

# Archaeological monitoring and recording at Mount House, The Street, Pleshey, Essex, CM3 1HQ

August 2016



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**commissioned by Dave Farrow  
on behalf of Lynsey Cook**

NGR: TL 6667 1451 (centre)

Planning ref.: 15/01958/FUL

CAT project ref.: 16/06f

ECC code: PY25

Chelmsford Museum accession code CHMRE: 2016.090

OASIS ref.: colchest3-255272



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**CAT Report 1005**  
September 2016

## Contents

|    |                            |   |
|----|----------------------------|---|
| 1  | Summary                    | 1 |
| 2  | Introduction               | 1 |
| 3  | Archaeological background  | 1 |
| 4  | Results                    | 1 |
| 5  | Finds                      | 2 |
| 6  | Discussion                 | 2 |
| 7  | Acknowledgements           | 2 |
| 8  | References                 | 2 |
| 9  | Abbreviations and glossary | 3 |
| 10 | Contents of archive        | 3 |
| 11 | Archive deposition         | 3 |

Figures

after p4

## List of photographs, tables and figures

Cover: general site shot

Photograph 1 Ground reduction within footprint of new pool building, 2  
looking NW

Fig 1 Site location  
Fig 2 Detailed site plan  
Fig 3 Representative section

## 1 Summary

*Archaeological monitoring and recording took place at Mount House, The Street, Pleshey during groundworks for the construction of a replacement pool building. Despite being located within the scheduled monument of Pleshey Castle and town enclosure, no significant archaeological horizons were identified. The development site appears to have been landscaped/terraced in the past, possibly during the construction of the current swimming pool.*

## 2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the archive report for archaeological monitoring and recording at Mount House, The Street, Pleshey, Essex which was carried out on 18th and 25th August 2016. The work was commissioned by Dave Farrow, on behalf of Lynsey Cook, in advance of the construction of a replacement pool building, and was undertaken by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT).

In response to consultation with Essex County Council Place Services (ECCPS), Historic Environment Advisor Alison Bennett advised that in order to establish the archaeological implications of this application, the applicant should be required to commission a scheme of archaeological investigation in accordance with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012).

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a *Brief for Archaeological Monitoring*, detailing the required archaeological work, written by Alison Bennett (ECCPS 2016), and a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by CAT in response to the brief and agreed with ECCPS (CAT 2016).

In addition to the brief and WSI, all fieldwork and reporting was done in accordance with English Heritage's *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* (English Heritage 2006), 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 briefs* (ClfA 2014a) and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (ClfA 2014b).

## 3 Archaeological background

The following archaeological background draws on the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) held at Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex and Medlycott, M (1999) *Pleshey Historic Town Assessment Report*.

The EHER shows that the proposed works at Mount House will take place within the scheduled monument area of Pleshey Castle and town enclosure (SM33, EHER 1126). The monument is a good example of a motte and bailey type of earthwork built in the 12th century with an unusually well-preserved town enclosure. The castle was slighted in 1157-8 but refortified in 1167. Only a short length of the north bailey remains, its line is possibly marked by Back Lane. Mount House lies within the medieval town enclosure, and has a high potential for archaeological finds and features relating to the medieval and post-medieval settlement.

Also located within the grounds of Mount House (Grade II listed, NHLE no. 1265049) are the remains of an ammunition shelter (EHER 20987).

## 4 Results (Figs 2-3)

All groundworks were completed by the contractor under archaeological supervision. The footprint of the new pool building, measuring 7m x 6.5m (45.5m<sup>2</sup>), was reduced by 450mm (north end) to 150mm (south end) due to sloping ground level. Modern topsoil

(L1, c 270-330mm thick) sealed natural deposits (L2). Modern disturbance associated with the previous building was also identified.



**Photograph 1** Ground reduction within footprint of new pool building, looking NW

## 5 Finds

No archaeological finds were recorded.

## 6 Discussion

Despite being located within the scheduled monument of Pleshey Castle and town enclosure, no significant archaeological horizons were identified during groundworks. The site appears to have been landscaped/terraced in the past, possibly when the existing swimming pool was built, and modern topsoil seals natural deposits.

## 7 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks Dave Farrow and Lynsey Cook for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister, fieldwork was carried out by B Holloway. Figures are by M Baister and E Holloway. The project was monitored for ECCPS by Alison Bennett.

## 8 References

|        |       |  |
|--------|-------|--|
| CAT    | 2014  | <i>Health and Safety Policy</i>  |
| CAT    | 2015  | <i>Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for archaeological monitoring at Mount House, The Street, Pleshey, Chelmsford, Essex, CM3 1HQ</i> |
| CIfA   | 2014a | <i>Standard and guidance for archaeological watching briefs</i>  |
| CIfA   | 2014b | <i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i>                      |
| DCLG   | 2012  | <i>National Planning Policy Framework</i> . Dept of Communities and Local Government.  |
| EAA 14 | 2003  | <i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England</i> , East   |

|                  |      |   |
|------------------|------|---|
| EAA 24           | 2011 | Anglian Archaeology, Occasional Papers, <b>14</b> . Ed. D Gurney <i>Research and archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the East of England</i> , East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers <b>24</b> , by Maria Medlycott |
| ECCPS            | 2015 | <i>Brief for Archaeological Monitoring at Mount House, The Street, Pleshey</i>  |
| English Heritage | 2006 | <i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment</i> (English Heritage)   |
| Medlycott, M     | 2011 | <i>Pleshey Historic Town Assessment Report</i>  |

## 9 Abbreviations and glossary

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| CAT           | Colchester Archaeological Trust   |
| ClfA          | Chartered Institute for Archaeologists                                    |
| context       | specific location of finds on an archaeological site                      |
| ECCPS         | Essex County Council Place Services                                       |
| EHHER         | Essex Historic Environment Record   |
| feature (F)   | an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a drain: can contain 'contexts' |
| layer (L)     | distinct or distinguishable deposit of soil                               |
| medieval      | period from AD 1066 to Henry VIII   |
| modern        | period from c AD 1800 to the present                                      |
| natural       | geological deposit undisturbed by human activity                          |
| NGR           | National Grid Reference   |
| post-medieval | from Henry VIII to c AD 1800  |
| residual      | something out of its original context, eg a Roman coin in a modern pit    |
| Section       | (abbreviation sx or Sx) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s       |
| WSI           | Written Scheme of Investigation   |

## 10 Contents of archive

**Finds:** n/a

### **Paper and digital record**

One A4 document wallet containing:

The report (CAT Report 1005)

ECC Evaluation Brief, CAT Written Scheme of Investigation

Original site record (Feature and layer sheets, Finds record, plans)

Site digital photos and log, Architectural plans, Attendance register, Risk assessment

## 11 Archive deposition

The paper and digital archive is currently held by the Colchester Archaeological Trust at Roman Circus House, Roman Circus Walk, Colchester, Essex CO2 7GZ, but will be permanently deposited with Chelmsford Museum under accession code CHMRE: 2016.090

**Distribution list:**

Dave Farrow  
Lynsey Cook  
ECC Place Services Historic Environment Advisor  
Essex Historic Environment Record, Essex County Council



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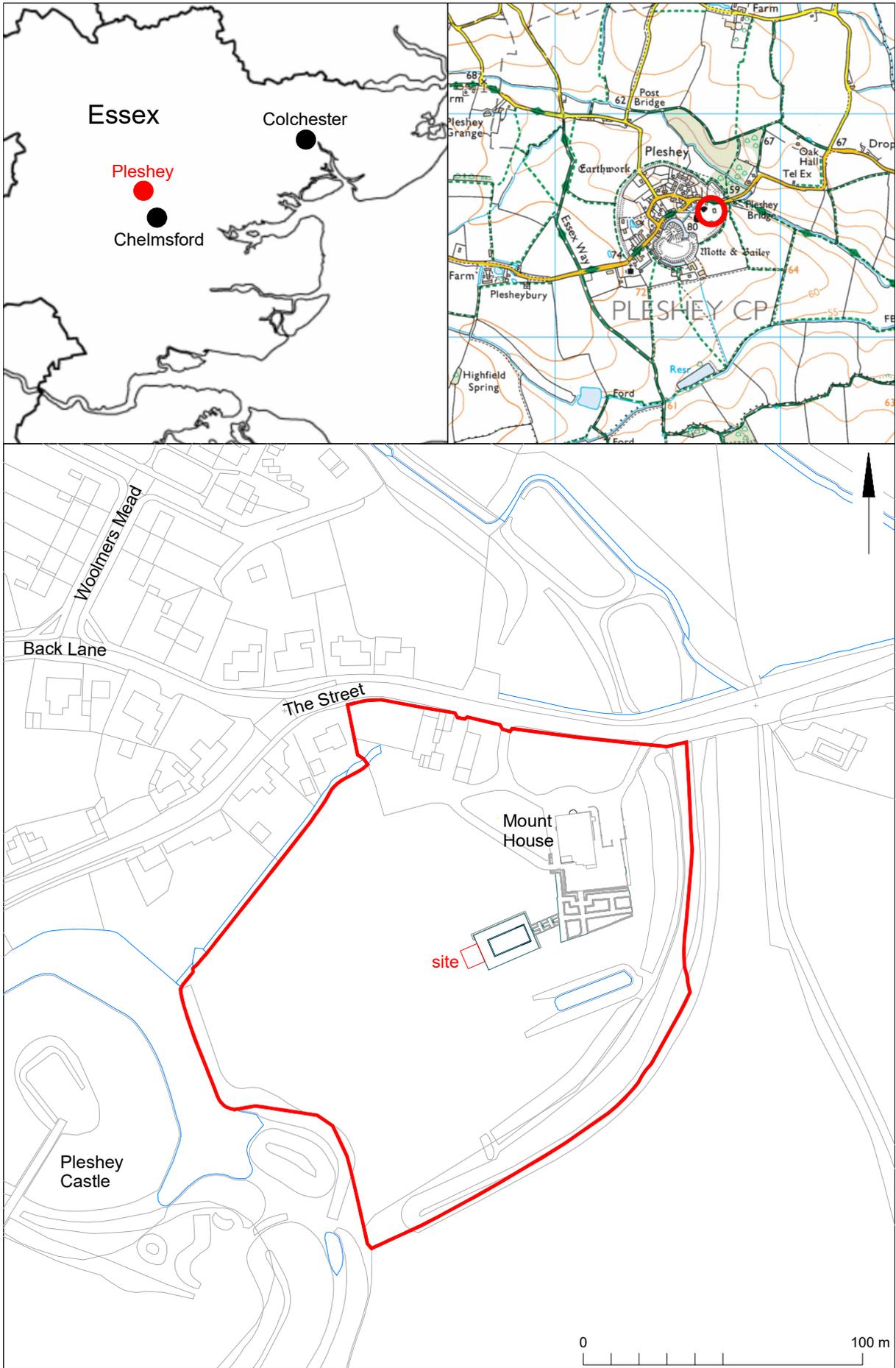


Fig 1 Site location.

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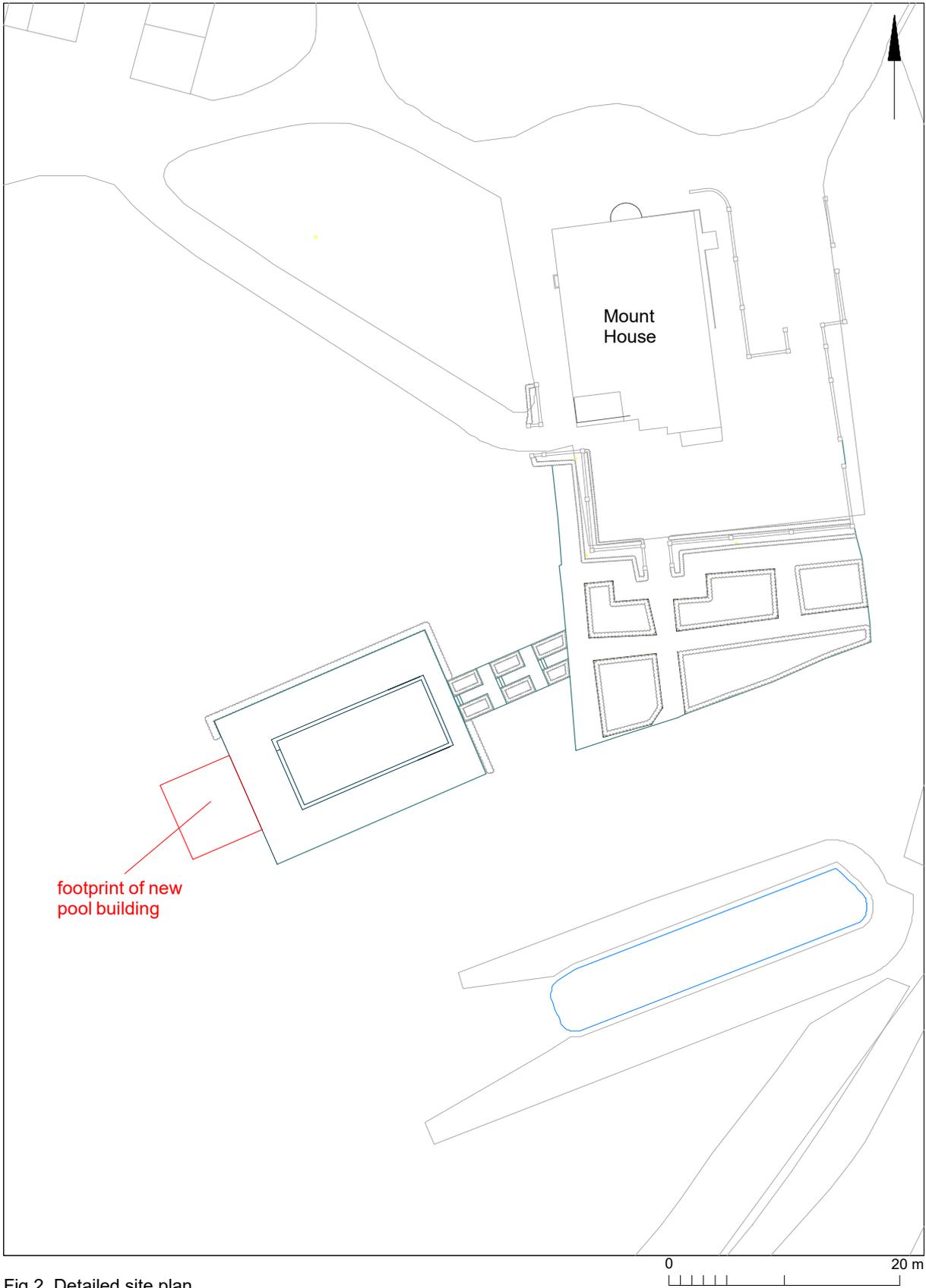


Fig 2 Detailed site plan.

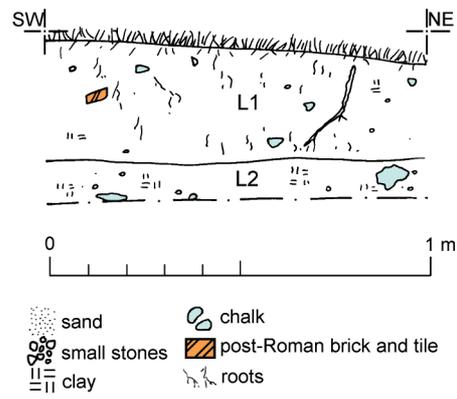


Fig 3 Representative section.

## Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

### Summary sheet

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Address:</b> Mount House, The Street, Pleshey, Essex, CM3 1HQ   |   |
| <b>Parish:</b> Pleshey   | <b>District:</b> Chelmsford   |
| <b>NGR:</b> TL 6667 1451 (centre)  | <b>Site code:</b><br>CAT project code: 16/06f<br>ECC project code: PY25<br>OASIS project ID: colchest3-255272 |
| <b>Type of work:</b><br>Monitoring and recording   | <b>Site director/group:</b><br>Colchester Archaeological Trust  |
| <b>Date of work:</b><br>18th and 25th August 2016  | <b>Size of area investigated:</b><br>7m x 6.5m (45.5m <sup>2</sup> )  |
| <b>Location of curating museum:</b><br>Chelmsford Museum<br>accession code CHMRE: 2016.090   | <b>Funding source:</b><br>owner   |
| <b>Further seasons anticipated?</b><br>Not known   | <b>Related EHER number:</b><br>EHER 1126, 20987   |
| <b>Final report:</b> CAT Report 1005   |   |
| <b>Periods represented:</b> modern   |   |
| <b>Summary of fieldwork results:</b><br>Archaeological monitoring and recording took place at Mount House, The Street, Pleshey during groundworks for the construction of a replacement pool building. Despite being located within the scheduled monument of Pleshey Castle and town enclosure, no significant archaeological horizons were identified. The development site appears to have been landscaped/terraced in the past, possibly during the construction of the current swimming pool. |   |
| <b>Previous summaries/reports:</b> –   |   |
| <b>Keywords:</b> –   | <b>Significance:</b> –  |
| <b>Author of summary:</b><br>Laura Pooley  | <b>Date of summary:</b><br>September 2016   |