



*Great Braxted
Parish Council*

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15th February 2024

To: Members of Great Braxted Parish Council

You are hereby summoned to attend

**AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL
TO BE HELD AT THE PAVILION GREAT BRAXTED
ON TUESDAY 5TH MARCH 2024 AT 8.00 PM**

for the purpose of transacting the following business:

Chairman of the Council

A G E N D A

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting

Minutes of the Meeting held on 18th January 2024 to be taken as read and signed as a correct record by the Chairman.

3. Declarations of Interest

Members are reminded that they are required to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, Other Pecuniary Interests or Non-Pecuniary Interests which they know they might have in items of business on the agenda. They are reminded that they will need to repeat their declarations at the appropriate point in the meeting and leave the room if required under the Code of Conduct which took effect in July 2022.

Unforeseen interests must be declared similarly at the appropriate time.

4. **Public Participation Session**

With respect to items on the Agenda and other matters of mutual interest.

5. **Essex Minerals Local Plan 2025-2040 and Call for Site Consultation**

To discuss the draft Essex Minerals Local Plan 2025-2040 and Call for Sites Consultation and to decide what comment, if any, should be made. [Report attached.](#)

6. **Date of Next Meeting**

7. **Chairman to Close the Meeting**



GREAT BRAXTED PARISH COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

Essex Minerals Local Plan 2025 – 2040

Agenda Item 5

Background

The County Council is currently in the consultation phase for the Draft Mineral Plan, intended to guide mineral extraction activities from 2025 to 2040. As part of this process, landowners and stakeholders were invited to propose extraction sites, with Parish Councils now being asked to provide input, particularly for sites within or adjacent to their jurisdiction. Each proposed site has undergone a provisional assessment based on 16 criteria which have been categorised Red, Amber Green (RAG).

Summary

The consultation document can be viewed [here](#) and the pages (50-68) relevant for consideration by the Council are shown below.

The consultation opened on the 6th February 2024 and will close on the 19th March 2024.

Among the proposed sites are three in or in close proximity to Great Braxted. These are numbered 49 to 52 in the consultation document.

Councillors are asked to assess the potential impacts these sites will have on the Parish, its inhabitants, and the environment, and to propose suitable measures to mitigate any adverse effects should these sites be chosen for inclusion in the final plan.

Advice

Considering the significance of mineral extraction activities on the local community and environment, the Parish Council, should thoroughly evaluate the proposed sites and their potential impacts. This evaluation should encompass factors such as traffic congestion, noise pollution, landscape alteration, and potential ecological consequences.

Recommendation

Given the importance of mitigating adverse impacts, it is recommended that the Parish Council collaborates closely with residents, environmental experts, and relevant authorities to formulate a comprehensive response. This may include advocating for stricter environmental regulations, proposing alternative site locations, or negotiating for mitigation measures to be implemented.

Candidate Site Reference	Candidate Site Name	District	Existing use	Site Area (ha)	Potential Yield (million tonnes)
A49	Colemans Farm - Hill Broad Farm Full Site	Maldon	Agricultural	40.74	2

The Site is promoted as an extension to an existing mineral Site (Colemans Farm Quarry) and is located to the south east of Colemans Farm Quarry. The Site area is approximately 40.74 ha and is proposed for approximately 2 million tonnes of sand and gravel extraction which would be transported internally to an existing plant site at Colemans Farm Quarry, where it will be washed, graded, and stocked prior to export off Site. It is proposed that once granted consent mineral extraction would follow on from the consented extraction activities at Colemans Farm Quarry and, subject to allocation, could be operated alongside Site A50. The adjoining uses include agricultural fields, woodland, Colemans reservoir and residential and commercial buildings. The hamlet of Rivenhall is located 800m north of the Site. Access to the Site is through the access arrangements for the existing workings at Colemans Farm Quarry. See Appendix J for a detailed map of the Site.

Summary of RAG Assessment

The results of the technical and desktop RAG assessment are detailed below.

Landscape and Visual Sensitivity	Biodiversity	Historic Buildings	Archaeology	Flooding	Transport	Access	Public Rights of Way	Geo-Environmental	Hydrology, Hydrogeology and Drainage	Air Quality	Soil Quality	Services & Utilities	Health & Amenity	Green Belt	Airport Safeguarding Zones
Red/Amber	Amber	Red/Amber	Amber	Amber	Red/Amber	Green	Red/Amber	Green	Amber	Green	Amber	Red/Amber	Red	Green	Green

Key findings of the assessment are as follows:

- The Site is very characteristic of the Blackwater/Brain/Lower Chelmer (C6) Landscape Character Area (LCA). Located on the edge of the River Blackwater, the western parcel of the Site comprises linear willow and poplar plantation which is a strong local feature of the landscape. The remainder of the Site comprises arable fields separated by established hedgerows, also located on the valley sides. With open views of the river, appropriate consideration is required to protect the characteristic features of the LCA, particularly on the setting of the River Blackwater valley floor, and mitigate the impacts on the landscape.
- Elm Springs Priority Habitat (Deciduous Woodland) defines the western site boundary, and Stowling & Crierswood Ancient Woodland is located 0.3km to

the south of the Site. The River Blackwater valley is located on the immediate boundary to the west, with strong intervisibility between the Site and the river. Appropriate consideration would be required to mitigate the physical impacts on Elm Springs with a suitable buffer. Mineral extraction within this location would significantly alter the setting of the River Blackwater valley, where a substantial buffer would be required.

- The River Blackwater follows the length of the western boundary and there is another watercourse within the Site which feeds into the River which is likely to be removed. These create a potential pollution pathway for water quality between the proposed mineral Site and a number of statutory wildlife sites. The potential for Likely Significant Effects, particularly to the Blackwater Estuary Special Protection Area and Ramsar site and the Essex Estuaries Special Area of Conservation will need to be considered through a plan-level Habitats Regulations Assessment.
- The Site is situated on low-lying land and comprises several arable fields; an area of Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland Priority habitat is located within the Site, to the west of the River Blackwater.
- The Site is graded Amber because ecological impacts could be moderate and are likely to require medium levels of mitigation to make the Site acceptable. The Site's groundwater may be affected, which in turn could affect the hydrology of on-site and off-site habitats. The proposals are also just over 100 metres from Braxted Park Local Wildlife Site. Substantial buffers are likely to be required near to the Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland Priority habitat, River Blackwater and other watercourses and their water quality must not be affected by the proposals. Affected Hedgerows and watercourses should be adequately and appropriately compensated.
- The allocation of The Site would have a major detrimental impact on the setting of the following Grade II listed buildings:
 - Appleford Bridge (List UID: 1111108)
 - Appleford Bridge Cottage (List UID: 1317172)
 - 1 and 2 School House (List UID: 1400105)
- The change to the setting of the listed buildings would amount to a mid-level of less than substantial harm to their significance.
- There would be a moderate impact on the significance of the Grade II listed Garden Wall of Little Braxted Hall (List UID: 1111073), resulting in a low level of less than substantial harm.
- There would be a minor impact on the setting of the group of three designated heritage assets at Great Braxted Hall resulting in the lowest level of less than substantial harm.
- The group of heritage assets at Little Braxted are unlikely to be affected, other than through minor environmental impacts.

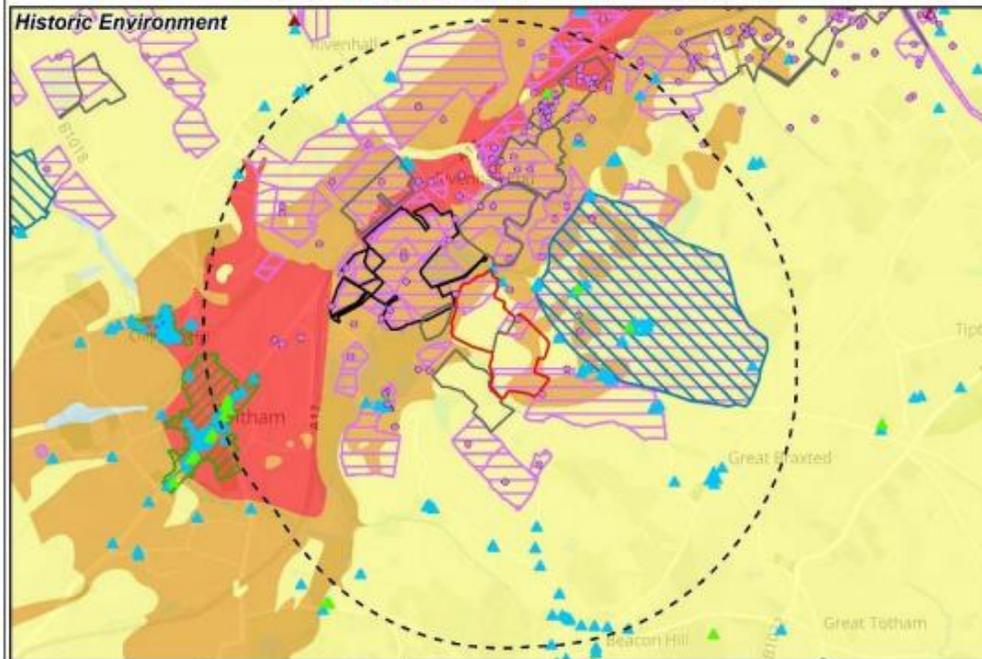
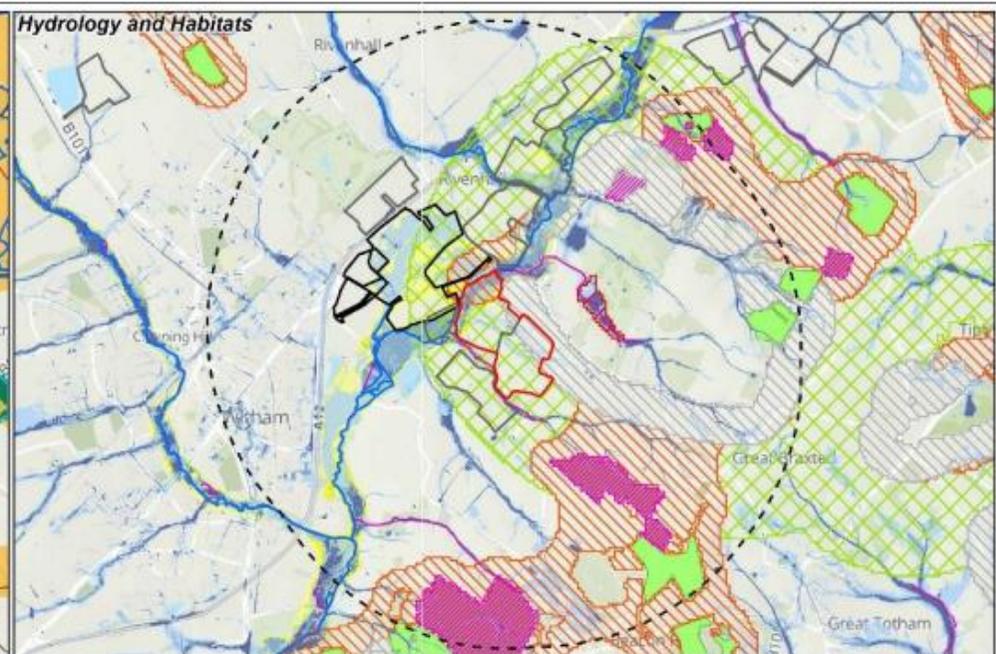
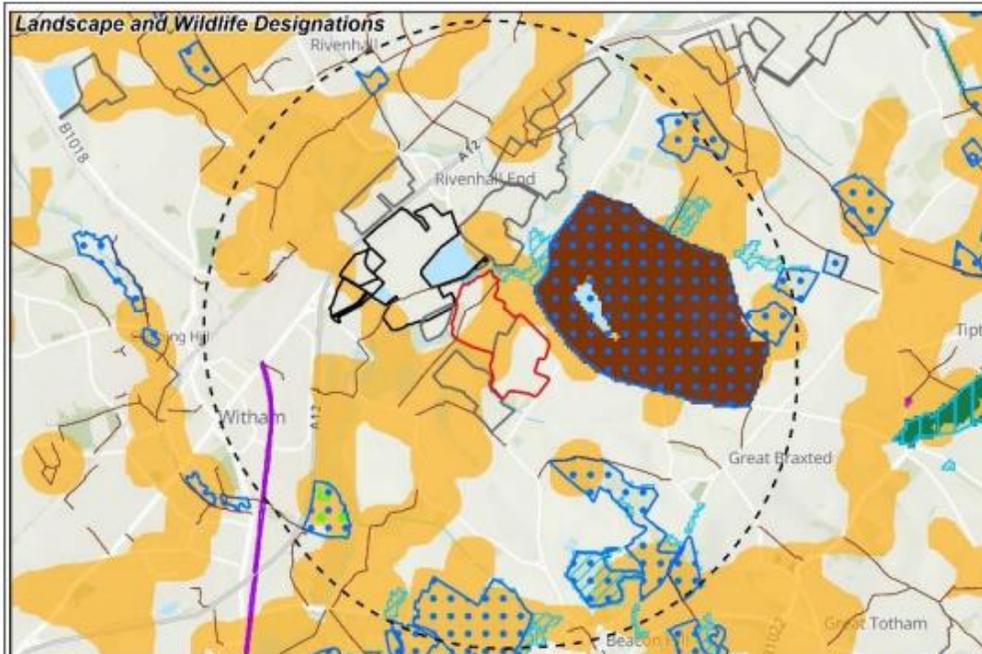
- The Site lies within an area of archaeological features as identified through aerial photographic evidence. In the northern area of the Site a circular enclosure is interpreted as being of prehistoric date and possibly a ritual monument
- A series of linear features may represent possibly prehistoric or later land division along the river valley.
- A scheduled monument lies within 1km of the Site.
- Palaeolithic archaeological remains and Pleistocene faunal remains have been recovered from river gravels within the vicinity of the Site.
- The Site is assessed as having a 'high' potential for surface water flood risk as identified within the SFRA.
- The Site has been identified as having a 'high' groundwater flood risk.
- The Site is predominantly within Flood Risk Zone 1 however parts of the Site within FRZ2 and FRZ3 associated with the River Blackwater are prone to fluvial flooding.
- Any potential changes to the porosity of the ground following works and its effects on groundwater levels will need to be mitigated.
- Restoration of the Site following operational closure should consider the inclusion of flood reduction measures such as NFM and/or tree planting to reduce risks across the wider catchment.
- Access proposed via an existing access from Little Braxted Lane which is classified as a local route (other) in Essex County Council's Development Management Route Hierarchy. This accords with (i) in the methodology (see Appendix G Transport for full methodology):

Access to a suitable existing junction with the main road network, via a suitable section of an existing road, as short as possible, without causing a detrimental impact upon the safety and efficiency of the network.

- 1 Public Right of Way crosses the Site. 1 Public Right of Way is within 100m of the Site. Appropriate consideration would be needed to mitigate potential impacts on these Public Rights of Way and high levels of mitigation may be required which is likely to include diversion especially with regard to the Public Right of Way crossing the Site.
- The Site has unproductive/low/medium to low groundwater vulnerability. The Site is within a Drinking Water Safeguard Zone (Surface Water) and is within Drinking Water Protection Areas (Surface Water). A watercourse (River Blackwater) is within the Site boundary and is 20m west and 30m north east,

another watercourse is 5m south west and an additional watercourse is 80m south. Appropriate consideration would be required to mitigate potential impacts on hydrology, hydrogeology, and drainage.

- The Site contains Grade 2 quality soil (very good quality agricultural land) and Grade 3 quality soil (good to moderate quality land), which is BMV land. Appropriate consideration would be required to mitigate the impacts on soil quality and agricultural land – this is likely to include removal of soils for stockpiling prior to reuse, potentially in site restoration.
- The Site contains 11kV overhead and underground electricity lines within the Site boundary. The Site is within 100m of a high pressure gas mains (Cadent Gas). Further investigation and consultation would be needed to determine appropriate mitigation measures to avoid impacts on the gas main to make the Site acceptable which may include diversion and/or protection.
- One residential building is present within the Site. Two residential buildings are outside the Site boundary less than or equal to 20m from the Site. One residential building is more than 20m but less than or equal to 50m from the Site. Nine residential buildings are more than 50m but less than or equal to 250m from the Site, Given the proximity of sensitive receptors, mitigation would be required, however, the levels of mitigation required to ensure that there are no serious impacts on health and amenity would likely be difficult to achieve.



Boundaries	Hydrology and Habitats	Historic Environment
Site Boundary	Main River	Grade I Listed Building
Other Candidate Sites	Other Watercourse	Grade II* Listed Building
Existing Quarry Boundaries	Risk of Flooding from Rivers and the Sea	Grade II Listed Building
2km Distance from Site Boundary	Flood Zone 2	Conservation Area (CA)
Public Rights of Way	Flood Zone 3	Scheduled Monument
Country Park	Risk of Flooding from Surface Water Extent	Historic Park and Garden
Local Wildlife Site (LoWS)	1 in 30 Flood Events	Historic Environmental Records
Local Nature Reserve (LNR)	1 in 100 Flood Events	Heritage Site and Monument
Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	1 in 1000 Flood Events	Heritage Site and Monument
Great Crested Newt - Amber Zone (Natural England District Level Licensing)	Habitat Network	Palaeolithic Potential
Irreplaceable and Priority Habitat	Lakes	High Potential
Lowland Heathland	Network Enhancement Zone 1	Moderate Potential
Traditional Orchard	Network Enhancement Zone 2	Low Potential
Wood Pasture and Parkland	Network Expansion Zone	Uncertain Potential
Other Priority Habitat	Restorable Habitat	
	Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland	
	Ancient Replanted Woodland	

<i>Candidate Site Reference</i>	<i>Candidate Site Name</i>	<i>District</i>	<i>Existing use</i>	<i>Site Area (ha)</i>	<i>Potential Yield (million tonnes)</i>
A50	Colemans Farm - Eastern extension (Appleford Farm)	Braintree	Agricultural	24.25	0.93

The Site is promoted as an extension to an existing mineral Site (Colemans Farm Quarry) and is located to the east of Colemans Farm Quarry. The Site area is approximately 24.25 ha and is proposed for 0.93 million tonnes of sand and gravel extraction which would be transported to an existing plant Site at Colemans Farm Quarry, where it will be washed, graded, and stocked prior to export off Site. It is proposed that once granted consent mineral extraction would follow on from the consented extraction activities at Colemans Farm Quarry. The adjoining uses include agricultural fields, woodland, Colemans reservoir, residential, farm and commercial buildings. The hamlet of Rivenhall is located 300m north and north east. Access to the Site is through the existing access into Appleford Farm. See Appendix J for a detailed map of the Site.

Summary of RAG Assessment

The results of the technical and desktop RAG assessment are detailed below.

Landscape and Visual Sensitivity	Biodiversity	Historic Buildings	Archaeology	Flooding	Transport	Access	Public Rights of Way	Geo-Environmental	Hydrology, Hydrogeology and Drainage	Air Quality	Soil Quality	Services & Utilities	Health & Amenity	Green Belt	Airport Safeguarding Zones
Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber	Red/Amber	Red/Amber	Green	Green	Amber	Green	Amber	Red	Red/Amber	Green	Green

Key findings of the assessment are as follows:

- The Site is significantly characteristic of the Blackwater/Brain/Lower Chelmer (C6) Landscape Character Area (LCA). Located close to the River Blackwater, the Site is lined by linear willow and poplar trees which are a strong local feature of the landscape. The remainder of the Site comprises arable fields with open views of the river. Appropriate consideration is required to protect the characteristic features of the LCA, particularly on the setting of the River Blackwater valley floor, and mitigate the impacts on the landscape.
- The River Blackwater valley is located close to the boundary to the east with strong intervisibility between the Site and the river. A number of Priority

Habitats (Deciduous Woodland) are located close to the eastern boundary of the Site, largely along the river edge. Mineral extraction within this location would significantly alter the setting of the River Blackwater valley, where a substantial buffer would be required.

- The River Blackwater follows one boundary and its tributaries follow two other boundaries. There are potential pollution pathways – e.g. water quality - between the proposed mineral Site and international wildlife sites that would need to be considered further through the plan-level Habitats Regulations Assessment and any subsequent planning application.
- The Site is situated on low-lying land and comprises two arable fields; an area of Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland Priority habitat is located in the centre of one of these fields. The woodland would be lost by these proposals.
- The Site is graded Amber because ecological impacts could be moderate and are likely to require medium levels of mitigation to make the Site acceptable. The Site's groundwater may be affected, which in turn could affect on-site and off-site habitats. Substantial buffers are likely to be required near to the River Blackwater, other watercourses and central Woodland and their water quality must not be affected by the proposals.
- The Site is approximately 75 metres to the north of the Grade II listed Appleford Bridge (List UID: 1111108). In terms of visual impact, there would be a low level of harm (Amber) to the Grade II Listed Appleford Bridge resulting from the visual impact of the scheme. There would be an environmental impact on the bridge and its setting, resulting from dust, noise, illumination at night and the movement of traffic.
- The use of the 250-year-old bridge by heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) travelling to and from the Site would potentially have a damaging impact on its fabric, along with the higher probability of vehicle strikes. The bridge is currently in frequent use by heavy goods vehicles day-to-day. Therefore, a Structural Survey of the bridge carried out by a Heritage Accredited Structural Engineer, would be required to inform a decision as to the extent of any possible harm resulting from its increased use by HGVs.
- The impact of noise, dust, and movement of HGVs, will have a low-level of adverse environmental impact on the settings of Appleford Bridge Cottage (List UID: 1317172); Grade II Listed Witham Lodge and Entrance Gates (List Entry Number: 1337342); Grade II listed brick-built boundary wall of Braxted Park (List Entry Number: 1111073). With controls over the routes and frequency of HGVs travelling to and from the Site, this could be effectively mitigated.
- A Scheduled Monument lies within 200m of the Site. Historic England should be consulted at the earliest opportunity to assess the impact on the setting of the Scheduled Monument.

- Archaeological evaluation has been completed across part of the Site which has identified concentrations of archaeological remains.

The Site lies within an area of archaeological features as identified through aerial photographic evidence and archaeological investigation. The Site contains concentrations of multi-period archaeological features. The Site also has potential to contain Palaeolithic archaeological remains and Pleistocene faunal and palaeoenvironmental remains.

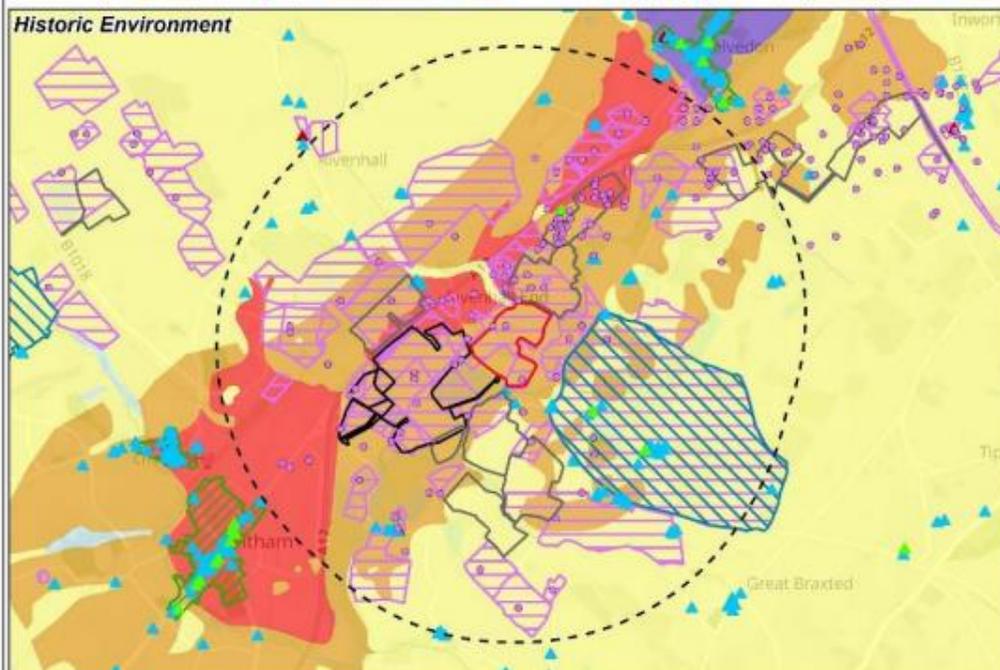
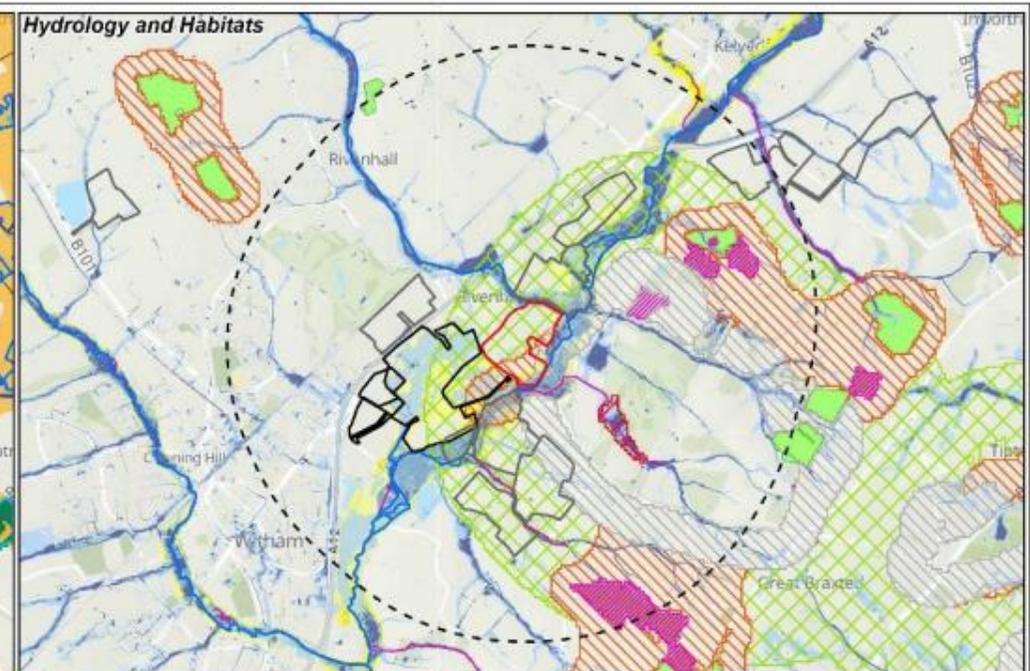
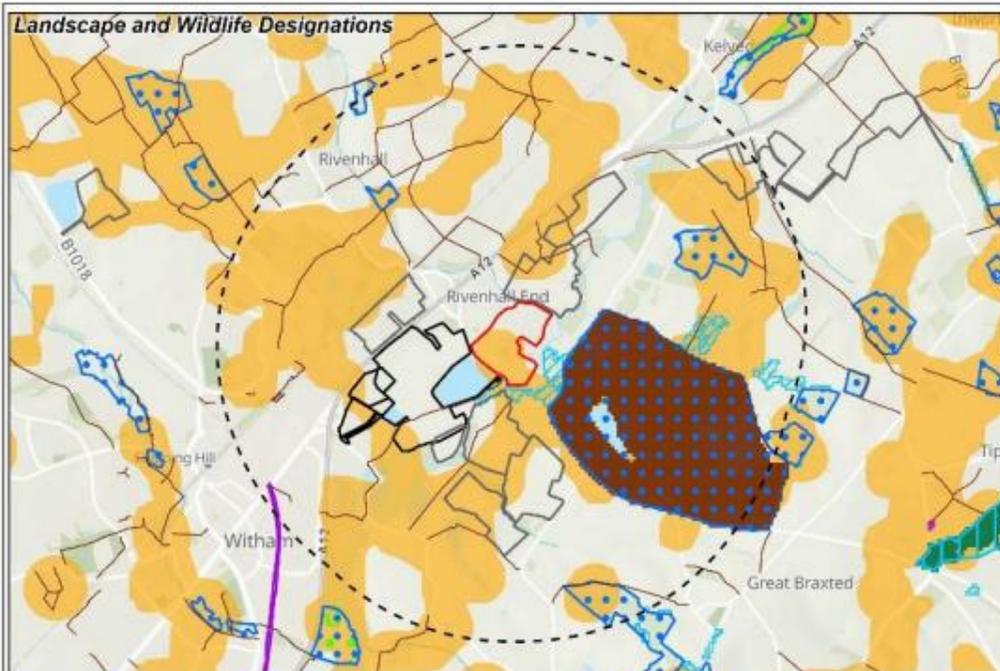
- The Site is assessed as having a 'medium' potential for surface water flood risk as identified within the SFRA.
- The Site has been identified as having a 'high' groundwater flood risk.
- The Site is predominantly within Flood Risk Zone 1, however 18% is within FRZ2&3 associated with the River Blackwater.
- Access is proposed via a modified access serving Appleford Farm onto Braxted Road which is a Secondary Distributor in Essex County Council's Development Management Route Hierarchy. This corresponds to (iii) in the methodology (see Appendix G Transport for full methodology):

Where access to the main road network in accordance with (i) and (ii) above is not feasible, road access via a suitable existing road prior to gaining access onto the main road network will exceptionally be permitted, having regard to the scale of the development, the capacity and form of the road and an assessment of the impact on road safety

- From a highway viewpoint Braxted Road, Oak Road and Henry Dixon Road and associated connections to the Main/Strategic Road Network via the A12 Trunk Road are not suitable in their current form.
- A Transport Statement scoping report supporting site A50 indicatively shows a modified access arrangement on drawing 15057-26B of the existing access serving Appleford Farm. This does not currently show that simultaneous access for two HGVs can be achieved satisfactorily but indicates that appropriate visibility splays are likely to be achievable at this location to accord with surveyed vehicle speeds.
- Interaction of modified access to Appleford Farm with Braxted Bridge and existing minerals access serving Colemans Farm required.
- Principle of access not agreed.
- The Site has medium to low groundwater vulnerability. The Site is within a Drinking Water Safeguard Zone (Surface Water) and is within Drinking Water Protection Areas (Surface Water). A watercourse (River Blackwater) is 30m south, and 10m and 70m south east of the Site and another watercourse is 5m north. There is a small water body present within the Site boundary.

Appropriate consideration would be required to mitigate potential impacts on hydrology, hydrogeology, and drainage.

- The Site contains Grade 2 quality soil (very good quality agricultural land) and Grade 3 quality soil (good to moderate quality land), which is BMV land. Appropriate consideration would be required to mitigate the impacts on soil quality and agricultural land – this is likely to include removal of soils for stockpiling prior to reuse, potentially in site restoration.
- The Site contains 11kV overhead electricity lines within the Site boundary. An overhead Openreach BT power line is present within the Site. The Site contains high pressure gas mains (Cadent Gas) within the Site boundary. Further investigation and consultation would be needed to determine appropriate mitigation measures to make the Site acceptable which would likely include diversion and/or protection. Diversion and/or protection may not be possible and/or may be cost prohibitive.
- Three residential buildings, three commercial buildings and a farm building (Appleford Farm) are outside the Site boundary less than or equal to 20m from the Site. Three residential buildings are more than 50m but less than or equal to 250m from the Site. Given the proximity of sensitive receptors, high levels of mitigation are likely to be required to make the Site acceptable in terms of impacts on health and amenity e.g. high level noise screening and extensive dust suppression measures.



<i>Candidate Site Reference</i>	<i>Candidate Site Name</i>	<i>District</i>	<i>Existing use</i>	<i>Site Area (ha)</i>	<i>Potential Yield (million tonnes)</i>
A51	Colemans Farm - North extension (Hill Broad Farm)	Maldon	Agricultural	19.77	0.6

The Site is promoted as an extension to an existing mineral Site (Colemans Farm Quarry) and is located to the south west of Colemans Farm Quarry. The Site area is approximately 19.77 ha and is proposed for approximately 0.6 million tonnes of sand and gravel extraction which would be transported internally to the existing plant Site at Colemans Farm Quarry, where it will be washed, graded, and stocked prior to export off Site. It is proposed that once granted consent mineral extraction would follow on from the consented extraction activities at Colemans Farm Quarry and, subject to allocation, could be operated alongside Site A50. The adjoining uses include agricultural fields, woodland, Colemans reservoir and residential and commercial buildings. The hamlet of Rivenhall is located 800m north of the Site. Access to the Site is through the access arrangements for the existing workings at Colemans Farm Quarry. See Appendix J for a detailed map of the Site.

Summary of RAG Assessment

The results of the technical and desktop RAG assessment are detailed below.

Landscape and Visual Sensitivity	Biodiversity	Historic Buildings	Archaeology	Flooding	Transport	Access	Public Rights of Way	Geo-Environmental	Hydrology, Hydrogeology and Drainage	Air Quality	Soil Quality	Services & Utilities	Health & Amenity	Green Belt	Airport Safeguarding Zones
Amber	Amber	Red/Amber	Amber	Amber	Green	Green	Red/Amber	Green	Amber	Green	Amber	Red/Amber	Red/Amber	Green	Green

Key findings of the assessment are as follows:

- The Site is significantly characteristic of the Blackwater/Brain/Lower Chelmer (C6) Landscape Character Area (LCA). Located on the river edge of the River Blackwater, the Site comprises linear willow and poplar plantation which is a strong local feature of the landscape which increases the complexity of the Site. The remainder of the Site comprises arable fields separated by established hedgerows, also located on the valley sides. With open views of the river, appropriate consideration is required to protect the characteristic features of the LCA, particularly on the setting of the River Blackwater valley floor, and mitigate the impacts on the landscape.

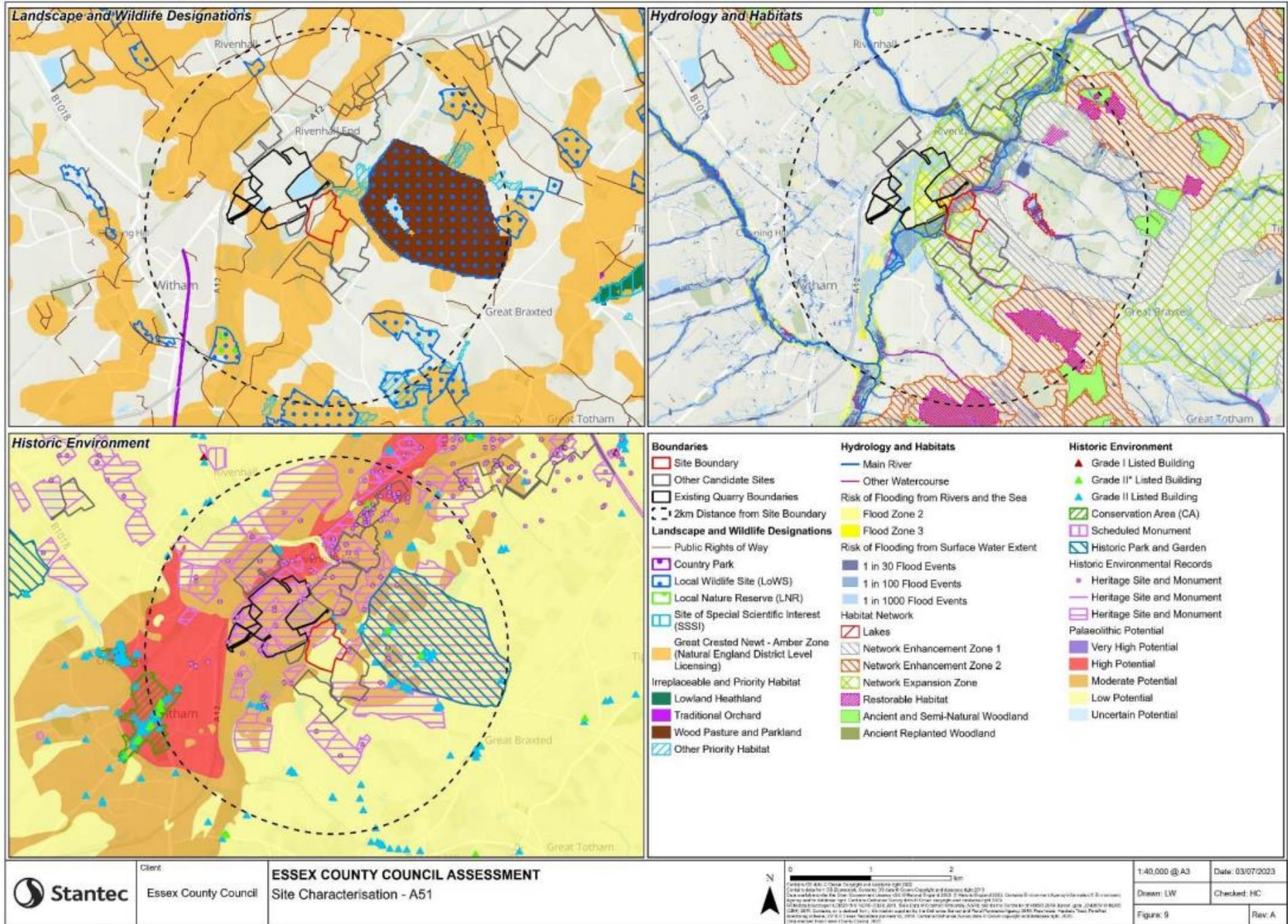
- The River Blackwater valley is located on the immediate boundary to the west, with strong intervisibility between the Site and the river. Appropriate consideration would be required to mitigate the physical impacts on Elm Springs with a suitable buffer. Mineral extraction within this location would significantly alter the setting of the River Blackwater valley, where a substantial buffer would be required.
- The River Blackwater follows the length of the western boundary and there is another watercourse within the Site which feeds into the River which is likely to be removed. These create a potential pollution pathway for water quality between the proposed mineral Site and a number of statutory wildlife sites. The potential for Likely Significant Effects, particularly to the Blackwater Estuary Special Protection Area and Ramsar site and the Essex Estuaries Special Area of Conservation will need to be considered through a plan-level Habitats Regulations Assessment.
- The Site is situated on low-lying land and comprises two arable fields; an area of Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland Priority habitat is located within the Site, to the west of the River Blackwater.
- The Site is graded Amber because ecological impacts could be moderate and are likely to require medium levels of mitigation to make the Site acceptable. The Site's groundwater may be affected, which in turn could affect the hydrology of on-site and off-site habitats. Substantial buffers are likely to be required near to the Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland Priority habitat, River Blackwater and other watercourses and their water quality must not be affected by the proposals. Affected Hedgerows and watercourses should be adequately and appropriately compensated.
- The northern tip of the Site is adjacent to the Grade II Listed Appleford Bridge (List UID: 1111108). There is a high degree of visibility between the Site to the south and the heritage asset. The Site is an important part of the asset's setting and is currently pastoral in character and undeveloped. There is likely to be a considerable visual impact on this agrarian character from the quarrying of the Site. The allocation of the Site would have a negative impact on the setting of the bridge, resulting in a mid-level of less than substantial harm.
- The north-east boundary of the Site also abuts the curtilage boundary of the Grade II Listed Appleford Bridge Cottage (List UID: 1317172). The excavation of the Site would result in a mid-level of less than substantial harm, due to the visual intrusion of the quarrying works on the bridge's setting.
- Mitigation in the form of landscaping or screens of vegetation is unlikely to significantly reduce the visual impact on both the bridge and cottage. The mid-level of harm resulting from the visual impact could not be effectively mitigated.
- The structural impact of heavy vehicle use on the Grade II Listed Appleford bridge would need to be assessed by a heritage structural engineer in order

for the impact of its use in conjunction with the Site to be understood. At present, the impact is unknown. Once a structural survey report has been submitted it would then be possible to assess the level of harm to the bridge resulting from the scheme. Should any impacts be found to result from the bridge's use by HGVs in conjunction with the Site activity, mitigation in the form of the prohibition of use of the bridge by HGVs would reduce any direct physical impacts on the bridge.

- The impact on other nearby heritage assets would be limited to environmental impacts of dust, noise and traffic and would be low.
- The Site lies within an area of archaeological features as identified through aerial photographic evidence.
- In the northern area of the Site a circular enclosure is interpreted as being of prehistoric date and possibly a ritual monument.
- A series of linear features may represent possibly prehistoric or later land division along the river valley.
- A Scheduled Monument lies within 1km of the Site.
- Palaeolithic archaeological remains and Pleistocene faunal remains have been recovered from river gravels within the vicinity of the Site.
- The Site is assessed as having a 'high' potential for surface water flood risk as identified within the SFRA.
- The Site has been identified as having a 'medium' groundwater flood risk.
- The Site is predominantly within FRZ1, although 43% of the Site is within FRZ3 and FRZ2.
- The implementation of sediment and erosion control measures, e.g., silt fences, sediment basins, and vegetative cover, to prevent soil erosion and sedimentation in water bodies will help reduce the risk of flooding by maintaining proper stormwater management and preventing sediment build-up in waterways.
- 1 Public Right of Way crosses the Site. 1 Public Right of Way is within 100m of the Site. Appropriate consideration would be needed to mitigate potential impacts on these Public Rights of Way and high levels of mitigation may be required which is likely to include diversion especially with regard to the Public Right of Way crossing the Site.
- The Site has unproductive/medium to low groundwater vulnerability. The Site is within a Drinking Water Safeguard Zone (Surface Water) and is within Drinking Water Protection Areas (Surface Water). A watercourse (River Blackwater) is within the Site boundary and is 20m west and 30m north east, another watercourse is 5m south west, a watercourse is 80m south and an

additional watercourse is 90m south. Appropriate consideration would be required to mitigate potential impacts on hydrology, hydrogeology, and drainage.

- The Site contains Grade 2 quality soil (very good quality agricultural land) and Grade 3 quality soil (good to moderate quality land), which is BMV land. Appropriate consideration would be required to mitigate the impacts on soil quality and agricultural land – this is likely to include removal of soils for stockpiling prior to reuse, potentially in site restoration.
- The Site contains 11kV overhead and underground electricity lines within the Site boundary. The Site is within 100m of a high pressure gas mains (Cadent Gas). Further investigation and consultation would be needed to determine appropriate mitigation measures to avoid impact on the gas main to make the Site acceptable which may include diversion and/or protection.
- Two residential buildings are outside the Site boundary less than or equal to 20m from the Site. One residential building is more than 50m but less than or equal to 250m from the Site, Given the proximity of sensitive receptors, high levels of mitigation are likely to be required to make the Site acceptable in terms of impacts on health and amenity e.g. high level noise screening and extensive dust suppression measures.



Review of Essex MLP 2014 - Assessment of Candidate Sand and Gravel Sites, November 2023

<i>Candidate Site Reference</i>	<i>Candidate Site Name</i>	<i>District</i>	<i>Existing use</i>	<i>Site Area (ha)</i>	<i>Potential Yield (million tonnes)</i>
A52	Colemans Farm - Southern extension	Braintree	Agricultural	4.13	0.11

The Site is promoted as an extension to an existing mineral Site (Colemans Farm Quarry) and is located to the south of Colemans Farm Quarry. The Site area is approximately 4.13 ha and is proposed for 0.11 million tonnes of sand and gravel extraction which would be transported to the existing Colemans Farm Quarry plant Site, where it will be washed, graded, and stocked prior to export off Site. It is proposed that once granted consent mineral extraction would follow on from the consented extraction activities at Colemans Farm Quarry. The adjoining uses include agricultural fields and woodland. The town of Witham is located to the west of the Site. Access to the Site is proposed through the existing Little Braxted Lane access into, and internal haul roads through, Coleman's Quarry. However, should A12 improvements be constructed, then access could potentially be via the proposed Braxted Road access. See Appendix J for a detailed map of the Site.

Summary of RAG Assessment

The results of the technical and desktop RAG assessment are detailed below.

Landscape and Visual Sensitivity	Biodiversity	Historic Buildings	Archaeology	Flooding	Transport	Access	Public Rights of Way	Geo-Environmental	Hydrology, Hydrogeology and Drainage	Air Quality	Soil Quality	Services & Utilities	Health & Amenity	Green Belt	Airport Safeguarding Zones
Amber	Amber	Amber / Green	Amber	Red / Amber	Green	Green	Green	Green	Amber	Green	Amber	Amber	Green	Green	Green

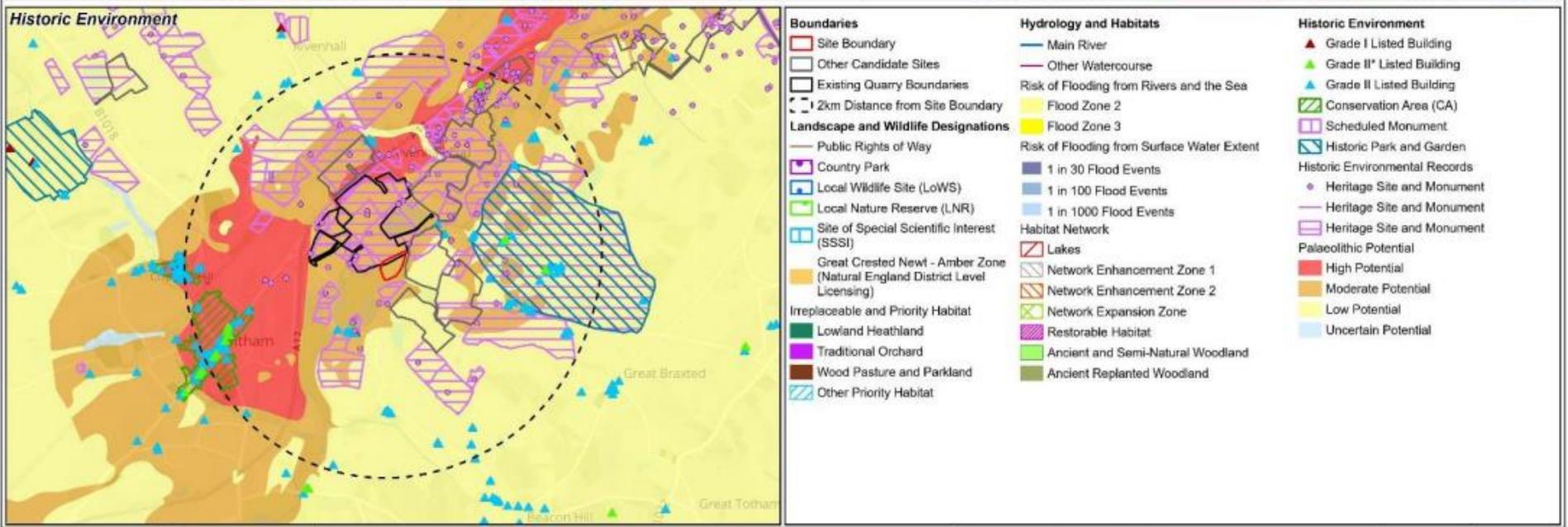
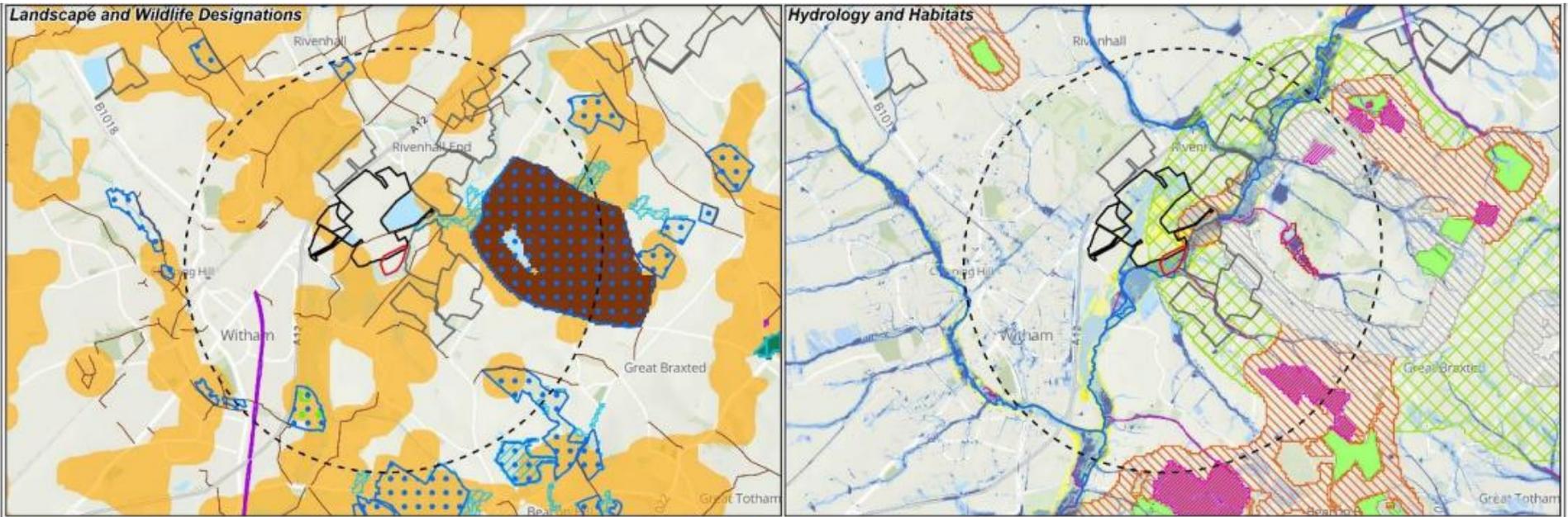
Key findings of the assessment are as follows:

- The Site is located within the River Blackwater valley floor and is therefore very characteristic of the Blackwater/Brain/Lower Chelmer (C6) Landscape Character Area (LCA). The east, south and west boundaries are defined by the linear poplar and willow plantations that line the banks of the River Blackwater that runs close to the boundary of the Site. The Site itself is very flat and comprises grassland which makes up the valley floor landscape character. Mineral extraction of the Site will significantly alter the setting of the River Blackwater and surrounding character.
- Elm Springs Priority Habitat (Deciduous Woodland) is located 0.1km to the east of the Site, and Stowling & Crierswood Ancient Woodland is located 0.4km to the south-east of the Site. The River Blackwater valley defines the

southern boundary and is a prominent feature within the immediate landscape. Appropriate consideration would be required to mitigate the physical impacts on The River Blackwater with a suitable buffer.

- Public Rights of Way (PRoW) are not located immediately adjacent to the Site; however, a footpath runs to the south of the River Blackwater (Footpath 1) and a bridleway to the north (Bridleway 29). The PRoWs provide open views of the Site in the context of the River Blackwater and linear plantations which acts as a prominent feature in the foreground/background, respectively.
- The River Blackwater is close to the Site's eastern boundary creating a potential pollution pathway for water quality between the proposed mineral Site and a number of statutory wildlife sites. The potential for Likely Significant Effects, particularly to the Blackwater Estuary Special Protection Area and Ramsar site and the Essex Estuaries Special Area of Conservation will need to be considered through a plan-level Habitats Regulations Assessment.
- The Site is situated on low-lying land and comprises an arable field; an area of Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland Priority habitat is located immediately south of the Site.
- The Site is graded Amber because ecological impacts could be moderate and are likely to require medium levels of mitigation to make the Site acceptable. The Site's groundwater may be affected, which in turn could affect the hydrology of on-site and off-site habitats. Substantial buffers are likely to be required near to the Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland Priority habitat and River Blackwater and water quality must not be affected by the proposals. The affected hedgerows should be compensated.
- To the southwest of the Site is a group of designated heritage assets, which are as follows:
 - Little Braxted Mill, Grade II Listed (List UID: 1308828)
 - Kitchen/Dovecote north of Little Braxted Hall, Grade II* listed (List UID: 1146757)
 - Summer House at Little Braxted Hall, Grade II listed (List UID: 1146764)
 - Garden Wall of Little Braxted Hall, Grade II Listed (List UID: 1111065).
 - Little Braxted Hall and Railings, Grade II Listed (List UID: 1111063).
 - Church of St Nicholas, Grade I Listed (List UID: 1111066).
 - Monument in St Nicholas Churchyard, Grade II Listed (List UID: 1146792)
- Due to the spatial separation of these heritage assets from the Site, the impacts of quarrying at the Site are likely to be minor, amounting to the lowest level of less than substantial harm, and may require low levels of mitigation to make the Site acceptable.
- Any application should be accompanied by a heritage statement that assesses the impact on the listed buildings, along with an assessment of the significance of the unlisted farmhouse and barn at Coleman's Farm, both of which have been much altered but are of some antiquity.

- Mitigation to keep buildings and structures a sufficient distance from the heritage assets, or screening options, along with traffic management plans, could provide effective mitigation.
- The Site lies within an area of recorded multi-period archaeological activity as revealed by aerial photographic evidence and archaeological investigations in the surrounding fields.
- There are recorded alluvial deposits within the Site which have high potential for preservation of waterlogged deposits and palaeoenvironmental evidence.
- Palaeolithic archaeological remains and Pleistocene faunal remains have been recovered from river gravels within the vicinity of the Site.
- The Site is assessed as having a 'high' potential for surface water flood risk as identified within the SFRA.
- The Site has been identified as having a 'high' groundwater flood risk.
- The Site is predominantly (95%) within FRZ3 and is therefore at risk from fluvial flooding.
- The Site has medium to low groundwater vulnerability. The Site is within a Drinking Water Safeguard Zone (Surface Water) and is within Drinking Water Protection Areas (Surface Water). A watercourse (River Blackwater) is 5m south east, and 20m east and another watercourse is and 60m south east. Appropriate consideration would be required to mitigate potential impacts on hydrology, hydrogeology, and drainage.
- The Site contains Grade 2 quality soil (very good quality agricultural land) and Grade 3 quality soil (good to moderate quality land), which is BMV land. Appropriate consideration would be required to mitigate the impacts on soil quality and agricultural land – this is likely to include removal of soils for stockpiling prior to reuse, potentially in site restoration.
- The Site is within 250m of high pressure gas mains (Cadent Gas). Further investigation and consultation would be needed to determine whether mitigation measures are needed to avoid any impact on gas mains. Such mitigation may include diversion and/or protection.



	Client	ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL ASSESSMENT Site Characterisation - A52			1:40,000 @ A3	Date: 03/07/2023
	Essex County Council				Drawn: LW	Checked: HIC
Document Path: C:\Users\l\p\Documents\A52\GIS\Projects\1332312285\1332512098.aprx			Figure: 10		Rev: A	