

**Legend**

-  Call for Sites
-  Active sites
-  District boundary



<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>
<b>A52</b>	<b>Colemans Farm - Southern extension</b>	<b>Braintree</b>	<b>Agricultural</b>	<b>4.13</b>	<b>0.11</b>

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 Strowling & 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.



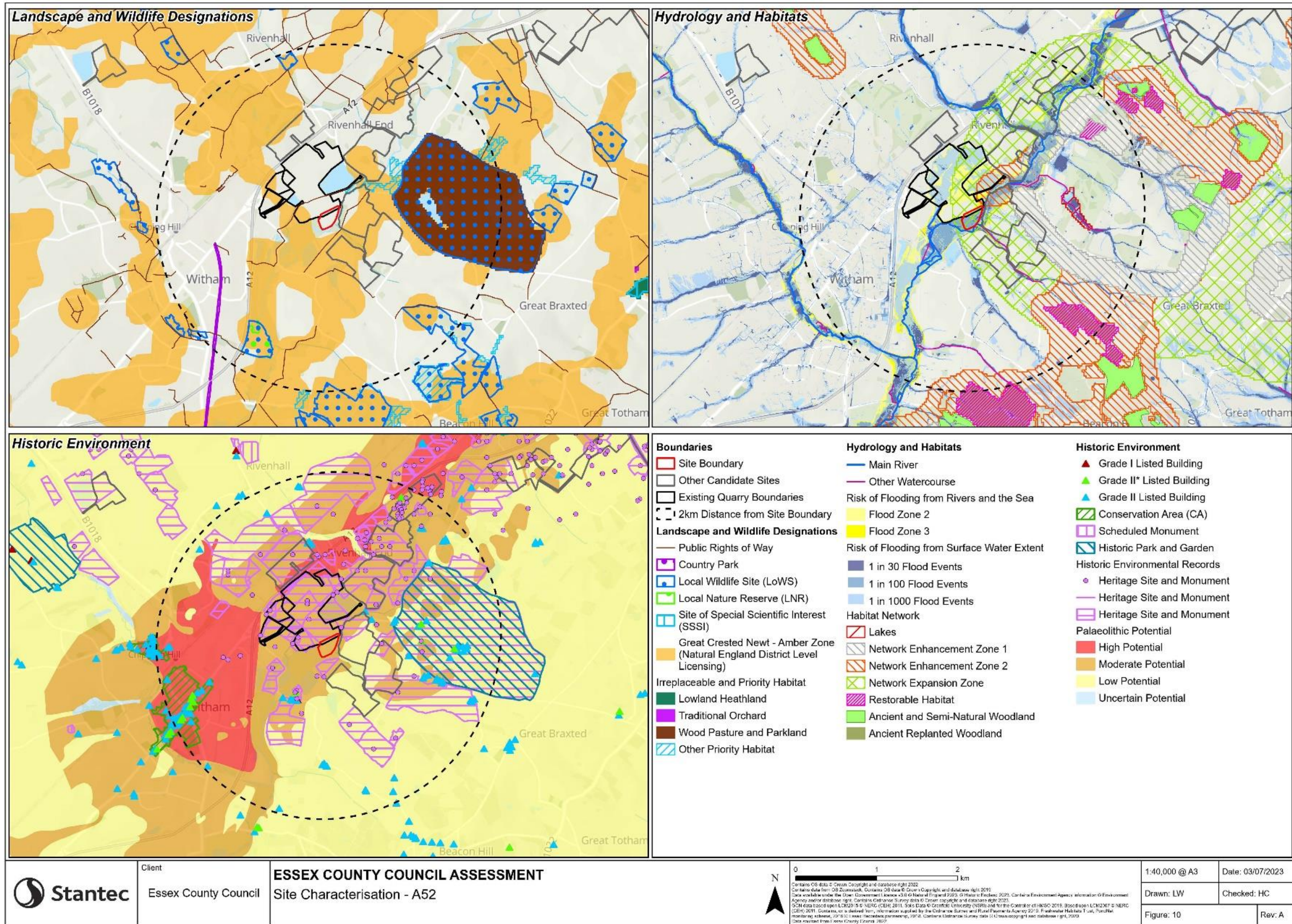


Figure 3.10: A52 - Colemans Farm - Southern Extension  
 Review of Essex MLP 2014 - Assessment of Candidate Sand and Gravel Sites, November 2023 68



The information and maps above represent a summary of the site assessment. You are encouraged to view the methodology and more detailed assessment for each site within appendices B-I. These can be found on the Candidate Sites Assessment webpage on our consultation pages:

[www.essex.gov.uk/minerals-review](http://www.essex.gov.uk/minerals-review)

Appendix B - Landscape and Visual Sensitivity

Appendix C - Biodiversity

Appendix D - Historic Buildings

Appendix E - Archaeology

Appendix F - Flooding

Appendix G - Transport

Appendix H – Access

Appendix I - Public Rights of Way, Geo-Environmental, Hydrology, Hydrogeology & Drainage, Air Quality, Soil Quality, Services & Utilities, Health & Amenity, Green Belt, and Airport Safeguarding Zones