

**New Pumping Station  
Gilden Way  
Harlow  
Essex  
Archaeological Monitoring**

**Project No: 8113  
Site Code: HAGWS 13**



**Report No: 2014171**

**May 2014**



**New Pumping Station  
Gilden Way  
Harlow  
Essex  
Archaeological Monitoring**

**NGR: TL 47956 11413**

**ASE Project No: 8113**

**Site Code: HAGWS 13**

**ASE Report No: 2014171**

**OASIS No: 179340**

**by**

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**May 2014**

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## **Summary**

*Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Optimise Barhale on behalf of Thames Water to undertake an archaeological investigation in association with the construction of a new pumping station and installation of a new sewer on land to the south of Gilden Way, Harlow.*

*The site was located within an area of high archaeological potential, primarily a Scheduled Monument to the west known as the 'Moot Mound', believed to have been the site of a probable Bronze Age barrow reused in the Saxon period as a meeting place (SM 29392). Medieval occupation has been recorded in the vicinity in Old Harlow and Churchgate Street.*

*Two features of limited archaeological significance were found during the topsoil strip, a long linear feature, either a gully or plough scar, beneath the new access road on the western side of the site, and a small oval pit or geological feature in the main part of the site. No finds were recovered. Archaeological monitoring on the insertion of new sewer pipes was not undertaken because the pipes were directionally drilled rather than trench-lain.*

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Site Background**

1.1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE) was commissioned by Optimise Barhale on behalf of Thames Water to undertake an archaeological investigation (strip, map and assess and archaeological monitoring) in association with the construction of a new pumping station and the installation of new sewer pipes on land off Gilden Way, on the eastern side of modern Harlow between August and September 2013.

1.1.2 The site occupies an area of 1500sqm located immediately to the south of Gilden Way, southeast of the historic core of Old Harlow and west of the former Churchgate Street village (Fig. 1; NGR: TL 47956 11413).

### **1.2 Geology and Topography**

1.2.1 According to British Geological Survey mapping ([www.bgs.ac.uk](http://www.bgs.ac.uk)) the underlying geology of the route comprises underlying geology consists of the Lowestoft Formation, which comprises chalky till, sands, gravels, silts and clay, overlying the Lewes Nodular Chalk formation and Seaford Chalk Formation.

1.2.2 Previously the site was former arable farmland which is predominantly flat at around 52.90mOD. It is bounded by residential areas to the north and east, arable land to the south and a small parcel of woodland to the west (Fig. 1).

### **1.3 Planning Background**

1.3.1 The site lies within an area of high archaeological potential. Following discussion between the client and Essex County Council (ECC) Place Services, it was agreed that a programme of archaeological works would be undertaken in association with the development, comprising a strip, map and assess exercise on the works compound and the pumping station and monitoring of the excavation of the reception pits for the direction drilling of new sewer pipes.

1.3.2 The recommendation made by ECC Place Services was consistent with guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG 2012).

1.3.3 An outline of the works required was provided in a brief issued by ECC Place Services (2013) and detailed in a Written Scheme of Investigation produced by Archaeology South-East (2013) which was subsequently approved by the Place Services team.

### **1.4 Aims and Objectives**

1.4.1 The aim of the work was to determine the location, extent, date character, condition and significance of any surviving remains, and if such were present, assess and excavate them to enable their preservation by record.

The objective of the work was to examine by excavation any deposits or features associated with the nearby Scheduled Monument known as the 'Moot'. Archaeological investigations on sites nearby suggested the possibility of prehistoric, Roman and Saxon occupation and the discovery of

medieval remains was also possible, given the proximity of the historic settlements of Churchgate Street and Old Harlow.

- 1.4.2 This was to be achieved by monitoring the topsoil strip on the site of the new pumping station and by making a record of the directional-drilling reception pits for the new sewer pipes. Although full monitoring was carried out on the topsoil strip, the opportunity to view the reception pits did not arise.

## **1.5 Scope of Report**

- 1.7.1 This report details the results of monitoring, excavation and recording during the topsoil stripping in association with the construction of a new pumping station carried out by Lukasz Miciak and Andy Letch (Senior Archaeologists) between the 28th August and 5th September 2013. The fieldwork was managed by Adrian Scruby.

## **2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The scheme works are located within the vicinity of a number of known archaeological sites. The following archaeological background utilises the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) held at Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford and the brief for the site.
- 2.1.2 According to the Brief there was potential for palaeo-environmental remains along the route of the new sewer pipe given the proximity of the stream to the east and evidence for earlier channels in aerial photographs of the site (ECC Place Services 2012). However, no previous finds or investigations have been done that verify this.
- 2.1.3 Residual worked flint from the Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic periods and Late Bronze Age or Early Iron Age field boundary ditches were revealed during an archaeological evaluation at the Mark Hall school, between London Road and the A414 road to the west of the site in 2004 (Barker 2004). The subsequent excavation (Robertson 2004) recorded Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age ditches and two small pits containing 'placed deposits' of cattle jaws and partially articulated lower legs. In the boundary ditch was a skeleton of a new-born lamb. The Roman features consisted of four pits. More recently, Iron Age structures or small enclosures, a possible Roman building and two possible Saxon sunken-featured buildings were found during an evaluation at the London Road Enterprise Zone (Chew 2014), which is currently under excavation.
- 2.1.4 To the south-west of the site is a Scheduled Monument known as the Harlow Mound or the Moot Mound', a probable Bronze Age round barrow reused as a meeting-place, or *moot*, in the Saxon period (SM 29392; HER 21).
- 2.1.5 Prehistoric enclosure ditches and a 5th century Early Saxon sunken-featured building were excavated on the west side of the Moot on the site of a putative Neolithic cursus (SM 24858; Germany 2008). Several residual Late Roman coins were collected, which suggest activity from this period also.
- 2.1.6 Extensive trial-trenching to the south on the New Hall housing development site in 2004 recorded a flint scatter, ring ditch and linear cropmarks of prehistoric date, Roman field ditches and demolition material and medieval

pottery of 14th and 15th century date (Archaeological Solutions 2004) Subsequent excavation by Archaeology South-East (Dyson in prep.) uncovered Bronze Age barrows, Roman settlement evidence and a Saxon sunken-featured building.

- 2.1.7 The site is located between the historic medieval and post-medieval settlements of Old Harlow and Churchgate Street, and to the north of the moated medieval manorial site of New Hall, where a 15/16th century Grade II Listed Building still stands (EHER 3612 and 31755).

### **3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Fieldwork Methodology**

- 3.1.1 At the start of the work the area for the new access road was excavated along the southern edge of the site (Fig. 2). This was followed by stripping at the north end for a car park and the southwest corner for the site compound. The main area was then stripped, leaving a temporary access road in the middle that was reduced after the access road had been built (Fig. 4).

- 3.1.2 Standard ASE excavation, artefact collection and recording methodologies were employed throughout. Natural soils and two possible archaeological features were exposed during the topsoil strip, at which point they were cleaned, hand-excavated by digging slots across their widths, and recorded using pro-forma context sheets. The features were drawn in plan and section and photographs taken using a digital camera. General site views were also taken. Some of these photographs are included in this report and others may be found in the archive.

- 3.1.3 All work was carried out in accordance with IfA (Institute for Archaeologists) by-laws and guidelines and complied with Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England (Gurney 2003).

#### **3.2 Site Archive**

- 3.2.1 The site archive is currently held at the offices of ASE and will be deposited at Harlow Museum in due course. The contents of the archive are summarised below (Table 1).

No. of contexts	7
No. of files	1
Plan and sections sheets	1
Photographs	12
Bulk finds	None

*Table 1: Quantification of site archive*

### **4.0 RESULTS**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

- 4.1.1 The results are detailed below following the process of excavation beginning with the access road and finishing with the main strip. A 0.30m-0.40m thick layer of dark brown sandy clay ploughsoil [07] and a thin light brown subsoil layer [01] were stripped to reveal the two features that were cut into a yellowish-orange sandy clay natural soil, which was consistent across the site. All features are located on Figure 1 and described below.



Additional context information is provided in Table 2.

#### 4.2 Access road

4.2.1 An undated linear feature was excavated along the route of the access road and interpreted as shallow gully or plough scar [03]. The feature was orientated NNE to SSW and over 9.5m long, 0.43m wide and 0.11m deep (Fig. 3). It had a single dark brown sandy clay fill (context [04]) and a concave base and may represent the remains of the former western field boundary. No cultural debris was recorded in the fill and no finds were collected.

#### 4.3 Main area

4.3.1 A short oval-shaped feature was excavated towards the eastern edge of the main area and was interpreted as either an elongated pit or else a small geological feature. The cut (context [05]) was orientated in a similar way to feature [03] and measured 2.1m by 0.82m (Fig. 5). It was 0.32m deep and had a single dark brown sandy clay fill (context [06]) and a concave base. Again, there were no finds or other cultural material in the fill.

#### 4.4 Reception pits

4.4.1 The reception pits for direct-drilling the new sewer pipes were not observed and so the potential for paleoenvironmental material around the stream was not assessed.

Context	Type	Description	Feature Date
01	Layer	Subsoil 0.1m thick. Light brown soft sandy clay	
02	Layer	Natural yellowish-orange compact sandy clay	
03	Cut	Gully or plough scar in access road dig (9.5m x 0.43m x 0.11m)	
04	Fill	Single fill of 03. Dark brown sandy clay single fill.	Unknown
05	Cut	Elongated pit or natural pocket. (2.1 x 0.82m x 0.32m)	
06	Fill	Single fill of 05 Dark brown sandy clay	Unknown
07	Layer	Former ploughsoil 0.3-0.4m dark brown soft sandy clay	

Table 2: List of recorded contexts

## 5.0 FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL

5.1 No finds were recovered during the monitoring works or environmental samples taken.

## 6.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

### 6.1 Discussion

5.1.2 Until recently the site was arable farmland and it would appear that layer [07] is the former ploughsoil and layer 01 beneath it is the remains of undisturbed subsoil.

5.1.3 Two features were excavated during the topsoil strip. The more significant of these is a possible gully that extends for over 9m along the line of the new access road on the western side of the site. In excavation it was interpreted as a possible plough scar, but its reasonable depth and profile suggests it may be the base of a former field boundary ditch that runs parallel to the existing boundary. Unfortunately no dating evidence was recovered. A small oval pit was found on the western side of the site. This too was undatable and the irregular nature of the cut suggests it is either prehistoric in date or a geological feature.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

5.2.1 The archaeological investigations found no remains datable to the Bronze Age or Saxon periods that could be associated with the Scheduled Monument to the southwest, or from other periods noted from sites further to the west and south. Only two features were uncovered during the work and their origins are unclear. Other such remains may have been shallower in nature and been ploughed-out over time.

5.2.2 The construction of the pumping station appears to have had minimal impact on the archaeological resource of this part of Harlow.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

ASE would like to thank Optimise Barhale for commissioning the archaeological work and for their assistance throughout the project, and Maria Medlycott of ECC Place Services for monitoring the project on behalf of the Local Planning Authority. The monitoring work was undertaken by Lukasz Mikiak and Andy Letch of Archaeology South-East. Andrew Lewsey produced the figures for this report. The project was managed by Adrian Scruby and Mark Atkinson managed the post-excavation process.

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**Appendix 1: EHER Summary Form**

<b>Site name/Address:</b> New Pumping Station, Gilden Way, Harlow	
<b>Parish:</b> Harlow	<b>District:</b> Harlow
<b>NGR:</b> TL 47956 11413	<b>Site Code:</b> HAGWS 13
<b>Type of Work:</b> Archaeological monitoring	<b>Site Director/Group:</b> A. Letch, ASE
<b>Date of Work:</b> Between August & September 2013	<b>Size of Area Investigated:</b> 1500sqm
<b>Location of Finds/Curating Museum:</b> Harlow Museum	<b>Funding source:</b> client
<b>Further Work Anticipated?:</b> No	<b>Related HER Nos.:</b> 3612 & 31755; SM 29392 & 24858
<b>Final Report:</b> EAH roundup	<b>OASIS No:</b> 179340
<b>Periods Represented:</b> Undated	
<p><b>SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:</b></p> <p><i>Archaeological monitoring was carried out in association with the construction of a new pumping station on land to the south of off Gilden Way, Harlow.</i></p> <p><i>The site was located within an area of high archaeological potential, primarily a scheduled monument immediately to the southwest, known as the Harlow Mound or Moot Mount, which is believed to have been the site of a probable Bronze Age barrow reused in the Saxon period as a meeting place (SM 29392). Extensive evidence for prehistoric, Roman and Saxon activity has been found further to the west and south. The site is also close to the medieval centres of Old Harlow and Churchgate Street.</i></p> <p><i>Two cut features were found during the topsoil strip. A long gully or plough scar was investigated on the western side of the site, which may in fact be the remains of a field boundary, perhaps associated with an existing field boundary to the east. A small oval pit was excavated in the main part of the site, which may be a geological feature.</i></p> <p><i>Despite the remains of multi-period activity in the vicinity of the site and more specifically Bronze Age and Saxon activity nearby, no significant features were identified or finds recovered.</i></p>	
<b>Previous Summaries/Reports:</b> None	
<b>Author of Summary:</b> A. Letch	<b>Date of Summary:</b> 20th May 2014

## Appendix 2: OASIS Form

**OASIS ID: archaeol6-179340**

### Project details

Project name	New Pumping Station, Gilden Way, Harlow, Essex
Short description of the project	Archaeological monitoring was carried out in association with the construction of a new pumping station on land to the south of off Gilden Way, Harlow. Two cut features were found during the topsoil strip. A long gully or plough scar was investigated on the western side of the site, which may be the remains of a field boundary ditch, perhaps associated with an existing boundary feature to the east. A small oval pit was excavated in the main part of the site, which may be a geological feature. Despite the remains of multi-period activity in the vicinity of the site and more specifically Bronze Age and Saxon activity to the south-west, no significant features were identified or finds recovered.
Project dates	Start: 28-08-2013 End: 05-09-2013
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	8113 - Contracting Unit No. HAGWS 13 – Site code
Type of project	Recording project
Monument type	GULLY/PLOUGHSCAR Uncertain
Monument type	PIT/NATURAL FEATURE Uncertain
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF

### Project location

Country	England
Site location	ESSEX HARLOW HARLOW New Pumping Station, Gilden Way
Study area	1500.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 47956 11413 51.7813167662 0.145095042135 51 46 52 N 000 08 42 E Point

### Project creators

Name of Organisation	Archaeology South-East
Project brief originator	Essex County Council Place Services
Project design originator	Archaeology South-East
Project director/manager	Adrian Scruby

Project supervisor	Andy Letch
Type of sponsor/funding body	Client
Name of sponsor/funding body	Optimise Barhale

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**Project archives**

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Harlow Museum
Digital Contents	"other"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography", "Survey"
Paper Archive recipient	Harlow Museum
Paper Contents	"other"
Paper Media available	"Photograph", "Plan", "Report", "Section"

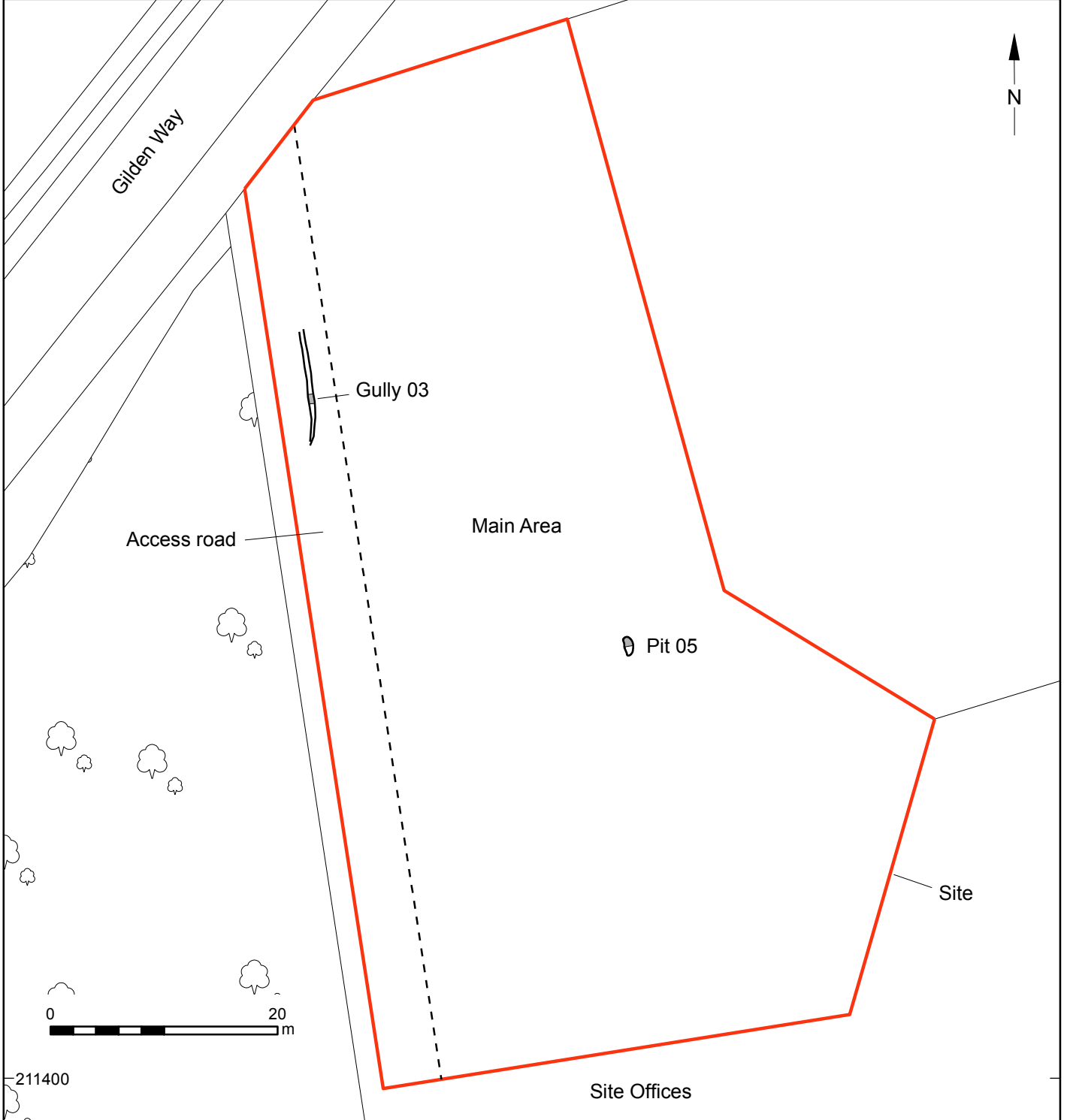
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**Project bibliography 1**

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	New Pumping Station, Gilden Way, Harlow: Archaeological Monitoring
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Entered by	Andy Letch (a.letch@ucl.ac.uk)
Entered on	29 May 2014



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Project Ref: 8113	May 2014	Site location and area of archaeological investigations		
Report Ref: 2014171	Drawn by: APL			

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Figure 2: Excavation of access road, viewed to south



Figure 3: Feature [04] viewed to south





Figure 4: Southeast part of main area, viewed to north



Figure 5: Feature [05] viewed to south