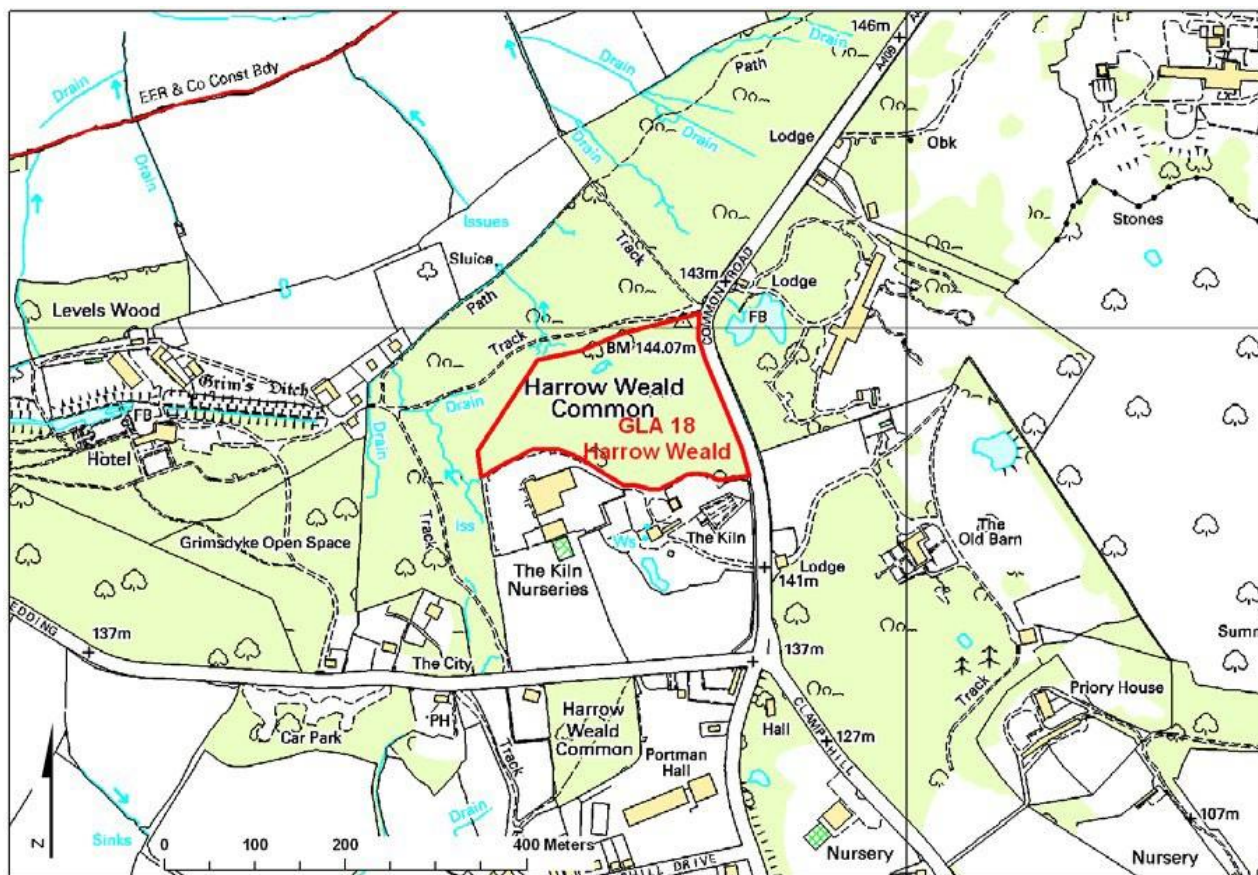


GLA 18 Harrow Weald

Grid Reference: TQ 147 929	Site Type: Natural exposure
Site Area (hectares): 3.52	Current use: Private country
Site ownership: Private owner	Borough: London Borough of Harrow
Field surveyor: Joanna Brayson	Date: February 2008
Latest visit: Allan Wheeler, Peter Collins, Diana Clements	Date: June 2018
Current geological designation: SSSI Citation: 1003687.PDF (naturalengland.org.uk)	Other designation: Borough Grade II SINC (Harrow Weald Common)

Site Map

OS Topography © Crown Copyright



Stratigraphy and Rock Types

Time Unit: Pleistocene	Rock Unit: Stanmore Gravel Formation, Crag Group
Rock Type: Sand and gravel	Details: Gravel and sand, clayey near base. Gravel mostly composed of flints, up to 150mm in diameter, with a little quartz, quartzite and Lower Greensand chert in the fine fractions. Matrix of orange-brown, pale grey, red mottled clay and sandy clay, with pockets of coarse sand. Locally with layers of silt, clay or peat. Interpreted as offshore or beach gravels (Ellison et al 2004), or possibly fluvial (Bridgland 1994).
Time Unit: Eocene	Rock Unit: Claygate Member, London Clay Formation (not seen)
Rock Type: Sand, silt and clay	Details: Interbedded fine-grained sand, silt and clay.

Site Description

Harrow Weald is a small but important geological site which exhibits the most complete exposure of the Stanmore Gravel Formation overlying the Claygate Member of the London Clay. The Stanmore Gravel Formation is of uncertain origin and this has been the subject of much controversy over the past century. Recent research has cast doubt on their marine origin which was inferred by most early workers. The Harrow Weald section is important as a key site on which to base further studies of these deposits.

Assessment of Site Value		
Geodiversity topic: Lithostratigraphy; sedimentology.		
Access and Safety		
Aspect	Description	
Safety of access	Site accessed from gate from A409, Common Road, just north of garden centre. In 2018 a tree growing through the gate prevented it from opening. The site is on private property.	
Safety of exposure	Wooded area, take care – rough under foot.	
Permission to visit	Contact Natural England for access: ProtectedSites@naturalengland.org.uk	
Current condition	Neglected but easily re-excavated on small slope (probably edge of former quarry)	
Current conflicting activities	Possible overgrowth	
Restricting conditions	Access.	
Nature of exposure	Exposure in private wooded area – probably a former small quarry	
Culture, Heritage & Economic		
Aspect	Description	Rating
Historic, archaeological & literary associations	Much research has been done here over the last century.	6
Aesthetic landscape	Not accessible to public but is adjacent to open access area where the same lithology can be seen, particularly in the sides of streamlets	4
History of Earth Sciences	Marine origin versus fluvial.	6
Economic geology	None known but possibly former small quarry	0
GeoScientific Merit		
Geomorphology	Now forms a ridge of high ground (highest point locally 144 m).	0
Sedimentology	Depositional environment (marine/fluvial).	7
Palaeontology	None.	0
Igneous / mineral / metamorphic geology	None.	0
Structural Geology		0
Lithostratigraphy	Relationship between superficial deposits and bedrock.	6
Potential use	Research; higher further education.	
Fragility	Possible overgrowth	
Current Site Value		
Community	Not accessible.	0
Education	Could be included in a geotrail of the area which would include the view site from the car park, former brickworks (Clamp Hill, and kiln) and nearby evidence of gravel digging and a rare 'Pulhamite' feature. There is already a Nature Trail through Harrow Weald Common and, in 2018, new notice boards detailing the extent of the geological SSSI	0
Geodiversity value		
SSSI:	Exposures of units valuable for research but with poor access.	6

GLA 18 Harrow Weald



Exposures are mostly easily seen in the slope that was probably the edge of a former small quarry



Photos: Diana Clements, July 2011