GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY REPORT

GEOPHYSICS FOR ARCHAEOLOGY & ENGINEERING

Land at Eight Ash Green
Colchester, Essex

Client
CgMs Heritage (part of RPS)

For
Gladman Developments Ltd

Survey Report
11661

Date
October 2017

Incorporating

GSB PROSPECTION LTD

and

STRATASCAN LTD

SUMO Services Ltd
Cowburn Farm
Market Street
Thornton
Bradford
BD13 3HW
T: 01274 835016

SUMO Services Ltd
Vineyard House
Upper Hook Road
Upton upon Severn
Worcestershire
WR8 0SA
T: 01684 592266

geophysics@sumoservices.com
www.sumoservices.com

GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY REPORT

Project name:
Land at Eight Ash Green, Colchester, Essex

SUMO Job reference:
11661

Client:
CgMs Heritage (part of RPS)
For:
Gladman Developments Ltd

Survey date:
23-24 August 2017
21 September 2017

Report date:
3 October 2017

Field co-ordinator:
Joe Perry BA
Olivier Vansassenbrouck MSc

Field Team:
David Stockwell BA
Robert Smail PhD
Ben Arrowsmith

Report written by:
Claire Stephens BA MA

CAD illustrations by:
Claire Stephens BA MA

Project Manager:
Jon Tanner BSc MSc PCIfA

Report approved by:
Dr John Gater BSc DSc(Hon) MCIfA FSA

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LIST OF FIGURES

DIGITAL CONTENT (Archive Data CD/DVD)

- Minimally Processed Greyscale Images and XY Trace Plots in DWG format
- Digital Copies of Report Text and Figures (both PDF and native formats)

1 SUMMARY OF RESULTS

No anomalies of archaeological interest have been identified by the survey. Most of the detected responses are ferrous in nature, relating to buried pipes, adjacent boundaries and scattered debris. A few very weak trends and isolated pit-type anomalies have been highlighted; these form no clear patterns and are likely to be natural, agricultural or modern in origin.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background synopsis

SUMO Services Ltd were commissioned to undertake a geophysical survey of an area outlined for residential development. This survey forms part of an archaeological investigation being undertaken by **CgMs Heritage (part of RPS)** on behalf of **Gladman Developments Ltd.**.

2.2 Site details

NGR / Postcode	TL 932 264 / CO3 9UF
Location	The site is located immediately north of Halstead Road, Eight Ash Green, Colchester, Essex. It is bound to the north by Fiddlers Hill, to the south by Halstead Road, to the east by residential development and to the west by agricultural land.
OASIS Ref	gsbprosp1-297300
HER/SMR	ECC4051
District	Colchester
Parish	Eight Ash Green CP
Topography	Gently sloping
Current Land Use	Areas 1 & 2 – pasture; Area 3 – set aside, recently cut
Weather	Fair
Geology	Solid: London Clay Formation – clay, silt and sand. Superficial: Cover sand – clay, silt and sand (BGS 2017).
Soils	Boundary of Ludford Association (571x) deep, well drained loamy and sandy soils and Wix Association (573b) deep permeable coarse loamy soils (SSEW 1983).
Archaeology	None known within study area. The HER notes cropmarks (possible circular and rectangular features) on or adjacent to the site but their precise location is unknown and has not been confirmed by a recent review. Overall, the site is considered to have a low to moderate potential for evidence of archaeological interest (CgMs 2017).
Survey Methods	Magnetometer survey (fluxgate gradiometer)
Study Area	8 ha

2.3 Aims and Objectives

To locate and characterise any anomalies of possible archaeological interest within the study area.

3 METHODS, PROCESSING & PRESENTATION

3.1 Standards & Guidance

This report and all fieldwork have been conducted in accordance with the latest guidance documents issued by Historic England (EH 2008) (then English Heritage), the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2014) and the European Archaeological Council (EAC 2016).

3.2 Survey methods

Detailed magnetic survey was chosen as an efficient and effective method of locating archaeological anomalies.

Technique	Instrument	Traverse Interval	Sample Interval
Magnetometer	Bartington Grad 601-2	1.0m	0.25m

More information regarding this technique is included in Appendix A.

3.3 Data Processing

The following basic processing steps have been carried out on the data used in this report:

De-stripe; de-stagger; interpolate

3.4 Presentation of results and interpretation

. The presentation of the results for each site involves a grey-scale plot of processed data. Magnetic anomalies are identified, interpreted and plotted onto the 'Interpretation' drawings. The minimally processed data are provided as a greyscale image in the Archive Data Folder with an XY trace plot in CAD format. A free viewer is available: https://viewer.autodesk.com

When interpreting the results, several factors are taken into consideration, including the nature of archaeological features being investigated and the local conditions at the site (geology, pedology, topography etc.). Anomalies are categorised by their potential origin. Where responses can be related to other existing evidence, the anomalies will be given specific categories, such as: *Abbey Wall* or *Roman Road*. Where the interpretation is based largely on the geophysical data, levels of confidence are implied, for example: *Probable*, or *Possible Archaeology*. The former is used for a confident interpretation, based on anomaly definition and/or other corroborative data such as cropmarks. Poor anomaly definition, a lack of clear patterns to the responses and an absence of other supporting data reduces confidence, hence the classification *Possible*.

4 RESULTS

The survey is divided into three survey areas (Areas 1-3) and specific anomalies have been given numerical labels [1] [2] *which appear in the text below, as well as on the Interpretation Figure(s).*

4.1 *Probable / Possible Archaeology*

4.1.1 No magnetic responses have been recorded that could be interpreted as being of archaeological interest.

4.2 *Uncertain*

4.2.1 A very faint linear trend [1] appears to coincide roughly with the line of a former boundary shown only on the Fordham Parish Tithe Map of 1837 (CgMs Figure 3); however, the magnetic anomaly is too weak (barely visible above the general background) to enable any firm interpretation and is therefore categorised as *Uncertain.*

4.2.2 Similarly inconclusive is the interpretation of anomalies [2], comprising a weak trend and a linear alignment of ferrous dipoles. They roughly follow the line of a former boundary shown on the 1837 Tithe Map and on some modern mapping (CgMs Figures 3 & 8), but not on early OS mapping or modern satellite imagery. It is unclear whether the anomalies relate directly to a former boundary or represent a section of buried pipe or drain.

4.2.3 The remaining *Uncertain* anomalies comprise a few isolated pit-type responses, short linear anomalies and several weak trends. A combination of agricultural, natural and modern factors is considered most likely for all of these.

4.3 *Natural / Geological / Topographic*

4.3.1 A few broad, weak responses in Area 1 are typical of localised natural soil variations.

4.4 *Ferrous / Magnetic Disturbance*

4.4.1 Ferrous anomalies produced by two iron/steel pipes dominate the data for Area 2 and extend into Area 3. These anomalies will have masked any weak responses, if present.

4.4.2 Elsewhere, bands of ferrous response at the grid edges are due to adjacent fences and other material associated with the extant field boundaries. Smaller scale ferrous anomalies ("iron spikes") are present throughout the data and their form is best illustrated in the XY trace plots. These responses are characteristic of small pieces of ferrous debris (or brick / tile) in the topsoil and are commonly assigned a modern origin. Only the most prominent of these are highlighted on the interpretation diagram.

5 DATA APPRAISAL & CONFIDENCE ASSESSMENT

5.1 Historic England guidelines (EH 2008) Table 4 states that the average magnetic response on London Clay is poor / variable and superficial deposits of Cover sand are also expected to give uncertain to poor responses. In this instance, the masking effects of widespread ferrous anomalies in the central part of the site is also a factor for consideration. While peripheral or short lived archaeological features (e.g. pits or field systems) might not have sufficient magnetic enhancement to be detectable, one would expect major features (e.g. intensive settlement sites) to yield some detectable magnetic responses.

6 CONCLUSION

6.1 No responses of probable or possible archaeological interest have been detected by the survey. Ferrous responses from two pipes dominate much of the central portion of the study area. Away from this disturbance, most of the non-ferrous responses highlighted by the survey tend to be very weak / barely visible above background levels. Given the geology/soil conditions (see section 5 above), close attention was paid to these but none form clear patterns that might suggest archaeological features.

7 REFERENCES

BGS 2017 British Geological Survey, Geology of Britain viewer [accessed 02/10/2017] *website*: (http://www.bgs.ac.uk/opengeoscience/home.html?Accordion1=1#maps)

CgMs 2017 *Land North of Halstead Road, Eight Ash Green, Colchester: Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment.* CgMs Consulting Ltd, January 2017, unpublished.

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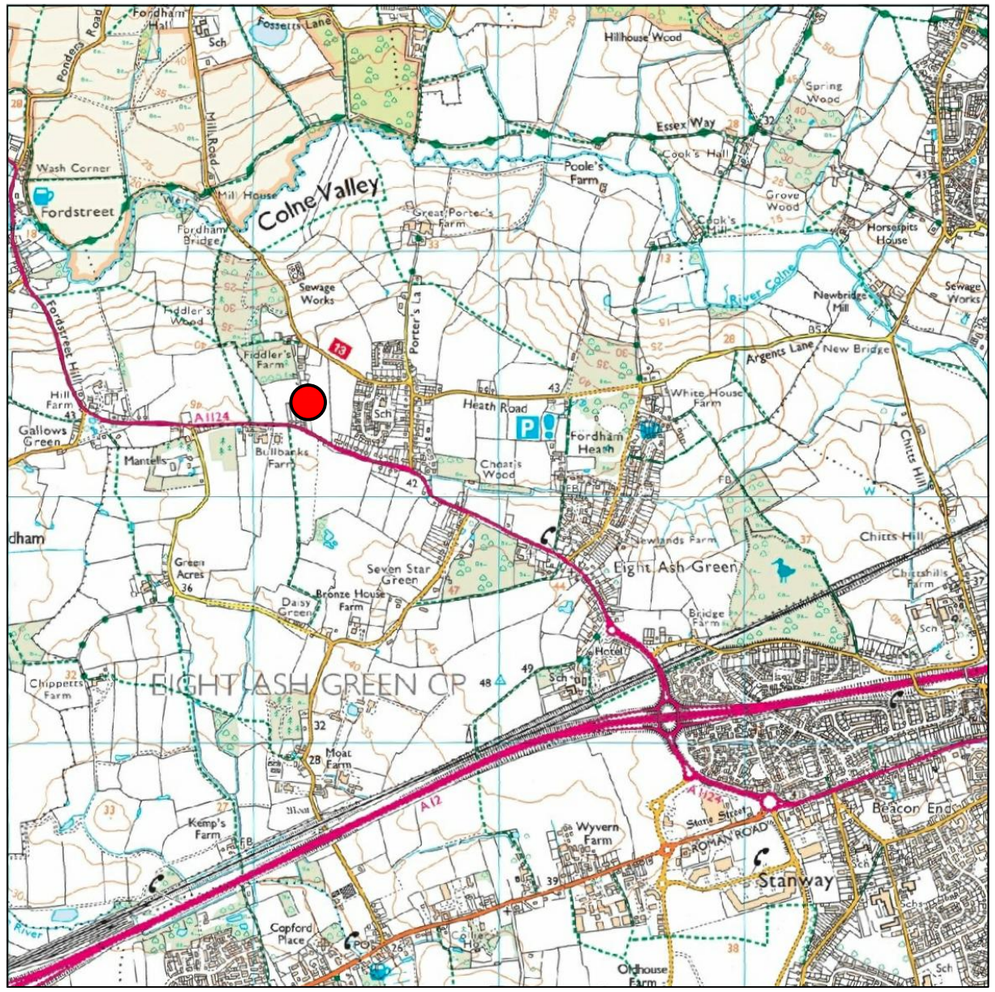

N

Site Location

sumo Survey
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Title:
Site Location Diagram

Client:
CgMs Heritage (part of RPS)

Project:
11661 Land at Eight Ash Green, Colchester

Scale:
0 metres 1250
1:25000 @ A3

Fig No:
01

N

Magnetometer Survey Area
showing 30m grids

sumo Survey
GEOPHYSICS FOR ARCHAEOLOGY & ENGINEERING

Title:
Location of Survey Areas

Client:
CgMs Heritage (part of RPS)

Project:
11661 Land at Eight Ash Green, Colchester

Scale:
0 metres 100
1:2000 @ A3

Fig No:
02

N

2
nT
-1

sumo Survey
GEOPHYSICS FOR ARCHAEOLOGY & ENGINEERING

Title:
Magnetometer Survey
Greyscale Plots

Client:
CgMs Heritage (part of RPS)

Project:
11661 Land at Eight Ash Green, Colchester

Scale:
0 metres 100
1:2000 @ A3

Fig No:
03

N

KEY

	Uncertain Origin (discrete / trend)
	Natural
	Pipe
	Ferrous

sumo Survey
GEOPHYSICS FOR ARCHAEOLOGY & ENGINEERING

Title:
Magnetometer Survey Interpretation

Client:
CgMs Heritage (part of RPS)

Project:
11661 Land at Eight Ash Green, Colchester

Scale:
0 metres 100
1:2000 @ A3

Fig No:
04

Appendix A - Technical Information: Magnetometer Survey Method

Grid Positioning

For hand held gradiometers the location of the survey grids has been plotted together with the referencing information. Grids were set out using a Trimble R8 Real Time Kinematic (RTK) VRS Now GNSS GPS system.

An RTK GPS (Real-time Kinematic Global Positioning System) can locate a point on the ground to a far greater accuracy than a standard GPS unit. A standard GPS suffers from errors created by satellite orbit errors, clock errors and atmospheric interference, resulting in an accuracy of 5m-10m. An RTK system uses a single base station receiver and a number of mobile units. The base station re-broadcasts the phase of the carrier it measured, and the mobile units compare their own phase measurements with those they received from the base station. This results in an accuracy of around 0.01m.

Technique	Instrument	Traverse Interval	Sample Interval
Magnetometer	Bartington Grad 601-2	1m	0.25m

Instrumentation: Bartington *Grad* 601-2

Bartington instruments operate in a gradiometer configuration which comprises fluxgate sensors mounted vertically, set 1.0m apart. The fluxgate gradiometer suppresses any diurnal or regional effects. The instruments are carried, or cart mounted, with the bottom sensor approximately 0.1-0.3m from the ground surface. At each survey station, the difference in the magnetic field between the two fluxgates is measured in nanoTesla (nT). The sensitivity of the instrument can be adjusted; for most archaeological surveys the most sensitive range (0.1nT) is used. Generally, features up to 1m deep may be detected by this method, though strongly magnetic objects may be visible at greater depths. The Bartington instrument can collect two lines of data per traverse with gradiometer units mounted laterally with a separation of 1.0m. The readings are logged consecutively into the data logger which in turn is daily down-loaded into a portable computer whilst on site. At the end of each site survey, data is transferred to the office for processing and presentation.

Data Processing

Zero Mean Traverse	This process sets the background mean of each traverse within each grid to zero. The operation removes striping effects and edge discontinuities over the whole of the data set.
Step Correction (De-stagger)	When gradiometer data are collected in 'zig-zag' fashion, stepping errors can sometimes arise. These occur because of a slight difference in the speed of walking on the forward and reverse traverses. The result is a staggered effect in the data, which is particularly noticeable on linear anomalies. This process corrects these errors.

Display

Greyscale/ Colourscale Plot	This format divides a given range of readings into a set number of classes. Each class is represented by a specific shade of grey, the intensity increasing with value. All values above the given range are allocated the same shade (maximum intensity); similarly, all values below the given range are represented by the minimum intensity shade. Similar plots can be produced in colour, either using a wide range of colours or by selecting two or three colours to represent positive and negative values. The assigned range (plotting levels) can be adjusted to emphasise different anomalies in the data-set.

Interpretation Categories

In certain circumstances (usually when there is corroborative evidence from desk-based or excavation data) very specific interpretations can be assigned to magnetic anomalies (for example, *Roman Road, Wall,* etc.) and where appropriate, such interpretations will be applied. The list below outlines the generic categories commonly used in the interpretation of the results.

Archaeology / Probable Archaeology	This term is used when the form, nature and pattern of the responses are clearly or very probably archaeological and /or if corroborative evidence is available. These anomalies, whilst considered anthropogenic, could be of any age.
Possible Archaeology	These anomalies exhibit either weak signal strength and / or poor definition, or form incomplete archaeological patterns, thereby reducing the level of confidence in the interpretation. Although the archaeological interpretation is favoured, they may be the result of variable soil depth, plough damage or even aliasing as a result of data collection orientation.
Industrial / Burnt-Fired	Strong magnetic anomalies that, due to their shape and form or the context in which they are found, suggest the presence of kilns, ovens, corn dryers, metal-working areas or hearths. It should be noted that in many instances modern ferrous material can produce similar magnetic anomalies.
Former Field Boundary (probable & possible)	Anomalies that correspond to former boundaries indicated on historic mapping, or which are clearly a continuation of existing land divisions. Possible denotes less confidence where the anomaly may not be shown on historic mapping but nevertheless the anomaly displays all the characteristics of a field boundary.
Ridge & Furrow	Parallel linear anomalies whose broad spacing suggests ridge and furrow cultivation. In some cases, the response may be the result of more recent agricultural activity.
Agriculture (ploughing)	Parallel linear anomalies or trends with a narrower spacing, sometimes aligned with existing boundaries, indicating more recent cultivation regimes.
Land Drain	Weakly magnetic linear anomalies, quite often appearing in series forming parallel and herringbone patterns. Smaller drains may lead and empty into larger diameter pipes, which in turn usually lead to local streams and ponds. These are indicative of clay fired land drains.
Natural	These responses form clear patterns in geographical zones where natural variations are known to produce significant magnetic distortions.
Magnetic Disturbance	Broad zones of strong dipolar anomalies, commonly found in places where modern ferrous or fired materials (e.g. brick rubble) are present.
Service	Magnetically strong anomalies, usually forming linear features are indicative of ferrous pipes/cables. Sometimes other materials (e.g. pvc) or the fill of the trench can cause weaker magnetic responses which can be identified from their uniform linearity.
Ferrous	This type of response is associated with ferrous material and may result from small items in the topsoil, larger buried objects such as pipes, or above ground features such as fence lines or pylons. Ferrous responses are usually regarded as modern. Individual burnt stones, fired bricks or igneous rocks can produce responses similar to ferrous material.
Uncertain Origin	Anomalies which stand out from the background magnetic variation, yet whose form and lack of patterning gives little clue as to their origin. Often the characteristics and distribution of the responses straddle the categories of *Possible Archaeology* / *Natural* or (in the case of linear responses) *Possible Archaeology* / *Agriculture*; occasionally they are simply of an unusual form.

Where appropriate some anomalies will be further classified according to their form (positive or negative) and relative strength and coherence (trend: weak and poorly defined).

Appendix B - Technical Information: Magnetic Theory

Detailed magnetic survey can be used to effectively define areas of past human activity by mapping spatial variation and contrast in the magnetic properties of soil, subsoil and bedrock. Although the changes in the magnetic field resulting from differing features in the soil are usually weak, changes as small as 0.1 nanoTeslas (nT) in an overall field strength of 48,000 (nT), can be accurately detected.

Weakly magnetic iron minerals are always present within the soil and areas of enhancement relate to increases in *magnetic susceptibility* and permanently magnetised *thermoremanent* material.

Magnetic susceptibility relates to the induced magnetism of a material when in the presence of a magnetic field. This magnetism can be considered as effectively permanent as it exists within the Earth's magnetic field. Magnetic susceptibility can become enhanced due to burning and complex biological or fermentation processes.

Thermoremanence is a permanent magnetism acquired by iron minerals that, after heating to a specific temperature known as the Curie Point, are effectively demagnetised followed by re-magnetisation by the Earth's magnetic field on cooling. Thermoremanent archaeological features can include hearths and kilns; material such as brick and tile may be magnetised through the same process.

Silting and deliberate infilling of ditches and pits with magnetically enhanced soil creates a relative contrast against the much lower levels of magnetism within the subsoil into which the feature is cut. Systematic mapping of magnetic anomalies will produce linear and discrete areas of enhancement allowing assessment and characterisation of subsurface features. Material such as subsoil and non-magnetic bedrock used to create former earthworks and walls may be mapped as areas of lower enhancement compared to surrounding soils.

Magnetic survey is carried out using a fluxgate gradiometer which is a passive instrument consisting of two sensors mounted vertically 1m apart. The instrument is carried about 30cm above the ground surface and the top sensor measures the Earth's magnetic field whilst the lower sensor measures the same field but is also more affected by any localised buried feature. The difference between the two sensors will relate to the strength of a magnetic field created by this feature, if no field is present the difference will be close to zero as the magnetic field measured by both sensors will be the same.

Factors affecting the magnetic survey may include soil type, local geology, previous human activity and disturbance from modern services.

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

Printable version

OASIS ID: gsbprosp1-297300

Project details

Project name	Land North of Halstead Road, Eight Ash Green, Colchester
Short description of the project	Geophysical (magnetometer) survey on 8ha of land at Eight Ash Green, Colchester.
Project dates	Start: 23-08-2017 End: 21-09-2017
Previous/future work	Not known / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	ECC4051 - HER event no.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 15 - Other
Monument type	NONE None
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	"Geophysical Survey"
Development type	Not recorded
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF
Position in the planning process	Not known / Not recorded
Solid geology	LONDON CLAY
Drift geology (other)	Cover sand - clay, silt and sand
Techniques	Magnetometry

Project location

Country	England
Site location	ESSEX COLCHESTER EIGHT ASH GREEN Land North of Halstead Road, Eight Ash
Postcode	CO3 9UF
Study area	8 Hectares
Site coordinates	TL 932 264 51.902079722452 0.808674090164 51 54 07 N 000 48 31 E Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Sumo Geophysics

Project brief originator	Consultant
Project design originator	Sumo Geophsyics
Project director/manager	Sumo Geophysics
Project supervisor	Sumo Geophysics
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Not known

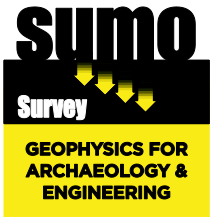
Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Sumo Geophysics
Digital Contents	"Survey"
Digital Media available	"Geophysics"
Paper Archive recipient	Sumo Geophsyics
Paper Contents	"Survey"
Paper Media available	"Drawing","Report","Survey "

Entered by	Sumo Geophysics (info@gsbsumo.com)
Entered on	2 October 2017

OASIS:

Please e-mail Historic England for OASIS help and advice



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Company Registration No.4275993.
Registered Office Unit 8 Hayward Business Centre, New Lane, Havant, Hampshire, PO9 2NL