

LOCAL GEOLOGICAL SITES

HARLOW DISTRICT



HaG1 Harlow Puddingstone

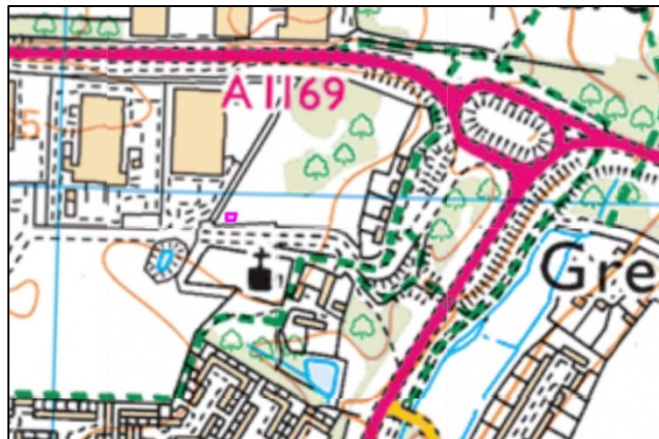
Site location: Outside gates of ICON Industrial area off Peldon Road

Grid reference: TL 4320 0898

Status: Publicly accessible but beyond road barrier.

Summary of the geological interest:

A giant puddingstone boulder outside the main industrial complex. It was discovered in 1966 during construction of the BP building, which was subsequently demolished. It is surrounded by a low fence and once had a signboard.



Site Assessment. Local Geological Sites (LoGS) in Essex are assessed using criteria based on DEFRA guidance. An assessment form is used which asks key questions under four value categories: scientific, educational, historical and aesthetic. This site has been assessed and qualifies under these criteria.

Scientific interest and site importance

A large boulder of puddingstone 1.65 metres (5 feet 6 inches) high formerly stood upright in the private quadrangle of the offices of Glaxo SmithKline (formerly BP House) in Third Avenue. It was discovered during construction of the building in 1966. Following demolition of the buildings the stone is now outside ICON.'s grounds, outside its main gates, in an open access green space.

Puddingstone is an extremely hard rock with an interesting history. About 60 million years ago, this boulder was part of a beach of flint pebbles on the coast of a subtropical sea. About 56 million years ago the sea had retreated and the layer of pebbles was situated beneath the soil in a hot, dry climate similar to that of the Kalahari Desert today. During this time the pebbles were cemented together by quartz, forming an incredibly tough rock called a silcrete. – nature's concrete.



The Harlow Puddingstone in its original position. Photo G Lucy 1966



The Harlow Puddingstone relocated Photo Linda Hambling.



The Harlow Puddingstone Photo K Timmons 2023



Location of Harlow Puddingstone Oct 2024 Photo R Mercer



Harlow Puddingstone Oct 2024 Photo R Mercer