

**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>A59</b>	<b>Lowleys Farm</b>	<b>Chelmsford</b>	<b>Agricultural</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>7.50</b>

The Site is promoted as a new mineral site at Goodmans Road, Chelmsford. The Site area is approximately 75 ha and is proposed for 7.50 million tonnes of sand and gravel extraction. The Site could be worked at any time during the plan period. Infrastructure needed on site includes a processing plant. The adjoining uses include agricultural fields and woodland. The village of Great Leighs is located to the north of the Site. This Site would be accessible from the Chelmsford Bypass. 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	Red/Amber	Red/Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber/Green	Red/Amber	Red/Amber	Green	Amber	Green	Amber	Amber	Red	Green	Green

Key findings of the assessment are as follows:

- The Landscape Character Area (LCA) is Central Essex Farmlands (B1) of which the Site possesses a number of distinct characteristic features of the LCA including the irregular field pattern of arable farmland intersected by a complex matrix of hedgerows. In turn this creates a strong sense of complexity increasing the sensitivity to the landscape features. Appropriate consideration is required to protect the characteristic features of the LCA and mitigate the impacts on the landscape.
- Lyonshall Wood located on the eastern boundary is a designated Local Wildlife Site (LoWS) and Ancient Woodland and demonstrates a significant contribution toward the local green infrastructure and visual amenity.
- Site A59 is within the Impact Risk Zone for the River Ter Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and the SSSI is located approximately 0.25 km from the Site. This is a geological SSSI and therefore potential ecological impacts are not considered further.

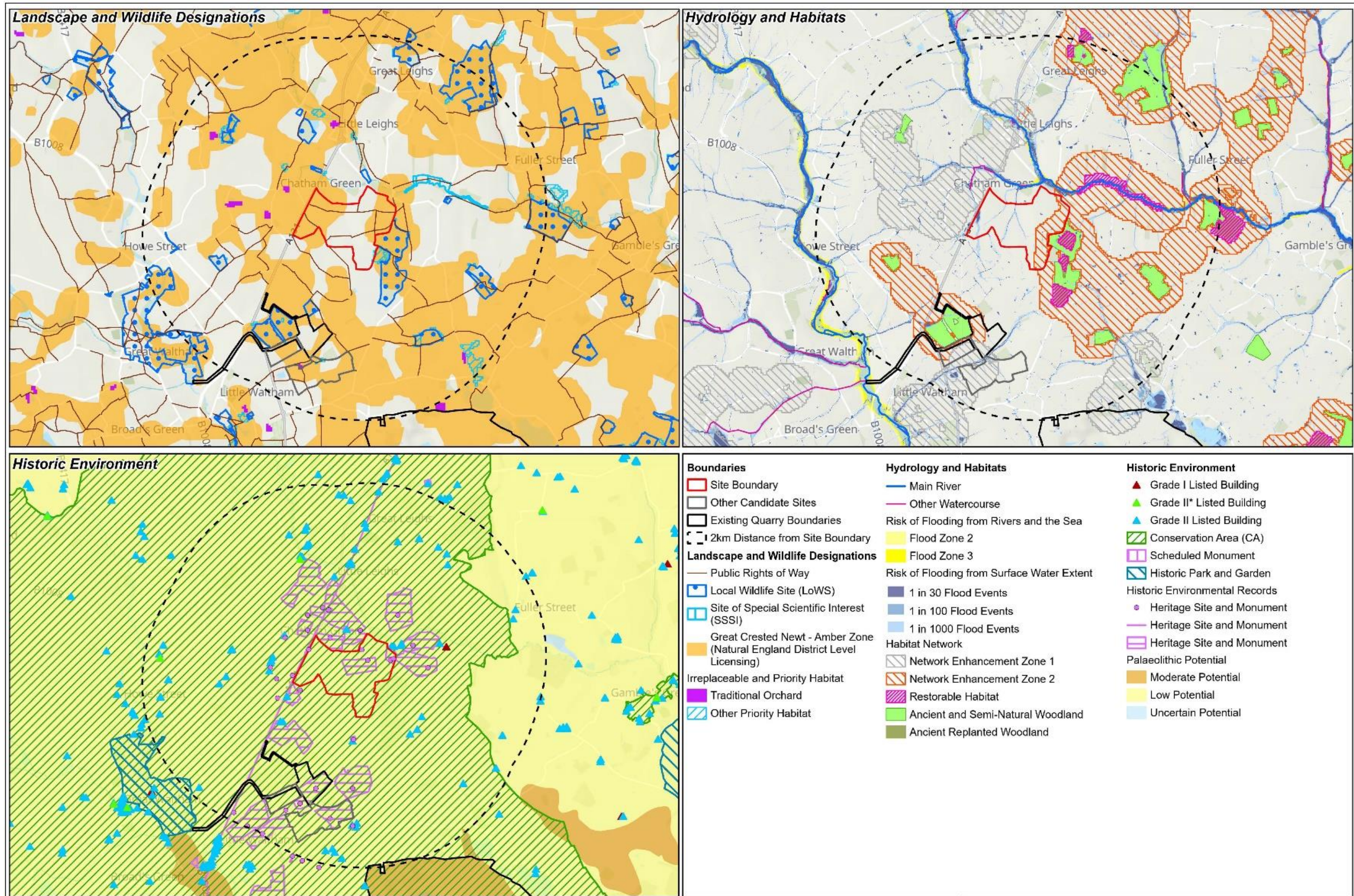
- Lyonshall Wood Local Wildlife Site (LoWS) is situated immediately adjacent to the eastern boundary. This is an ancient woodland which is therefore irreplaceable habitat.
- The Site comprises several arable fields bounded by mature hedgerows and mature trees which are Priority habitat. There are a number of candidate veteran trees on the northern boundary and near to Lyonshall Wood. The internal Hedgerow Priority habitats and associated trees, ditches and ponds would be removed to accommodate the development. Appropriate and adequate compensatory habitat would be required. The River Ter is situated less than 100 m from the northern boundary.
- The Site is graded Red-Amber because it could have major impacts upon the River Ter, adjacent ancient woodland, which is irreplaceable habitat, and could have a serious impact upon the LoWS and Priority habitats and species. Substantial buffers are likely to be required near to the adjacent Woodland. Appropriate and adequate compensatory habitat would be required for the loss of Hedgerow Priority habitat and associated trees, ditches, and ponds.
- The allocation of the Site would likely result in 'less than substantial' harm at a mid-level to the significance of two Grade II listed buildings through a profound change within their immediate settings: Goodmans Farmhouse (List UID: 1122135) and Barn to the east of Goodmans Farmhouse (List UID: 1171336).
- The undeveloped, agrarian landscape of the Site contributes to the setting and significance of these assets and the fundamental change in land use and land character would undermine the ability to understand and appreciate their significance.
- The western edge of the Site abuts the Roman Road from Chelmsford to Braintree. Archaeological evaluation has shown the presence of Late Iron Age and Roman occupation to the south of the Site.
- The northern part of the Site lies within an area known to contain areas of cropmark complexes. A series of enclosures are recorded both within and outside the Site.
- A farmstead is recorded on the first edition OS maps, which is no longer extant.
- The historic field pattern, although suffering some boundary loss probably has its origins in the medieval period and is unchanged on all the available historic maps.
- 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 entirely within Flood Risk Zone 1 and therefore is not at risk from fluvial flooding.
- Access is proposed onto the A131, which is classified as a Strategic Route in Essex County Council's Development Management Route Hierarchy. This accords with (ii) in the methodology (see Appendix G Transport for full methodology):

Where (i) is not feasible, direct access to the main road network involving the construction of a new access/ junction when there is no suitable existing access point or junction.

- There must be no impact on the delivery / construction of the Chelmsford north-east Bypass.
- The proposed access arrangement would depend upon the timescales for the delivery of the Chelmsford northeast bypass (CNEB).
- There must be no impact on the construction of the Chelmsford northeast bypass (as approved - CC/CHL/85/21).
- The proposed access arrangement to the Site would depend upon the timescales of the delivery of the Chelmsford northeast bypass. Therefore, two options for site access to proposed quarry are possible. Please see comments below.
- Off existing alignment of A131;
  - The existing access points onto A131 are via field accesses.
  - There is no detailed information submitted to demonstrate that a site access can be provided to current standards.
- With Chelmsford Northeast Bypass constructed
  - An agricultural access is currently shown off roundabout near Chatham Green it would need to be demonstrated that this access can provide appropriate access geometry and visibility splays to accommodate regular use by HGVs and that this would not impact on the safety or capacity of the proposed roundabout.
- 10 Public Rights of Way cross the Site. 1 Public Right of Way borders the Site. 1 Public Right of Way are 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 those Public Rights of Way crossing the Site.

- The Site has low/medium to low groundwater vulnerability. The Site is within a Drinking Water Safeguard Zone (Surface Water). A watercourse (Straw Brook) is 40m north of the Site and is 100m north west and 190m north east, and River Ter is 90m north east. A culverted stream or drainage ditch is around all field boundaries. 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. Overhead Openreach BT power lines are present within the Site boundary. Local Essex and Suffolk Water mains are located within the Site boundary. Further investigation and consultation would be needed to determine appropriate mitigation measures to make the Site acceptable which may include diversion and/or protection of services and utilities.
- One residential building is adjacent to the boundary of the Site (0m). Four residential buildings are outside the Site boundary less than or equal to 20m from the Site. Sixteen residential and one commercial building 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.



	Client	<b>ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL ASSESSMENT</b> Site Characterisation - A59	 0 1 2 km	1:45,000 @ A3	Date: 03/07/2023
	Essex County Council			Drawn: LW	Checked: HC
Document Path: C:\Users\lwignall\Documents\ArcGIS\Projects\332511098\332511098.aprx			Figure: 16 Rev: A		

Figure 3.16: A59 - Lowleys Farm  
 Review of Essex MLP 2014 - Assessment of Candidate Sand and Gravel Sites, November 2023 93

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