley and Alec Wade

fieldwork by Megan Beale

commissioned by Will Adshead-Grant on behalf of Pleshey Parish Council

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Issued:	**18/07/2023**	

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Cover: General view of playground

1 Summary

Archaeological monitoring was carried out during the construction of new play equipment at Pleshey Golden Jubilee Playground, Pleshey, Essex. The village of Pleshey is enclosed by a bank and ditch system, originating from the construction of a motte and bailey castle in the 12th-century. Due to this, Pleshey is a scheduled ancient monument. The foundations/floor of a 19th-20th-century building were revealed, likely relating to the nearby smithy.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This report presents the results of archaeological monitoring undertaken by the Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) at Pleshey Golden Jubilee Playground, Pleshey, Essex on the 2nd March and 7th July 2023. The work was commissioned by Will Adshead-Grant on behalf of Pleshey Parish Council and took place during groundworks for new play equipment.

As the site lies within a scheduled ancient monument (NHLE 1002191) and has a high potential for archaeological remains, an archaeological condition was recommended by the Historic England Inspector of Ancient Monuments (HEIAM) as part of scheduled monument consent (S00243155). This follows the guidelines given in the National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG 2021).

In addition to the scheduled monument consent and WSI, all fieldwork and reporting was done in accordance with *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (*MoRPHE*) (Historic England 2016), and with *Standards for field archaeology in the East of England* (EAA **14** and **24**). This report mirrors standards and practices contained in the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for archaeological watching brief* (CIfA 2014a) and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (CIfA 2014b).

3 Archaeological background (Fig 2)

The following archaeological background includes information from the Essex Historic Environment Records (EHER) held at Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex (accessed via http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk).

The Geology of Britain viewer (1:50,000 scale[1]) shows the bedrock geology of the site to be London clay formation (bioturbated or poorly laminated blue-grey or grey-brown slightly calcareous, silty to very silty clay), with superficial deposits of Lowestoft formation (an extensive sheet of chalky till, together with outwash sands and gravels, silts and clays. The till is characterised by its chalk and flint content).

After the Norman conquest, Pleshey became part of the estate of the noble Geoffrey de Mandeville and in the mid-12th-century he commissioned a major motte and bailey castle to be built on the site. In the late-12th-century, earthworks were added including a semi-circular ditch and earth bank installed to enclose an area to the north of the castle (EHER 1126-7). The castle was built on a slight ridge near the confluence of two streams which flow east towards the river Chelmer. The perimeter ditch still serves to delineate the village in a clear way.

Pleshey flourished throughout the medieval period under the noble or royal patronage of those holding the castle. When the castle was abandoned at the end of the medieval period, the town went into rapid decline due to its non-strategic location and the removal of royal patronage (Bennett 2006,11).

The decline of Pleshey has left Chelmsford Borough not only with one of its most attractive villages, but one of the best-preserved small medieval town and castle complexes in England and a site of national significance, almost all of which is a scheduled monument.

1 British Geological Survey – https://geologyviewer.bgs.ac.uk/?

Pleshey is dominated by the great medieval earthworks of Pleshey Castle and associated town enclosure. Much of the village is scheduled and has been demonstrated by previous excavation to contain stratified and well-preserved archaeological deposits, including:

- At Pleachfields, to the immediate north of the current site, a single trench was evaluated in 2004. A small number of disturbed medieval features were identified including ditches, pits and gullies (Allen 2004, EHER 46286). A further watching brief on a small house extension in 2010 did not reveal any archaeological features or finds (Letch 2010).
- At Woolmers Mead (to the immediate south-east of the site), a *c* 4m wide shallow ditch with a flat V-shaped profile was recorded running parallel to Back Lane in 1986 (Clarke 1986, EHER 16161).

For more background information on the excavation of Pleshey castle, Pleshey in general and the surrounding area, see the *Pleshey Historic Town Assessment Report* (Medlycott 1999) and the *Chelmsford Borough Historic Land Characterisation Project* (Bennett 2006).

4 Aims

Archaeological monitoring was undertaken to excavate and record any archaeological deposits which were exposed by the groundworks.

5 Results (Figs 2-3)

The first phase of work, carried out in March 2023, consisted of monitoring post-holes for the obstacle course (stepping stones, monkey bars, and swing board), as well as gate-posts and stripping to level the area for the climbing frame. A second phase, carried out in July 2023, consisted of monitoring post-holes for the climbing frame, walk and stretch, and the shimmy ropes. All work apart from the levelling for the climbing frame was excavated by hand. The levelling was machine-excavated.

Obstacle Course

Eight post-holes were dug during the construction of the obstacle course. They ranged in diameter from 0.4-0.65m, and were between 0.4-0.65m deep. Site stratigraphy consisted of a landscaped topsoil (L1, 0.12-0.17m) covering an accumulation layer (L2, 0.22-0.27m thick) which sealed clayey natural (L3, from *c* 0.35-0.45m bcgl (below current ground level)). Old modern concrete footings were noted in the central-northern area of the footings. These likely relate to former play equipment at this location. No archaeological remains were encountered.

Photograph 1 Post-holes for obstacle course from north end, view south-west.

Photograph 2 Post-holes for obstacle course from south end, view north-east.

Photograph 3 Close-up of a post-hole from the obstacle course.

Gate-posts

Two post-holes approximately 0.4m in diameter and 0.9m deep were excavated by the entrance of the playground. They were approximately 5m apart from each other. Topsoil (L1, *c* 0.05m thick) covered accumulation (L2, *c* 0.10m thick) which sealed natural (L3, from *c* 0.15m bcgl). No archaeological remains were encountered.

Photograph 4 Overall shot of entrance gate-posts, view north-east.

Photograph 5 General close-up shot of one of the entrance gate-posts, view north-east.

Climbing frame, "Thumper"

During the first phase, the area for the climbing frame was reduced by approximately 0.1m to level the area out. Only topsoil (L1) was removed. During the second phase, thirteen post-holes were excavated. All were 0.3m in diameter and 0.55m deep. A small trench measuring 0.3m by 1.15m was excavated on the north-east edge of the post-holes. It was approximately 0.3m deep. Four layers were present, in general L1 (0.12m thick) covered L2 (0.25m thick) which sealed L3 (from *c* 0.35m bcgl). However, a demolition layer (L4, *c* 0.2-0.3m thick) was seen in at least nine post-holes, and consisted of mostly red brick. This was covered by L1 and sealed L3.

Photograph 6 Overall shot of climbing frame post-holes, view south-east.

Photograph 7 Longer footing to the north-east of climbing frame post-holes. F1 can be seen (but not labelled) in section. View north-east.

A small amount of concrete was noted in one post-hole in the north corner. As with the obstacle course, this is likely related to footings for former play equipment. Evidence of a brick wall or foundation (F1) was noted in the most easterly footing for the climbing frame. It was approximately 0.25m thick, with an obvious flat surface. Due to having a larger section to investigate, it became clear that L4 is likely the same as F1.

Photograph 8 Post-hole from the climbing frame containing concrete, and partially L4.

Photograph 9 A post-hole from the climbing frame with L4 seen in section, view north-west.

Walk and stretch, log walk and shimmy ropes

Eight post-holes were dug to construct the walk and stretch, all 0.3m by 0.45m and 0.45m deep. The log walk was a short, wavy trench approximately 2.4m long, 0.3m wide and 0.3m deep. Next to the log walk on the west side were two triangular-shaped holes for the shimmy ropes. These two triangles were 2.9m away from each other, and measured 0.6m by 0.6m by 0.7m. The minimum depth was 0.25m. Within these triangles were three separate post-holes, ranging in depth from 0.3-0.5m. Across all three of these footprints, L1 (*c* 0.8-0.9m deep) sealed L2 (0.17-0.2m deep) over L3 (from *c* 0.25m bcgl). No archaeological remains were seen during monitoring of this area.

Photograph 10 Overall shot of post-holes for walk and stretch, view south-west.

Photograph 11 Overall view of trench for log walk, view north-west.

Photograph 12 Overall view of post-holes for shimmy ropes, view south-west.

Photograph 13 View of post-holes for shimmy ropes.

6 Finds

6.1 Ceramic and Pottery finds

by Dr Matthew Loughton

This watching brief uncovered four fragments of ceramic building material (henceforth CBM) with a weight of 3,650g. Landscaped topsoil L1 produced one piece of medieval/post-medieval peg-tile with a weight of 12g. Brick floor/foundation F1 produced three brick fragments with a weight of 3,638g, including one complete un-frogged example with dimensions of 225mm x 110mm x 66mm which dates to the first half of the 19th century.

6.2 Miscellaneous finds

by Laura Pooley and Alec Wade

Fragments of glass, animal bone and clinker were recovered from L1 and L4 along with a complete iron horseshoe. Both the glass and horseshoe date to the 19th-20th century. All of the finds are recorded in Table 1 and have been discarded.

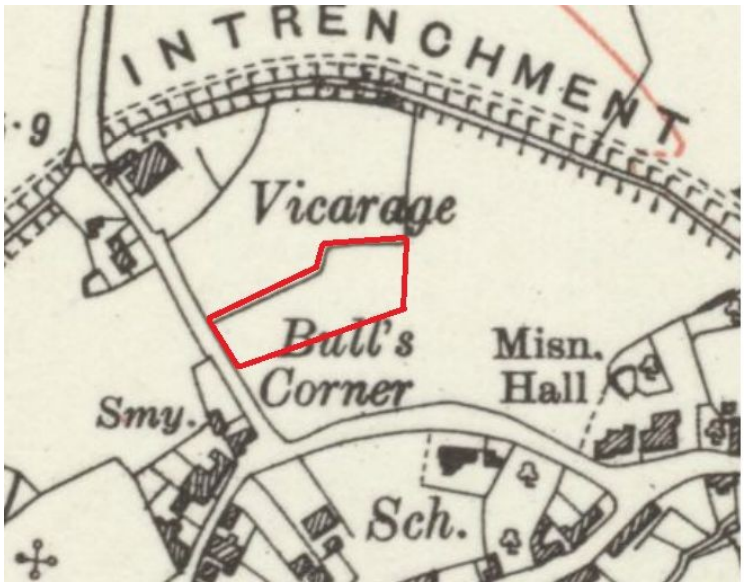
Context	Finds no.	Description
L1	1	**Glass:** Fragment (4.6g) of clear bottle glass, embossed '...]E[.../...]EVAN[…', 19th/20th century.
	2	**Animal bone:** Fragment of large-mammal pelvis, probably cow (32.9g).
L4	3	**Iron:** Complete horseshoe, large, 19th-20th century, 167mm long, 172mm wide (572.9g), 19th-20th century. **Clinker:** 12 fragments of clinker (112.9g).

Table 1 Miscellaneous finds listed by context.

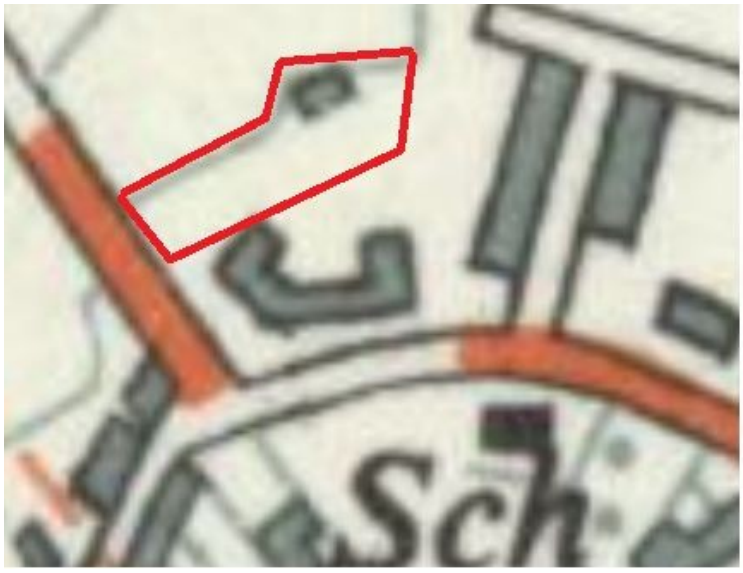
7 Conclusion (Figs 4-5)

There was only one feature found during archaeological monitoring. Due to the neat line of brick seen in section, it is probably a former floor or foundation to a building. It did not appear as neat where L4 was identified. However it is likely L4 is the same as F1, as they both appear at the same depth. Long-time residents of Pleshey noted there used to be a blacksmith's workshop in the location where L4 and F1 was identified, and that this had been built in the 1920s and demolished in the 1960s (pers. comms.). The brick recovered from F1 dates to the early 19th century, so may have been brick reused to construct this small building.

An OS map from 1924 shows no evidence of a structure at F1's location (Map 1). However a later OS map from 1959 shows a small building (Map 2). F1 and L4 noted on site are likely the remains of this building. Samples of clinker recovered from these contexts support the idea that this building belonged to a blacksmith or other metalworker. Map 1 shows there was a smithy (*Smy.*) across the road from the current development site. It does not appear marked on Map 2, however. The smithy itself appears to date from at least 1875 (Medlycott 1999), so F1 may have been built at the same time as or just after this, but does not appear on any maps prior to 1959. As a minor building, it may not have been included on earlier maps.



Map 1 OS Six-inch of Pleshey, published 1924. The site is outlined in red.



Map 2 OS 1:25,000 map of Pleshey, published 1959. The site outlined is in red and a building can be seen in the location where L4 and F1 were identified.

8 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks Will Adshead-Grant and Pleshey Parish Council for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister and A Wightman and carried out by M Beale. Figures were prepared by E Holloway, S Veasey and A Smith. The project was monitored for Historic England by Dr Jess Tipper.

9 References

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

Allen, P	2004	*Pleachfields, Vicarage Road, Pleshey, Essex: Archaeological evaluation by trial trenching*. Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit Report 1346
Bennett, A	2006	*Chelmsford Borough Historic Land Characterisation Project.* Essex County Council Historic Environment Branch
CAT	2023	*Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for archaeological monitoring at Pleshey Golden Jubilee Playground, Vicarage Road, Pleshey, Essex, CM3 1JG* by E Holloway
CIfA	2014a	*Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief.* Revised June 2020
CIfA	2014b	*Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials.* Updated October 2020
Clarke, C P	1986	*Woolmers Mead*
Gurney, D	2003	*Standards for field archaeology in the East of England.* East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14 (EAA **14**)
Historic England	2015	*Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (MoRPHE)
Letch, A	2010	*House extension at Pleachfields, Vicarage Road, Pleshey.* Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit
Medlycott, M	1999	*Pleshey Historic Town Assessment Report.* Essex County Council
Medlycott, M	2011	*Research and archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the East of England*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 24 (EAA **24**)
MHCLG	2021	*National Planning Policy Framework.* Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

10 Abbreviations and glossary

CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CBC	Colchester Borough Council
CIfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
context	specific location of finds on an archaeological site
feature (F)	an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a drain: can contain 'contexts'
HEIAM	Historic England Inspector of Ancient Monuments
layer (L)	distinct or distinguishable deposit (layer) of material
medieval	period from AD 1066 to *c* 1500
modern	period from *c* AD 1800 to the present
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
NGR	National Grid Reference
OASIS	**O**nline **A**cces**S** to the **I**ndex of Archaeological Investigation**S**, http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main
post-medieval	from c AD 1500 to c 1800
prehistoric	pre-Roman
rampart	an elongated bank or wall forming a defensive boundary of an enclosure
Roman	the period from AD 43 to *c* AD 410
section	(abbreviation sx or Sx) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s
wsi	written scheme of investigation

11 Archive deposition

Digital record: This project falls within the CIfA definition of a sterile project (https://www.archaeologists.net/selection-toolkit/sterile-projects), and as such the preserved archaeological archive will take the form of a single digital document that incorporates all the relevant elements from the project archive. This document will be uploaded to OASIS and released into the Archaeological Data Service (ADS) library, from where it will be curated by the ADS. The single digital document will include the report, Brief, WSI, photographs, and original site data (for example context sheets, section drawings).

Distribution list
Will Adshead-Grant
Pleshey Parish Council
Dr Jess Tipper, Historic England Inspector of Ancient Monuments
Essex Historic Environment Record

Appendix 1 Context list

Context	Finds no.	Context type	Description	Date
L1	1, 2, 5	Topsoil	Friable moist medium/dark grey/brown silty clay with brick flecks and inclusions of: stone 1%	Modern
L2	-	Accumulation	Friable dry/moist medium grey/brown silty clay with brick flecks and inclusions of: stone 1% tile/brick 1%	Modern
L3	-	Natural	Friable/firm moist light yellow clay and inclusions of: stone 5%	Post-glacial
L4	3	?Demolition layer	Red brick with dark orange-grey-brown silty loam	Post-medieval/ modern
F1	4	Brick/floor foundation	Red brick with dark orange-grey-brown silty loam	Modern

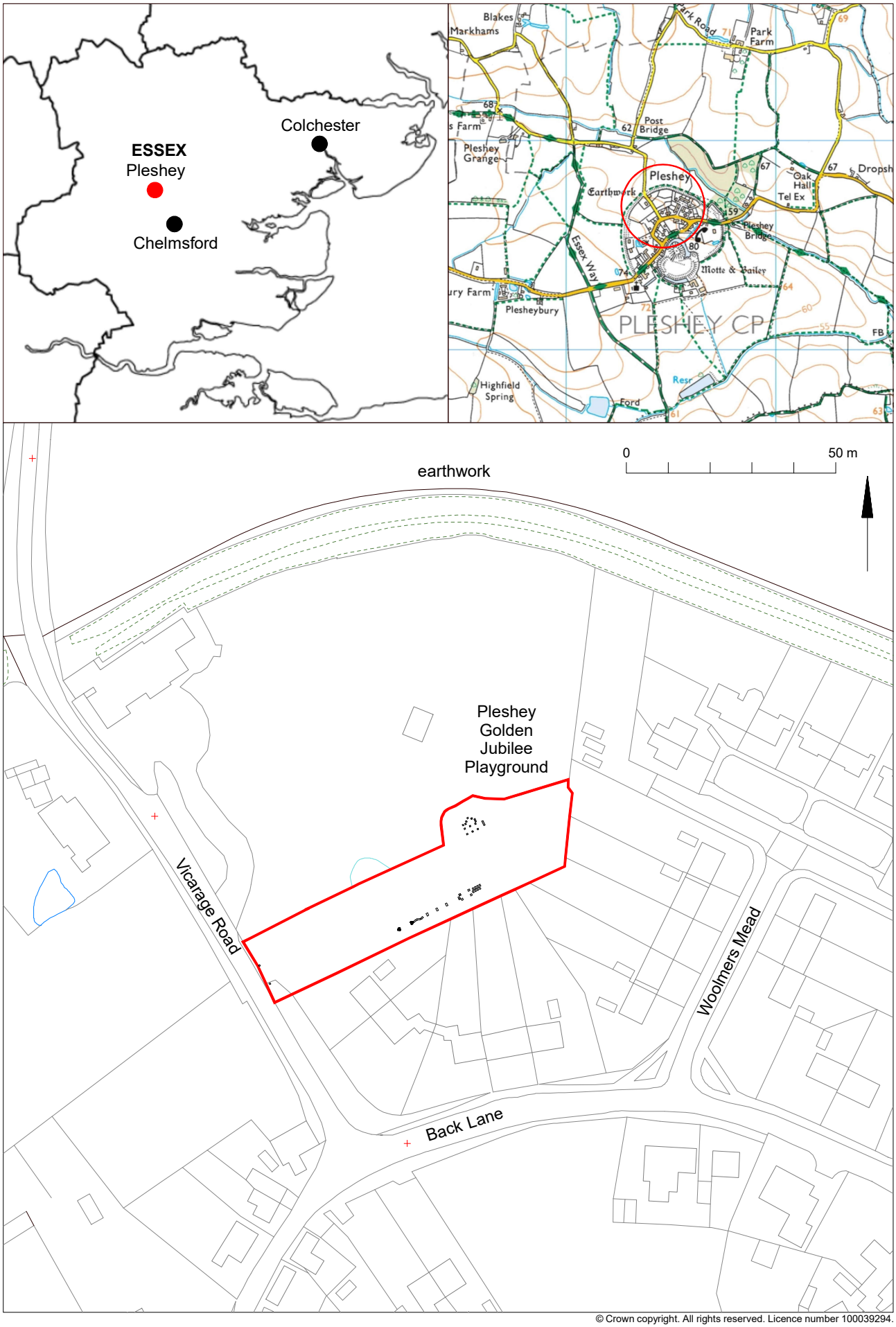


Fig 1 Site location.

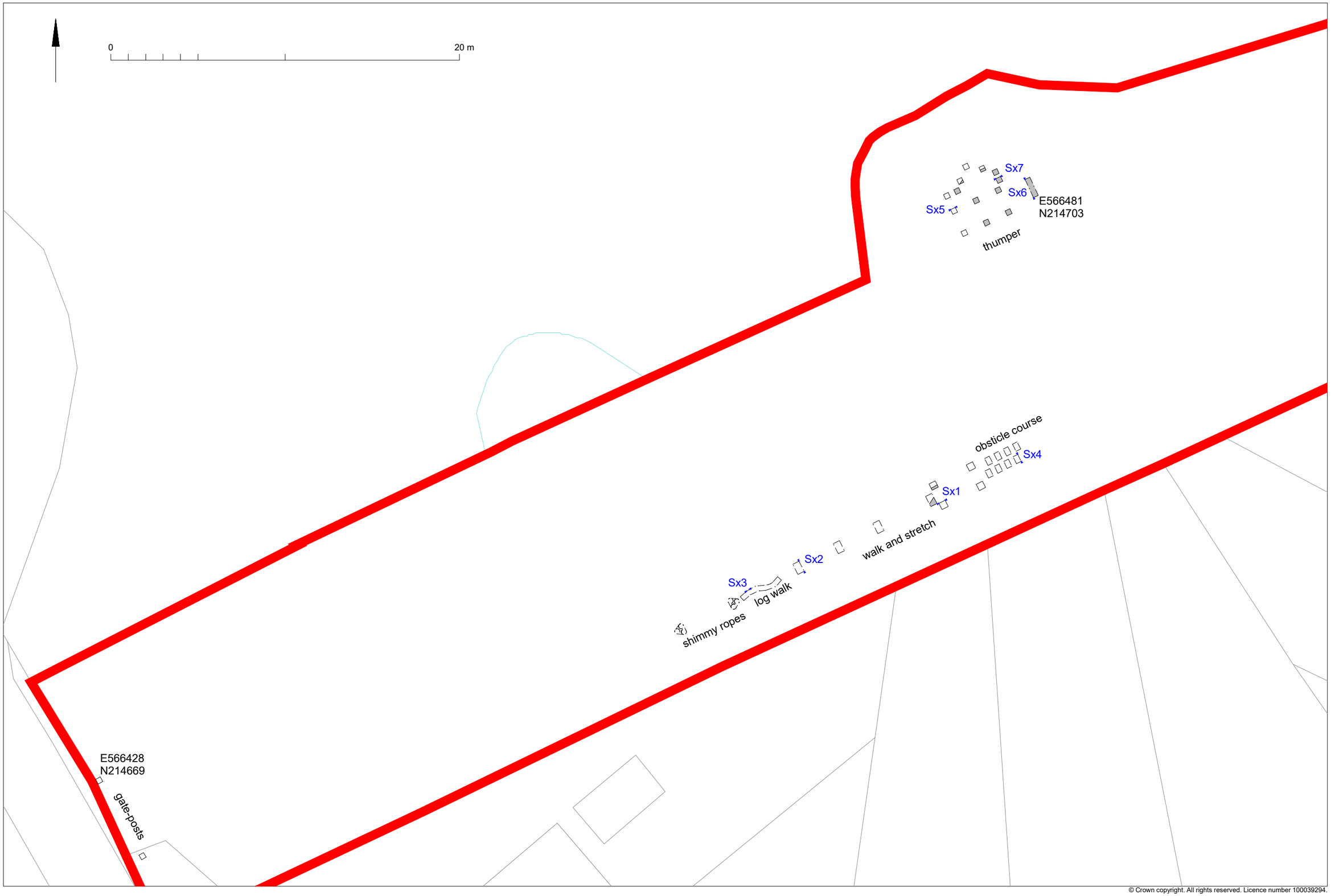


Fig 2 Results. All modern features in grey.

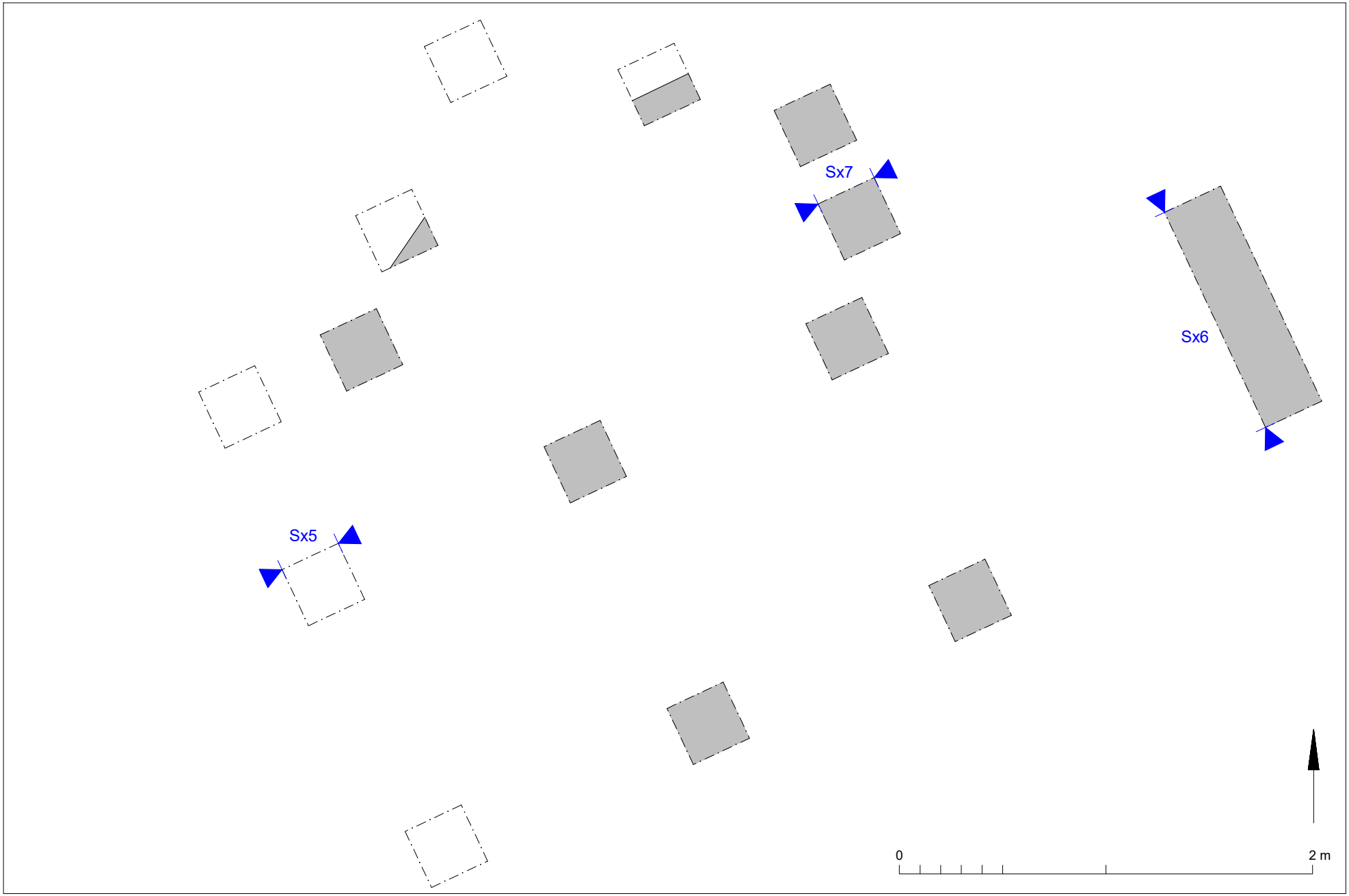


Fig 3 Thumper footings showing extent of F1/L4 in grey.

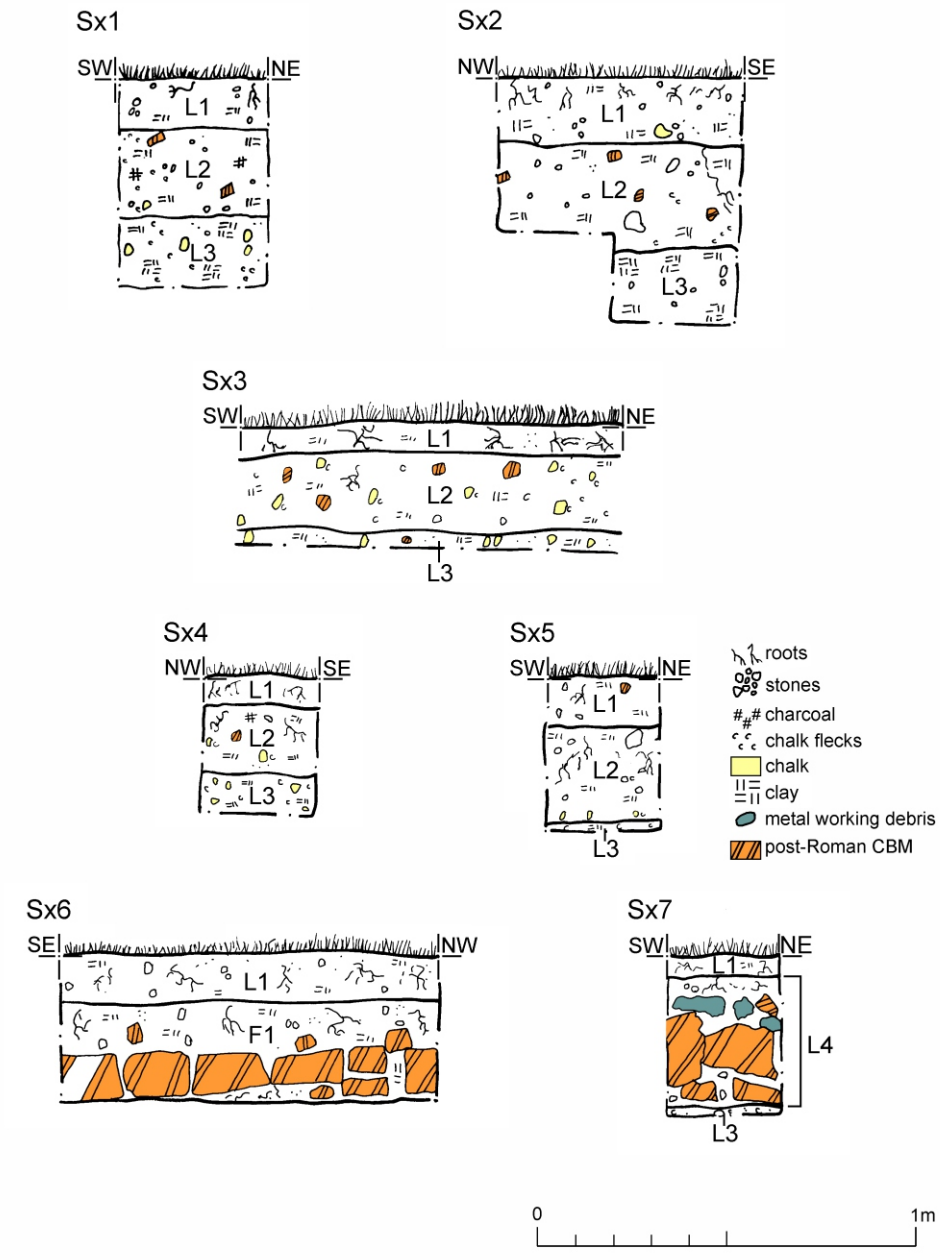


Fig 4 Feature and representative sections.

Colchester Archaeological Trust

Written scheme of investigation
for archaeological monitoring at the
Pleshey Golden Jubilee Playground, Vicarage Road,
Pleshey, Essex, CM3 1JG.

June 2023

CAT project ref.: 2022/12d
ECC code: PYVR23

Written scheme of investigation for archaeological monitoring the Pleshey Golden Jubilee Playground, Vicarage Road, Pleshey, Essex, CM3 1JG.

June 2023

NGR: TL 66469 14688

Scheduled Ancient Monument no.: EX22 HA 1002191
Scheduled Monument Consent no.: S00243155

CAT project ref.: 2022/12d

ECC code: PYVR23
Curating museum: Chelmsford
Historic England Inspector of Ancient Monuments: Dr Jess Tipper
OASIS id: colchest3-511555

WSI prepared by: Emma Holloway
Figure by: Chris Lister

Commissioned by: Will Adshead-Grant
Client: Pleshey Parish Council

Prepared by:	Emma Holloway	Junior Project Officer
Reviewed and approved by:	Chris Lister	Contracts Manager
Issued:	18/01/2023	
Revised by:	Emma Holloway	Junior Project Officer
Re-issued:	26/06/2023	

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Site location and description

The site is located within the centre of the historic village of Pleshey at the Golden Jubilee Playground, Vicarage Road, Pleshey, Essex (Fig 1). Pleshey is situated approximately 8.5km north-west of the centre of Chelmsford. The site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) TL 66469 14688.

Proposed work

The proposed development comprises of the removal of old play equipment to be replaced with a new climbing frame, play house, obstacle courses, bug house and the installation of a new gate.

Archaeological and geological background

The following archaeological background includes information from the Essex Historic Environment Records (EHER) held at Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex (accessed via http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk).

The Geology of Britain viewer (1:50,000 scale[1]) shows the bedrock geology of the site to be London clay formation (bioturbated or poorly laminated blue-grey or grey-brown slightly calcareous, silty to very silty clay), with superficial deposits of Lowestoft formation (an extensive sheet of chalky till, together with outwash sands and gravels, silts and clays. The till is characterised by its chalk and flint content).

After the Norman conquest Pleshey became part of the estate of the noble Geoffrey de Mandeville. In the mid 12th century he commissioned a major motte and bailey castle to be built on the site. In the late 12th century earthworks were added including a semi-circular ditch and earth bank installed to enclose an area to the north of the castle (EHER 1126-7). The castle was built on a slight ridge near the confluence of two streams which flow east towards the river Chelmer. The perimeter ditch still serves to delineate the village in a clear way.

Pleshey flourished throughout the medieval period under the noble or royal patronage of those holding the castle. When the castle was abandoned at the end of the medieval period, the town went into rapid decline due to its un-strategic location and the removal of royal patronage (Bennett 2006,11).

The decline of Pleshey has left Chelmsford Borough not only with one of its most attractive villages but one of the best preserved small medieval town and castle complexes in England, a site of national significance almost all of which is a Scheduled Monument.

Pleshey is dominated by the great medieval earthworks of Pleshey Castle and associated town enclosure. Much of the village is scheduled (EX22 HA 1002191) and has been demonstrated by previous excavation to contain stratified and well preserved archaeological deposits, including:

At Pleachfields, to the immediate north of the current site, a single trench was evaluated in 2004. A small number of disturbed medieval features were identified including ditches, pits and gullies (Allen 2004, EHER 46286). A further watching brief on a small house extension in 2010 did not reveal any archaeological features or finds (Letch 2010).

At Woolmers Mead (to the immediate south-east of the site) a *c* 4m wide shallow ditch, with a flat V-shaped profile was recorded running parallel to Back Lane in 1986 (Clarke 1986, EHER 16161)

For more background information on the excavation of Pleshey castle, Pleshey in general and the surrounding area see the *Pleshey Historic Town Assessment Report* (Medlycott 1999) and the *Chelmsford Borough Historic Land Characterisation Project* (Bennett 2006).

[1] British Geological Survey – https://geologyviewer.bgs.ac.uk/?

Project background

As the site lies within a Scheduled Ancient Monument and an area highlighted by the EHER as having a high potential for archaeological remains an archaeological condition was recommended by the Historic England Inspector of Ancient Monuments (HEIAM) as part of Scheduled Monument consent. This follows the guidelines given in the National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG 2021).

Requirement for work (Figs 1-2)

The required archaeological work is for an archaeological monitoring of all groundworks. Details are given in the Scheduled Monument consent documents.

Specifically: Groundworks will comprise of the following post-holes excavated for each piece of play equipment. Measurements are footing sizes below modern ground level:

Phase 1

- "Thumper" climbing framework: 13 footings measuring 0.3m^2 and 0.45m deep and 1 measuring 0.4m^2 and 0.4m deep.
- The play house: 8 footings measuring 0.10-0.15m^2 and 0.6m deep.
- The obstacle course:
  - Monkey bars: 2 footings 0.4m^2 and 0.75m deep.
  - Log traverse: 2 footings 0.45m^2 and 0.6m deep.
  - Swing board: 4 footings 0.45m^2 and 0.6m deep.
  - Stepping stones: 4 footings 0.4m^2 and 0.5m deep.
- The bug house: 1 footing measuring 0.10-0.15m^2 and 0.6m deep (may not be required depending on design used).
- The entrance gate posts: 2 new gate posts set 1.2m back from the highway, spaced 5m apart. Footings will measure 0.3m^2 and 0.76m deep.

Phase 2

- Shimmy ropes: 2 footings in 'T' shapes approximately measuring 1m long by 0.78m wide and 0.6m deep.
- Log walk: an 'S' shaped channel to be dug which measures 0.4m wide by approximately 2.5m long and 0.45m deep.
- Walk and stretch: 8 footings, each measuring 0.35m long by 4.5m wide and 0.45m deep.

Archaeological monitoring will determine the presence or absence, the extent, date and character and significance of any archaeological deposits that may be present and ensure their preservation by record. The monitoring will take place in all areas where topsoil stripping or ground reduction will have potential to disturb the archaeological horizon.

The monitoring is being undertaken to identify and record any surviving archaeological deposits that may exist on site.

If unexpected remains are encountered the HEIAM will be informed immediately.

In the exceptional circumstances that important, well-preserved mosaic floors (or similar remains) are discovered, which cannot otherwise be avoided by the development (and satisfactorily preserved in situ), a contingency will be required for the block-lifting of these archaeological remains, e.g. well-preserved mosaic remains and for subsequent conservation and presentation. A decision about the need for conservation and lifting of important archaeological remains will be made in consultation with specialist stakeholders (e.g, Historic England, Chelmsford Museum and Norfolk Museums Service, Conservation and Design Services).

General methodology

All work carried out by CAT will be in accordance with:

- Professional standards of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, including its *Code of Conduct* (CIfA 2014a-c).
- East of England Standards and Frameworks published by East Anglian Archaeology (Gurney 2003, Medlycott 2011) and the recent review updates on https://researchframeworks.org/eoe/.
- Relevant Health & Safety guidelines and requirements (CAT 2022).
- Scheduled Monument consent documents (S00243155).

Professional CAT field archaeologists will undertake all specified archaeological work, for which they will be suitably experienced and qualified.

Notification of the supervisor/project manager's name and the start date for the project will be provided to the HEIAM one week before start of work.

Unless it is the responsibility of other site contractors, CAT will study mains service locations and avoid damage to these.

At the start of the project (when the WSI is written) an OASIS online record http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/ will be initiated and key fields completed (Activity type, Location and Reviewers/Admin areas). At the end of the project all parts of the OASIS online form will be completed for submission to the EHER. This will include an uploaded .PDF version of the entire report.

A project or site code will be sought from the ECCHEA and/or the curating museum, as appropriate to the project. This code will be used to identify the project archive when it is deposited at the curating museum.

Staffing

The number of field staff for this project is estimated as follows: One CAT officer for the duration of the groundworks.

Monitoring methodology

There will be sufficient on-site attendance by CAT staff to maintain a watch on all contractors' groundworks to record, excavate or sample (as necessary) any archaeological features or deposits.

All topsoil removal and ground reduction will be done with a toothless bucket under the supervision and to the satisfaction of CAT staff. Where necessary, areas will be cleaned by hand to ensure the visibility of archaeological deposits.

If any features or deposits are uncovered, time will be allowed for these features to be excavated by hand, planned and recorded. This includes a 50% sample of discrete features (pits, etc), 10% of linear features (ditches, etc) in 1m wide sections, and 100% of complex structures/features. Complex archaeological structures such as walls, kilns, ovens or burials will be carefully cleaned, planned and fully recorded.

Fast hand-excavation techniques involving (for instance) picks, forks and mattocks will not be used on complex stratigraphy.

A metal detector will be used to examine spoil heaps, and the finds recovered.

Individual records of excavated contexts, layers, features or deposits will be entered on proforma record sheets. Registers will be compiled of finds, small finds and soil samples.

All features and layers or other significant deposits will be planned, and their profiles or sections recorded. The normal scale will be site plans at 1:20 and sections at 1:10, unless circumstances indicate that other scales would be appropriate.

Site surveying

The site and any features will be surveyed by Total Station or GPS, unless the particulars of the features indicate that manual planning techniques should be employed. Normal scale for archaeological site plans and sections is 1:20 and 1:10 respectively, unless circumstances indicate that other scales would be more appropriate.

The site grid will be tied into the National Grid. Corners of excavation areas will be located by NGR coordinates.

Environmental sampling policy

The number and range of samples collected will be adequate to determine the potential of the site, with particular focus on palaeoenvironmental remains including both biological remains (e.g. plants, small vertebrates) and small sized artefacts (e.g. smithing debris). Samples will be collected for potential micromorphical and other pedological sedimentological analysis. Environmental bulk samples will be 40 litres in size (assuming context is large enough).

Sampling strategies will address questions of:

- The range of preservation types (charred, mineral-replaced, waterlogged), and their quality.
- Concentrations of macro-remains.
- Differences in remains from undated and dated features.
- Variation between different feature types and areas of site.

CAT has an arrangement with Val Fryer / Lisa Gray whereby any potentially rich environmental layers or features will be appropriately sampled as a matter of course. Trained CAT staff will process the samples and the flots will be sent to Val Fryer or Lisa Gray for analysis and reporting.

Should any complex, or otherwise outstanding deposits be encountered, VF or LG will be asked onto site to advise. Waterlogged 'organic' features will always be sampled. In all cases, the advice of VF/LG and/or the Historic England Regional Advisor in Archaeological Science (East of England) on sampling strategies for complex or waterlogged deposits will be followed, including the taking of monolith samples.

Human remains

CAT follows the policy of leaving human remains *in situ* unless there is a clear indication that the remains are in danger of being compromised as a result of their exposure or unless advised to do so by the project osteologist or the HEIAM. If circumstances indicated it were prudent or necessary to remove remains from the site during the monitoring, the following criteria would be applied; if it is clear from their position, context, depth, or other factors that the remains are ancient, then normal procedure is to apply to the Department of Justice for a licence to remove them and seek advice from the project osteologist. Following Historic England guidance (2018) if the human remains are not to be lifted, the project osteologist should be available to record the human remain *in situ* (i.e. a site visit). Conditions laid down by the DoJ license will be followed. If it seems that the remains are not ancient, then the coroner, the client, and the HEIAM will be informed, and any advice and/or instruction from the coroner will be followed.

Photographic record

Will include both general and feature-specific photographs, the latter with scale and north arrow. A photographic register giving context number, details, and direction of shot will be prepared on site, and included in the site archive.

Finds

All significant finds will be retained.

All finds, where appropriate, will be washed and marked with site code and context number.

Most of our finds reports are written internally by CAT staff under the supervision and direction of Philip Crummy (Director) and Laura Pooley (Post-excavation Manager). This includes specialist subjects such as:

ceramic finds (pottery and ceramic building material): Matthew Loughton
animal bones: Alec Wade (or Adam Wightman/Pip Parmenter - small groups only)
small finds, metalwork, coins, etc: Laura Pooley
non-ceramic bulk finds: Laura Pooley
flint: Adam Wightman
environmental processing: Bronagh Quinn
osteology: (human remains): Megan Seehra

or to outside specialists:

animal and human bone: Julie Curl (*Sylvanus*)
environmental assessment and analysis: Val Fryer / Lisa Gray
archaeometallurgy: David Dungworth
radiocarbon dating: SUERC Radiocarbon Dating Laboratory, Glasgow
conservation/x-ray: Laura Ratcliffe (LR Conservation) / Norfolk Museums Service, Conservation and Design Services

Other specialists whose opinion can be sought on large or complex groups include:

other: EH Regional Adviser in Archaeological Science (East of England).

All finds of potential treasure will be removed to a safe place, and the coroner informed immediately, in accordance with the rules of the Treasure Act 1996. The definition of treasure is given in pages 3-5 of the Code of Practice of the above act. This refers primarily to gold or silver objects.

Requirements for conservation and storage of finds will be agreed with the appropriate museum prior to the start of work, and confirmed to the HEIAM.

A contingency will be made in the budget for scientific assessment/analysis if suitable deposits are identified. This can include soil micromorphological and geochemical analysis of floors and dark earth deposits and/or absolute dating (such as archaeomagnetic and radiocarbon). The Historic England Regional Science Advisor will be consulted for advice.

Results

Notification will be given to HEIAM when the fieldwork has been completed.

An appropriate archive will be prepared to minimum acceptable standards outlined in *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (Historic England 2015).

The report will be submitted within 6 months of the end of fieldwork, with a copy supplied to the Historic Environment Advisor as a single PDF.

The report will contain:

- Location plan of trenches in relation to the proposed development. At least two corners of each excavated area will be given a 10 figure grid reference.

- Section/s drawings showing depth of deposits from present ground level with Ordnance Datum, vertical and horizontal scale.
- Archaeological methodology and detailed results including a suitable conclusion and discussion.
- Appropriate discussion and results section assessing the site in relation to the Regional Research Frameworks (Brown and Glazebrook 2000, Medlycott 2011. https://researchframeworks.org/eoe/).
- All specialist reports or assessments
- A concise non-technical summary of the project results.

An OASIS summary sheet will be completed at the end of the project and supplied to the HEIAM. This will be completed in digital form with a paper copy included with the archive. A copy (with trench plan) will also be emailed to the Hon. Editor of the Essex Archaeology and History Journal for inclusion in the annual round-up of projects (paul.gilman@me.com).

Publication of the results at least a summary level (i.e. round-up in *Essex Archaeology & History*) shall be undertaken in the year following the archaeological fieldwork. An allowance will be made in the project costs for the report to be published in an adequately peer reviewed journal or monograph series.

A PDF copy of the full report will be uploaded by CAT to the OASIS website and the Colchester Archaeological Trust's Online Report Library (http://cat.essex.ac.uk/), both of which are publicly accessible.

Archive deposition

The requirements for archive storage shall be agreed with the Curating museum.

If finds are retained from the site the full archive will be deposited with Chelmsford Museum unless otherwise agreed in advance. (A full copy of the archive shall in any case be deposited). If there are no finds a full digital archive will be deposited with ADS Archaeology.

The requirements for archive storage will be agreed with the curating museum.

If the finds are to remain with the landowner, a full copy of the archive will be housed with the curating museum and provision must be made for additional recording (e.g. photography, illustration and analysis) as appropriate.

The digital archive resulting from the work will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service (www.archaeologydataservice.ac.uk) to safeguard the long-term curation of the digital records. The HEIAM will be notified when the digital archive has been deposited. Prior to deposition CAT's data management plan (based on the official guidelines from the Digital Curation Centre [DCC 2013]) will ensure the integrity of the digital archive. A summary of the contents of the archives shall be supplied to the HEIAM at the time of their deposition.

The ECCHEA will be notified when the digital archive has been deposited.

Monitoring

The HEIAM will be responsible for monitoring progress and standards throughout the project, and will be kept regularly informed during fieldwork, post-excavation and publication stages.

Notification of the start of work will be given to the HEIAM one week in advance of its commencement.

Any variations in this WSI will be agreed with the HEIAM prior to them being carried out.

The HEIAM will be notified when the fieldwork is complete.

The involvement of the HEIAM shall be acknowledged in any report or publication generated by this project.

Public outreach

As part of CAT's public outreach programme, CAT is committed to engaging our local community with their archaeological resource. Among other activities, CAT regularly invites volunteers to engage in finds processing tasks at our office, such as washing, marking, sorting and packing bulk archaeological finds from commercial archaeological projects. Our volunteer programme is not designed to replace the work of paid archaeologists but to complement it, and to provide greater public benefit by means of community engagement and participation.

CAT volunteers are fully trained in all tasks they are engaged in and are fully supervised by a CAT employee at all times. Finds processing volunteers are managed and supervised by a Senior Post-Excavation Assistant, whose role is to ensure that all volunteer processing is carried out to the highest possible standard and within professional guidelines. This is overseen by the Post-Excavation Manager and Director.

CAT will never use volunteers in place of employees when funding is agreed for the latter, or if doing so would disadvantageously affect the timetable of works agreed between CAT and our clients.

CAT's liability insurance policies cover the activities of volunteers and liability towards them. All activities are carried out according to CAT's 'Volunteer and work experience policy' and 'Outreach, public relations and publicity policy'.

Events, activities and social media

In addition, the CAT website (https://catuk.org/) and social media sites are updated regularly with information on our events and activities, with copies of our archaeological reports freely available at http://cat.essex.ac.uk/. Staff regularly give talks/lectures to groups, societies and schools, information on which (including any fees) is available by contacting the office on 01206 501785. CAT also works in partnership with both the Colchester Archaeological Group and Young Archaeologists Club providing venues for their meetings, advice and assistance.

References

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

Allen, P	2004	*Pleachfields, Vicarage Road, Pleshey, Essex: Archaeological evaluation by trial trenching.* Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit Report 1346
Bennett, A	2006	*Chelmsford Borough Historic Land Characterisation Project.* Essex County Council Historic Environment Branch
Brown, N & Glazebrook, J	2000	*Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties 2. Research agenda and strategy.* East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 8 (EAA **8**).
CAT	2022	*Health & Safety Policy.*
CIfA	2014a	*Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief.* Revised June 2020
CIfA	2014b	*Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials.* Revised October 2020.
CIfA	2014c	*Code of Conduct.* Revised October 2022.
Clarke, C P	1986	*Woolmers Mead*
Digital Curation Centre (DCC)	2013	*Checklist for Data Management Plan v. 4.0.*
Gurney, D	2003	*Standards for field archaeology in the East of England.* East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14 (EAA **14**).
Historic England	2015	*Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment*

(MoRPHE).

Historic England 2018 *The Role of the Human Osteologist in an Archaeological Fieldwork Project*. By S Mays, M Brickley & J Sidell.

Letch, A 2010 *House extension at Pleachfield, Vicarage Road, Pleshey.* Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit

Medlycott, M 1999 *Pleshey Historic Town Assessment Report*. Essex County Council

Medlycott, M 2011 *Research and archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the East of England*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 24 (EAA **24**).

MHCLG 2021 *National Planning Policy Framework*. Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

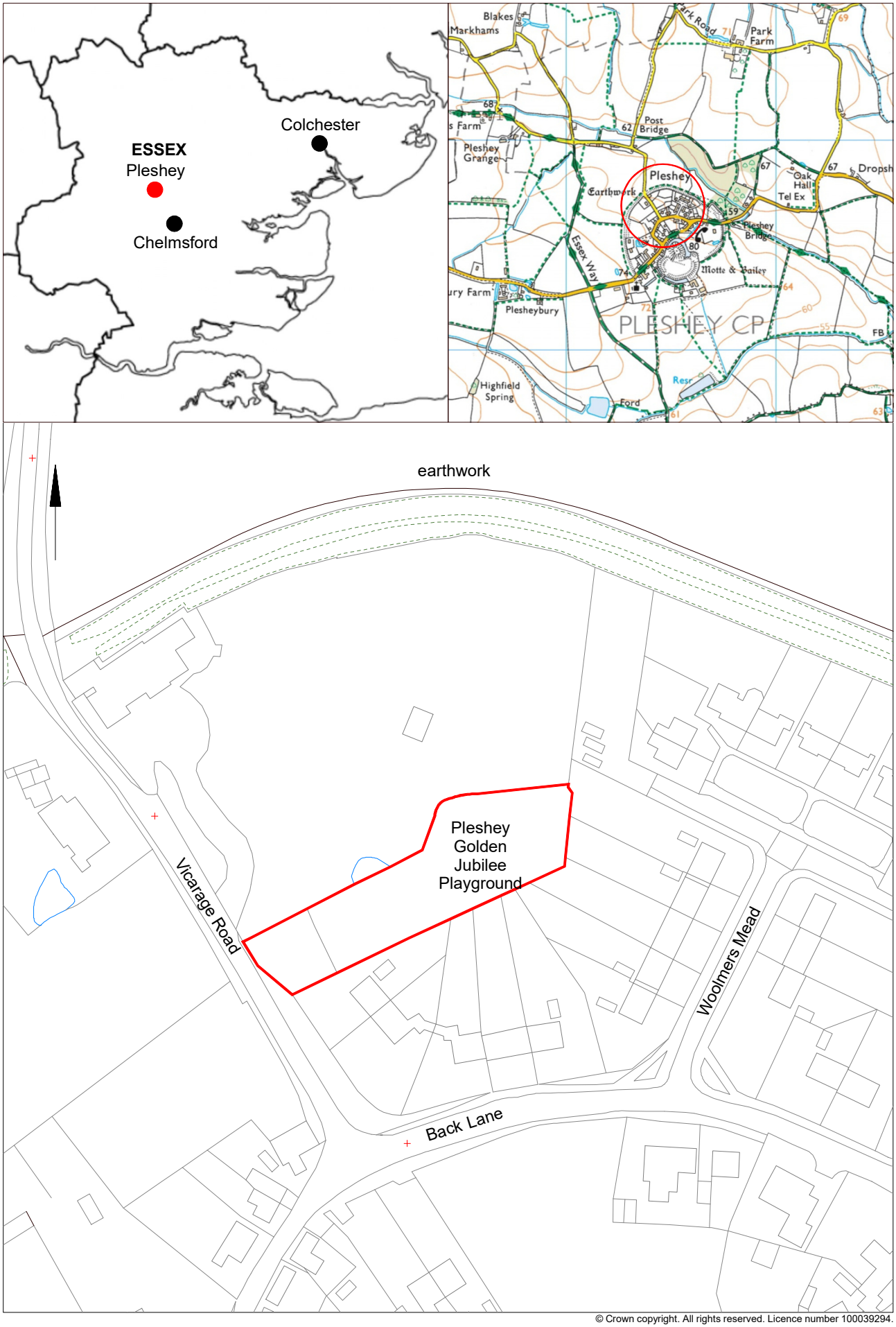

Fig 1 Site location.

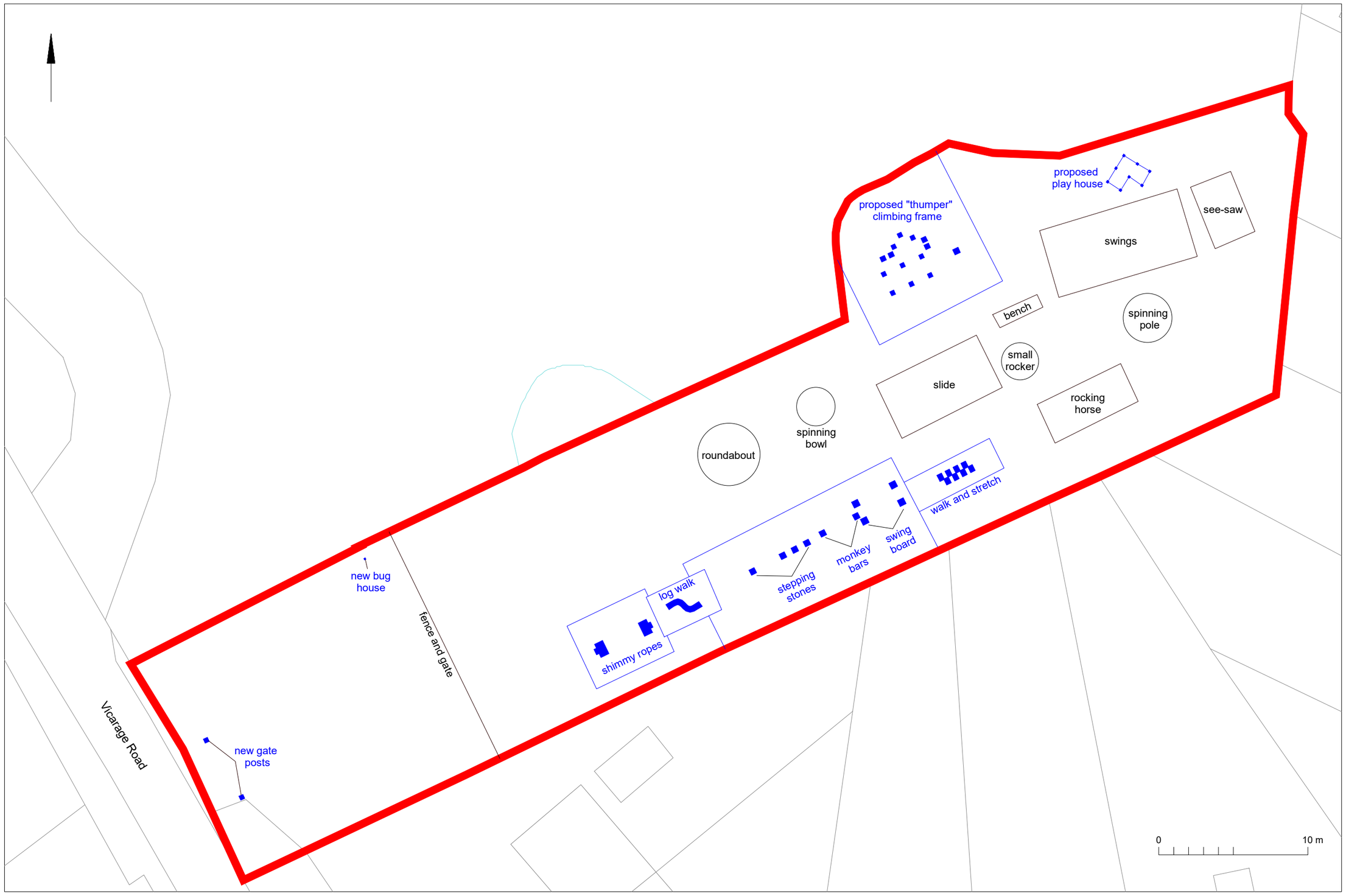

Fig 2 Site plan showing existing equipment (black) and proposed new equipment (blue).

OASIS Summary for colchest3-511555

OASIS ID (UID)	colchest3-511555
Project Name	Archaeological monitoring at Pleshey Golden Jubilee Playground, Vicarage Road, Pleshey, Essex, CM3 1JG: March-July 2023
Sitename	Pleshey Golden Jubilee Playground, Vicarage Road, Pleshey, Essex, CM3 1JG.
Sitecode	PYVR23
Project Identifier(s)	2022/12d
Activity type	Watching Brief
Planning Id	
Reason For Investigation	Scheduled monument consent
Organisation Responsible for work	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project Dates	02-Mar-2023 - 07-Jul-2023
Location	Pleshey Golden Jubilee Playground, Vicarage Road, Pleshey, Essex, CM3 1JG. NGR : TL 66469 14688 LL : 51.8060485231073, 0.413147675298102 12 Fig : 566469,214688
Administrative Areas	Country : England County : Essex District : Chelmsford Parish : Pleshey
Project Methodology	As the site lies within a scheduled ancient monument (NHLE 1002191) and has a high potential for archaeological remains, an archaeological condition was recommended by the Historic England Inspector of Ancient Monuments (HEIAM) as part of scheduled monument consent (S00243155). The work took place during groundworks for new play equipment. All work was carried out accordance with the WSI.
Project Results	Archaeological monitoring was carried out during the construction of new play equipment at Pleshey Golden Jubilee Playground, Pleshey, Essex. The village of Pleshey is enclosed by a bank and ditch system, originating from the construction of a motte and bailey castle in the 12th-century. Due to this, Pleshey is a scheduled ancient monument. The foundations/floor of a 19th-20th-century building were revealed, likely relating to the nearby smithy.
Keywords	Building - 20TH CENTURY - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types
Funder	Town or parish council Pleshey Parish Council
HER	Scheduled Monument Casework - unRev - STANDARD
Person Responsible for work	Chris Lister, Adam Wightman
HER Identifiers	HER Event No - PYVR23
Archives	Digital Archive - to be deposited with Archaeology Data Service Archive; Accession Id(s): PYVR23

Report generated on: 18 Jul 2023, 14:42