
# THAMES WATER
# Milford Gardens FAS
# Stanmore
# HA8

London Borough of Harrow

An archaeological watching brief report

February 2005

REGISTERED IFA ORGANISATION

MUSEUM OF LONDON
Archaeology Service

THAMES WATER
Milford Gardens FAS
Stanmore
HA8

London Borough of Harrow

Site Code: MFG04


Project Manager — Elizabeth Howe
Author — Simon Davis
Kenneth Lymer



Museum of London Archaeology Service



Mortimer Wheeler House, 46 Eagle Wharf Road, London N1 7ED
tel 020 7410 2200 fax 020 7410 2201
email molas@molas.org.uk

# Summary (non-technical)

*This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief that was carried out by the Museum of London Archaeology Service (MoLAS) at the site of the Thames Water flood alleviation scheme in Milford Gardens, Stanmore. Claire Cable on behalf of Thames Water Utilities commissioned the report from MoLAS.*

*Following the recommendations of the English Heritage archaeological advisor (GLAAS) for the London Borough of Harrow, an archaeological watching brief was carried out during the proposed programme of groundworks.*

*The results of the investigation have helped to refine the initial assessment of the archaeological potential of the site. Mechanical excavations within the area of the proposed groundwork and associated enabling works were monitored from the 25.10.2004–23.11.2004. The scheme comprised a programme of topsoil removal and the deep mechanical excavation of a circular shaft (shaft A) to enable the installation of a storm water storage tank. The works at Milford Gardens (Chandos recreation ground) comprise part of a programme of groundwork associated with a proposed flood alleviation scheme.*

*Three undated small circular pits were recorded along the southern edge of the main compound area. Full excavation of the features produced no datable material. The pits are thought to have derived from either the post-medieval landscaping of Chandos recreation ground or from the nearby gardens adjacent to Camrose Avenue.*

# Table Of Contents

# List of Illustrations

*Front cover: The site in the 19th century (The Village London Atlas)*

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Site background

The watching brief took place in Chandos Recreation ground, Little Stanmore, hereafter called 'the site'. The centre of the site is at OS National Grid Reference 518852 190847. The proposed works comprised the excavation of two shafts (A and B, Fig 2) to enable the installation of a storage tank as part of a programme of flood alleviation work. A programme of archaeological monitoring was carried out during the removal of topsoil and where relevant subsoil deposits from the working areas within the site compound. The modern ground level immediately adjacent to the site entrance was recorded at a height of *c* 60.00m AOD. The site code is MFG 04.

## 1.2 The planning and legislative framework

The proposed work constitutes permitted development, under the terms of the Town and Country Planning Act, being exempt from the requirement for planning permission under the General Development Order. Thames Water adheres to the terms of the Code of Practice on Conservation, Access and Recreation, published as a result of the 1989 Water Act, insofar as its activities may affect the historic landscape.

## 1.3 Origin and scope of the report

This report was commissioned by Claire Cable of Thames Water Utilities Plc and produced by the Museum of London Archaeology Service (MoLAS). The report has been prepared within the terms of the relevant Standard specified by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA 2001).

The purpose of the watching brief was to determine whether archaeological remains or features were present on the site and, if so, to record the nature and extent of such remains. A number of more site-specific research aims and objectives were established in the preceding *Method Statement* (Howe 2004), and are outlined in the following section.

The purpose of the present report is to analyse the results of the investigation against the original research aims, and to suggest what type of further work, including analysis or publication (if any), should now take place.

## 1.4 Aims and objectives

The following research aims and objectives were established in the *Method Statement* for the watching brief (Section 2.2):

The limited nature of the proposed works and the watching brief upon them makes it unreasonable to establish many specific archaeological research objectives. The archaeological brief is essentially limited to establishing where, if at all, archaeological deposits may survive (presence/absence), recording where necessary, and to ensuring that the proposed groundworks do not involve the destruction of any archaeological deposits of national significance. Nevertheless, in addition, a few research questions can be outlined:

1. What was the level of natural topography?

2. What are the earliest deposits identified?

3. What are the latest deposits identified?

4. Is there evidence for the medieval manor of Little Stanmore?

All research is undertaken within the priorities established in the Museum of London's *A research framework for London Archaeology 2002*.

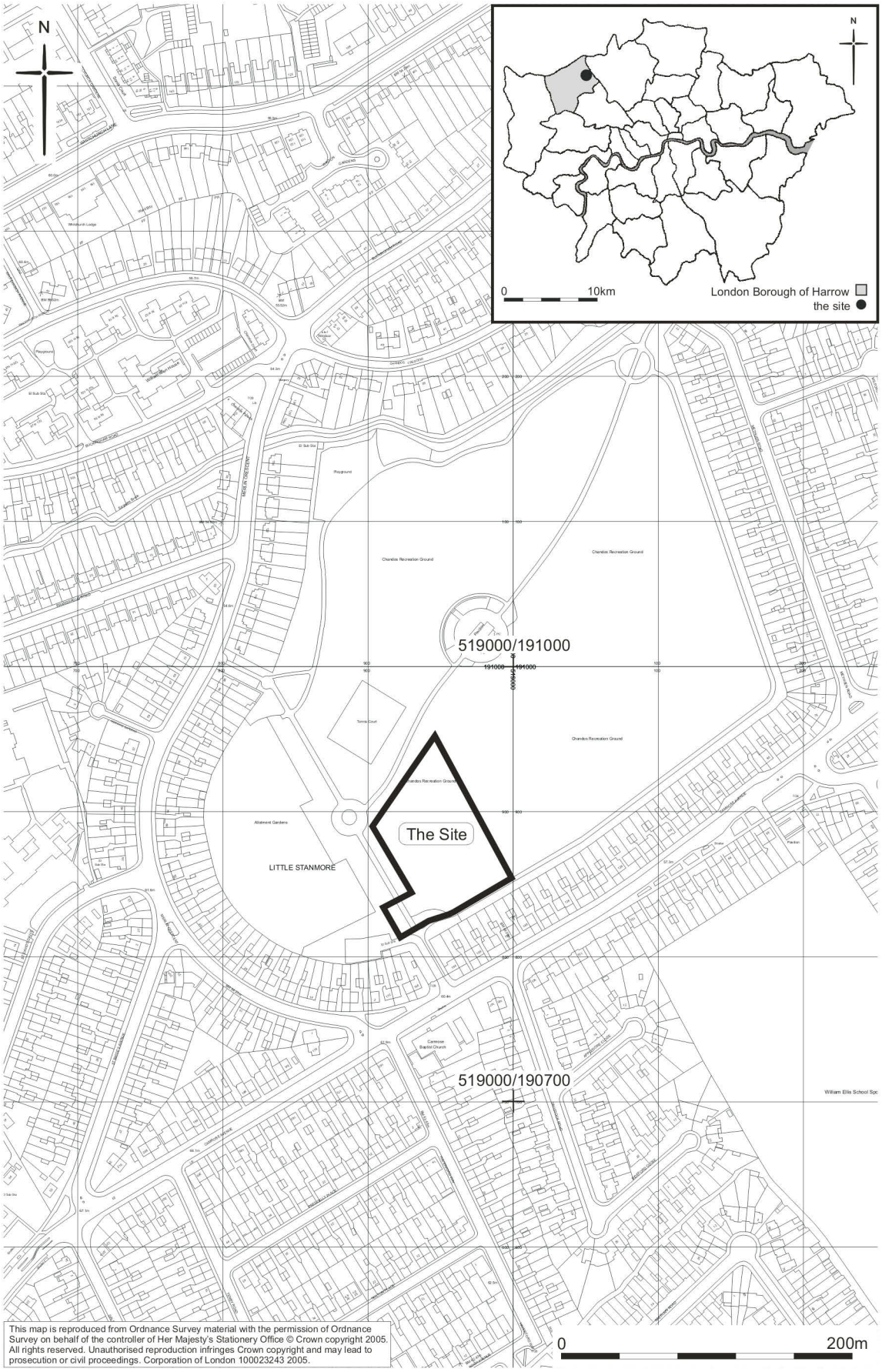




Fig 1 Site location

# 2 Topographical and historical background

### *2.1.1 Geology and topography*

London occupies part of the Thames Basin, a broad syncline of chalk filled in the centre with Tertiary sands and clays. In most of London, this Tertiary series of bedrock consists of London Clay. Above the bedrock lie the Pleistocene (Quaternary) fluvial deposits of the River Thames arranged in flights or gravel terraces. These terraces represent the remains of former floodplains of the river, the highest being the oldest with each terrace becoming progressively younger down the valley side. The natural terraces slope gradually down to the north towards the river.

The Geological Survey of 1994 demonstrates that the study site lies within the Thames Basin on the London Clay

The contemporary ground level within the central part of the site is *c* 59.40m AOD.

### *2.1.2 Prehistoric*

Entries in the Greater London Sites and Monuments Register identify chance finds. There are no prehistoric entries relating directly to the site.

Later maps indicate the areas of marshland that could have been utilised in earlier periods. During the prehistoric periods much of the area close to the Edgware Brook would have been wet and marshy with pools of water separated by boggy ground. Areas such as this would have been exploited by prehistoric people for food, such as wild plants, fish and waterfowl, as well as for building materials such as reeds and willow.

### *2.1.3 Roman*

The arrival of the Romans in AD 43 brought about a distinct change in the settlement pattern in the London area. Within approximately a decade, the Romans had established a town on the north bank of the Thames where the City of London now stands. A network of roads stretched out in several directions from this town.

The site is located about 600m to the west of Edgware Road, a modern route aligned along the Roman road Watling Street. Watling Street linked London and St. Albans. Although the exact line of the Roman road has not been determined in Edgware, the nearest location at which it has been positively identified was on Brockley Hill, 3 km to the north of the site. At Brockley Hill, the Roman road was identified to the west of the line of the modern road and was 9.40m wide. A ditch was recorded parallel to the west side of the road which itself was constructed from a bank of clay with gravel layers. The road was in use up to the 4th century.

Brockley Hill has been considered to be the location of the Roman settlement of *Sulloniacae.* At the summit of Brockley Hill pottery kilns have been excavated[1]. In the absence of identifiable dwellings at Brockley Hill, it may be that the Roman settlement is located further to the south. Within Canons Park a Roman tile kiln has been excavated and part of a Roman building in the form of a floor has been found. A Roman coin was found to the south of the site. These finds suggest some Roman activity close to the site.

### *2.1.4 Saxon*

There was some settlement in the Edgware area by the 10th century. Edgware is first mentioned in a charter of AD 978 as 'The Old Town Place', a part of *Aegceswer*. An earlier reference, of AD 957, was made to the town place along Watling Street, taken to mean Edgware. The Domesday book of 1086 does not mention Edgware, as it was within the manor of Little Stanmore but it records a church at Great Stanmore. This was probably a Saxon church located to the west of the site in Old Church Lane but all that remains now is a tombstone of Baptist Willoughby, rector of Stanmore in the 17th century.

### *2.1.5 Medieval*

The main medieval village of Great Stanmore was marked by the moat of the manor house. From 1300 to 1632 St Mary's church stood to the north of the moat the village extended northward where medieval tenements were scattered.

In 1176 Henry II confirmed a grant of land in Little Stanmore to the Canons of the priory of St Bartholomew the Great, West Smithfield. This included the church of St Lawrence and a vicarage first mentioned in 1244. The Stanmore estate held at Domesday by Roger de Rames. The lands, which probably included the later manors of both Little Stanmore, sometimes called Canons, and Edgware, passed to Roger's son William but were divided, with the rest of the Rames barony, between his sons Roger (II) and Robert by *c* 1130. Their holdings were separated by the road running north-westward from Stone Grove in Watling Street towards Watford. Part of the Domesday manor east of Watling Street, i.e. most of Edgware, may have passed from the Rames family on the marriage of Adelize, probably Roger's daughter, to Edward of Salisbury. After the rest had been divided between the two brothers, the property north of the old Watford road was treated as part of the vill of Edgware, while that to the south was considered to belong to Stanmore and eventually, since it was smaller than the St. Albans estate, to form Little Stanmore. The reunion of the two Rames estates under Roger's son, Roger (III), made the name Little Stanmore less appropriate, although the northern part was for long described as in Edgware.

In the 16th century, if not earlier, the priors leased out many portions of their property in Little Stanmore, normally for at least 30 years. A lease in 1501 of the manor of 'Little Stanmore called Canons' provides the earliest instance of an alternative name being given to the manor, Canons originally having been the land granted to the priory in 1330. Thereafter the second name became increasingly common, until it was often used on its own, although a few documents, including a will dated 1693, continued

[1] see for example Seeley and Thorogood 1994

more accurately to refer to the manor of Little Stanmore and the capital message called Canons.

St. Bartholomew's was surrendered in 1539 and Little Stanmore, like Great Stanmore, was granted for life to the last prior, Robert Fuller, in 1540. It reverted to the Crown on Fuller's death later in that year and in 1543 the manor house of Canons, as leased to William Daunce, was granted to the sitting tenant Hugh Losse and his heirs. ( Cockburn and Baker 1971).

### *2.1.6 Post-medieval*

In 1597 Watling Street was recorded as between 60 and 105 feet in width. By the 16th and 17th centuries a substantial settlement had grown up either side of the road and a number of buildings, mostly houses but including the White Hart Inn still survive.

The manor house and gardens of Little Stanmore were leased to William Daunce of Whitchurch in 1535. Stanmore Marsh first appears in the records towards the end of the 16th century although Marsh Farm was mentioned as early as 1520[2]. The boundary between the parishes of Great and Little Stanmore was ill defined in the area of the marsh. Stanmore Marsh was enclosed by Sir Lancelot Lake in the 1650s.

In 1710 the manor of Little Stanmore passed to the Duke of Chandos who spent much of his fortune on the house and land of Canons Park as well as on the wall paintings of St Lawrence's Church[3].

The understanding of the setting of the site during the post-medieval era is greatly enhanced by the cartographic record. Although it does not give any detail, the John Rocque map of 1746 depicts the site area as rural, much as it was known to be during the medieval period.

[2] Farino 1989, 55
[3] Weinreb and Hibbert 1983, 120-121

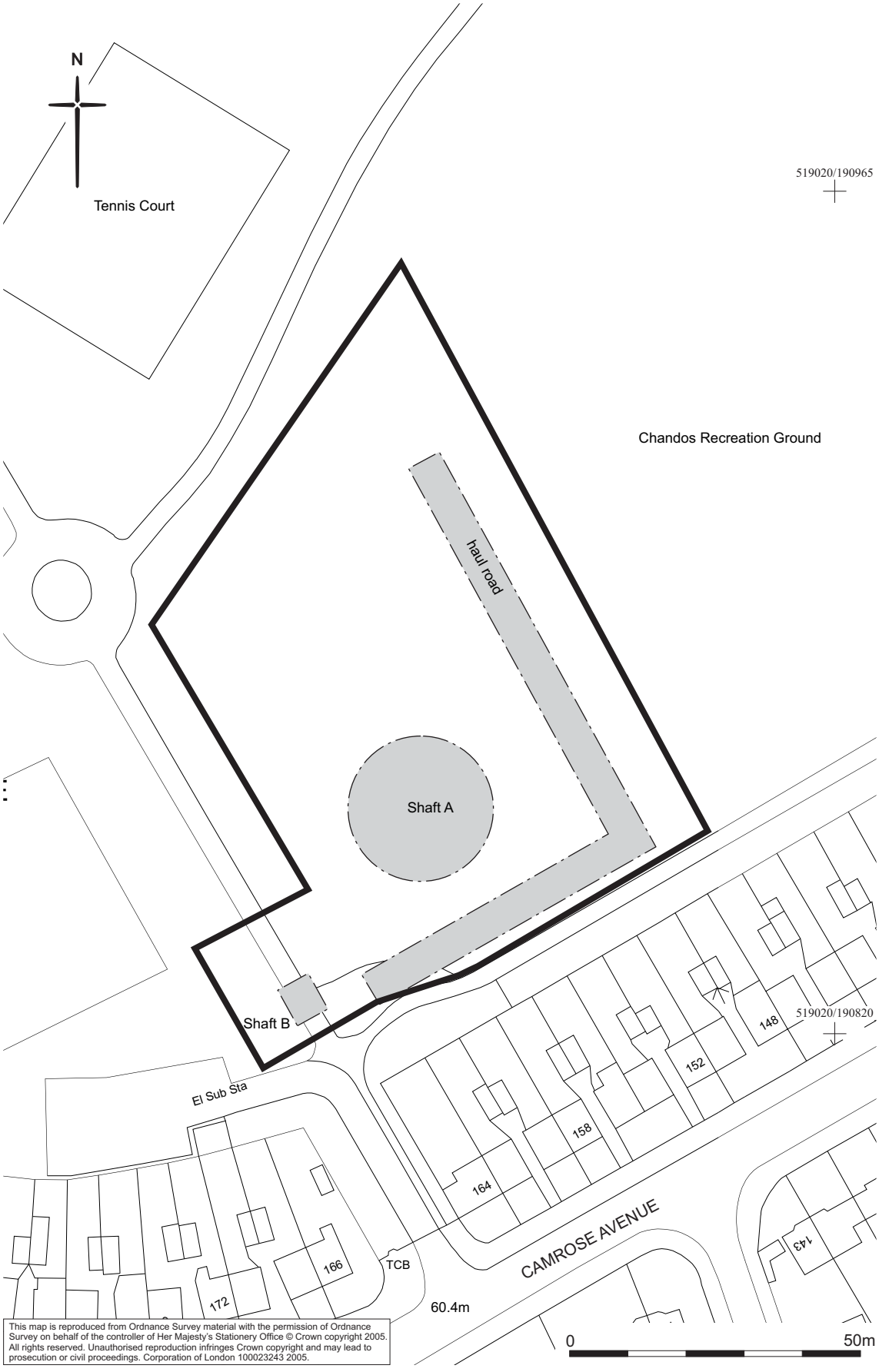


Fig 2 Areas covered by the watching brief

# 3 The watching brief

## 3.1 Methodology

All archaeological excavation and recording during the watching brief was done in accordance with the *Method Statement* (Howe 2004) and the MoLAS Archaeological Site Manual (MoLAS 1994).

The proposed flood alleviation works are located at the southwest corner of Chandos Recreation Ground adjacent to Little Stanmore allotment Gardens (Fig 2). The recreation ground is located within a residential area bounded to the south by Camrose Avenue and to the east by Methuen Road. The north and west boundaries of the site are bounded by Chandos Crescent and Merlin Crescent.

As part of the enabling works at the site all areas within the main compound were de-turfed using a mechanical excavator, this was carried out prior to any deep excavation of the underlying geology at the site. Topsoil deposits were removed from the haul road area and from the areas affected by the excavation of shafts A and B (Fig 2). Generally, the deposits were removed to a depth of *c* 0.30m below the contemporary ground levels, exposing an oxidised mid brown-orange silty-clay natural subsoil. Removal of the topsoil and where relevant, underlying deposits, was monitored by a senior archaeologist from MoLAS. All exposed areas were scanned for archaeological remains.

To ensure that any surviving archaeological remains could be adequately recorded it was necessary to inspect the subsoil prior to any proposed deep excavation and/or installation of the haul road. Weathered subsoil deposits were removed in a controlled manner, and the exposed areas were scanned for archaeological remains.

The location of the area of excavation was recorded by the MoLAS Geomatics department and plotted onto the Ordnance Survey grid.

A written and drawn record of all deposits encountered was made in accordance with the principles set out in the MoLAS site manual (MoLAS 1994).

Where relevant, sections were drawn at a scale of 1:10 or 1:20; numbered contexts were allocated where appropriate.

The site has produced: 1 measured sketch plan; 7 context records: 6 black and white print negatives and 6 colour slides. No archaeological finds were recovered from the site.

The site records can be found under the site code MFG 04 in the MoL archive.

## 3.2 Results of the watching brief

**Main compound area and Haul road (Fig 2 and 3)**

The main compound area measured approximately 111m long (north–south) by 64m wide (east–west). Minimal deposits of topsoil were removed from the areas within the main compound, exposing an oxidised weathered mid brown silty-clay natural subsoil that overlaid the natural clay in this area. No archaeological deposits were observed within this deposit. The contemporary ground levels within the main compound varied from *c* 59.00m AOD in the south of the site to *c* 60.70m AOD at the north end of the site.

The haul road extends roughly eastwards from the site entrance 54m and turns through 90º to run for 78m in a northwest direction towards the north corner of the site, the haul road measured 6.0m wide (Fig 2). Natural deposits of mid orange-brown silty-clay were exposed approximately 0.30m below the contemporary ground levels.

Three small circular pits were recorded during the mechanical excavation of the haul road. Pit [2] was recorded in the southeast corner of the haul road (Fig 3). The pit was roughly circular and measured 0.80m in diameter. Full excavation of the feature demonstrated that it had been horizontally truncated and survived to a depth of 0.12m deep. No finds were recovered from the pit, however, the nature and colour of the fills suggest that it was likely to be of late post-medieval date.

Pit [4] was recorded in the central south part of the haul road, 9.20m to the west of pit [2]. This feature was significant only in that it was almost identical to pit [2] in its shape and size. The feature was 0.80m in diameter and survived to a depth of 0.10m. The fills within this feature produced no datable material and were of identical colour to that of pit [2].

Pit [6] was also recorded within the southern part of the haul road, towards the western end. This circular feature was also very similar to pits [2] and [4] as it survived to a depth of 0.12m deep and was 0.90m in diameter. The pit produced no finds material, but the nature of the fill suggests that it is contemporary with pits [2] and [4] to the east (Fig 3).

All three features were aligned to form a straight line (roughly east–west). It appears that they were all contemporary, perhaps representing the severely truncated line of a post-built structure or possibly the remains of an earlier line of trees. The rear of the properties on Camrose Avenue back onto the recreation ground suggesting that the features may relate to the adjacent gardens in some way.

*Table 1 Dimensions and levels (haul road)*

| *Haul Road* |
|---|

| | |
|---|---|
| Location | Southern and central aspects of the site, located within the main compound area. |
| Dimensions | Total length = 131m by 6.0m wide |
| Modern ground level | *c* 59.00m AOD |
| Base of excavation | *c* 58.70m AOD |
| Depth of archaeological deposits seen | 0.125m (maximum) |
| Level of base of deposits observed | *c* 58.58m AOD |
| Natural observed | *c* 58.70m AOD |

**The main shaft area (Shaft A)**

This area was is located in the southern corner or the main compound, adjacent to the main entrance into the site (Fig 3). Shaft A will hold a storage tank and stormwater balancing tank and deep excavation of the shaft is required prior to the installation of the tank. The excavated area measured approximately 25m in diameter and removal of the topsoil within this area exposed heavily oxidised deposits of mid orange-brown silty-clay.

During mechanical excavation of the upper deposits within this area no archaeological deposits were observed.

*Table 2 Dimensions and levels (Shaft A)*

| *Shaft* | |
|---|---|
| Location | Southwest corner of main compound |
| Dimensions | 25m diameter |
| Modern ground level | *c* 59.50m OD |
| Base of topsoil | *c* 59.20m OD |
| Depth of archaeological deposits seen | No archaeological deposits observed |
| Level of base of deposits observed | Not recorded |
| Natural observed | *c* 59.20m OD |

**The secondary shaft area (Shaft B)**

This area was situated just outside the main site compound, to the west of the site entrance. The shaft measured 7.0m in length by 6.0m wide. The excavation of the shaft was monitored to a depth of approximately 1.50m below the contemporary ground levels exposing natural deposits of oxidised mid orange-brown silty-clay.

The shaft was located directly over the current park path (Fig 2) the construction of which had truncated the uppermost deposits within this area. During mechanical excavation of the shaft no archaeological deposits were observed.

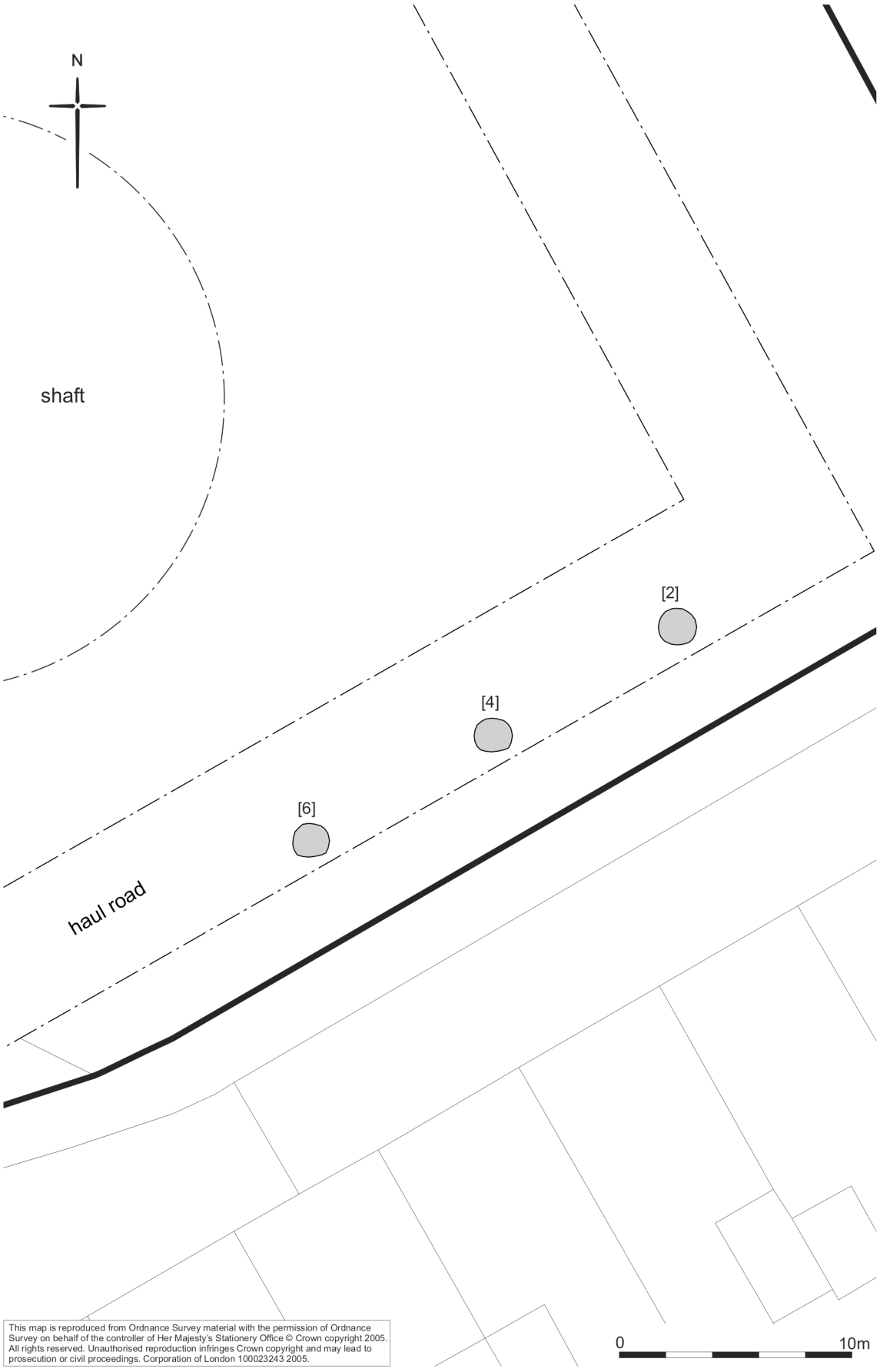




Fig 3 Plan of archaeological features

# 4 Potential of archaeology

## 4.1 Original research aims

1. What was the level of natural topography?

*Natural deposits were observed approximately 0.20m below the contemporary ground levels underlying a very thin deposit of silty topsoil. The natural deposits comprised mid orange–brown weathered silty clays and were recorded at 60.50m AOD at the northern side of the main compound area falling through a very gentle slope to 58.30m AOD in the eastern corner of the site.*

2. What are the earliest deposits identified?

*The remains of three truncated pit bases were recorded during the mechanical excavation of the haul road within the main compound area. Despite full excavation of these features no datable material was recovered from the pits.*

3. What are the latest deposits identified?

*No further archaeological remains were recorded during the proposed groundwork.*

4. Is there evidence for the medieval manor of Little Stanmore?

*No evidence for the medieval manor of Little Stanmore was recorded during the watching brief.*

## 4.2 Significance of the data

Three undated cut features were recorded at the site. Due to the poor preservation of the remains and lack of dating evidence, little can be inferred regarding the significance of the finds. The central southern part of the Chandos recreation ground may have once been utilised as gardens or allotments, due to the close proximity of pits [2], [4] and [6] to the rear of properties adjoining Camrose Avenue. Equally it is possible that the pits represent the truncated remains of an earlier tree line that perhaps defined the edge of the recreation ground. The features are considered to be of any local significance only.

# 5 Publication and archiving

Information on the results of the excavation will be made publicly available by means of a database in digital form, to permit inclusion of the site data in any future academic researches into the development of London.

The site archive containing original records and finds will be stored in accordance with the terms of the *Method Statement* (Howe 2004) with the Museum of London within 12 months of the end of the watching brief.

In view of the lack of archaeological information at the site (Section 4) it is suggested that a short note on the results of the watching brief within the annual round up of the *London Archaeologist* would be considered sufficient in terms of publication.

# 6 Conclusions

The undated remains of three small pit bases or tree boles were recorded at the site during the archaeological watching brief.

The archaeological remains and local topography suggest that horizontal truncation across the site was minimal. A very thin topsoil deposit was recorded directly overlying heavily weathered and bioturbated deposits of silty-clay that have been interpreted as natural deposits.

No further archaeological remains were recorded during the archaeological watching brief.

# 7 Acknowledgements

MoLAS are grateful to Claire Cable of Thames Water Utilities for commissioning this report and for providing information to MoLAS regarding the site.

# 8 Bibliography

Cockburn, JS, and Baker, TFT (Eds), 1971 *The hundred of Gore. A History of the County of Middlesex*, Volume IV

Department of the Environment, 1990 *Planning Policy Guidance: Archaeology and Planning* (PPG16)

English Heritage, 1991 *Exploring Our Past, Strategies for the Archaeology of England*

English Heritage, 1991 *Management of Archaeological Projects (MAP2)*

English Heritage Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service, June 1998 *Archaeological Guidance Papers 1-5*

English Heritage Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service, May 1999 *Archaeological Guidance Papers 6*

English Heritage, May 1998 *Capital Archaeology. Strategies for sustaining the historic legacy of a world city*

Howe, E, 2004 Thames Water: Milford Gardens FAS, Stanmore HA8: A Method Statement for Archaeological Watching Brief, MoLAS unpub rep

Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA), 2001 *By-Laws, Standards and Policy Statements of the Institute of Field Archaeologists (*rev. 2001), *Standard and guidance: watching brief*

Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA), supplement 2001, *By-Laws, Standards and Policy Statements of the Institute of Field Archaeologists: Standards and guidance – the collection, documentation conservation and research of archaeological materials*

MoLAS, 1994 *Archaeological Site Manual 3rd edition*

Museum of London, 2002 *A research framework for London Archaeology 2002*

Thompson, A, Westman A, and Dyson, T (eds), 1998 *Archaeology in Greater London 1965-90: a guide to records of excavations by the Museum of London*, Archaeol Gazetteer Ser Vol 2, London

# 9 NMR OASIS archaeological report form

## 9.1 OASIS ID: molas1-5232

| | |
|---|---|
| **Project details** | |
| Project name | Milford Gardens Flood Alleviation Scheme (Thames Water) |
| Short description of the project | Following the recommendations of the English Heritage (GLAAS) officer responsible for the London Borough of Harrow, an archaeological watching brief was carried out during the proposed programme of groundwork.<br>The scheme comprised a programme of topsoil removal and the deep mechanical excavation of a circular shaft prior to installation of a storm water storage tank. The works at Milford Gardens (Chandos recreation ground) comprise part of a programme of groundwork associated with the proposed flood alleviation scheme. |
| Project dates | Start: 25-10-2004 End: 23-11-2004 |
| Any associated project reference codes | MFG 04 - Sitecode |
| Type of project | Recording project |
| Site status | None |
| Current Land use | Other 14 – Recreational usage |
| Investigation type | 'Watching Brief' |
| Prompt | Water Act 1989 and subsequent code of practice |
| **Project location** | |
| Country | England |
| Site location | GREATER LONDON HARROW STANMORE Milford Gardens, Stanmore |
| Postcode | HA 8 |
| Study area | 5000 Square metres |
| National grid | TQ 18852 90847 Point |

| | |
|---|---|
| reference | |
| Height OD | Min: 58.3m Max: 61m |

**Project creators**

| | |
|---|---|
| Name of Organisation | MoLAS |
| Project brief originator | English Heritage/Department of Environment |
| Project design originator | MoLAS |
| Project director/manager | Elizabeth Howe |
| Project supervisor | Simon Davis |
| Sponsor or funding body | Thames Water |

**Project archives**

| | |
|---|---|
| Physical Archive Exists? | No |
| Digital Archive recipient | LAARC |
| Digital Archive ID | MFG 04 |
| Digital Media available | 'Survey','Text' |
| Digital Archive Exists? | Yes |
| Paper Archive recipient | LAARC |
| Paper Contents | 'Stratigraphic','Survey' |
| Paper Media available | 'Context sheet','Correspondence','Drawing','Miscellaneous Material','Notebook - Excavation',' Research',' General Notes','Photograph','Plan','Report','Unpublished Text' |
| Paper Archive Exists? | Yes |

**Project bibliography 1**

| | |
|---|---|
| Publication type | Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript) |
| Title | Thames Water, Milford gardens FAS, Stanmore HA8 |
| Author(s)/Editor(s) | Davis, S. |
| Date | 2004 |
| Issuer or publisher | MoLAS |
| Place of issue or publication | Unpublished material |
| Description | Unpublished Watching brief report |
| Entered by | Simon Davis |
| Entered on | 29 November 2004 |