

GLA 67 Summerhouse Lane Chalk Pit

Grid Reference: TQ 043 916

Site Type: Former Chalk Pit

Site Area (hectares): 0.52

Current use: Housing Estate and Business Park

Site ownership: Linden Homes

Borough: London Borough of Hillingdon

Field surveyor: Diana Clements, Ann Davidson and Members of HHGS

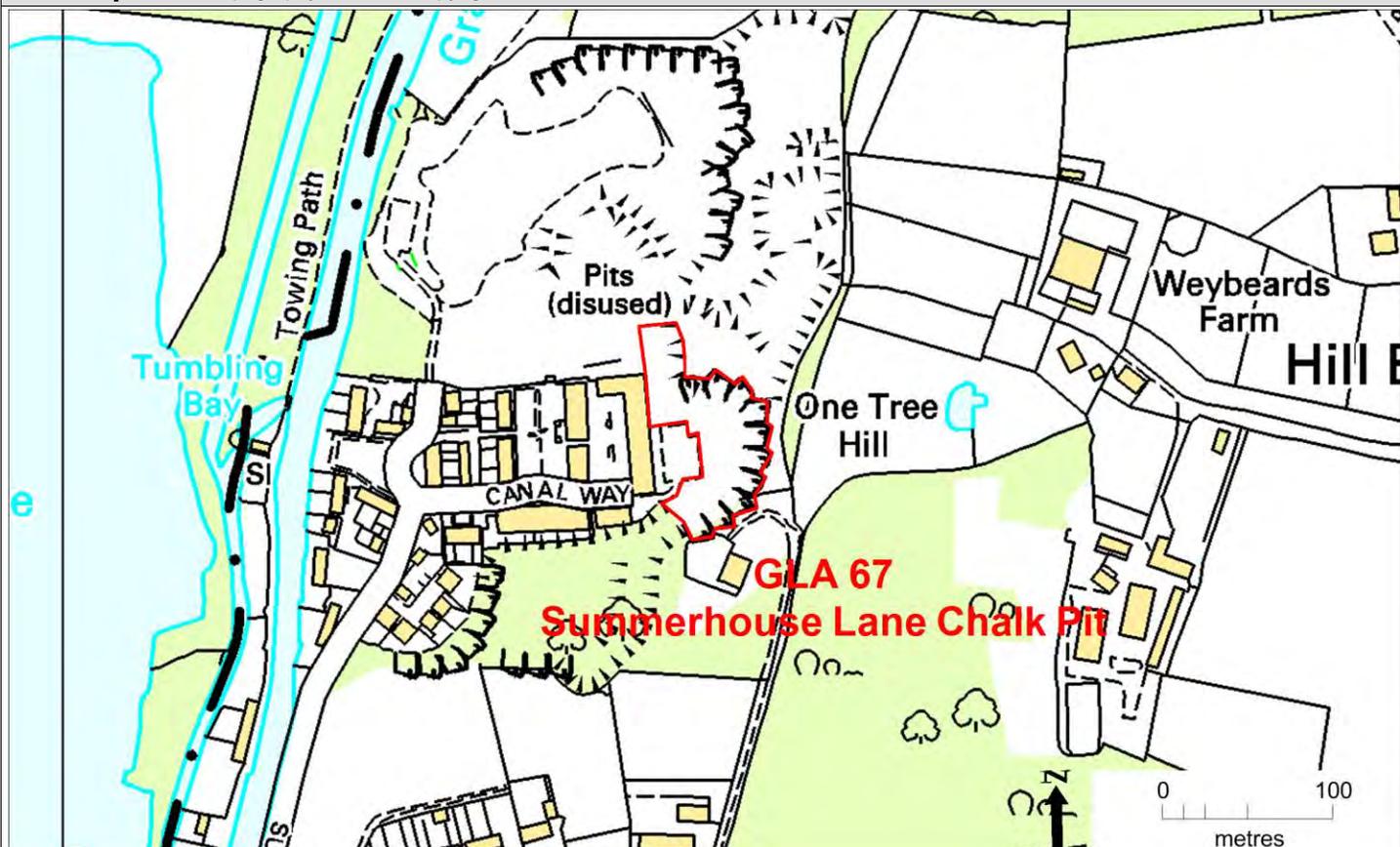
Date: October 2013

Current geological designations:

Other scientific:

Site Map

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Stratigraphy and Rock Types

Time Unit: Cretaceous

Rock Unit: White Chalk Subgroup, Seaford Chalk Formation

Rock Type: Chalk

Details (Seaford Chalk): Firm white chalk with conspicuous semi-continuous nodular and tabular flint seams. Hardgrounds and thin marls are known from the lowest beds. Some flint nodules are large to very large.

Site Description

Of the chalk pits along the Colne, apart from Harefield that only exposes 2 m (GLA 34,SSSI), the only one that is still at all accessible (now utilised as a housing estate) is at the end of Summerhouse Lane (see below). There were at least three other pits running north along this stretch of the Colne. Very small exposures can still be seen high up in the wooded slopes of the adjacent 'Water Meadows' at the extreme end of Summerhouse Lane. These are not accessible and nor are the two quarries further along adjacent to the Springwell Lane bridge over the Grand Union Canal beside the lock. At Summerhouse Lane the Seaford Chalk has well-displayed solution hollows that run from the top to reappear at the base. A path exists close to the face allowing views and access but becomes progressively more overgrown and blocked by rubbish. The quarry is described with a logged section in GA Guide 68.

The Colne Valley Chalk pits provide details of the Chiltern succession.

Assessment of Site Value

Geodiversity topic: Lithostratigraphy; sedimentology; geomorphology; palaeontology.

Access and Safety		
Aspect	Description	
Safety of access	Path adjacent to the face at the back of the pit becomes progressively overgrown. Fallen block from vertical face highlights the safety issues	
Safety of exposure	The exposure is becoming increasingly vegetated particularly with buddleia but also some brambles and nettles; other pits along the Colne have become extensively wooded.	
Permission to visit	Private land so permission should be sought from Linden Homes	
Current condition	The impressive chalk face is still visible through the scrub, both natural and planted, with the spectacular solution hollow on the north face.	
Current conflicting activities	Rubbish dump for the industrial estate	
Restricting conditions	Scrub vegetation	
Nature of exposure	Remaining visible face of large Chalk Pit	
Culture, Heritage & Economic		
Aspect	Description	Rating
Historic, archaeological & literary associations	Published on old maps, BGS memoir;	5
Aesthetic landscape	Interesting recreational space for the housing estate; close to the Hillingdon Canal Trail	5
History of Earth Sciences	Local quarrying. GA Guide 68 (2012) Itinerary 1 shows a vertical logged section with details of the stratigraphy	8
Economic geology	Chalk used for lime and distemper	8
GeoScientific Merit		
Geomorphology		
Sedimentology	Seaford Chalk Formation	2
Palaeontology	Important for dating (see GA Guide 68)	4
Igneous/mineral/ Metamorphic Geology	None	0
Structural Geology	Local sub-surface structure needs resolving	4
Lithostratigraphy	Flint bands still visible and solution hollow spectacular	4
Potential use	Research; education;	
Fragility	natural overgrowing; weathering/erosion;	
Current Site Value		
Community	Within housing estate; close to Hillingdon Canal Trail	6
Education	Possible local use	6
Geodiversity value		
Potential LIGS: The chalk quarries of the Colne Valley were once important both locally and to the capital. This is the least overgrown and most accessible currently.		4

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Photos: Diana Clements



2005



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