

**An Archaeological Investigation  
at the Recreation Ground,  
Purdview Close, Great Glen,  
Leicestershire  
(SP 655 981)**

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&  
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For

Great Glen Parish Council/  
HSSP architects

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## **An Archaeological Investigation at the Recreation Ground, Purdview Close, Great Glen, Leicestershire (SP 655 981)**

Leon Hunt

### **Summary**

*An archaeological investigation through trial trenching was carried out by ULAS at the Recreation Ground, Purdview Close, Great Glen, Leicestershire (SP 655 981). A single evaluation trench was placed across the footprint of the proposed new pavilion. A service trench and a narrow ditch were encountered. The conditions during the excavation were very poor and the trench soon filled with water. However, the ditch fill could be identified as being similar to the topsoil, suggesting that the ditch is relatively recent in date. No archaeological finds were recovered during the evaluation. The archive will be deposited with Leicestershire County Council, Heritage Services with accession number X.A110.2006.*

### **Introduction**

University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) were commissioned by Great Glen Parish Council and HSSP Architects to carry out an archaeological investigation during groundworks at the Recreation Ground, Purdview Close, Great Glen, Harborough, Leicestershire (NGR: SP 655 981)

This archaeological work forms part of the planning proposal for the site for the construction of a new changing block (Planning Application No. 06/00466/3) (Figure 3).

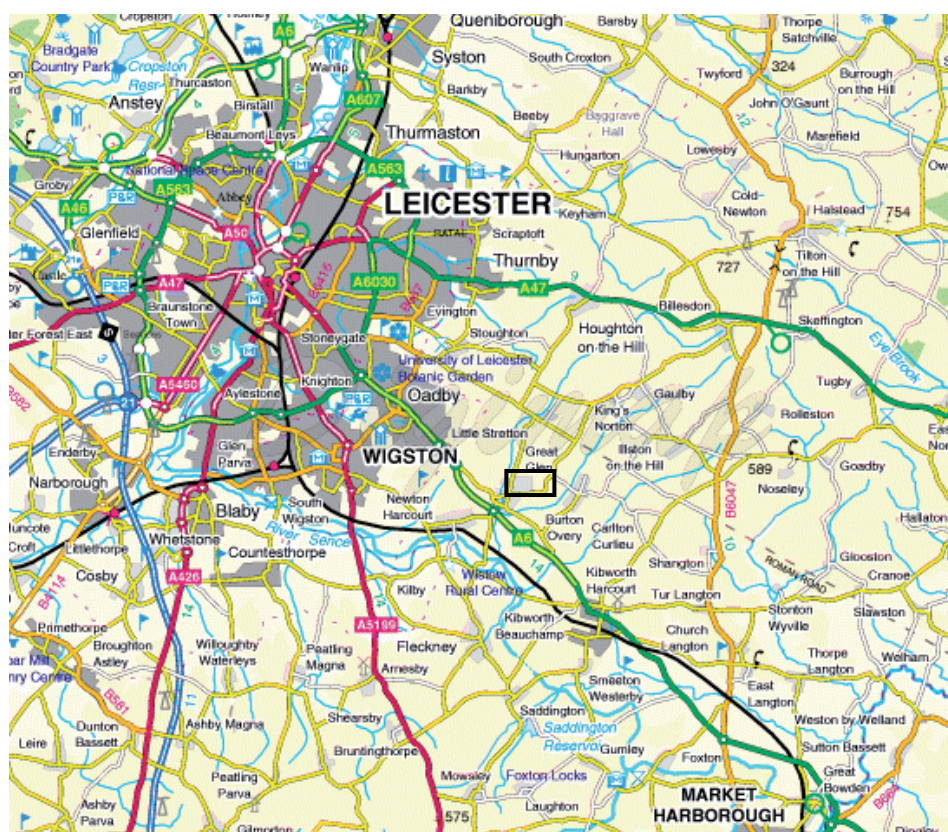
The Planning Archaeologist at Leicestershire County Council Heritage Services, as archaeological advisers to the planning authority, detailed the need for an archaeological evaluation of the proposed development area in the *Brief for Archaeological Investigation (strip, plan and sample excavation) at Recreation Ground, Purdview Close, Great Glen, Leicestershire (SP 655 981)* (Appendix 1, hereinafter ‘the brief’).

The brief indicated that the area is in a rich archaeological landscape close to a Roman site and the historic village core of Great Glen. Fieldwalking to the north of the area has produced pottery and ceramic building material typical of a Roman Villa.

The work followed the *Design Specification for Archaeological Evaluation by Trial Trenching* prepared by ULAS. (ULAS 06/644: see Appendix 2).

### **Location and Geology**

The site lies on the western side of Great Glen village, which lies c.6 km to the south east of Leicester (Figure 1), to the north of the houses in Fordview Close. The new pavilion is to be constructed to the west of the existing block (see Figures 2 & 3). The land lies at a height of c.100m OD. The underlying geology is like to consist of Lower Lias Clays and Limestones (Ordnance Survey Geological Survey Sheet 156).



**Figure 1: Site Location. Scale 1: 50 000**

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## Aims and Methods

The aim of the evaluation was to establish the presence or absence of archaeological deposits and, if present, determine their extent, character and quality of preservation. This would allow the Planning Archaeologist to assess the potential impact of the proposed development upon any archaeological remains.

All work followed the *Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations* and adhered to the Standing Conference of Archaeological Unit Manager's (SCAUM) Health and Safety Manual and ULAS's Health and Safety Guidelines (2001) and Health and Safety Policy (2001). The recording followed the ULAS Field Recording Manual.

An evaluation trench was excavated across the approximate centre of the footprint of the proposed new pavilion. The trench was oriented approximately east-west and was 11.12m long and 1.62m wide.

The trench was excavated by a JCB 3CX back-actor using a toothless ditching bucket under constant supervision of an archaeologist. The trench was excavated to the top of the natural substratum or the top of archaeological deposits, whichever was encountered first.



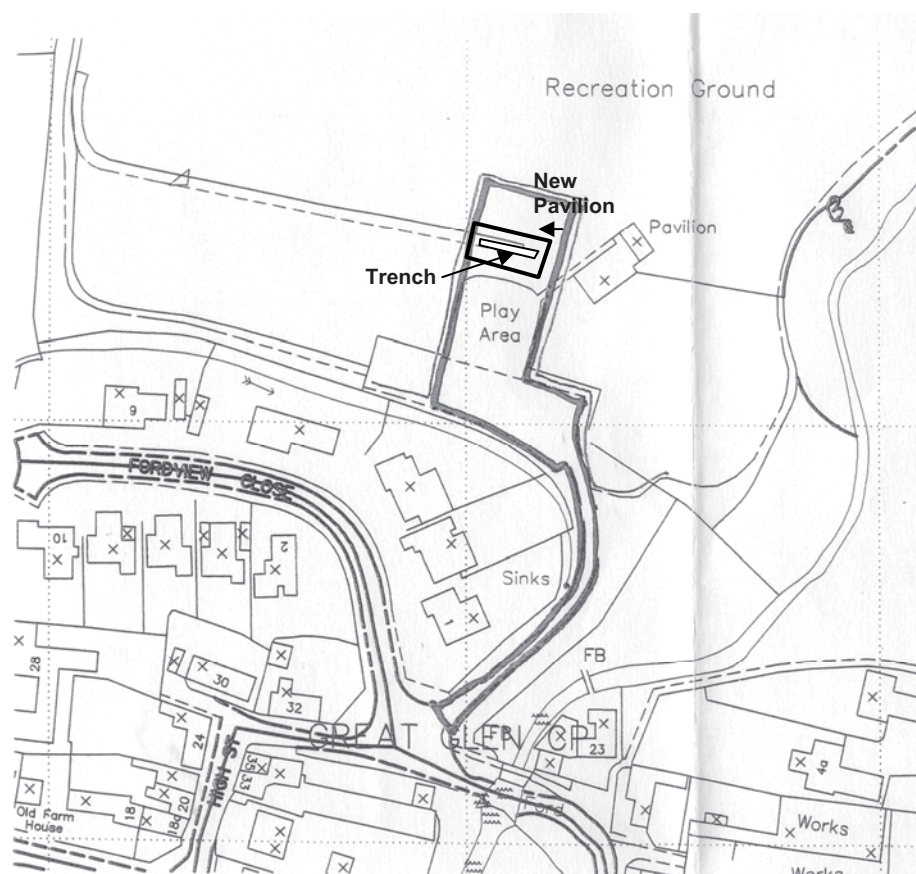


Figure 2: Location of new pavilion and archaeological trench. Scale 1:1250

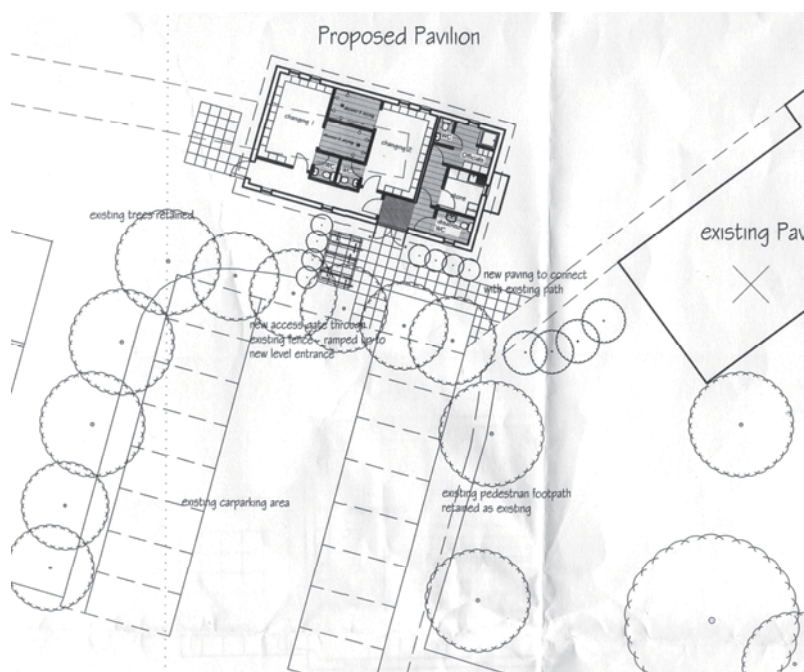


Figure 3: Plan of proposed new pavilion. Plan provided by developer.

## Results

See table below for recorded sedimentary depths.

The upper soil layers were stripped until the natural substrata or archaeology was encountered. Natural orange brown clay was encountered at a depth of between 0.64-0.87m.

Throughout the excavation the weather was progressively inclement and severely constrained the amount of recording that was carried out. The trench flooded very rapidly and unfortunately in view of this no photographic record could be made.

Due to the health and safety concerns of an open trench on an open playing field the trench was recorded and back-filled very quickly.

The topsoil in the trench consisted of a friable greyish brown clayey silt with no obvious stones, to a depth of between 0.15m and 0.38m (see table). Below the topsoil lay firm greyish brown clayey silt subsoil with small stones to a depth of 0.31-0.60m.

A service trench, running north-south lay towards the western end of the trench, alongside which lay a 0.85m wide ditch, with a curved base and evenly sloping sides. The ditch contained a fill of greyish brown clayey silt with small flecks of sand and charcoal and few sub-angular and angular stones. No archaeological finds were encountered.

Interval	0(E)	2	4	6	8	10 (W)
<b>Topsoil Depth (m)</b>	0.27	0.38	0.33	0.15	0.29	0.33
<b>Subsoil Depth (m)</b>	0.40	0.47	0.54	0.60	0.50	0.31
<b>Top of Natural (m)</b>	0.67	0.85	0.87	-	0.79	0.64
<b>Base of Trench (m)</b>	0.67	0.87	0.87	0.75	0.79	0.64

## Conclusion

Although the persistent rain made the evaluation very difficult, the trench excavation revealed a narrow ditch running north-south across the recreation ground. As no archaeological finds were discovered within the trench it was impossible to date the ditch to any particular period. However, the similarity of the ditch fill to the topsoil, suggests that the ditch was backfilled during the landscaping of the recreation ground, thereby revealing the ditch to be relatively modern in date.

## Acknowledgements

ULAS would like to thank HSSP Architects and Great Glen Parish Council for their help and co-operation with this project. The archaeological work was carried out by Matthew Hurford and Daniel Prior. The project manager was Patrick Clay.

## **Archive**

The archive will be deposited with Leicestershire County Council Heritage Services with accession number X.A110.2006 and consists of the following:

- 1 Trench Recording Sheet
- 2 Architect's Plans
- 1 unbound copy of this report

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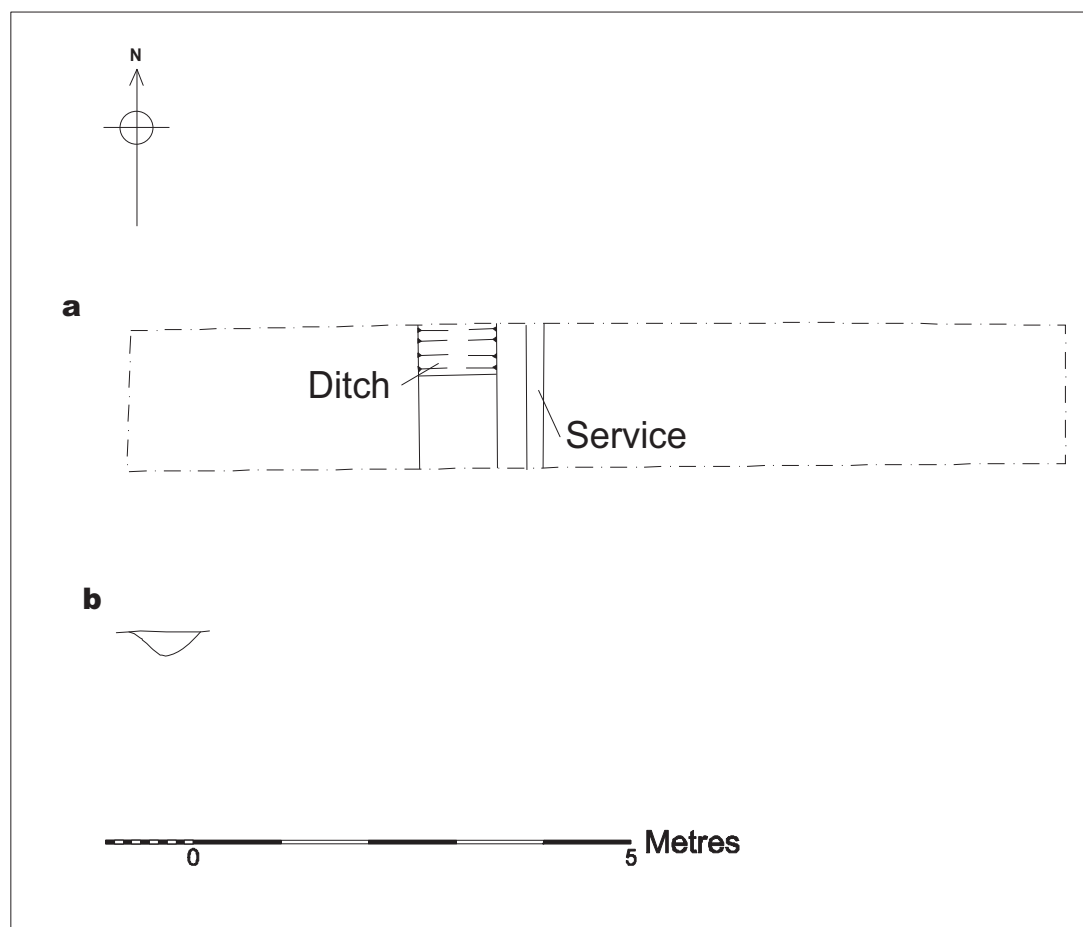
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04/10/06



**Figure 4: a. Post-excavation plan of evaluation trench. b. Section of ditch encountered in trench**



**APPENDIX 1:**

**BRIEF FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION  
(STRIP, PLAN & SAMPLE EXCAVATION)**

## **APPENDIX 2:**

### **UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES**

#### **Design Specification for archaeological work**

*Recreation Ground, Purdview Close, Great Glen,  
Leicestershire (SP 655 981)*

*Planning Application: 06/00466/3*

*For: Great Glen Parish Council and HSSP Architects*

#### **1 Definition and scope of the specification**

1.1 In accordance with Planning Policy Guidelines 16 (PPG16, Archaeology and planning), para.30, this specification provides a written scheme for archaeological attendance, including control and supervision of ground works, as required by the Planning Authority, of any ground works on the site which may disturb areas of archaeological potential in connection with a planning application for the construction of a new changing block at the recreation ground Purdview Close, Great Glen, Leicestershire (Sp 655 981) for HSSP Architects.

1.2 All archaeological work will adhere to the Institute of Field Archaeologist's (IFA) *Code of Conduct* and *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* and the *Guidelines for Archaeological Work in Leicestershire and Rutland* (LMARS).

#### **2 Background**

##### *2.1 Requirement for archaeological work*

2.1.1 The archaeological work involves the investigation (strip, plan and excavation) during the groundworks to identify any deposits of archaeological importance as detailed in the *Brief for archaeological investigation (strip, plan and sample excavation) at Recreation Ground Purdview Close, Great Glen, Harborough, Leicestershire* (LCC 17.05.2006 hereinafter 'The Brief').

##### *2.2 Archaeological potential*

2.2.1 The 'brief' indicates that the area is in a rich archaeological landscape close to a Roman site and the historic village core (5). Fieldwalking to the north of the area has recovered pottery and ceramic building material typical of a Roman Villa.

#### **3 Aims**

3.1 Through archaeological observation of existing overburden stripping and groundworks by the client's contractors:

1. To identify the presence/absence of any earlier building phases or archaeological deposits.
2. To establish the character, extent and date range for any archaeological deposits to be affected by the proposed ground works.
3. To record any archaeological deposits to be affected by the ground works.

4. To produce an archive and report of any results.

#### **4 Methods**

4.1 The project will involve the observation of overburden removal and other groundworks by an experienced professional archaeologist during the works specified above (Brief 8.3). Initially a trial trench will be excavated to assess the presence, extent and character of any archaeological deposits. During these ground works, if any archaeological deposits are seen to be present, the archaeologist will record areas of archaeological interest.

4.2 The archaeologist will co-operate at all times with the contractors on site to ensure the minimum interruption to the work.

4.3 Any archaeological deposits located will be hand cleaned and planned as appropriate. Samples of any archaeological deposits located will be hand excavated. Measured drawings of all archaeological features will be prepared at a scale of 1:20 and tied into an overall site plan of 1:100. All plans will be tied into the National Grid using an Electronic Distance Measurer (EDM) where appropriate.

4.4 Archaeological deposits will be excavated and recorded as appropriate to establishing the stratigraphic and chronological sequence of deposits, recognising and excavating structural evidence and recovering economic, artefactual and environmental evidence. Particular attention will be paid to the potential for buried palaeosols and waterlogged deposits in consultation with ULAS's environmental officer.

4.5 All excavated sections will be recorded and drawn at 1:10 or 1:20 scale, levelled and tied into the Ordnance Survey datum. Spot heights will be taken as appropriate.

4.5 Any human remains encountered will be initially left *in situ* and only be removed under a Home Office Licence and in compliance with relevant environmental health regulations. The developer, Leicestershire County Council, Heritage Services and the coroner will be informed immediately on their discovery.

4.6 Internal monitoring procedures will be undertaken including visits to the site from the project manager. These will ensure that professional standards are being maintained. Provision will be made for monitoring visits with representatives of the owners, Leicestershire County Council, Heritage Services and Harborough District Council.

4.7 In the event of significant archaeological remains being located during the watching brief there may be the need for contingency time and finance to be provided to ensure adequate recording is undertaken ('Brief' 8.11). On the discovery of potentially significant remains the archaeologist will inform the developer, the Planning Archaeologist at Leicestershire County Council, Heritage Services and the planning authority. If the archaeological remains are identified to be of significance additional contingent archaeological works will be required.

#### **5 Recording Systems**

5.1 Individual descriptions of all archaeological strata and features excavated or exposed will be entered onto prepared pro-forma recording sheets.

5.2 A site location plan based on the current Ordnance Survey 1:1250 map, (reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO) will be prepared. This will be supplemented by a plan at 1:200 (or 1:100), which will show the location of the areas investigated.

5.3 A record of the full extent in plan of all archaeological deposits encountered will be made on drawing film, related to the OS grid and at a scale of 1:10 or 1:20. Elevations and sections of individual layers of features should be drawn where possible. The OD height of all principal strata and features will be calculated and indicated on the appropriate plans.

5.4 An adequate photographic record of the investigations will be prepared. This will include black and white prints and colour transparencies illustrating in both detail and general context the principal features and finds discovered. The photographic record will also include 'working shots' to illustrate more generally the nature of the archaeological operation mounted.

5.5 This record will be compiled and fully checked during the course of the watching brief.

5.6 All site records and finds will be kept securely.

## **6 Report and Archive**

6.1 An accession number will be drawn prior to the commencement of the project (Brief 8.1). Following the fieldwork the on-line OASIS form at <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis> will be completed. A report on the investigation will be provided following the groundworks.

6.2 Copies will be provided for the client, Sites and Monuments Record and planning Authority. The copyright of all original finished documents shall remain vested in ULAS and ULAS will be entitled as of right to publish any material in any form produced as a result of its investigations.

6.3 A full copy of the archive as defined in the 'Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage' (UKIC 1990), and Standards in the Museum care of archaeological collections (MGC 1992) and 'Guidelines for the preparation of site archives and assessments for all finds (other than fired clay objects) (Roman Finds Group and Finds Research Group AD 700-1700 1993) will be presented to Leicestershire County Council, Heritage Services normally within six months of the completion of analysis. This archive will include all written, drawn and photographic records relating directly to the investigations undertaken.

## **7 Publication**

7.1 A summary report will be submitted to a suitable regional or national archaeological journal within one year of completion of fieldwork. A full report will be submitted if the results are of significance.

## **8 Timetable and Staffing**

8.1 The investigation is scheduled to commence during w.c 02.10.2006. An experienced archaeologist will be present during this work. It is proposed to supervise all works, as specified above, initially starting with a 20m trial trench

## **9 Health and Safety**

9.1 ULAS is covered by and adheres to the University of Leicester Statement of Safety Policy and uses the ULAS Health and Safety Manual (revised 2005) with appropriate risks assessments for all archaeological work. A draft Health and Safety statement for this project is in the Appendix. The relevant Health and Safety Executive guidelines will be adhered to as appropriate.

## 10 Insurance

10.1 All ULAS work is covered by the University of Leicester's Public Liability and Professional Indemnity Insurance. The Public Liability Insurance is with St Pauls Travellers Policy No. UCPOP3651237 while the Professional Indemnity Insurance is with Lloyds Underwriters (50%) and Brit Insurances (50%) Policy No. FUNK3605.

## 11. Bibliography

MAP 2, *The management of archaeological projects* 2nd edition English Heritage 1991

MGC 1992, *Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections* (Museums and Galleries Commission)

RFG/FRG 1993, *Guidelines for the preparation of site archives* (Roman Finds Group and Finds Research Group AD 700-1700)

SMA 1993, *Selection, retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections. Guidelines for use in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (Society of Museum Archaeologists)

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25.09.2006

## **Appendix**

### **Draft Project Health and Safety Policy Statement**

***Recreation Ground, Purdview Close, Great Glen,  
Leicestershire (SP 655 981)***

***Planning Application: 06/00466/3***

***For: Great Glen Parish Council and HSSP Architects***

#### *1 Nature of the work*

1.1 This statement is for an archaeological watching brief.

1.2 The work will involve observation of groundworks during daylight hours and recording of any underlying archaeological deposits revealed. Overall depth is likely to be c. 0.2-0.5m. This will involve the examination of the exposed surface with hand tools (shovels, trowels etc) and excavation of archaeological features. All work will adhere to the University of Leicester Health and Safety Policy and follow the guidance in the ULAS Health and Safety Manual (2001) together with the following relevant Health and Safety guidelines.

1.3 HSE Construction Information Sheet CS8 Safety in excavations.  
HSE Industry Advisory leaflet IND (G)143 (L): Getting to grips with manual handling.  
HSE Industry Advisory leaflet IND (G)145 (L): Watch Your back.  
CIRIA R97 Trenching practice.  
CIRIA TN95 Proprietary Trench Support Systems.  
HSE Guidance Note HS(G) 47 Avoiding danger to underground services. HSE Guidance Note GS7 Accidents to children on construction sites

1.4 The Health and Safety policy on site will be reassessed during the evaluation .

1.5 All work will adhere to the contractors' health and safety policy.

#### **2 Risks Assessment**

##### *2.1 Working within a building site*

Precautions. No work will be undertaken beneath section faces. Loose spoil heaps will not be walked on. Protective footwear will be worn at all times. Hard hats will be worn at all times. A member of staff qualified in First Aid will be present at all times. First aid kit, vehicle and mobile phone to be kept on site in case of emergency.

##### *2.2 Working with plant.*

Precautions. Hard hats, protective footwear and hazard jackets will be worn at all times. No examination of the area of stripping will take place until machines have vacated area. Observation of machines will be maintained during hand excavation. Liaison will be maintained with the contractors to ensure programme of machine movement is understood.

##### *2.3 Working within areas prone to waterlogging.*



Protective clothing will be worn at all times and precautions taken to prevent contact with stagnant water which may carry Vialls disease or similar.

#### *2.4 Working with chemicals.*

If chemicals are used to conserve or help lift archaeological material these will only be used by qualified personnel with protective clothing (i.e a trained conservator) and will be removed from site immediately after use.

#### *2.5 Other risks*

Precautions. If there is any suspicion of unforeseen hazards being encountered e.g chemical contaminants, unexploded bombs, hazardous gases work will cease immediately. The client and relevant public authorities will be informed immediately.

2.9 No other constraints are recognised over the nature of the soil, water, type of excavation, proximity of structures, sources of vibration and contamination.

Patrick Clay

25.09.2006

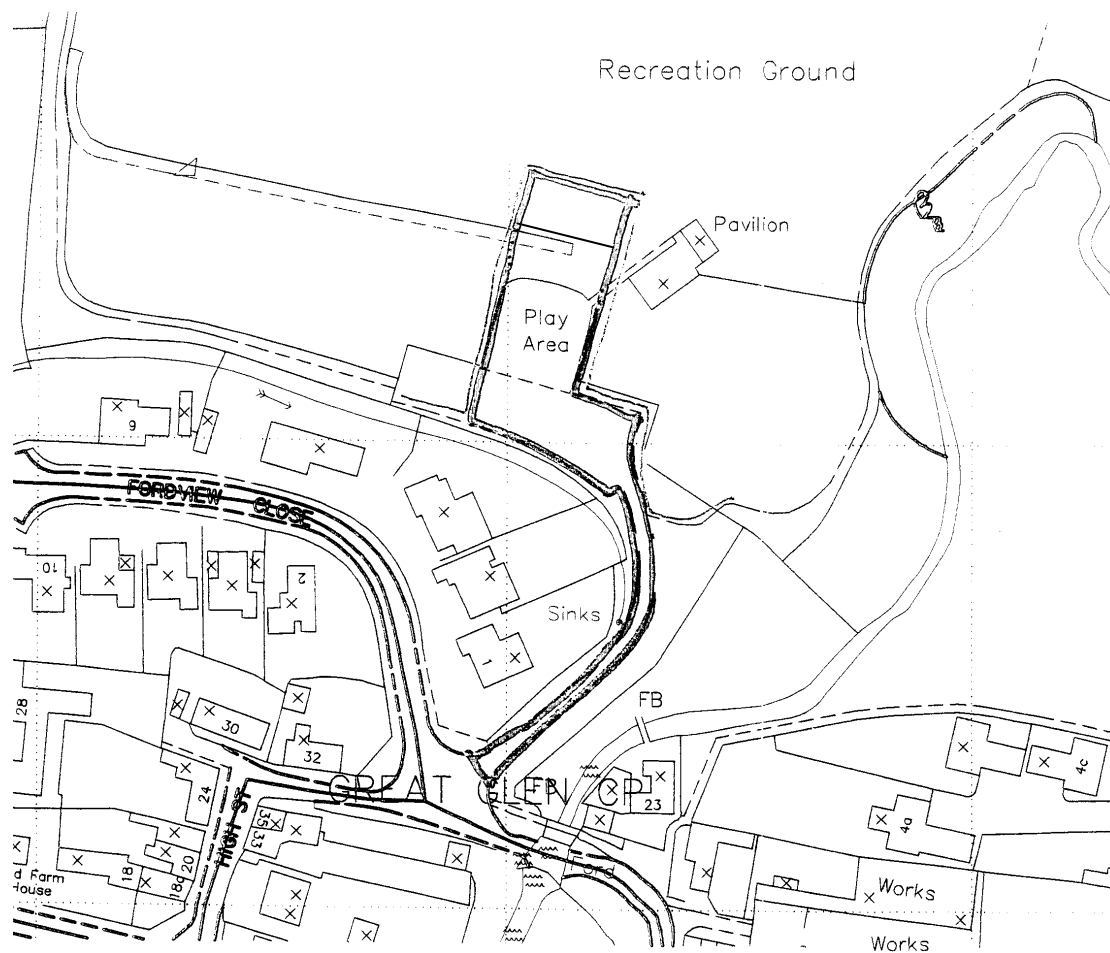


Figure 1 Location of Development Showing Proposed Position Of Trench

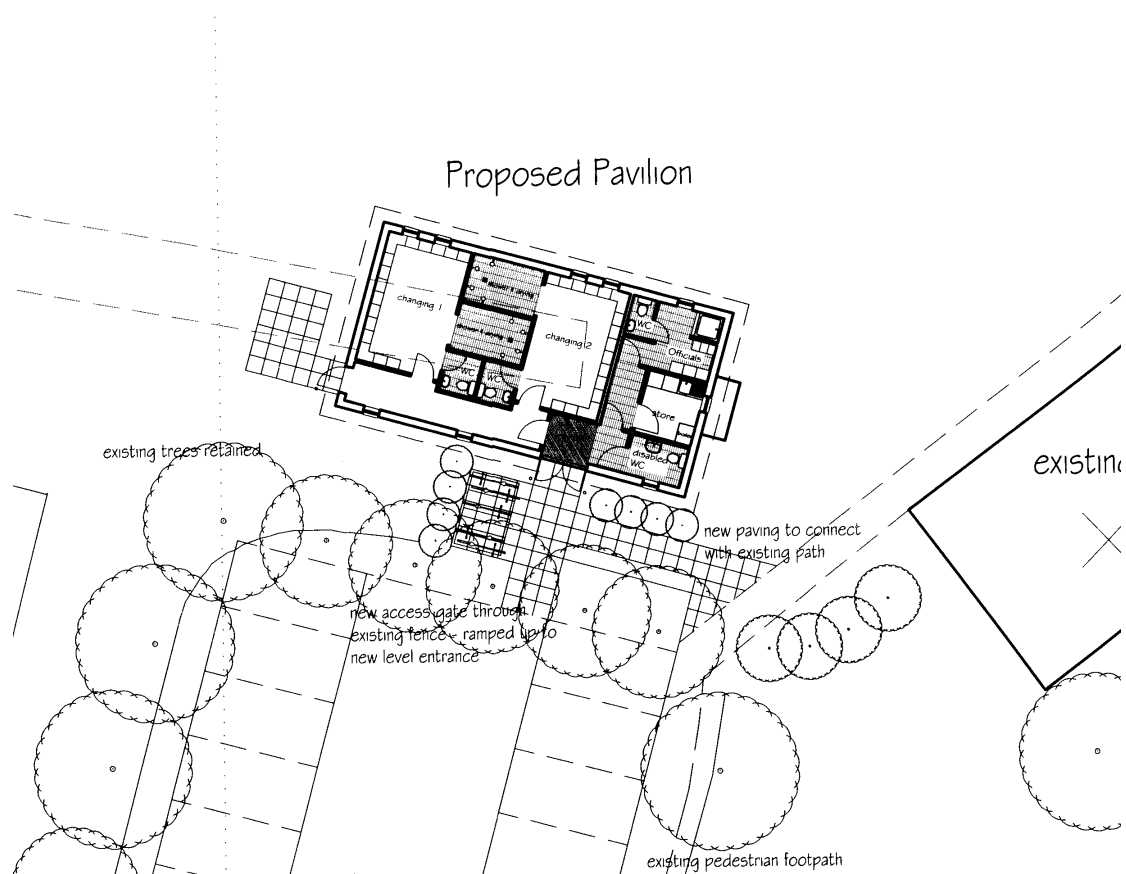


Figure 2 Location of Development Showing Proposed new pavilion