

## 1 ABSTRACT

- 1.1 *The following report details the results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken by AOC Archaeology between 24<sup>th</sup> August and 26<sup>th</sup> September 2006 at Hatch End playing fields, Uxbridge Road, Harrow, (NGR TQ 1351 9114).*
- 1.2 *Further to an archaeological watching brief undertaken during the excavation of geotechnical pits in May 2006, a second phase of watching brief work was carried out during the excavation of a new channel designed to divert the River Pinn around the edge of the playing fields east of Harrow Arts Centre to the existing railway culvert behind Morrison's store.*
- 1.3 *A late post-medieval brick wall was identified during the second phase of watching brief. This was aligned north, north-east by south, southwest and extended for 3m to a later truncation. No associated features were identified with this wall.*
- 1.4 *No earlier archaeological remains were identified during the watching brief.*

## 2 INTRODUCTION

### Site Location

- 2.1 The site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) TQ 1351 9114 (Figure 1), adjacent to the Harrow Arts Centre and swimming baths. The land is currently used as a playing field. To the south the site is bounded by National Railway's west coast main line and to the north by Uxbridge Road (Figure 2).
- 2.2 The proposed works on the site are for a flood alleviation scheme for the River Pinn.

### Scope of Works

- 2.3 The Watching Brief was carried out during the excavation of the new water channel and topsoil strip for the new landscaping levels of the playing field areas to the east.
- 2.4 The interface between topsoil, sub-soil and the natural brickearth was checked for archaeological features.

## 3 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 3.1 The site lies upon London Clay tertiary geology with drift remnants of Stanmore gravels approximately 0.5 miles to the northeast, and Woolwich and Reading Beds 0.5 miles to the southwest.
- 3.2 The site itself lies on flat ground at the bottom of the River Pinn valley and is subject to frequent flooding during times of peak flow.

## 4 HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The name Pinner is thought likely to derive from *Pynn*, a Saxon personal name and *ora*, meaning riverbank, suggesting a nearby Saxon settlement. Pinner, however, is not mentioned in the documentary sources until 1321. Hatch End is named from its position beside the gate of Pinner Park, deriving from the medieval *hatch*, for gate. Pinner Park is first mentioned in documentary sources from 1273, and was originally a deer park belonging to the Archbishop of Canterbury, lord of the manor of Harrow. It became a farm in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and is now a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM). This park lies on the opposite side of the railway line to the site.
- 4.2 Hatch End developed around Headstone Lane, and although there are few survivals now of any houses of historical date, it seems to have been the northern end which was first developed.

## Watching Brief during Geotechnical Works

- 4.3 A Watching Brief was conducted upon seven geotechnical test pits in May 2006, and determined that there were extensive areas of made ground overlying natural brickearth deposits. It is presumed that these dumps were used to create a level surface for the playing field. At the southern end of the site in Trench 5, fluvial gravels had been re-deposited before ground-raising action, in order to aid drainage. There was no obvious sign of major truncation of the natural soil profile in any of the trenches, although some landscaping work has taken place on the site in the recent past
- 4.4 At the base of the geotechnical trenches, bluish grey gravels of fluvial origin were observed. It is possible that they are part of either the Stanmore gravels or Woolwich and Reading Beds which are present close by. Alternatively they could represent the remains of Pleistocene palaeochannels cut into the tertiary geology.

## 5 METHODOLOGY

- 5.1 Prior to the Phase I Watching Brief a unique sitecode for the project (**UBG06**) was obtained from the Museum of London.
- 5.2 The machine excavation of the new course (carried out by Pumpwise Dredging) and the created sections were monitored from the 'beehive area', the corner to the South, along the main west side, and where it turned north-west to link with the existing culvert at Uxbridge Road.
- 5.3 The Watching Brief was undertaken by Paul Fitz under the overall project management of Ron Humphrey for AOC Archaeology.

## 6 RESULTS

- 6.1 The earliest deposit identified on site was a mid yellow/brown natural brickearth with gravel lens inclusions (004). This was undisturbed over the whole area apart from one red brick wall (005), located to the northeast of the site (Figure 2). It was bonded with pale grey/white mortar on a foundation bed of large flint nodules. The wall itself measured 3m in length on a north, northeast – south, southwest alignment and was truncated at its south end by a 20<sup>th</sup> century drain cut. The average brick size measured 55mm x 100mm x 225mm. The wall survived to its highest at its north end, approximately 0.46m, the coursing being random with some bricks laid on their side. No construction cut was visible for this wall although this may be due to the density of modern intrusions in the area.
- 6.2 Sealing the natural deposit and overlying the wall was a layer of 20<sup>th</sup> century made ground (003). This was in turn sealed by a subsoil deposit (002) and topsoil (001). The topsoil and subsoil deposits were present across the site but varied in

thickness, being relatively shallow at the south end, growing deeper (approximately 0.25m) to the north.

## 7 CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 Whilst the wall is undated it is certainly post-medieval and probably 20<sup>th</sup> century in date. With no associated features it is not possible to draw any further conclusions.
- 7.2 No evidence of medieval or earlier activity was seen. Assuming Hatch End playing fields were originally the north-eastern extent of a medieval Archbishop of Canterbury's (as Lord of the manor of Harrow) deer park then it had probably remained a partially wooded area under estate jurisdiction, saving it from development until modern times.
- 7.3 Publication of the results will be through ADS Oasis form (Appendix B).

## 8 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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**Figure 1 – Site Location**

**Figure 2 – detailed location**

## Appendix A: Context Register

Context No.	Context Description	Length	Width	Depth
	<b>Test pit watching brief</b>			
1/001	topsoil	1.70m	1.13m	0.30m
1/002	20th C made ground	1.70m	1.13m	0.36m
1/003	degraded tarmac spread	1.70m	1.13m	0.10m
1/004	subsoil	1.70m	1.13m	0.28m
1/005	blue grey natural gravels	1.70m	1.13m	1.00m+
2/001	topsoil	1.90m	1.14m	0.30m
2/002	subsoil	1.90m	1.14m	0.15m
2/003	natural brickearth	1.90m	1.14m	1.25m
2/004	natural gravels	1.90m	1.14m	L.O.E.
3/001	topsoil	1.90m	1.19m	2.0m
3/002	made ground	1.90m	1.19m	0.5m
3/003	subsoil	1.90m	1.19m	0.57m
3/004	brickearth	1.90m	1.19m	1.10m
3/005	london clay	1.90m	1.19m	0.46m+
4/001	topsoil	1.90m	1.14m	0.30m
4/002	subsoil	1.90m	1.14m	0.60m
4/003	glacial subsoil?	1.90m	1.14m	0.30m
4/004	natural brickearth	1.90m	1.14m	0.60m+
5/001	topsoil	1.90m	1.14m	0.23m
5/002	redeposited subsoil	1.90m	1.14m	0.30m
5/003	redeposited gravels	1.90m	1.14m	0.41m
5/004	natural brickearth	1.90m	1.14m	1.00m+
6/001	topsoil	1.90m	1.14m	0.40m
6/002	made ground	1.90m	1.14m	0.20m
6/003	natural brickearth	1.90m	1.14m	1.20m
6/004	natural gravels	1.90m	1.14m	L.O.E.
7/001	topsoil	1.90m	1.14m	0.33m
7/002	made ground	1.90m	1.14m	0.20m
7/003	natural brickearth	1.90m	1.14m	0.87m
7/004	natural gravels	1.90m	1.14m	L.O.E.

### New Water Course Watching Brief

001	topsoils	100%	100%	0.10-0.26m
002	subsoils	variable	variable	variable
003	20th century made ground	variable	variable	variable
004	natural brickearths/gravels	100%	100%	LOE
005	wall	c.4.0m	0.50m	0.48m

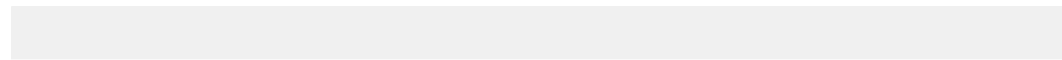


## Appendix B: OASIS Form

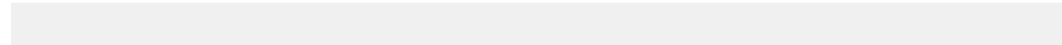
### OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: ENGLAND

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**OASIS ID: AOCARCHA1-18610**



#### Project details

Project name	River Pinn flood alleviation scheme
Short description of the project	watching Briefs were carried out firstly on geotechnical pits and then the excavation of the main new river channel course through the playing fields. Other than a Post- Medieval red brick wall , no other features were discovered.
Project dates	Start: 11-05-2006 End: 26-09-2006
Previous/future work	Not known / No
Any associated project reference codes	7554 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	UBG 06 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 14 - Recreational usage
Monument type	WALL Uncertain
Investigation type	'Watching Brief'

Prompt Environmental Assessment regulations Schedule 2 projects (Discretionary)

### Project location

Country England  
Site location GREATER LONDON HARROW PINNER Hatch End playing Fields  
Postcode HA5  
Site coordinates TQ 1351 9114 51.6071593840 -0.360653527029 51 36 25 N 000 21 38 W Point

### Project creators

Project brief originator English Heritage/Department of Environment  
Project design originator AOC Archaeology  
Project director/manager Ron Humphrey  
Project supervisor Fitz  
Type of sponsor/funding body Borough Council

### Project archives

Digital Archive recipient Museum of London  
Digital Archive ID UBG 06  
Digital Contents 'Stratigraphic'  
Digital Media available 'Images raster / digital photography', 'Spreadsheets'

Paper Archive recipient	Museum of London
Paper Archive ID	UBG 06
Paper Contents	'Stratigraphic'
Paper Media available	'Diary','Microfilm','Plan','Unpublished Text'

### Project bibliography

1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	watching brief at River Pinn flood alleviation, Hatch End
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Fitz
Date	2006
Issuer or publisher	AOC Archaeology
Place of issue or publication	AOC Archaeology, London
Description	A4 text and site location plans

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Entered on	27 September 2006