

# HISTORIC TOWNS IN ESSEX

## ~HARLOW~

HISTORIC TOWNS ASSESSMENT REPORT  
1999



ENGLISH HERITAGE



Essex County Council

# HARLOW

## HISTORIC TOWN ASSESSMENT REPORT

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# **HARLOW HISTORIC TOWN ASSESSMENT REPORT**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This report is an archaeological and historical assessment of Harlow and forms part of the Essex Historic Towns Survey. This is an extensive urban survey as defined by English Heritage (1992a) of 32 historic settlements in Essex. This project, funded by English Heritage, forms part of a nationwide reassessment of the management of the urban archaeological resource. The project is being carried out by Essex County Council's Planning Department and takes as its basis a survey carried out by the County Council in the early 1980's. This was published as Historic Towns in Essex (Eddy and Petchey 1983) and adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance by the County and District Councils.

This report has been compiled using a number of sources, including the Essex Sites and Monuments Record (ESMR), the List of Buildings of Architectural and Historical Interest, records held by the County Planning Department's Historic Buildings Section, and various cartographic and documentary records (following an assessment of such records by Dr Chris Thornton of the Victoria County History, Essex). The preparation of this report has involved the addition of information to the ESMR database and the digitising of spatial data onto a Geographic Information System (GIS).

For the purposes of this study the Roman period is the time-span between 43-410, the Saxon period is 410-1066, the medieval period is 1066-1536, the post-medieval period is 1536-1900 and the modern period is 1900 to the present day. This corresponds to the period divisions used by the ESMR.

## **LOCATION AND TOPOGRAPHY**

The historic town of Harlow is split into a number of distinct areas. The Roman town is sited within the parish of Harlow, immediately to the south of the river Stort. Medieval Harlow (Old Harlow) is approximately half a kilometre to the south of it. There are also two further medieval centres at Harlowbury to the north-east of Old Harlow and Churchgate Street to the east. The New Town of Harlow now incorporates both Roman Harlow and Old Harlow and extends beyond the borders of Churchgate Street and Harlowbury.

The solid geology of the area consists of Upper Chalk, which outcrops on the Sawbridgeworth ridge to the north of Harlow. The chalk is overlain by London Clay, outcrops of which occur on Harlow Common and Potter Street (it is this clay which formed the basis of the post-medieval pottery industry). The London Clay in turn is overlain by glacial drift deposits, consisting of two boulder clay levels, which included Hanningfield Till (the basis of the pottery industry), separated and occasionally underlain by glacial sands and gravels. Quaternary 'Head' deposits also occur and in the Roman town area there are also alluvial deposits from the flood-plain of the Stort. The Roman temple is sited on a small hill, approximately 9m high, overlooking the Stort flood-plain.

## BRIEF HISTORY OF THE TOWN

The Harlow area has been occupied since the Late Palaeolithic period (c. 12,000 - 10,000 BC). However, the evidence from the Palaeolithic, Mesolithic (10,000 - 3,500 BC) and Neolithic (3,500 - 2,000 BC) periods consists only of scattered flint flakes and tools. The Bronze Age (2,000 - 600 BC) is better represented, by a line of burial sites along the southern bank of the River Stort, including a group of eight burial urns at the temple site. In the Iron Age (600 BC - AD 43), Harlow lay on the tribal boundary between the Catuvellauni in Hertfordshire and the Trinovantes in Essex. At the temple hill there were two roundhouses of mid to late Iron Age date and numerous Iron Age coins, small finds and animal bones. The quantity and pattern of distribution of the coins, coupled with what appears to have been deliberate damage to the small finds suggests that the site had a religious rather than domestic function. The discovery of coins of a late Iron Age date in the Holbrooks area suggests that the Roman town occupied a pre-existing Late Iron Age site.

Roman Harlow consisted of a temple, which developed from the Iron Age temple, and a widespread area of occupation, interpreted as urban in nature, to the north and east of it. Within this area of occupation there is evidence for both masonry and timber buildings, an internal road-pattern and manufacturing areas, as well as a masonry building which has been variously interpreted as a second temple and a public building. The town seems to have grown in response to the presence of the temple.

The evidence for the Saxon period is lighter, although there is sufficient to indicate settlement within the area. There is a Saxon structure at Harlow Temple, interpreted as a pagan shrine by R. Bartlett (pers. comm.). Saxon pottery and metalwork have also been recovered from the Harlow area. In addition the placenames evidence does suggest a Saxon presence in the area. The area was certainly settled by the end of the Saxon period, indeed it was the centre of the Saxon administrative division known as the Harlow Hundred, which stretched from Roydon to Hallingbury.

Medieval Harlow was a polyfocal settlement and the dominant landowner was the Abbey of St Edmunds in Bury, Suffolk. The oldest part is Harlowbury, which was the manorial centre and there may also have been an early medieval village on this site. The medieval town of Harlow (Old Harlow) is sited to the south-west of Harlowbury on the east-west Hertford to Dunmow road. It grew as a result of the granting of a fair and a market on the site in 1218, although there is some evidence that there had previously been a small settlement and market there in Stephen's reign (1135-54). Abbot Hugh gave the tenants a charter allowing them to hold their tenements 'as freely as our burgesses of St Edmund and our other burgesses'. However an inquisition held in 1290 concluded that the market tenants were of villein status, even if they paid rent rather than carrying out customary services. To the south-east of Old Harlow and physically distinct from the main urban focus is Churchgate Street where the Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin is sited. The medieval economy appears to have been based on the market and the collection and preparation of wool. There is also documentary evidence of potters in Harlow (in the Potter Street area to the south of the medieval town) since the 13th century (Newton and Bibbings 1960), and two kilns dating to c.1500 have been found on Harlow Common.

With the Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1536 the Abbey of St Edmund's ceased to be the major land-holder in the area. There appears to have been a period of depression in the post-medieval period, with the market being held only sporadically; this coincides with a period of encroachment on and further infilling of the market area. However, in contrast to the fortunes of the market, it was during the post-medieval period that Harlow rose to

archaeological prominence due to its pottery industry, which was based around Potter Street, Latton Street, and towards Harlow Common, which supplied the bulk of the slipware pottery found in London. Examples of Harlow metropolitan ware have also been found as far afield as New England and Virginia (Noel Hume, 1969 and 1970).

In 1947 the area was designated as the site for Harlow New Town, one of the eight new satellite settlements to be built around London to relieve housing shortage. The New Town boundary enclosed four parishes, Parndon, Netteswell, Latton and Harlow, as well as the Roman Town and Old Harlow, and a number of smaller villages, halls and churches. Frederick Gibberd was appointed planner-architect for the project; his master-plan was completed in 1949 and he was subsequently responsible for much of the housing erected in accordance with it. The New Town was characterised by urban building-types in a rural setting.

## **EVIDENCE**

### **DOCUMENTARY**

#### ***Summary assessment of the documentary and cartographic evidence***

by Chris Thornton (Victoria County History)

There are extensive manorial records for the manor of Harlowbury from the late 14th to the 20th centuries, and also smaller collections of manorial material for other estates. The maps available are rather limited, but one of 1847 shows the town before the first OS maps, and there is a 1616 estate map for Altham and an eighteenth century estate map for Lushington. There are local government records from the late 19th century to before the founding of the new town. Records relating to the new town are in the Essex Record Office. The main secondary source is *VCH Essex*, pp.131-49 (Ancient parish) and pp. 149-58 (Harlow Town). See also Gibberd, et al., *Harlow: The story of a New Town* (1980) and list of publications in *VCH Bibliography*.

#### ***Place-name and documentary evidence***

The documentary and placename evidence demonstrates that the Harlow area was occupied during the Saxon period and that Harlow itself was the administration centre of the Harlow Hundred. The name Harlow is interpreted as meaning either 'army-hill' (Reaney, 1935) or 'temple-hill' (M. Henig/R. Bartlett pers. Comm.), both interpretations refer to the embanked temple hill. In 1041 or 1045 Thurstan, son of Wine, a Saxon Thane with considerable estates in Norfolk, Cambridgeshire and Essex, left in his will his land at Harlow to the Abbey of St Edmunds in Suffolk (Bateman 1969).

The Domesday Book (Rumble 1985), provides further information on the locality immediately prior to the Norman Conquest. The area known as Harlow was 12 hides (1440-1800 acres) in extent, although this would have included the modern area of Church Langley as well as Old Harlow. The land-owners in 1066 were St Edmund's Abbey, Brictrmer, Godwin, Ingvar and 10 free men. The landscape depicted in the Domesday Book is that of a settled rural community; there were in addition to the land-owners and their dependants, the households of 20 villagers, 28 small-holders and 11 slaves. The land-use of the area consisted of a mix of arable land, woodland and meadow; there was also one mill attached to the main manor. Cattle, sheep and pigs were reared. In addition the Abbey of St. Edmund's kept horses and beehives.

The earliest documentary evidence for the medieval period is again the Domesday Book (Rumble 1983). By 1086 all the Saxon land-owners, with the exception of St. Edmund's Abbey, had been replaced by Normans. These were Count Eustace, Eudo the Steward and Ranulf, who in turn let these to sub-tenants. The number of villager households dropped from 20 to 15, that of small-holders rose from 28 to 32 and the number of slaves dropped from 11 to 9. The quantity of woodland and meadow remained the same as in the Saxon period, but the number of plough-teams dropped by 2. This possible decline in the amount of land under arable cultivation is echoed by a rise in the number of livestock kept. In 1213-1229 Abbot Hugh granted burgage tenure to the tenants of Harlow 'as freely as our burgesses of St Edmunds and our other burgesses' (Fisher, 1937). The raising and preparation of wool became important in the Harlow economy in the 14th and 15th centuries. There are records of fulling having taken place, but little evidence for cloth production.

## **ARCHAEOLOGICAL**

### ***Above ground remains***

The only above ground remains for the Roman period is the temple hill itself; the plan of the temple is marked out in concrete but no actual walls are visible. The above ground remains for the medieval period consist of the street-pattern of Old Harlow, the manor house and chapel of Harlowbury, the parish church of St Mary in Churchgate Street, St Mary at Latton, Netteswell tithe barn, the slight earthworks of the possible deserted village at Harlowbury and the Roman road, surviving as a slight earthwork in Felmongers Woods. In addition there are the later medieval and post-medieval buildings in Churchgate Street and Old Harlow.

### ***Excavations***

It had been known since 1764 that there were masonry remains beneath the surface of the hill beside the Stort. These were first identified as being the remains of a Romano-British Temple by Miller Christy in 1927, and formed the basis of Mortimer Wheeler's seminal work on this monument type (Wheeler, 1928). The site was subsequently re-investigated in 1962-71 (France and Gobel, 1985) and in 1985-88 (Bartlett, 1988). Rescue excavations took place within the area of the Roman town; at Holbrooks in 1970 (Conlon, 1973) and again in 1978 (Chapman, 1979) and in 1980/81 (Bartlett, 1982); and at Staffords (Sewter, 1973: Chapman, 1979: Bartlett, 1981). Excavations have also taken place in and around Harlowbury Chapel (Bartlett, 1985) and on the mill site at Harlowbury (Andrews, 1991). There has also been an excavation in Old Harlow at The Chequers site (Andrews, 1991). In addition there have been numerous watching-briefs and several evaluations. Outside the Historic Town area, large-scale fieldwork has taken place at Church Langley and Gilden Way.

**Table 1: Fieldwork, archives and publications**

ESMR	SITE	ARCHIVE LOCATION	PUBLICATION
0017	Harlow Temple	Finds & archive: Harlow Museum	France, N.E. & Gobel, B.M., 1985 "The Romano-British Temple at Harlow" WEAG, ESMR: Bartlett, R. "Latton: Harlow Temple" <i>Essex Archaeol. Hist.</i> 21 p.133
0018	Harlowbury deserted medieval village	Plan: ESMR	Davison, K. 1975, Plan of earthworks, ESMR
0019, 0134	Harlowbury Chapel, 1984	Finds & archive: Harlow Mus.	Bartlett, R. 1985 "Excav. in Essex", <i>Essex Archaeol. Hist.</i> 16
16168-9	Harlowbury Chapel Drainage, 1994	Archive: ESMR, Finds: Discarded	Havis, R. 1994 "Harlowbury Chapel watching-brief", ESMR
16195	Sheering Rd. Churchgate St.	None	Bartlett, R. pers. comm. ESMR
16196	Mill Lane, Churchgate St.	None	Bartlett, R. Pers. comm. ESMR
16216-7	Harlowbury mill (HY90)	Finds: Montrose Rd, Archive: D. Andrews, ECC	Andrews, D. 1991 "Excav. in Essex" <i>Essex Archaeol. Hist.</i> 22, p.155
16766	Mill Lane, St Nicholas Sch., Churchgate St (HAML96)	Finds: Montrose Road, Archive: Bocking Place	Lavender, N. 1995 "Land at Mill Lane, Churchgate St., Harlow, Essex; Arch. Eval." ECC Int. Rep. ESMR
3609	Holbrooks, 1970, 1978, 1980 & 1981	Finds & archive: Harlow Museum	Conlon, R. 1973, "Holbrooks: An Iron Age and Romano-British settlement" <i>Essex J.</i> , 8 pt.2, p.30-50: Chapman, J. 1979 "Excav. in Essex" <i>Essex Archaeol. Hist.</i> 11, p.104: Bartlett, R. 1981 "Excav. in Essex" <i>Essex Archaeol. Hist.</i> 13, p.52: Bartlett, R. 1982, "Excav. in Essex" <i>Essex Archaeol. Hist.</i> 14, p.140
3610	Harlowbury House	Finds & archive: Harlow Mus.	Bartlett, R. 1984 "Harlow - Harlowbury House" <i>Essex Archaeol. Hist.</i> 16, p.169
3611, 3614	Staffords, 1972-5 & 1979-80	Finds & archive: Harlow Museum	Sewter, J. 1973, "2nd season of excav. at the RB site of Staffords House, Old Harlow" ESMR: Chapman, J. 1980, "Excav. in Essex" <i>Essex Archaeol. Hist.</i> 12, p.43: Bartlett, R. 1981, "Excav. in Essex" <i>Essex Archaeol. Hist.</i> 13, p.52
3634	Priory Avenue	Passmore Edwards Mus.	ESMR OScard TL41SE07
9123-6	Adj. The Chequers, Market St.	Finds: Montrose Rd ? Archive: D. Andrews?	Andrews, D.D. 1991 "An arch. sequence at the edge of Old Harlow market-place" <i>Essex Archaeol. Hist.</i> 22, p.101
9933	Jesman Aggregates, Harlow Mill	Finds & archive: Harlow Mus.	Bartlett, R. pers. comm. ESMR

### Finds

### Late Iron Age and Roman pottery by Scott Martin and Colin Wallace (Essex County Council Field Archaeology Group)

The first modern excavations in Harlow were in 1962 on the Temple site. Leaving aside the hilltop temple site there is little information available about the settlement site. Occupation probably commenced in the Late pre-Roman Iron Age. Pottery of this period, including Gallo-Belgic forms and 'Belgic' grog-tempered ware, has been recorded from the temple site (Thompson 1982, 719). A second temple site has been postulated in the Holbrooks area (Burnham and Wachter 1990, 187-8), although extensive metalworking (copper, tin, iron and lead) is known in the vicinity, and a farm-like timber building - again with associated evidence of metalworking - is recorded on the Stafford House site. At the former site, the presence of

Romano-Saxon pottery (cf. Conlon 1973, fig. 17) suggests continued occupation into the later 4th century. However, the value of the site's pottery is negated by the fact that the site was not well recorded due to the speed of the salvage operation (R. Bartlett pers comm.). Very little pottery from Harlow has been published in detail with nothing quantified. This site lies close to the Hadham manufactory and is of considerable importance to our understanding of this industry. The Felmongers pit group (glass published; pottery unpublished) from south of the town, dated to the mid 2nd century, contained large quantities of vessels in Hadham white-slipped ware, including flagons, poppy beakers (not recorded at Chelmsford), mortaria and carinated bowls (Going 1987, 5). Its publication should foster a better appreciation of the range of forms present in this fabric. The recent excavations at Old House, Church Langley also provided valuable evidence concerning the Hadham industry, this time regarding the dating of Hadham oxidised red ware (Martin in prep).

Some of the earlier excavations at the Temple have been published in monograph form (France and Gobel, 1985). The more recent excavations await publication (Bartlett, 1988) and when they are, the opportunity may be taken to re-assess the significance of the earlier work.

The main publication is Wilkinson and Clark, 1985 (Temple), but other publications include Conlon, 1973 (1970 Holbrooks excavations) and Wright, 1925-27 (Miller Christy's sand-pit to the west of the Roman Road).

#### **Saxon finds** by Sue Tyler (Essex County Council Archaeological Advisory Group)

A few sherds of Early Saxon pottery have been found from the town (Goulds Timberyards) and are in Harlow Museum. The Roman Temple site produced an Early Saxon structure, possibly a shrine, with a fair amount of pottery (report in prep. by R. Bartlett) for which S. Tyler has done the pottery report (ESMR 16965). In addition a Germanic-type brooch has been found at New Hall, and brooches were also recovered from a possible cemetery site at Pishiobury to the north-east of Harlow and pottery was found during the fieldwork at Gilden Way.

#### **Medieval pottery** by Helen Walker (Essex County Council Field Archaeology Group)

##### The medieval pottery industry

There was a medieval pottery industry in the Harlow area (first referenced in the 13th century), however most of the known production sites lie outside the medieval town, as would be expected. No work on medieval production sites has been published and a dating frame-work and typology need to be established. The evidence for medieval pottery production at Harlow is as follows:-

*Motts Green, Canes Lane* TL 477 069; five to six boxes of material from possible kiln dump; Ref: Meddens and Redknapp 1992 *Medieval Ceramics* **16**, 39. An earlier report lists Canes Lane as a habitation site (Robertson, I. G. 1976', 'The archaeology of the M11 motorway in Essex 1970-1975) Location of finds: Harlow Museum

*Harlow Common* TL 4790 0880, Parish: North Weald Bassett - situated at Harlow Common, just east of Potter Street, two pottery kilns with finds dated c. 1500. Ref: SMR 3777. In addition, there is more medieval Harlow ware from production and settlement sites at Harlow Museum.

### Medieval pottery from settlement sites

A number of excavations have produced small amounts of medieval pottery, although no separate pottery reports have been produced. These are at *Harlowbury*, to the east of Harlowbury Manor (Andrews 1991, 155, this site needs publication), where 12th to 13th century early medieval fabrics were found, while other features produced 13th to 14th century pottery. Another excavation at *Harlowbury Manor* (Bartlett SMR archive report) produced small amounts of mainly residual pottery dating from Saxon to post-medieval. In addition, a fieldwalking survey of *Gilden Way* found Late Saxon pottery near to Harlowbury. At *Netteswellbury*, a few sherds of ?12th century pottery were excavated from two medieval ditches (Bartlett 1988, 266). The main medieval site is *The Chequers, on the edge of Old Harlow Market Place* (Walker 1991, HL 1) where medieval Harlow ware predominates, accounting for 45% of the total assemblage, lending weight to the argument that it is a local product. Fragments from medieval Harlow ware cooking pots, bowls and slip-painted and glazed jugs were found. Small amounts of London-type ware were also present, with Mill Green ware appearing later in the sequence. There was also a field known as 'potters croft' close to the Pincey brook to the east of Old Harlow in the fourteenth century.

### **Post-medieval pottery** by Helen Walker (Essex County Council Field Archaeology Group)

#### The post-medieval pottery industry

Harlow rose to prominence as a production centre of slipware in the post-medieval period. The post-medieval pottery from kilns at Harlow need to be published with special reference to the Metropolitan slipwares, and a typology and dating framework established, although a PhD thesis is currently underway (R. Bartlett pers. comm.).

*17th century pottery sites at Harlow, Essex* (Newton and Bibbings 1960) This article discusses the location of kilns at Potter Street in relation to a 15th century map, and describes the surface geology of boulder clay with chalk fragments. Documentary evidence mentions potters at Harlow from 1254 onwards and shows that the potters lived on Harlow Common, close to the London Road. Cartographic evidence suggests that potting was still carried on in the late 18th century. Two kiln sites are described:

*Site 1*, at Latton Street, produced mainly coarse wares which show a considerable variety of form, including one or two-handled pitchers, and cisterns. These are mostly unglazed and sometimes show slip-painted decoration on the upper half of the pot, and incised horizontal grooves around the girth. Not as common, are large internally glazed bowls and there is one example of a dripping dish. Black-glazed wares make up a small proportion of the finds, and most comprise fragments from tygs. They have an all over black or sometimes brown or green glaze, and the number of handles varies from one to ?four, according to the size of the tyg. Other black-glazed forms comprise, mugs, the base of a candlestick and a variety of jug types. Kiln furniture comprises clay rings used as kiln props, which were improved over time by adding projecting spikes. Fragments from saggars are common, about 7 inches in diameter with vertical cylindrical walls, perforated near the base and/or near the top, and highly fired with flat rims. Metropolitan slipware is also present and there is a great variety of design. Dishes are common and the design is repeated on each quarter; other forms comprise small jugs, candle sticks and chafing dishes. Some designs appear to be taken from nature and are suggestive of honeycombs, fish, and foliage.

*Site 2*, is further south and on the western side of (what was) the A11 and about quarter of a mile south of (what was) the Sun and Whale Bone public house. The pottery is similar to that from site 1 but with a large proportion of Metropolitan slipware. The remains of a kiln were found along with a pugging pit and prepared clay ready for use. The slip-trailed decoration is much more casually executed than that found at site 1 and it is suggested that the pottery

from site 2 is later. (Cunningham notes that this report contains only a small proportion of the slipware designs, and that some reconstructions are inaccurate (Cunningham 1985b, 64)).

*Potteries at Latton, Essex* by W. Davey (1966). This article describes the reasons why the post-medieval industry developed here, including the presence of suitable clays. The potteries were owned by a number of allied families which meant that the pottery produced was all very similar. He describes three more production sites, in addition to those already published by Newton and Bibbings; *Pinchions, Latton Common*, situated near the market at Bush Fair and producing mainly black-glazed ware tygs, mugs and chamber pots. Metropolitan slipware was also found in the area but was not definitely made at this site; *Longcroft, Brays Grove School*. Finds include lead glazed wares, black-glazed wares, and Metropolitan slipware with slip-trailed letters and writing; *Latton Farm, Second Avenue*, located from documentary evidence. No kilns were found but there are examples black-glazed ware, Metropolitan slipware and plain lead glazed wares. Overall, about 60% are plain lead-glazed wares, 35% are black-glazed wares and 5% are slip-decorated.

*Unpublished kiln sites* A number of sites at the new development at Church Langley, to the north of Potter Street, have produced evidence for post-medieval pottery production, and pottery from waster dumps comprising plain lead-glazed wares, black-glazed wares, Metropolitan slipware and fragments from saggars have been found. The Tesco site is scheduled for publication (Walker forthcoming) while other sites are mentioned in *Essex Archaeol. Hist.* roundups (Atkinson 1994, 198; Medlycott 1995, 249-50). A couple of small scale excavations in the area of Potter Street have also produced post-medieval kiln material but no kiln or related structures have been discovered (Hepple 1995, 244; Reidy 1994, 253). In addition, there may be more post-medieval material in the possession of Wally Davey or at Harlow Museum.

#### Post-medieval pottery from settlement sites

*Harlowbury* (Andrews 1991, 155) Some 17th century pottery was found in association with the wheel race of a water mill.

## **LISTED BUILDINGS**

in consultation with Ken Sowman and Dave Stenning (Listed Buildings)

The schedule of listed buildings provided in this report is derived from the List of Buildings of Special Architectural and Historical Interest. This List has been compiled over many years through the work of many inspectors and, as a result, the reliability of the List varies from District to District. Time was extremely limited and very few interiors were looked at, or even the rear wings of buildings. Where further research has been carried out on individual buildings, this has often shown the limitations of the List descriptions. The List for Harlow was originally compiled in 1981 and is of variable quality.

There are 53 Listed Buildings in historic Harlow. Of these, two are listed grade I (Harlowbury Chapel and manor house), two are grade II\* and the remainder are grade II. Outside the Historic Town area is the Grade I Monk's Barn at Netteswellbury. The chapel and the church are built of rubble, but the majority of the rest of the buildings were timber-framed and plastered until the 19th century when brick predominated.

**Table 1: Listed buildings by attributed century of origin**

CENTURY	NUMBER
12	2
13	1
14	0
15	5
16	4
17	9
18	12
19	20
20	1

Buildings of particular significance include:-

- Harlowbury Manor House - This is a very large timber-framed aisled hall built in the late 12th to early 13th century. Of this only two bays of the open hall survive, together with its smoke-blackened roof, but missing the aisles. In the 14th century and 15th centuries cross-wings were added. In the 16th century a chimney stack was added and an upper floor inserted into the hall. In the late 19th century all but the northern side was encased in brick.
- Harlowbury Chapel - The Chapel is 12th century in date, and is built of flint rubble and Reigate stone off-cuts. It appears that the roof was rebuilt c.1300. After the Dissolution an upper floor was inserted and the building converted to agricultural use. Extensive repair work took place in the nineteenth century.
- 38, Market Street has a 15th century jettied cross-wing and 18th century wall-paintings.
- The Queen's Head Public House, Churchgate Street is a good long wall jetty house with an 'aisle' along the back, a very unusual arrangement. The windows of this building have a mixture of diamond and rectangular mullions which is again very odd.
- 21, Fore Street is down on the list description as 16th-17th century, but actually incorporates part of a medieval shop.
- Churchgate Hotel, formerly the Chantry House is a very fine quality house, and it is thought that it was the house for the priest of the chantry of St Petronilla, which was within the parish church.
- The George Public House in the market-place is thought to incorporate one bay of a presumed market-hall. The original building was at least three bays long.
- The Gables, Fore Street is fifteenth century in origin.

## **SYNTHESIS**

### **PRE-URBAN SYNTHESIS**

#### ***Prehistoric***

Excavations and fieldwalking in the Harlow area have produced finds of Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, Neolithic, Bronze Age and Iron Age date (from the Northbrooks, Holbrooks, Foster Street, Harlow Temple, Netteswellbury and Church Langley sites). A line of Bronze Age burial sites follow the higher ground along the southern bank of the River Stort; these include the 'Moot Mound', the Temple mound, Hill House Farm and the Hospital Mounds in Little Parndon. Within the historic urban area the temple excavations (ESMR 107; France and Gobel, 1985; Bartlett, 1990) revealed that the hill-top had been a focus of activity for much of the prehistoric period. The earliest evidence recovered was a number of Upper

Palaeolithic flint blades. The Mesolithic period is also represented by substantial amounts of flint tools, including an axe/adze. Five Bronze Age urned cremations were found during the 1962-71 excavations. In 1985-9 an Early Bronze Age pond-barrow was identified, with associated cremation burials. Early Iron Age pottery sherds have also been recovered from the hill-top.

### *The Iron Age temple*

In the mid-late Iron Age the hill-top became the focus of more intense activity. A roundhouse (ESMR 109), approximately 13m in diameter, was excavated; the earliest fills contained mid-late Iron Age pottery and a shield-binding whilst the latest included coins dating to AD 10-40. To the north and east of the roundhouse were found a large number of post- and stake-holes, possibly belonging to ancillary structures or even a timber enclosure. It appears that the roundhouse had become the focus of cult offerings dating from c.50 BC until the Roman invasion and after (France and Gobel, 1985; Bartlett, 1988b). 787 coins were recovered, dating from 50 BC to AD 40 with many in mint condition. The coin record shows that the temple lay within Catuvellaunian tribal territory, close to its border with the Trinovantes. There are also coins from the Iceni (Norfolk), Corieltavi (Leicestershire) and the Durotriges (Dorset). In association with these were found objects of a more domestic type, which have been interpreted by the excavator as further offerings; these included brooches, iron tools, shield bindings and thin iron strips. The 1970/1 rescue excavations at the Holbrooks site (Conlon, 1973), 500m to the north of the temple, produced 37 Celtic coins, slightly earlier in date than the temple coins.

## URBAN SYNTHESIS

### **Roman**

Roman Harlow consisted of a temple, which developed from the Iron Age temple, and a widespread area of occupation to the north and east of it. Within this area of occupation there is evidence for both masonry and timber buildings, an internal road-pattern and manufacturing areas, as well as a masonry building which has been variously interpreted as a second temple and a public building. The town seems to have grown in response to the presence of the temple.

The Roman urban components are:-

### **The Temple** (TL 4679 1230)

The religious usage of the temple precinct (ESMR 17) continued in the Roman period, beginning with the replacement of the roundhouse with a square-in-square Romano-British temple. The pottery and coin evidence suggests that this structure was built in 60-80 AD. The temple was 14.8m square and the inner *cella* was 7.m square. Its walls had been heavily robbed, but enough remained to show that it had been of flint and mortar construction with tile bonding courses. It was also evident that it had been plastered and painted and had tessellated floors. To the east of the building and contemporary with it a new cobbled surface had been laid. Early in the second century a rectangular timber palisade was erected around the temple, approximately 10m from the ambulatory wall. Soon after 200 AD this palisade was removed and a wall put in its place. The area in front of the temple was levelled up, in order to build two small rooms flanking the entrance to the temple, the front wall of these rooms forming the rear wall of a new rectangular courtyard. This courtyard measured 28.7 by 22.6m and was entered through a massive gateway, and on either of the narrow sides were a pair of galleries, with the main altar now standing in this enclosure. To the rear of the original temple was added other small rooms and a second

masonry court, which echoed the plan of the preceding timber palisade. The hill which the temple stood on was defined by a ditch 4.6m wide enclosing about 4 hectares, with a single causeway entrance at its southern end. The temple precinct was destroyed by fire and systematically dismantled in the late fourth-century. There is some indication of continued use of the ruins, as evidenced by a hearth and associated stake-holes found within one of the small rooms flanking the temple entrance, and a timber structure abutting the outside wall. The finds from the temple included coins, brooches, rings and a carved head of Minerva. The faunal evidence showed that 80% of the bones derived from 6-9 month old lambs, presumably sacrificial.

### ***The Holbrook's masonry building*** (TL4693 1271)

The 1970-1 rescue excavations at the Holbrooks site (Conlon, 1973), 500m to the north of the temple revealed amongst other features three rooms of a Roman masonry building. This area (c. 100m across) was also particularly rich in coins, brooches and Roman votive objects including gilt-bronze letters, bronze leaves, miniature axes and a lead sheet inscribed with a dedication and request to Mercury. The excavator interpreted the site as workshops producing votive objects for the main temple complex, based on the evidence for actual metal-working on site. However, these type of votive objects were not actually found on the main temple site. It has therefore been suggested (Fitzpatrick in France and Gobel, 1985) that the concentration of votive objects indicates that the site was a second Late Iron Age/Romano-British temple complex, ending in the Flavian period. However, the plan of the masonry building is not that of a typical Romano-British temple, and moreover the excavator thought that he had discovered a hypocaust system associated with the building, which would be more common in a domestic context or in a *mansio* or baths. There is also the problem that the apparent distribution pattern of finds may be linked to the fact that the excavation was concentrated on the area of the masonry building. Finally, there is a discrepancy between what are definitely votive objects (the inscribed tablet and the miniature axes) and what have been classed as votive objects but are equally valid in a secular context (the coins, brooches and pottery). The author of this report suggests that at present the evidence demonstrates that firstly there was a deposit of votive offerings, possibly intended for the main temple or possibly for a second temple; secondly that there was a substantial masonry building, and that on the basis of its plan it is more probably a public building such as a *mansio* or a wealthy domestic dwelling rather than a temple. Finally there is evidence for bronze-working in the area and that both votive offerings and domestic items could have been manufactured on the site.

### ***The built-up area*** (Centred TL 4713 1248)

The temple or temples appear to have been the focus for an extensive settlement, extending over 12 hectares. The western side of this settlement was delimited by the temple precinct and hill and extended north and north-east to the river and the Holbrooks site, east and south-east onto the Stafford House site and south towards Old Harlow. The most informative excavations have been at the Holbrook's and Stafford House sites.

In 1935-6 construction work at the Holbrooks' factory (ESMR 3607) revealed a tessellated floor and wall foundations, indicating the presence of at least one substantial building. In 1970-1 when the area immediately to the north (ESMR 3609) of this was re-developed (covering an area of approximately 7 hectares) a very hurried rescue excavation was undertaken. One major structure was discovered, consisting of at least three rooms, one with red *tesserae* flooring and painted plaster, another with a tessellated floor but this structure could not be dated. To the south-east of this structure lay various other cobbled areas and fragmentary walls, as well as several hearths and pits. The site as a whole had been occupied from the first century until the end of the Roman period. The finds included over 600 Roman coins, 37 lead weights, about 200 fragments of bronze sheet, slag with a

high copper and tin content, iron slag and lead waste, as well as the votive objects discussed above. Alternative interpretations for this site have been that it was another temple site (see above) and that it was a manufacturing area for votive offerings for the main temple site (Conlon, 1973). As the Holbrooks site covers such a large area, there is no reason why there could not be both a temple and a manufacturing area, providing goods for the temple or temples, as well as the usual domestic, administrative and commercial properties associated with towns. Three fragments of a pipe-clay theatre mask found in the 1980-1 excavations even suggest the possibility of there having been a theatre on or near the site.

In 1978 further excavations were undertaken at the south-west corner of the main Holbrooks site (Chapman, 1979), uncovering remains of timber structures, occupation layers, ditches, rubbish and quarry pits and a garden area. Industrial activity was indicated by gravel quarrying, iron slag and a bone trial piece. Trenches immediately to the west of the Holbrooks site (Bartlett, 1982) produced quantities of Roman building material and pottery as well as a timber-lined well containing organic debris, theatre mask and bath clogs.

The Stafford House site (ESMR 3611, 3614) consisted of a timber building 5m by 4m, sealed beneath a fourth century gravel yard and buildings surrounded by a timber palisade. The fourth-century structures consisted of a rectangular building (9 by 4m), which was replaced by an aisled building (15 by 15m), both associated with a gravel yard, several ditches and a well. There is also evidence of ironworking and possibly milling from this site. The finds from this site included a bronze figurine of Mercury and a tripod mount of Bacchus. A timber-lined pit on this site may have been used for the tanning of leather.

Smaller sites within the town area include a bronze-worker's hearth (ESMR 3634), which was excavated at Priory Avenue. In 1951 (ESMR 3632) a number of very large rubbish-pits (approximately 2.5 m wide by 4m deep) were discovered about 300m to the south-east of the temple; the finds indicate a second-century date. A watching-brief at Harlow Mill Station, to the north of the previous site, revealed Roman occupation deposits at a depth of about 1m beneath the existing ground surface.

### ***Street-pattern***

Three routes are focused on the site. One road ran south from the temple towards Epping, one probably led north-east from the river crossing and a third headed north-west to Braughing. The Old Road/Langley Lane route may also be that of a Roman road (R. Bartlett pers. comm.) Some traces of internal streets were noted during the Holbrooks excavation, but these are unpublished.

### ***Cemetery*** (TL 4708 1231)

There must have been cemeteries associated with the settlement and these are presumed to be on the outskirts of the main settlement as was the Roman custom. Six wooden coffins (and possibly several stone ones) were found in 1841 during the construction of the railway. The construction work of 1935-6 at the Holbrook's factory site (ESMR 3601) removed a large, roughly circular mound to reveal a burial pit containing bone, pottery and brooches. At Church Langley, to the south-east of the Roman town, a small cremation cemetery was found, attached to an outlying settlement.

### ***Saxon***

There is some evidence for early Saxon occupation of the area. Some sherds of fifth to seventh century Saxon pottery have been recovered from the Holbrooks area, Harlowbury and Netteswellbury. The Roman Temple site produced an Early Saxon structure of 5th to 7th century date (ESMR 16965).

The documentary and placename evidence demonstrates that administrative re-organisation of the landscape in the Harlow area took place in the Saxon period. The Hundred or Half-Hundred of Harlow is traditionally meant to have met at the Moot Mound at Mulberry Green. This was sub-divided into four parishes, Harlow, Netteswell, Latton and Parndon. Each parish was long and narrow, stretching from the River Stort in the north to the slopes of Rye Hill in the south. This plan ensured that each had equal access to the river, the water-meadows, arable land and woodland. Some of these parishes contained only a single farm or manor, whilst Harlow had several including the village and manor of Harlowbury. There is no evidence however that this occupation was urban in nature.

In 1041 Thurstan, a Saxon Thane, left his manor at Harlow to the Abbey of St Edmunds in Suffolk (Bateman 1969). This manor appears to have been Harlowbury, immediately to the north-east of Old Harlow. Excavations beneath the medieval Harlowbury Chapel (ESMR 3610) have revealed a rectangular six post building, dated by radio-carbon to the mid-Saxon period. Its position and alignment suggests that it was a Saxon predecessor to the 12th century church.

### ***Medieval synthesis and components***

Medieval Harlow was a polyfocal shifting settlement, the dominant landowner of which was the Abbey of St Edmunds in Bury, Suffolk. The earliest medieval settlement was Harlowbury, which was the manorial centre and the site of an early medieval village. The Abbey of St Edmunds then moved the village to the south-east to Churchgate Street, where the Parish Church was built. In 1218 a fair and a market was granted, which were held on the land now known as Old Harlow to the south-west of Harlowbury on the east-west Hertford to Dunmow road. There is some evidence that there had previously been a small settlement and market on this site in the mid-12th century, but following the 1218 grant the focus of the town moved from Churchgate Street to Old Harlow, although the parish church remained in the former location. Abbot Hugh gave the tenants a charter allowing them to hold their tenements 'as freely as our burgesses of St Edmund and our other burgesses', however an inquisition held in 1290 concluded that the market tenants were of villein status, even if they paid rent rather than carrying out customary services.

The medieval urban components are:-

### **Harlowbury**

#### ***Manor House*** (TL 4773 1209)

The manor house at Harlowbury is a very large timber-framed aisled hall built either by Abbot Samson of Bury St Edmunds in the late 12th century or by one of his successors in the early 13th century. A portion of this original building exists as two bays of an open aisled hall (now missing its aisles) and a smoke-blackened roof. Additions were made to it in the 14th and 15th centuries. A lease agreement for 1536 between one William Sumner and the Abbey gives a detailed description of the Manorial estate. The Great Hall faced south into the courtyard, with a kitchen adjacent to the east wall. The parlour and one or two bedrooms lay at the west end. The courtyard was enclosed by barns, stables and outbuildings, and it is likely there was also an outer courtyard. The manorial chapel stood by the outer gate. In addition there was a mill, dovecote, animal pound and fruit garden including a vinery and nuttury.

### **Chapel** (TL 4772 1205)

Harlowbury Chapel is late 12th century in origin, and appears to have replaced a Saxon predecessor (see above). The roof appears to have been reconstructed c.1300.

### **Deserted medieval village** (TL 4776 1198 centred)

The late Saxon and early Medieval village of Harlow recorded in the Domesday Book as having 31 households is thought to have been at Harlowbury, near the manorhouse. Excavation in 1990 to the east of the manorhouse revealed rubbish-pits and gullies but nothing structural, suggesting the main focus of settlement was not in that area. The field to the south of Harlowbury manor and chapel does contain low earthworks, which although they do not form a coherent plan, are thought to possibly mark the site of the deserted medieval village (ESMR 18).

### **The mill** (TL 4776 1213)

Trenching of the field to the east of Harlowbury Manor (Andrews, 1991) uncovered 11th to 12th century features and a silted-up pond containing 13th-14th century pottery. In the post-medieval period this site was occupied by a water-mill and the medieval features have been interpreted as a precursor to this structure.

### **Churchgate Street**

#### **The built-up area** (TL 4833 1149 centred)

Medieval Churchgate Street consisted of a single street set at right-angles to the main Hertford to Dunmow road, approximately three-quarters of a kilometre to the east of Old Harlow. It appears to have developed as a result of the removal of the village at Harlowbury to Churchgate Street by the Abbey, probably before the end of the eleventh century. The parish church is sited halfway down the street on the western side. The extent and nature of the medieval built-up area is not known, but it is suggested that it probably resembled the post-medieval settlement, the oldest portions of which are 16th century, and that it took the form of dwellings, lining both sides of the road, probably more of a rural village than urban in nature.

#### **Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin** (TL 4827 1146)

The parish church is of flint-rubble construction with some Roman brick and free-stone incorporated in the make-up and stone dressings. The earliest part is the nave which is 12th century in origin, the central tower may also have belonged to that period. North and south transepts were added in the 13th century, and the chancel and north-east vestry in the late-14th century. The cruciform plan and central tower are unusual in Essex.

### **Old Harlow**

#### **The built-up area** (TL 4709 1150 centred)

The medieval town of Harlow (Old Harlow) was sited on the east-west road from Hertford to Dunmow. It grew up following the grant of a market and annual fair in 1218, although there may already have been an earlier market on the site (Fisher, 1937). The original plan of the town appears to have consisted of a row of properties, essentially rural in appearance, on the southern side of Fore Street/High Street. To the rear of these were strip fields which were farmed by the tenants on the frontage. In front of these properties was an open market-place, possibly extending as far north as St John's churchyard. The northern side of the market-place was then filled in with tenement properties with no gardens, backed by an alley. This block has been identified as the 'Midil Rowe' referred to in 1431 (Fisher, 1939). The

buildings between Back Street and Fore Street are also market infill, referred to in the 1431 survey as 'the middle of the market'.

An excavation next to the Chequers public house (ESMR 9123-6; Andrews, 1991) on the northern side of the market-place revealed a sequence of buildings in or at the edge of the market-place. The earliest of these was of earthfast timber construction, and has been tentatively interpreted by the excavator as a 'seld', a number of which are recorded as having stood in the marketplace in 1383. A 'seld' is variously identified as a market-stall (Fisher, 1939) or a single-storey addition to the rear of a building on the frontage (Keene, 1985). This structure was contemporary with the market place and has been dated to the 13th century. It was replaced by a more permanent timber-framed and clay-floored building, dating to the late 13th to 14th century. The positioning of both these structures shows that the original line of buildings on the site were sited approximately 5m further back than the present street frontage. This building was demolished and a layer of gravel metalling spread over the site in the late 14th to 16th century. An earlier excavation at the rear of this site had found deep waterlogged deposits dating from the 13th to the 15th/16th centuries, possibly the fill of a gravel pit or pond.

### ***The market-place*** (TL 4710 1156)

In 1218 Abbot Hugh II obtained the grant of a weekly market and an annual fair. Fisher (1937) however, argued that there was a possibility of there having been a market here since the mid-12th century. The original market-place appears to have been much bigger, extending possibly as far north as the churchyard, but it was encroached on and areas infilled during the medieval period (see above). There were two market crosses, one in the town centre and one on the Harlow/Latton border .

### ***Market-house*** (TL 4718 1156)

Part of a possible market-house has been identified as having been incorporated into the structure of The George Public House which is sited in the middle of the market-place. One bay with a crown-post roof remains, and there are indication that originally there would have been at least two more bays, one to each side of the survivor.

### ***The fair green*** (TL 4715 1164)

An annual fair was granted in 1218 and was held in the Fair Croft to the north-west of the town behind 'Midil Rowe'

## ***Post-medieval and modern synthesis and components***

With the Dissolution of the Monasteries the Abbey of St Edmund's ceased to be the major land-holder in the area and Harlowbury manor and chapel passed into private hands. The post-medieval era also coincided with a period of decline in the market, possibly linked to the collapse of the wool trade. This decline is archaeologically indicated by the infilling of much of the market-area. In contrast to the decline of the market the post-medieval period was also the time of the flourishing of the Metropolitan slipware pottery industry (Davey, 1966). This was based to the south of the town, around Potter Street, Latton Street and Harlow Common, and supplied the bulk of the slipware pottery found in London. The pottery industry had ceased by 1750, and the Lushington estate map of 1778 shows that there were no extant kilns on the Marks Hall Estate.

In 1947 an area of approximately two and a half thousand hectares was designated as the site for Harlow New Town, one of the eight new satellite settlements to be built around London to relieve the housing shortage. The New Town boundary enclosed four parishes,

Parndon, Netteswell, Latton and Harlow, as well as the Roman Town and Old Harlow, and a number of smaller villages, halls and churches. Frederick Gibberd was appointed planner-architect for the project, his master-plan being completed in 1949. He was subsequently responsible for much of the housing erected in accordance with it. The New Town was characterised by urban building-types in a rural setting.

The post-medieval and modern components are:-

### **Harlowbury**

#### ***Harlowbury Manor*** (TL 4773 1209)

In the 16th century a chimney stack was added to the manor house and an upper floor inserted into the hall. In the late 19th century all but the northern side was encased in brick, giving a Victorian appearance. After the Dissolution the Chapel was converted to agricultural use. Extensive repair work took place in the nineteenth century.

#### ***The mill*** (TL 4776 1213)

The wheelrace of a breastshot watermill excavated to the east of Harlowbury Manor (Andrews, 1991), has been dated on the basis of the pottery and carpentry methods to the 17th century. As it does not appear on the 18th and 19th century maps it is presumed to have become redundant by that date.

### **Old Harlow**

#### ***The built-up area*** (TL 4709 1150 centred)

Harlow grew slowly in the post-medieval period and the basic medieval plan remained largely unchanged, with the exception of further infilling of and encroachment on the market-place. The excavation beside the 'Chequers' Public House illustrates this (Andrews, 1991). Here the walls of the 17th century timber-framed cottage that stood on the site extend over the medieval/early post-medieval market metalling but are still approximately 5m back from the current road edge whilst the 18th century 'Chequers' is on the road frontage. During the 18th century the eastern end of the High Street developed with larger brick-built dwellings joining the earlier thatched cottages.

#### ***The market*** (TL 4707 1153)

As discussed above the market area was further infilled and encroached on in the post-medieval period until it became little more than a widening of the street. A map of 1825 shows a market house opposite the 'Crown' Public House, roughly on the site of the medieval market cross.

#### ***St John the Baptist Church*** (TL 4708 1162)

This church was built in 1839-40 of yellow brick in the lancet style. It was built as a chapel-of-ease for the Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin, and in 1857 it became a parish church in its own right, but the parishes were re-united in 1923. It was made redundant in 1977. A watching-brief on land to the east of the church revealed 19th century sand-pits.

## **Churchgate Street**

### ***Built-up area*** (TL 4833 1149 centred)

Ribbon development continued southwards along Churchgate Street and into Hobbs Cross Road. The Churchgate Hotel (originally Chantry House) was built in the 17th century at the head of Churchgate Street and the school in the 19th century. There are also some groups of 19th century estate workers cottages.

### ***Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin*** (TL 4827 1146)

In the 19th century the organ-chamber, vestry and south porch were added, the central tower rebuilt and a west tower of brick is said to have been removed.

## **SUMMARY OF GENERAL IMPORTANCE OF THE TOWN**

### **HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SUMMARY**

Harlow is of considerable archaeological and historical importance, as an example of a small Roman town and a medieval and post-medieval small market town. The two urban forms are both sited in the north-western quadrant of Harlow New Town but are geographically distinct from each other. Archaeologically the Roman town is of importance as an example of a town that appears to have developed in response to the presence of a temple, it in itself being sited on a site of prehistoric ritual significance. The small market town is of interest in that it is an example of a site which developed from a late Saxon/early medieval manorial centre at Harlowbury, but then was moved twice, first to Churchgate Street and then to Old Harlow and deliberately fostered by the granting of a market. Much could be learnt about changes in housing plan and layout as these foci developed from village to urban centre. Harlow New Town is important as an example of a post-war new town.

The earlier prehistoric evidence in Harlow consists of scattered flint flakes and tools. The Bronze Age is represented by a line of burial sites along the southern bank of the River Stort, including a group of eight burial urns at the later Roman temple site. In the Iron Age Harlow lay on the tribal boundary between the Catuvellauni in Hertfordshire and the Trinovantes in Essex. At the temple hill there were two roundhouses of mid to late Iron Age date and numerous Iron Age coins, small finds and animal bones. The quantity and pattern of distribution of the coins, coupled with what appears to have been deliberate damage to the small finds suggests that the site had a religious rather than domestic function. The discovery of coins of a late Iron Age date in the Holbrooks area suggests that the Roman town occupied a pre-existing Late Iron Age site. Roman Harlow consisted of a temple, which developed from the Iron Age temple, and a widespread area of occupation, interpreted as urban in nature, to the north and east of it. Within this area of occupation there is evidence for both masonry and timber buildings, an internal road-pattern and manufacturing areas, as well as a masonry building which has been variously interpreted as a second temple and a public building. The town seems to have grown in response to the presence of the temple.

The evidence for the Saxon period is lighter, although there is sufficient to indicate settlement within the area. There is a Saxon structure at Harlow Temple, interpreted as a pagan shrine by R. Bartlett (pers. comm.). Saxon pottery and metalwork have also been recovered from the Harlow area. By the end of the Saxon period it was the centre of the Saxon administrative division known as the Harlow Hundred, which stretched from Roydon to Halvingbury.

Medieval Harlow was a polyfocal settlement, the dominant landowner being the Abbey of St Edmunds in Bury, Suffolk. The oldest part is Harlowbury, which was the manorial centre and there may also have been an early medieval village on this site. The medieval town of Harlow (Old Harlow) is sited to the south-west of Harlowbury on the east-west Hertford to Dunmow road. It grew as a result of the granting of a fair and a market on the site in 1218, although there is some evidence that there had previously been a small settlement and market there in Stephen's reign (1135-54). Abbot Hugh gave the tenants a charter allowing them to hold their tenements 'as freely as our burgesses of St Edmund and our other burgesses'. However an inquisition held in 1290 concluded that the market tenants were of villein status, even if they paid rent rather than carrying out customary services. To the south-east of Old Harlow and physically distinct from the main urban focus is Churchgate Street where the Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin is sited. The medieval economy appears to have been based on the market and the collection and preparation of wool. There is also documentary evidence of potters in Harlow (in the Potter Street area to the south of the medieval town) since the 13th century (Newton and Bibbings 1960), and two kilns dating to c.1500 have been found on Harlow Common.

With the Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1536 the Abbey of St Edmund's ceased to be the major land-holder in the area. There appears to have been a period of depression in the post-medieval period, with the market being held only sporadically; this coincides with a period of encroachment on and further infilling of the market area. However, in contrast to the fortunes of the market, it was during the post-medieval period that Harlow rose to archaeological prominence due to its pottery industry, which was based around Potter Street, Latton Street, and towards Harlow Common, which supplied the bulk of the slipware pottery found in London.

In 1947 the area was designated as the site for Harlow New Town, one of the eight new satellite settlements to be built around London to relieve the housing shortage. The New Town boundary enclosed four parishes, Parndon, Netteswell, Latton and Harlow, as well as the Roman Town and Old Harlow, and a number of smaller villages, halls and churches. Frederick Gibberd was appointed planner-architect for the project; completing his master-plan in 1949. He was subsequently responsible for much of the housing erected in accordance with it. The New Town was characterised by urban building-types in a rural setting.

## **SURVIVAL**

Some zoning of potential survival can be undertaken. In the Roman town area much of the temple has been excavated, however those portions of the temple hill that have not been examined have a high potential of cut features, buried land surfaces and the lower courses of masonry structures. In the remainder of the Roman town large-scale modern disturbance took place during the construction of the industrial estate and housing, although there is a possibility that areas of cut features survive under carparks, concrete floors and gardens. In the Harlowbury area the potential of survival is good; there is some post-medieval disturbance but little of a modern nature. The degree of survival in the area of the medieval town in both Old Harlow and Churchgate Street is uncertain. The one excavation undertaken (beside the Chequers, Old Harlow) did uncover cut features and floor levels, so there is a possibility of there being further evidence underneath the post-medieval and modern town. The survival of the post-medieval and the New Town built environment is good.

Waterlogged deposits are expected to be rare or absent in either the Roman or medieval towns, except from either very localised deposits along the river edge or from discrete features such as wells and the deeper pits. The soil type is alkaline, bone survival is good, as is that of ceramic and metallic objects.

There have been a number of archaeological excavations in Harlow, the majority of which have been in the Roman temple and town area, with smaller scale excavations at Harlowbury and Old Harlow. However, only the 1985-6 excavations of the temple and the excavations at Harlowbury Chapel and The Chequers, Old Harlow have been published. There are extensive manorial records for the manor of Harlowbury from the late 14th to the 20th centuries, and also smaller collections of manorial material for other estates. The maps available are rather limited, but the one of 1847 shows the town before the first OS maps. There are local government records from the late 19th century to before the founding of the new town and papers relating to the New Town.

The amenity value of the Roman town is low: the temple remains as open space and the walls have been marked out in concrete but the site is in need of maintenance and access is difficult; the remainder of the Roman town is under industrial estate and housing development. However, the medieval and post-medieval town is of higher amenity value: Harlowbury and Churchgate Street still have a visual cohesion and are demonstrably 'old', whilst Old Harlow retains sufficient of its post-medieval structures and layout to be recognisable as a 'historic town'. Harlow Museum has informative displays on the history and development of the Harlow area from the prehistoric period onwards.

## **CURRENT PLANNING CONSTRAINTS**

There are a number of Scheduled Ancient Monuments in or immediately adjacent to the Historic Town area, these are the Chapel at Harlowbury (SAM 50), the Roman Temple (SAM 62), the mound known as the Moot Mound 250 metres to the north of The Kennels (SAM 73), Harlowbury deserted medieval village (SAM 171), the cursus to the south of Gilden Way (SAM 24858) and the Roman Villa to the north of Gilden Way (SAM 24860). The Conservation Area covers the majority of the medieval and post-medieval town, and part of the New Town. There are 53 Listed Buildings in historic Harlow. Of these, 2 are listed grade I (Harlowbury Chapel and manor house), 2 are grade II\* and the remainder are grade II. The line of the River Stort and the area to the east of the town is Green Belt. The Gibberd Garden is a Registered Historic Park or Garden.

## **RESEARCH PRIORITIES**

### ***Roman period***

Harlow appears to have developed in the Roman period on a Late Iron Age site. The town area, in particular the temple site, already had a religious significance in both the Bronze Age and the Iron Age. The Roman town appears to have been largely based on the temple/s although it probably also had a market function. Going (in Brown and Glazebrook, forthcoming) has identified a period of decay and dereliction in many of the East Anglian region's towns after the mid third century. Questions have also been raised regarding the nature of later Roman industries in towns and the presence of agricultural activities within the urban area (Going forthcoming). With regard to these issues the archaeology of Harlow has a significance at a local and regional level.

The research priorities for the Roman period are:-

- The records of the unpublished excavations should be assessed in order to establish what they could add to our knowledge of the Roman town and a publication plan agreed.
- The origins and subsequent development of the Roman small town need to be examined.
- The economic basis of the town, its internal morphology and chronological development is little understood and further work is required in these areas.
- The relationship between the Roman town and its hinterland needs to be examined, Harlow presents a particularly good opportunity for such studies, in the light of the large-scale fieldwork at Gilden Way and Church Langley.

### ***Saxon Period***

The processes of change from the late Roman to early Saxon period and the late Saxon to early medieval periods have been highlighted as an important area of study at the national level (English Heritage, 1997).

The research priorities for the Saxon period are:-

- The period of transition from the Roman town to the early Saxon settlement needs to be examined. It is not known whether the town had been abandoned by the time the first Saxon settlers arrived at Harlow, or whether both population groups co-existed, or indeed whether one group forcibly expelled the other.
- The possibility that the Early Saxon structure at the temple was a pagan shrine needs to be examined.
- The location, morphology and date of the later Saxon settlement at Harlowbury need to be established, as do the processes of change from the late Saxon to early medieval period.

### ***Medieval, post-medieval and modern period***

The understanding of the development and function of the medieval and post-medieval small market town and the exploration of theories regarding the interaction of settlement form with social action, economy, politics etc. have been highlighted as an important area of study at the national level (English Heritage, 1997; Ayres in Brown and Glazebrook, forthcoming). The research priorities for the medieval and post-medieval period are:-

- Fieldwork undertaken within Harlow has added little to our knowledge of the medieval town, principally because modern development has led to a concentration of archaeological investigation on the area of the Roman town. Subsequent fieldwork should be targeted to correct this imbalance.
- The transition from the late Saxon to the medieval periods needs to be examined.
- The records of the unpublished excavations should be assessed in order to establish what they could add to our knowledge of the Roman town and a publication plan agreed.
- Harlow presents an opportunity to examine a number of important issues, including those of patronage and the processes of shifting urban settlement.
- The medieval pottery from the ?production site at Motts Green should be assessed to decide whether it is from a production site or a habitation site. The medieval kiln material from Harlow common should be located and assessed with a view to publication, along with any other kiln material that might be in Harlow museum or in private possession.
- It is also important to publish any outstanding post-medieval material, especially the Metropolitan slipware industry, to enable whole patterns to be identified from sherd material. Any dating evidence provided by excavations of the kilns and waster-heaps would be most useful, as would any diagnostic features that allow Harlow products to be differentiated from those of Stock or Loughton.

- Harlow New Town presents an opportunity to examine the intentions inherent in the founding of a New Town and how this was realised in its physical fabric and subsequent development.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Richard Bartlett for his information and advice.

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1: Documentary sources

Archive	Classmark	Number	Date	Description
B.L.	Harl.	51 E.26,27; 56 G.14	temp. Hen. III - Edw. I	Grants.
E.R.O.	D/DEs	M1-79	1390-1962	Extensive manorial records, court rolls etc., manor of Harlow.
B.L.	Add. Ch.	55182- 55192	14th - 18th cent.	Rentals of More Hall in Harlow.
P.R.O.	SC2	123-125	Edw. II - Geo. III	Books of reliefs, fines etc., for Honor of Clare including Harlow. See P.R.O. List and Index VI (1896) for full listings.
P.R.O.	SC6	1117/11	3-4 Edw. IV	Receiver's accounts, incl. Harlow Hundred.
P.R.O.	SC2	72/893	4-6 Hen. VII	Estreats and rents of Maundeville Hundred, including Harlow.
B.L.	Add. Ch.	4815-6; 4821; 1967	1551-2; 1579; 1675	Extracts from court rolls of Harlow Bury manor.
P.R.O.	SC2	74/915	21 Jas I	Maundeville and Tutbury honors, including full list of tenants and holdings with fines and services in the Hundred of Harlow. Memoranda of courts to be held.
P.R.O.	E317	Essex 6	Commonwealth	Survey of Harlow (Hundred?).
E.R.O.	D/DK	M70-73.	1650, 1700-1793, 1783	Rentals and court rolls of manors of New Hall, Brent Hall, Kitchen Hall.
E.R.O.	D/P	32/28/1	1680-92	Rental of manor of Harlow Bury.
E.R.O.	T/M	132	1741	Road map of roads around Harlow. Turnpikes. Some buildings. Scale: 1 and 1/4 in. to 1m.
B.L.	Add. MS.	32502	1772-1775	Vicar's tithe rental.
E.R.O.	D/P	32/28/2	1797	Account of inhabitants of parish grouped by occupation.
E.R.O.	D/DU	44/2	1847	Estate map including enlarged inset of part of town. Scale: 20 in. to 1m.
E.R.O.	D/CT	164	1849	13.3 in. to 1m.
E.R.O.	D/RE		1894-1955	Epping Rural District records.

APPENDIX 2: Listed buildings

Serial No.	Date	Street	No.	Name	Building Type	GV	Grade	Material
2/2	12	Old Road		Chapel	Chapel	Y	I	Rubble, reigate clunch, brick
9/3	12	Churchgate Street		Parish Church of St. Mary and St. Hugh	Church	N	II	Flint, roman brick
2/1	13	Old Road		Harlowbury		Y	I	Timber framed, stock brick
5/18	15	Fore Street		The Gables	House	N	II*	
5/4	15	Market Street	38	T. R. Gladwin General Stores		N	II	Timber framed, plastered, weatherboarded
5/8	15/16	Fore Street		Marquis Of Granby Public House	Public House	N	II	Timber framed, plastered, weatherboarded
5/6	15/16	Market Street		The Crown Public House	Public House	N	II	Timber framed, plastered
7/9	15/16	Sheering Drive	14	Newhall	House	N	II	Timber framed, plastered
9/5	16	Churchgate Street		The Queen's Head Public House	House	N	II*	Timber framed, plastered
7/6	16	Churchgate Street	1	Meathams	House	N	II	
7/11	16	Churchgate Street	2, 3, 4	Godsafe		N	II	Timber framed,
5/20	16-17	Fore Street	21			N	II	Timber framed, plastered, ashlar marked
9/1	17	Churchgate Street	17, 19	Post Office	Shop	N	II	
7/12	17	Churchgate Street	15		House	N	II	Timber framed,
7/10	17	Churchgate Street	13		House	N	II	Timber framed, plastered
9/8	17	Churchgate Street		Churchgate Hotel	House	N	II	Timber framed, plastered
9/4	17	Churchgate Street		Stafford Almshouses	Almshouse	N	II	Timber framed, weatherboarded
5/14	17	High Street	32		Shop	N	II	Timber framed, weatherboarded
5/10	17	High Street	34			N	II	Timber framed, plastered, ashlar
7/8	17	Sheering Drive	8, 10	Long Barn	Barn	N	II	Timber framed, weatherboarded
5/26	17/18	Market Street	42-48 [even], 50		Tenement	N	II	Timber framed, plastered, weatherboarded
9/6	18	Churchgate Street	28, 30, 32	Disty's[30]	House	N	II	Timber framed, weatherboarded, brick
9/7	18	Churchgate Street	42, 44			N	II	Timber framed, plastered, weatherboarded
5/15	18	High Street	2		Bank	N	II	Timber framed, plastered
5/16	18	High Street	7, 9			N	II	Roughcast

5/11	18	High Street	71	Chesnut Cottage	House	N	II	Timber framed, plastered
5/12	18	High Street		Marigolds	House	N	II	Flemish bond gault brick
5/7	18	Market Street		The Chequers Public House	Public House	N	II	Brick, plastered
5/24	18	Market Street	60	Nunns	House	Y	II	Flemish bond brick
7/4	18	Sheering Road	13, 15	Almshouses	Almshouse	N	II	Flemish bond brick
5/1	18	Station Road		Barclays Bank	House	N	II	Flemish bond brick
7/2	18/19	Sheering Road		Mill Hurst	House	Y	II	Stucco
7/3	18/19	Sheering Road		Garden Wall of 70ft. and Gate Piers	Garden wall	Y	II	Brick
7/5	19	Churchgate Street	2, 4, 6		House	N	II	Timber framed, weatherboarded
9/2	19	Churchgate Street	21, 23, 25		Tenement	N	II	Timber framed, rendered, weatherboarded
9/9	19	Churchgate Street		Lychgate to Churchyard of St. Mary and St. Hugh	Lych gate	N	II	Tarred softwood
7/7	19	Churchgate Street		The School	School	N	II	Ragstone
8/2	19	East Park	115	Gate Lodge		N	II	Flemish bond brick
8/1	19	Fore Street		Harlow Baptist Church	Church	N	II	Stock brick
5/19	19	Fore Street	19			N	II	Flemish bond stock brick
5/21	19	Fore Street	23, 25			N	II	Flemish bond brick
3/24	19	Hare Street	96, 97		Tenement	Y	II	Flemish bond stock brick
5/13	19	High Street		The Wayre	House	N	II	Flemish bond stock brick, stone plinth
8/3	19	London Road		Fawbert and Barnards School	School	N	II	Flemish bond stock brick
8/4	19	London Road		Garden Wall	Wall	N	II	Stock brick
5/23	19	Market Street	54, 56, 58			Y	II	English bond, flemish bond brick
6/2	19	Old Road	4		House	N	II	Flemish bond brick
5/22	19	Park Hill		West House	House	N	II	Flemish bond stock brick
5/25	19	Park Hill	9	Hemsford	House	N	II	Flemish bond stock brick
7/1	19	Sherring Road	23		Residential building	N	II	Weatherboarded, rendered
5/3	19	St John's Walk		St John's Cottage	House	Y	II	Rendered, weatherboarded
5/2	19	St John's Walk		Church of St. John the Baptist	Church	Y	II	Flemish bond stock brick
5/9	19	Station Road		Former George Hotel	Hotel	N	II	Brick, plastered, ashlar
9/10	20	Churchgate Street		K6 Telephone Kiosk	Telephone box	N	II	

APPENDIX 3: Urban components list

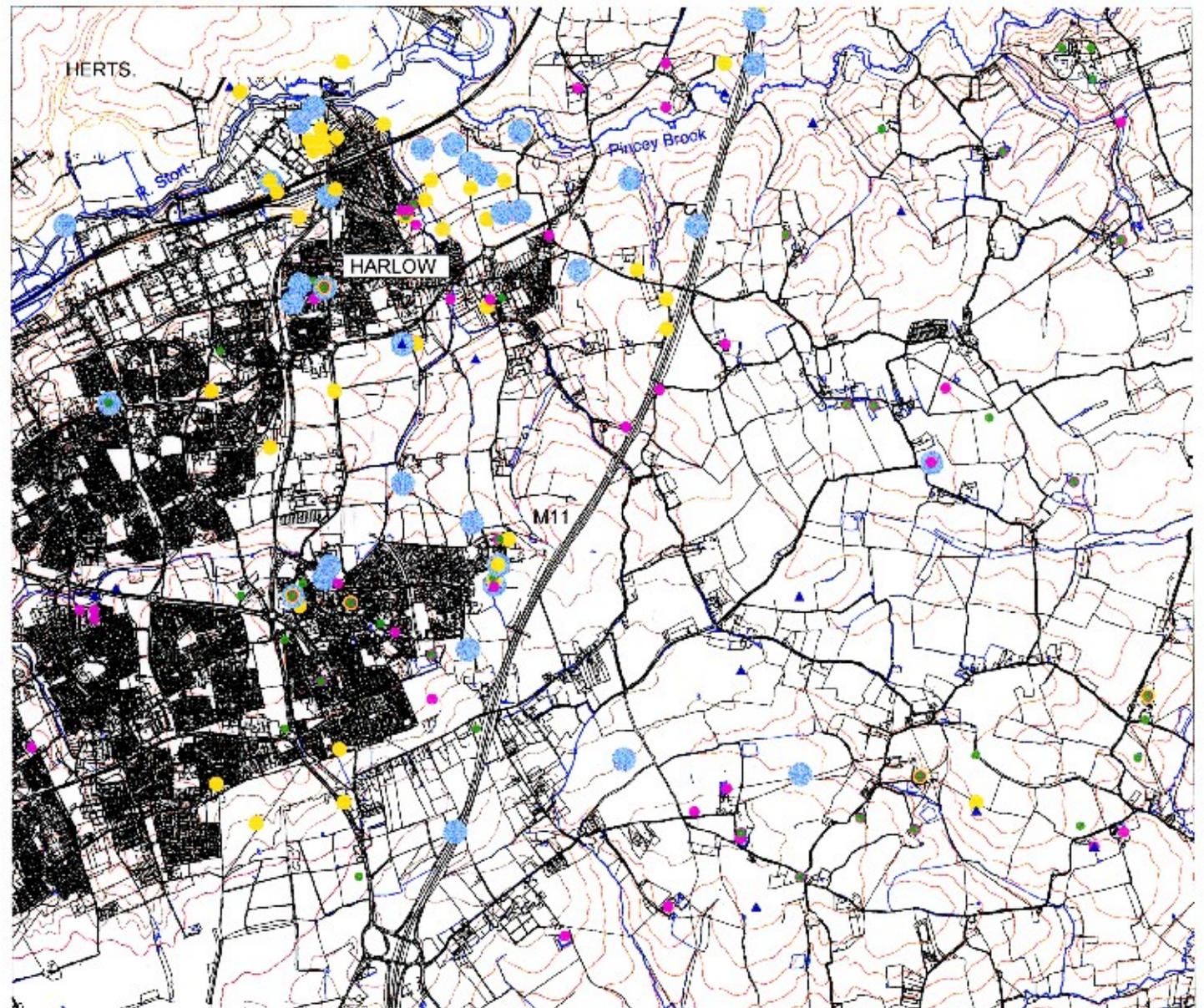
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ROMAN	
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223	BUILT-UP AREA
224	ROADS
225	BURIALS
226	HOLBROOKS MASONRY STRUCTURE
221	TEMPLE
MEDIEVAL	
230	BUILT-UP AREA
229	DESERTED MEDIEVAL VILLAGE
228	HARLOWBURY CHAPEL
227	HARLOWBURY MANOR HOUSE
233	PARISH CHURCH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN
231	MARKET-PLACE
579	MARKET-HOUSE
238	MILL
232	FAIR GREEN
POST-MEDIEVAL	
234	PARISH CHURCH OF ST JOHN
235	PARISH CHURCH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN
236	BUILT-UP AREA
237	MARKET
239	MARKET-HOUSE
241	MILL
240	HARLOWBURY MANOR

# HARLOW Environs



## SMR Sites

-  PREHISTORIC
-  ROMAN
-  MEDIEVAL
-  POST MEDIEVAL
-  MODERN
-  UNCERTAIN

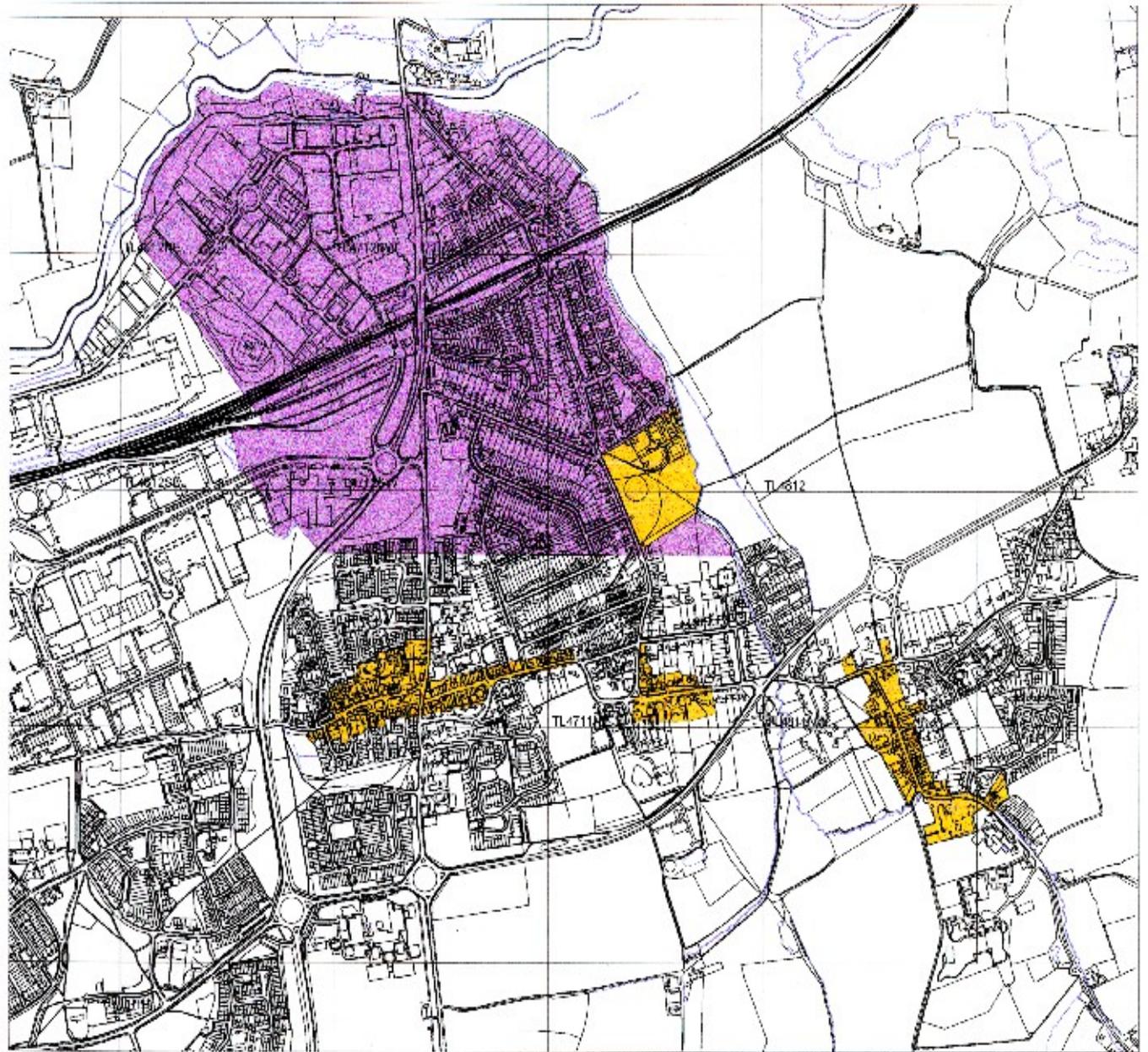


# HARLOW

## Historic Town Extent



-  Medieval and post-medieval town
-  Roman town



0 0.5 1 1.5 Kilometers

# HARLOW

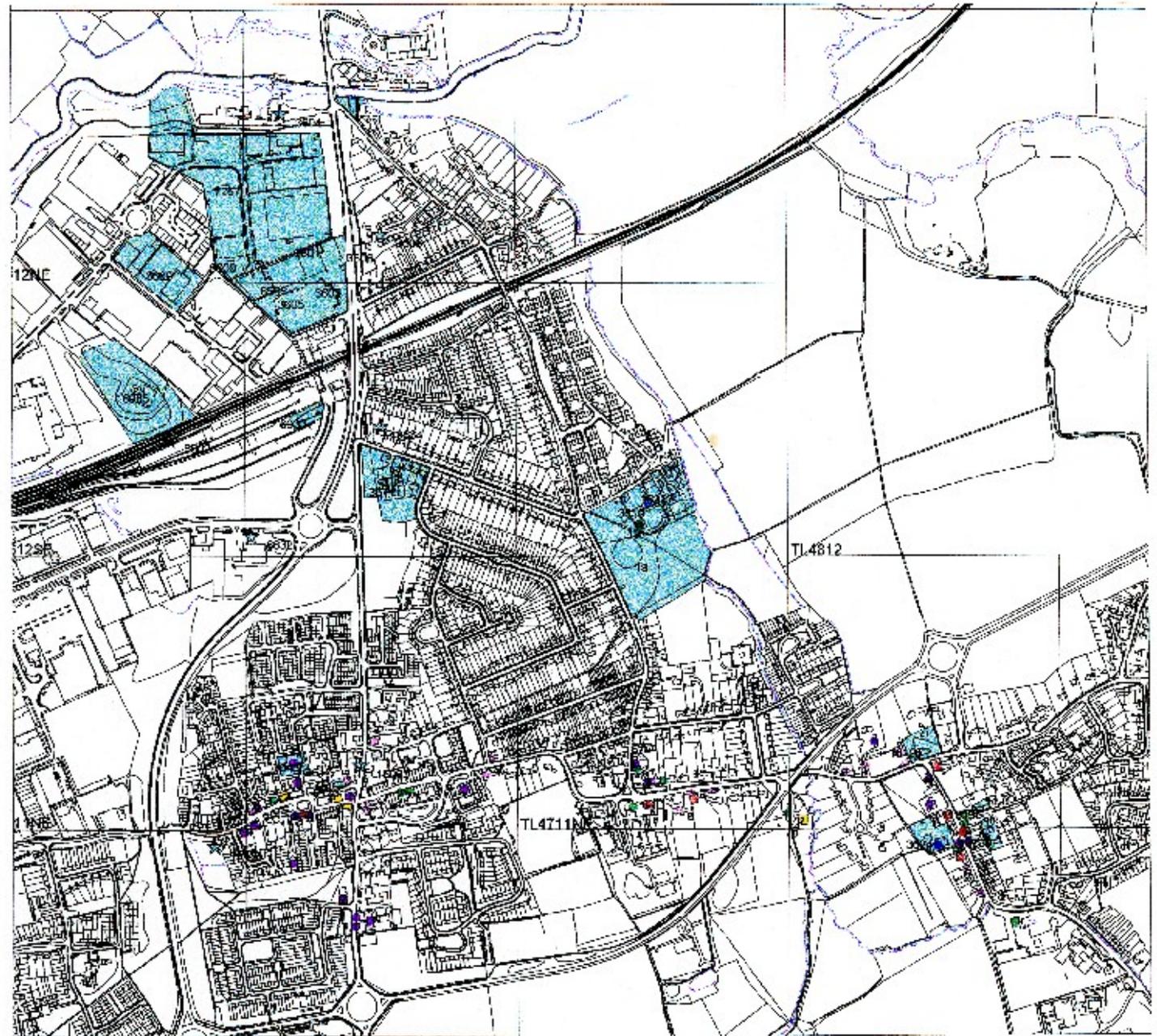
## SMR sites and Listed Buildings



### Listed Buildings by century of origin

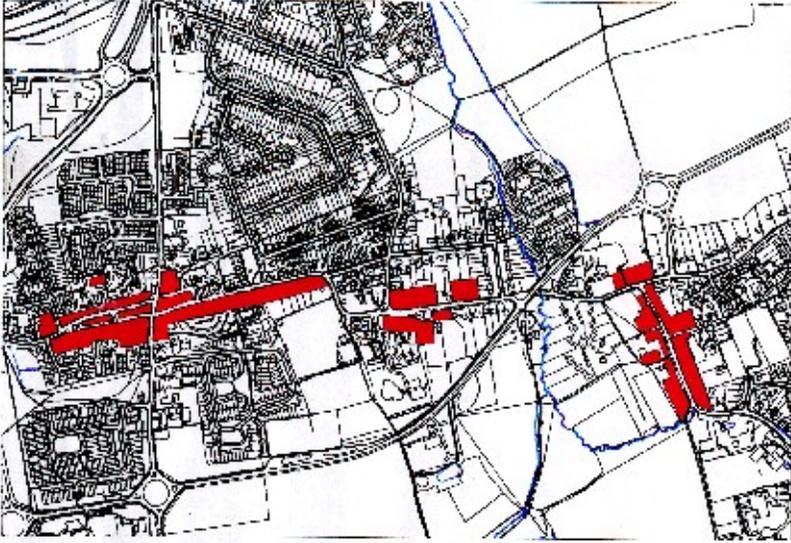
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- 13
- 15
- MED
- 16
- 17
- 18
- 19
- 20

- SMR site
- ☆ SMR find-spot

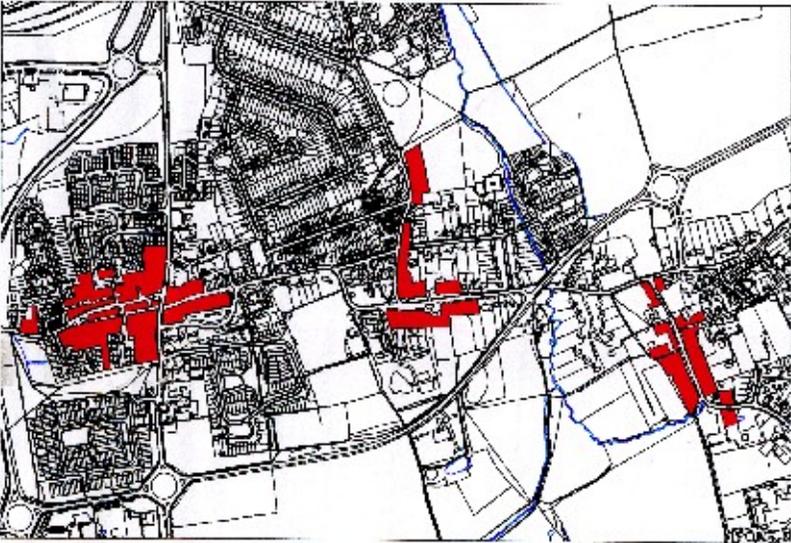


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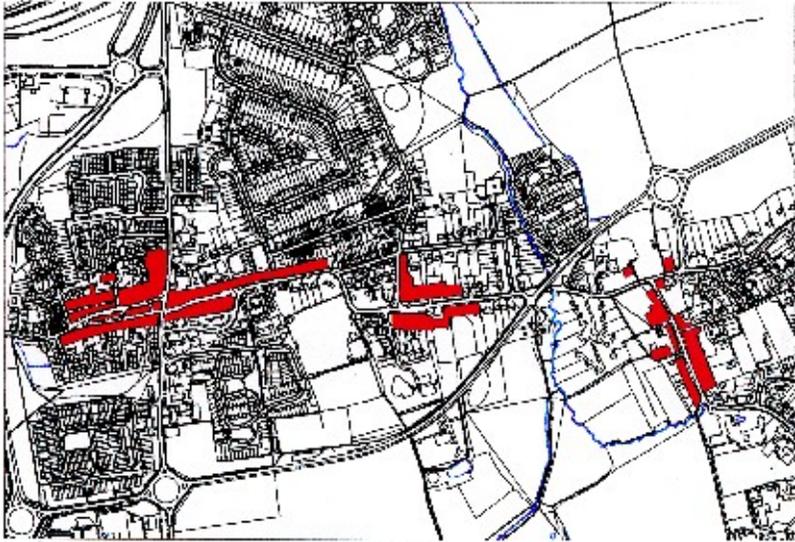
# The Development of Harlow from the Cartographic Evidence



1777



1849



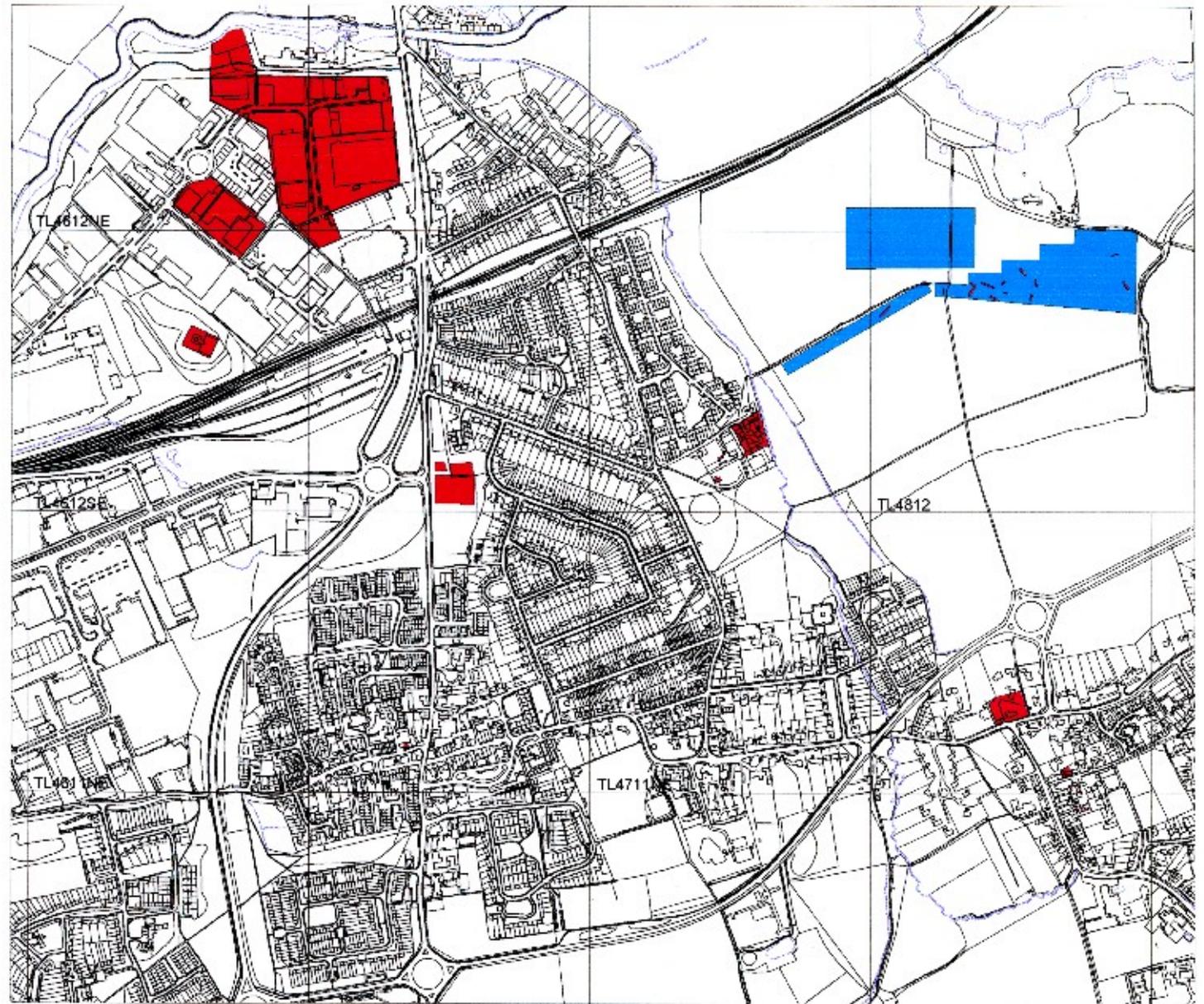
1881

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# HARLOW Fieldwork



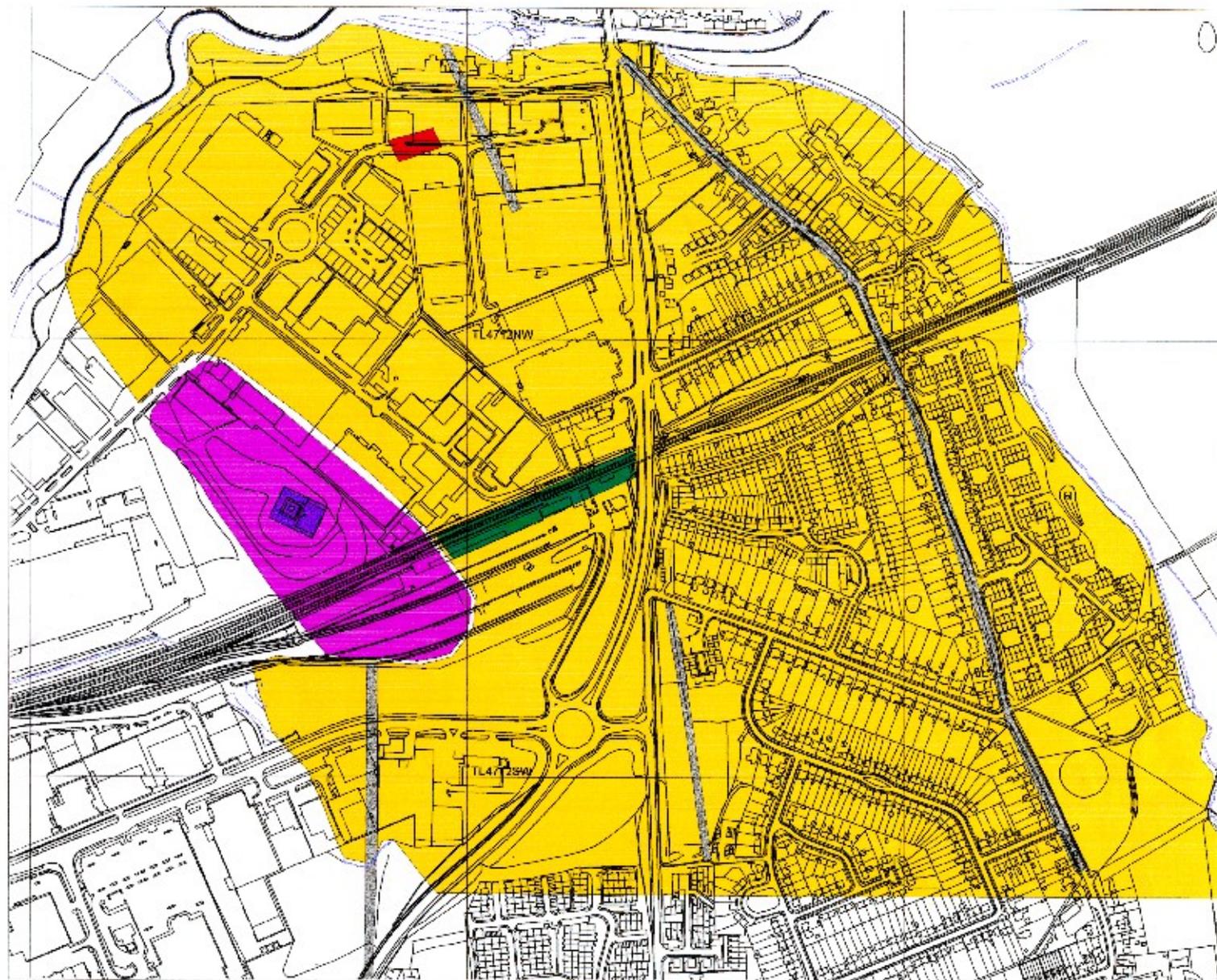
-  Excavation/watching-brief
-  Geophysical survey



# HARLOW ROMAN INTERPRETATION



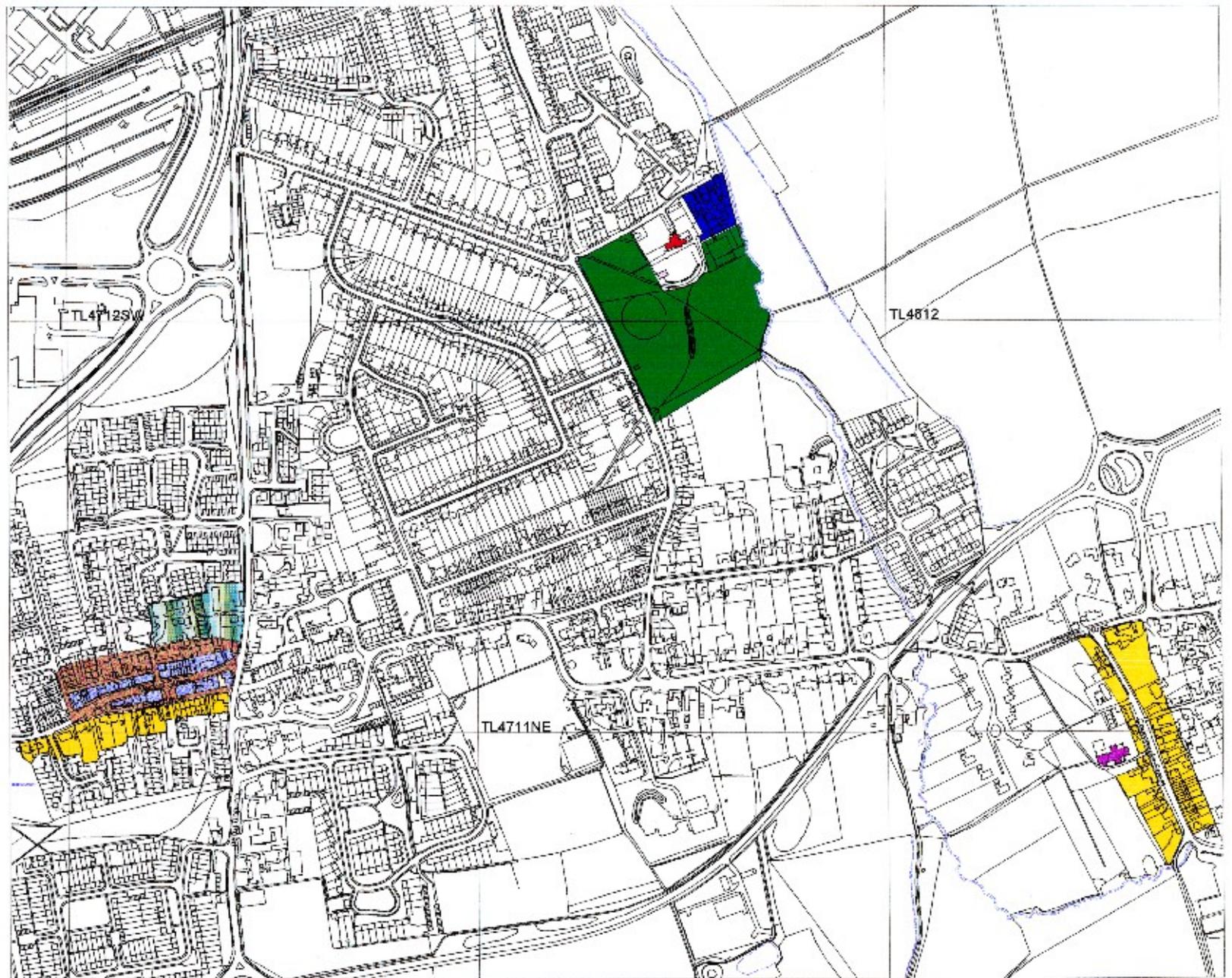
- KEY**
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  - BURIALS
  - HOLBROOKS MASONRY STRUCTURE
  - ROADS
  - TEMPLE
  - TEMPLE PRECINCT



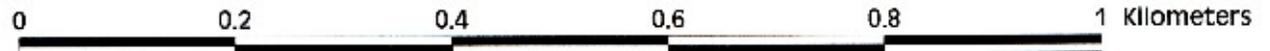
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# HARLOW

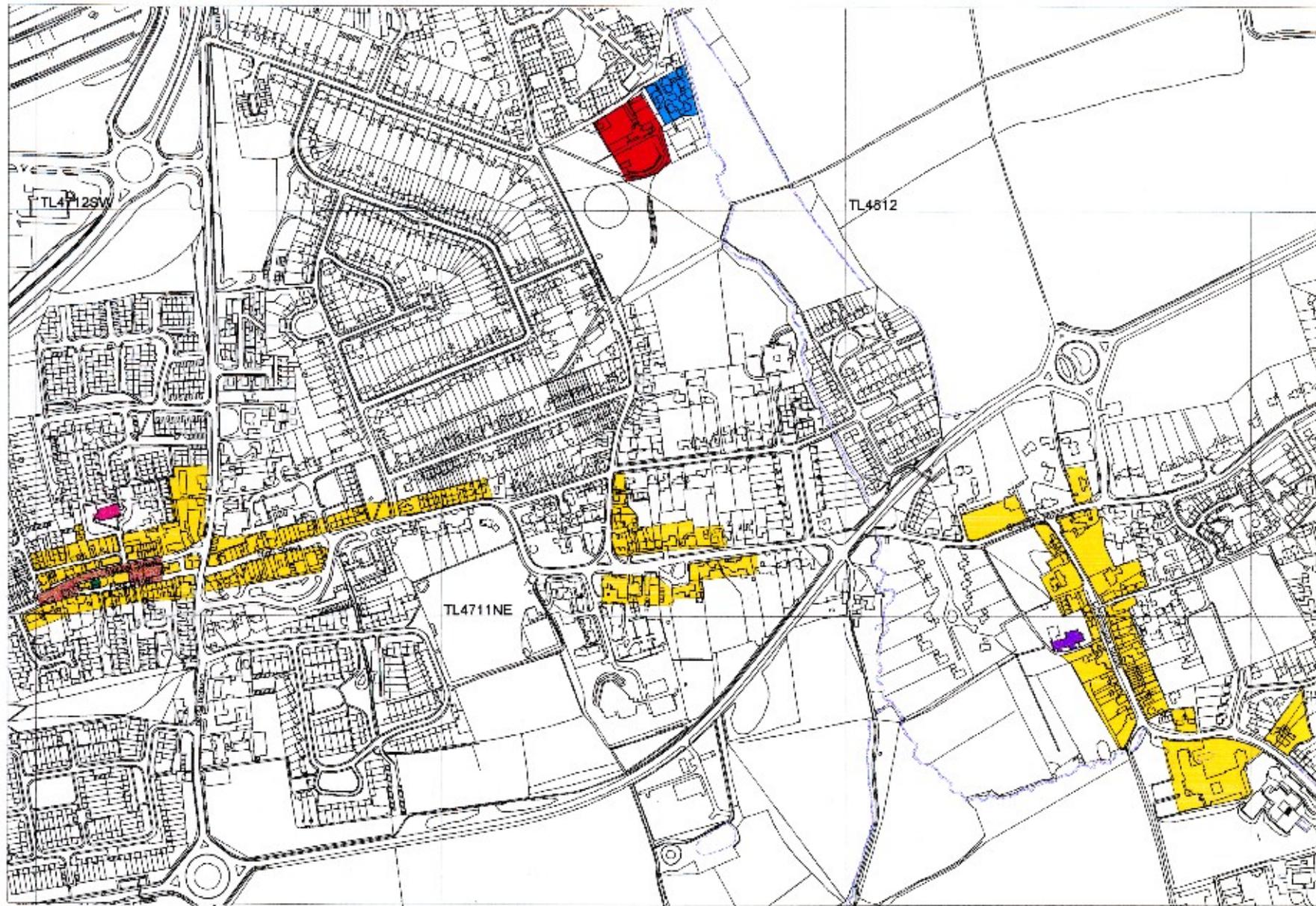
## Medieval interpretation



- KEY
- BUILT-UP AREA
  - DESERTED MEDIEVAL VILLAGE
  - FAIR GREEN
  - HARLOWBURY CHAPEL
  - HARLOWBURY MANOR HOUSE
  - INFILLED MARKET-PLACE
  - MARKET-PLACE
  - MILL
  - PARISH CHURCH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN
  - MARKET-HOUSE



**HARLOW**  
Post-medieval interpretation



- KEY**
- BUILT-UP AREA
  - HARLOWBURY MANOR HOUSE
  - MARKET
  - MARKET-HOUSE
  - MILL
  - PARISH CHURCH OF ST JOHN
  - PARISH CHURCH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN



# HARLOW

## Planning constraints



### Constraints

- Listed Buildings
- Scheduled Ancient Monument
- Registered Historic Park or Garden
- Special Landscape Area
- Common Land
- Conservation Area
- Site of Importance for Nature Conservation
- Metropolitan Green Belt

