

# LOCAL GEOLOGICAL SITES

## BRAINTREE DISTRICT



### BraG15 Hill Farm Sarsen Stones, Gestingthorpe

**Site location:** Sarsen stones situated on the private entrance drive to Hill Farm in Gestingthorpe.

**Grid Reference:** TL 821 391

**Status:** Private – on the entrance drive to Hill Farm

**Summary of the geological interest:**

Several sarsen stones (the largest 160cm x 110cm x 60cm) are situated on the private entrance drive to Hill Farm.



**Site Assessment.** Local Geological Sites (LoGS) in Essex are assessed using criteria based on DEFRA guidance. An assessment form is used which asks key questions under four value categories: scientific, educational, historical and aesthetic. This site has been assessed and qualifies under these criteria.

#### **Scientific interest and site importance**

Sarsens are extremely hard boulders of sandstone that are often used as boundary or entrance markers having been dragged from nearby fields. They formed around 55 million years ago when the climate of Britain was hot and a layer of sand beneath the surface of the ground became cemented with quartz. Research has compared the conditions under which sarsens and puddingstones may have been formed with the present day climate in the Kalahari Desert and parts of Australia. They are thus very resistant to erosion and have survived the rigours of the Ice Age. They were weathered out of the geological strata where they were formed – the Lower Tertiary Upnor Formation, which outcrops locally.

**Reference:** Lucy 2003a



*Sarsen stone on the entrance drive to Hill Farm (photo: R. Coleman)*



*Hill Farm Sarsen 2022 Photo R Mercer*



*Another Sarsen in front of the farmhouse*