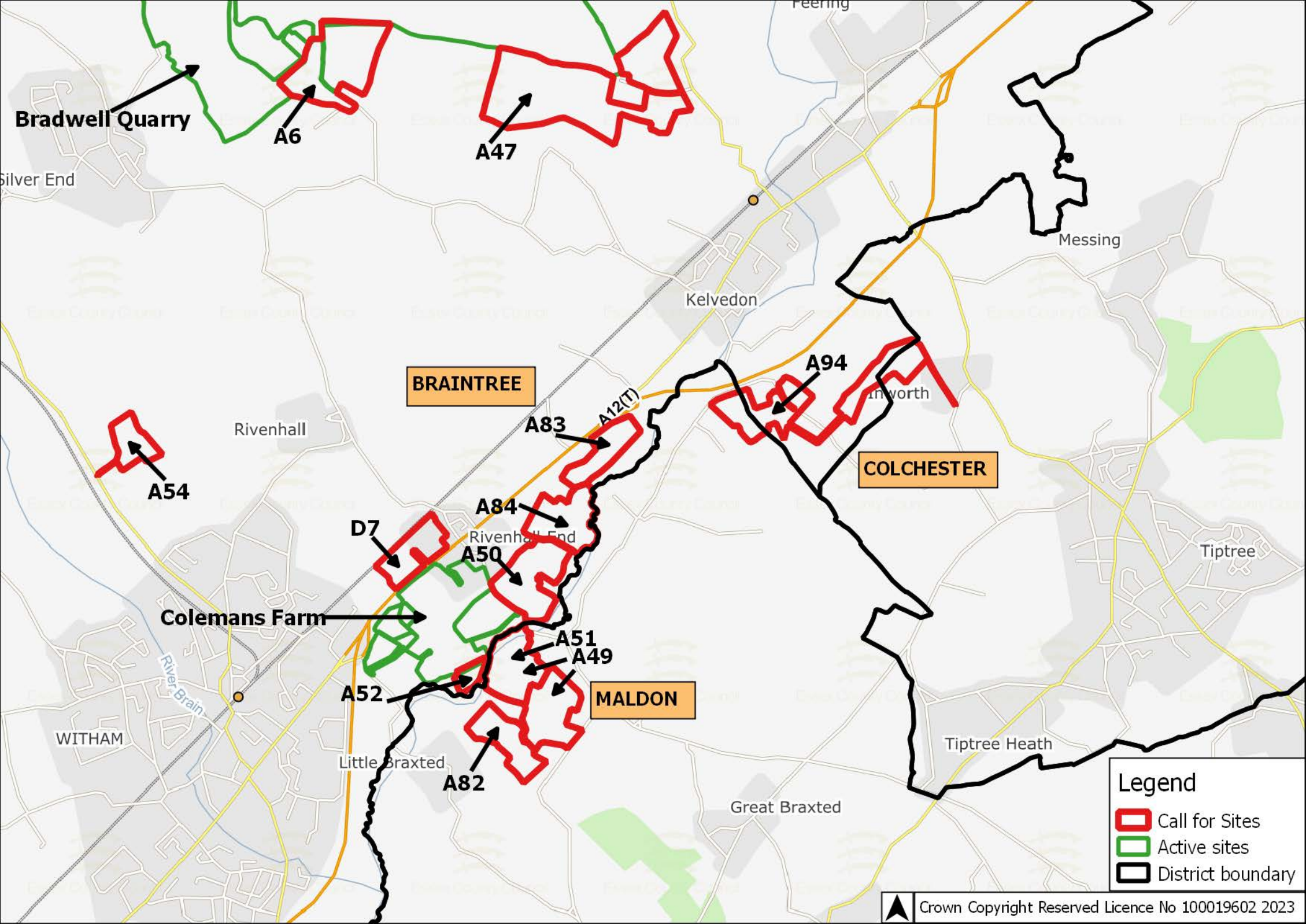


Land at Pond Farm D7	Legend Site Boundary
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Legend

- 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>
D7	Land at Pond Farm (transhipment site)	Braintree	Agricultural	15.38	n/a

The Site is promoted as a new Site at land to the north of London Road, Pond Farm, Witham. The Site area is approximately 15.38 ha and is promoted as a transhipment site for road and rail which would involve the import and export of hard rock within England. The estimated throughput is 0.4 million tonnes per annum. The adjoining uses include agricultural fields, woodland, a railway line, the A12, and residential and commercial buildings. The town of Witham is located to the west of the Site. The Site is potentially promoted as accessible utilising infrastructure installed as part of the A12 improvement works. 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 /Green	Green	Red/ Amber	Amber	Amber	Red/ Amber	Red/ Amber	Green	Green	Amber	Green	Amber	Red	Red	Green	Green

Key findings of the assessment are as follows:

- The Site possesses few characteristics of the Brain/Blackwater/Lower Chelmer (C6) Landscape Character Area (LCA) with the exception of the arable farmland with well hedged boundaries. The limited number of characteristic features and the Site's disconnect from the wider characteristic landscape, owed to the A12 and railway separation, reduces the sensitivity of the Site.
- There are no important landscape features located within the immediate vicinity of the Site, however a number of small Priority Habitats (Deciduous Woodland) are located on the opposite side of the A12. The limited number of important designations reduces the overall sensitivity of the Site.
- The allocation of the Site would likely result in 'less than substantial' harm at a mid-level to the significance of the Grade II listed Pond Farmhouse (List UID: 1122597), and the Barn to the west of Pond Farm (List UID: 1264934).

- The impact on the Grade II listed Barn to the south of Pond Farmhouse is likely to be at the lower end of 'less than substantial.'
- The undeveloped, agrarian landscape of the Site makes a positive contribution to the setting of these assets and enhances their significance. The fundamental change in land use, land character and environmental impacts would undermine the ability to understand and appreciate their significance.
- The Site contains evidence recorded on the Essex Historic Environment record for a possible settlement enclosure. Prehistoric, Late Iron Age/Roman, and Roman settlement activity is recorded in the surrounding area. The Site also lies along a Roman road.
- The Site has potential to contain Palaeolithic archaeological remains and Pleistocene faunal and palaeoenvironmental remains.
- The Site has been partially evaluated and archaeological mitigation has been agreed in the western section as part of the A12-A120 widening scheme.
- 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 'low' groundwater flood risk.
- The Site is entirely within Flood Risk Zone 1 and therefore is not at risk from fluvial flooding.
- It is unclear from the information provided as to the proposed access strategy having regard to the current road layout and future scenarios associated with the A12 DCO.
- Access from the local highway network via Eastways Industrial estate is constrained and access to the current A12 would be contrary to Department for Transport Circular 1/2022 Strategic Road network.
- The A12 Trunk Road forms part of the Strategic Road Network managed by National Highways. Whilst an initial conversation has taken place with National Highways to inform this RAG grade it is imperative that they are formally consulted at the appropriate time.
- It is unclear from the information provided as to the proposed access strategy having regard to the current road layout and future scenarios associated with the A12 DCO.
- Access from the local highway network via Eastways Industrial estate is constrained and access to the current A12 would be contrary to Department for Transport Circular 1/2022 Strategic Road network.

- The A12 Trunk Road forms part of the Strategic Road Network managed by National Highways. Whilst an initial conversation has taken place with National Highways to inform this RAG grade it is imperative that they are formerly consulted at the appropriate time.
- 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 water course is 90m north of the Site. 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) 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 within the Site boundary. 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/protection may not be possible and/or may be cost prohibitive.
- Nine residential buildings are adjacent to the boundary of the Site (0m). Ten residential buildings, one commercial building, and one building of unknown use are outside the Site boundary less than or equal to 20m from the Site. Twelve residential buildings and one sports facility (golf course) are more than 20m but less than or equal to 50m from the Site. Seventy seven residential buildings, four commercial buildings and commercial activity (business park) 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.

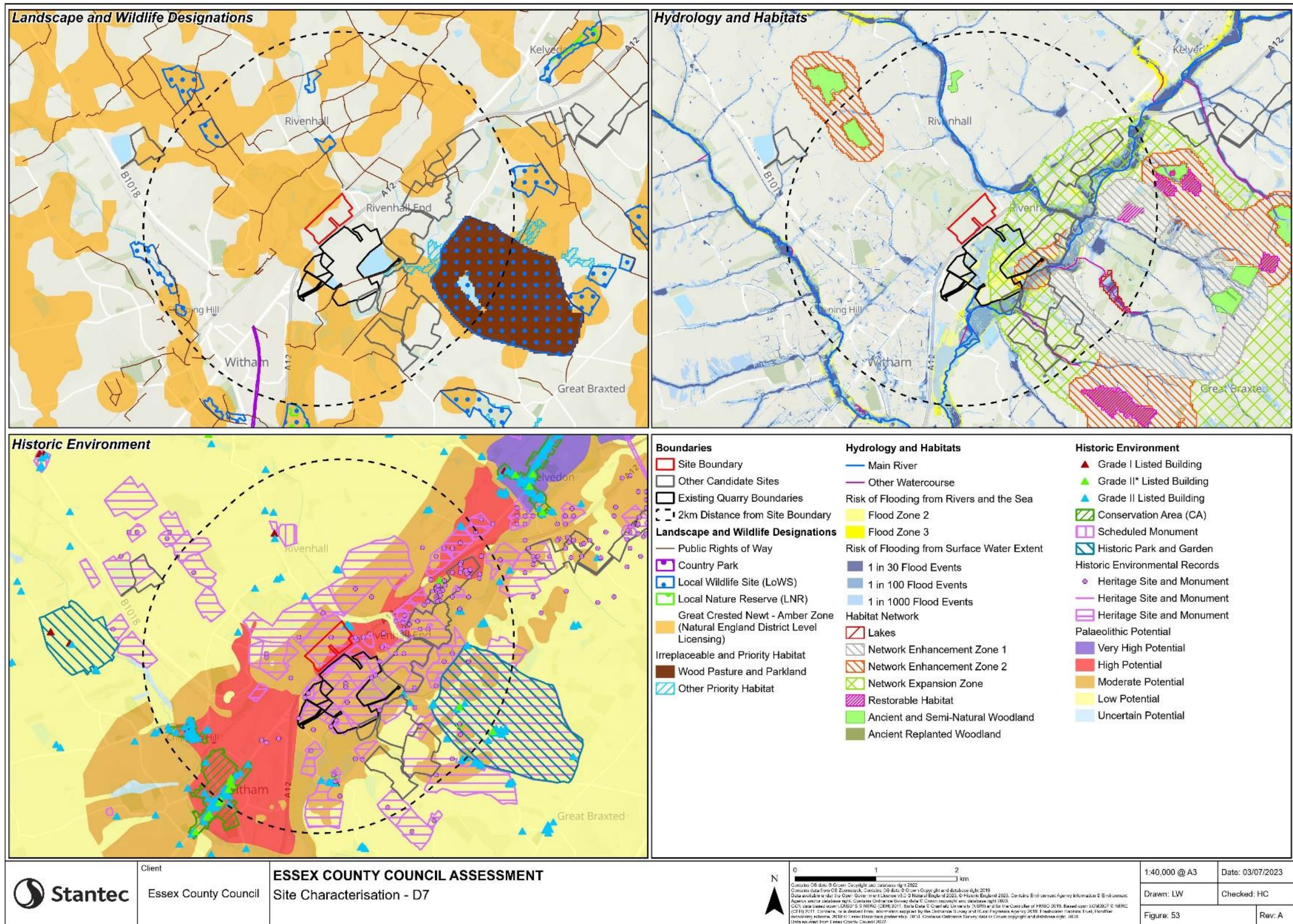


Figure 3.52: D7 - Land at Pond Farm (transshipment site)

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

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