

Land at Heckfordbridge

Candidate Sites A61: Heckfordbridge Site 1 and A62: Heckfordbridge Site 2

Strategic Context

Following a review of the Plan in 2019, the Council determined a need to produce a new Minerals Local Plan. The emerging 'Replacement Essex Minerals Local Plan' (MLP) covers a plan period of 2025-2040. It is understood that whilst this Regulation 18 public consultation presents the Replacement Minerals Local Plan; including Plan provision figures and the assessments of submitted sites, this Draft Plan does not present a list of preferred site allocations to meet the newly quantified minerals need for the County. Preferred site allocations will be presented in the next version of the Replacement Minerals Local Plan, following any reassessment required as part of consultation responses received on the methodology and its application across each site.

The MPA do not seek to allocate the full 87.56mt through the Replacement MLP as there is existing permitted reserve. It is anticipated that at the time of adoption in 2025, there will be a permitted reserve of 22.95mt. This would leave a requirement of **64.56mt to be allocated through the Replacement MLP.**



The Sustainability Appraisal published as part of the Consultation, at Section 5.3.3, considers 'Meeting Mineral Needs'. Within this section the MPA identify four sites which have potential for "enabling significantly positive effects in regard to meeting mineral needs." These sites are:

- A48 - Bradwell, Grange Farm (Braintree) - 12.2Mt;
- A49 - Colemans Farm, Hill Broad Farm (Full Site) (Braintree) - 2Mt;
- **A62 - Heckfordbridge, Site 2 (Colchester) - 8.2Mt; and,**
- A93 - Land at Pattiswick Hall Farm (Full Site) (Braintree) - 8.2Mt.

Deliverability

A48 - Bradwell, Grange Farm

Based on extant planning permissions, it is assessed that there is sufficient permitted mineral within the existing Bradwell Quarry to support operations until **2031-2033**. It is therefore unlikely that the 12.2mt of mineral contained within the Candidate Site would come forward prior to this time. Assuming the Candidate Site followed exhaustion of existing permitted mineral, and continuation of the existing ~750,000tpa (best case scenario for Bradwell Quarry as it operates at between 600,000tpa and 750,000tpa), then approximately 5.25mt (43%) - 6.75mt (55%) of the 12.2mt would be released within the plan period.

A49 - Colemans Farm, Hill Broad Farm

Based on extant planning permissions, it is assessed that there is sufficient permitted mineral at Colemans Farm Quarry to maintain production until **2036**. Again, assuming the Candidate Site mineral follows exhaustion of permitted mineral, and output of ~150,000tpa remains as existing, then ~600,000 tonnes of sand and gravel (30%) could be released within the plan period.

A62 - Heckfordbridge, Site 2

Mineral extraction at Heckfordbridge could begin in **2027** following cessation of mineral operations at Land at Bellhouse Farm South (Subject to Planning Permission). This would allow for 13 years of supply within the plan period. At the existing output rate of 500,000tpa, that would equate to a release of 6.5mt of the 8.2mt total – 79% of total supply.

A93 - Land at Pattiswick Hall Farm

This would be a new greenfield site not connected to any existing operations. Factors which could affect the deliverability of this site would be whether there is a mineral operator lined up to operate the site, the lead in time associated with the setup of a new quarry – i.e preparing a planning application and achieving planning permission, internal infrastructure, processing plants and staffing. Finally, the site faces large access issues to overcome in the form of achieving site access directly off a trunk road.

Land at Heckfordbridge

Candidate Sites A61: Heckfordbridge Site 1 and A62: Heckfordbridge Site 2

Land at Heckfordbridge

Candidate Sites A61: Heckfordbridge Site 1 and A62: Heckfordbridge Site 2

Comparison of Re-Assessed Site A62 Heckfordbridge against the identified 'Positive Sites for Meeting Mineral Need'

Criteria	A62 – Heckfordbridge (Re-assessed)	A48 – Bradwell, Grange Farm	A49 – Colemans Farm	A93 – Land at <u>Pattiswick</u> Hall Farm
Landscape and Visual Sensitivity	Amber/Green	Amber	Red/Amber	Red/Amber
Biodiversity	Amber/Green	Red/Amber	Amber	Red/Amber
Historic Buildings	Amber	Red/Amber	Red/Amber	Red/Amber
Archaeology	Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber
Flooding	Amber	Amber/Green	Amber	Amber/Green
Transport	Amber	Green	Red/Amber	Red
Access	Green	Red/Amber	Green	Red
Public Rights of Way	Red/Amber	Red/Amber	Red/Amber	Red/Amber
Geo-Environmental	Green	Green	Green	Green
Hydrology, Hydrogeology and Drainage	Amber	Red/Amber	Amber	Red/Amber
Air Quality	Green	Green	Green	Green
Soil Quality	Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber
Services & Utilities	Amber	Amber	Red/Amber	Amber/Green
Health & Amenity	Amber	Red	Red/Amber	Red
Green Belt	Green	Green	Green	Green
Airport Safeguarding Zones	Green	Green	Green	Green

Land at Heckfordbridge

Candidate Sites A61: Heckfordbridge Site 1 and A62: Heckfordbridge Site 2

Land at Heckfordbridge

Candidate Sites A61: Heckfordbridge Site 1 and A62: Heckfordbridge Site 2

Conclusion

This report provides a justified re-assessment of Heckfordbridge utilising the Methodologies produced by Essex County Council in the 'Assessment of Candidate Sand and Gravel Sites' which form part of the current Regulation 18 Consultation of the Review of the Essex Minerals Local Plan 2014.

We have reviewed the extensive consultation material published by Essex County Council, including the Replacement Minerals Local Plan, Assessment of Candidate Sites, Assessment Methodologies and Sustainability Appraisal, with particular focus given to the RAG Assessment of the Candidate Site A62 – Heckfordbridge.

This consultation response document provides an assessment and comparison of the Candidate Site A62 (Heckfordbridge), mainly against three other specific sites. These sites being:

- A48 – Bradwell, Grange Farm (Braintree);
- A49 – Colemans Farm, Hill Broad Farm (Full Site) (Braintree); and,
- A93 – Land at Pattiswick Hall Farm (Full Site) (Braintree).

These sites were chosen as a result of the Sustainability Appraisal produced as part of the Regulation 18 Consultation, which in Section 5.3 provides a summary of the full suite of Candidate Sites potential significant effects identified. Section 5.3.3 of the Appraisal considers 'Meeting Mineral Needs'. The three sites listed above, along with A62 Heckfordbridge are listed within this section as "enabling significantly positive effects in regard to meeting mineral needs".

The Replacement MLP was received to understand the mineral need position of Essex County Council. Looking at the total tonnage of sand and gravel required to be allocated within the Replacement MLP, it is identified that in order to demonstrate a 7 year landbank at the end of the plan period (2040), that a total of 87.56 million tonnes of resource is needed to be allocated. This is under the assumption that annual sales will total the annual apportionment of the Replacement MLP of 3.98Mtpa.

The MPA do not seek to allocate the full 87.56mt through the Replacement MLP as there is existing permitted reserve. It is anticipated that at the time of adoption in 2025, there will be a permitted reserve of 22.95mt. This would leave a requirement of 64.56mt to be allocated through the Replacement MLP.

A review of the current permissions for the quarries associated with three of the assessed Candidate Sites (A48, A49 and A62), and the greenfield site (A93), identified that only Candidate Sites A62 (Heckfordbridge) and A93 (Land at Pattiswick Hall Farm), would be able to contribute to Essex landbank prior to the 2030's, with current permitted mineral at Bradwell Quarry (A48) lasting until 2031-2033, and Colemans Farm Quarry (A49) until 2036.

Candidate Site	Likely year for mineral release	Percentage of mineral likely to be released during Plan Period
A48 – Bradwell, Grange Farm	2031 - 2033	43% - 55%
A49 – Colemans Farm, Hill Broad Farm (Full Site)	2036	30%
A62 Heckfordbridge, Site 2	2027	79%
A93 – Land at Pattiswick Hall Farm (Full Site)	Unknown	Unknown

In terms of the methodologies used in the assessment of the Candidate Sites, we question whether a number of these are fully fit for purpose. Where issues are raised (namely Landscape and Visual Sensitivity, Transport, Access, Soil Quality, Services and Utilities, and Health and Amenity), justification is provided as to why, and where appropriate alternate suggestions are made.

Following our re-assessment of the RAG Grades against the published methodologies, we found that in a number of cases, the RAG Assessment was overly critical and could justifiably be lowered. Whilst we agreed with the RAG Assessment for Archaeology, Flooding, Transport, Public Rights of Way, Geo-Environmental, Hydrology & Hydrogeology & Drainage, Air Quality, Soil Quality, Services & Utilities, Green Belt and Airport Safeguarding Zone; we found the assessment could be justifiably lowered for Landscape & Visual, Biodiversity, Historic Buildings, Access and Health & Amenity.

For a number of the elements which we agreed with the RAG Assessment, we believe had the methodologies been more fit for purpose then the assessment for Heckfordbridge could have been lowered.

Overall, as can be seen from the Summary Table, Candidate Site A62 performs well against the direct comparison sites capable of releasing substantial mineral resource. Resultingly, we request that Heckfordbridge (Candidate Site A62) be allocated within the Replacement Minerals Local Plan 2040.

Land at Heckfordbridge

Candidate Sites A61: Heckfordbridge Site 1 and A62: Heckfordbridge Site 2

