

LOCAL GEOLOGICAL SITES

BRAINTREE DISTRICT



BraG5 Colemans Farm Gravel Quarry, Little Braxted

Site location: A working gravel quarry in Little Braxted near Witham

Grid Reference: TL 834 153

Status: Private quarry – access is only available with permission from the quarry operators.

Summary of the geological interest:

Colemans Farm Quarry is a working gravel quarry. The quarry works gravels that are associated with the terraces of the river Blackwater. The gravels in this area can provide important evidence of the evolution of this major Essex river.



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:

The gravels in this area can provide important evidence of the evolution of the river Blackwater since the retreat of the Anglian Ice Sheet, 450,000 years ago.

These gravels contain an interesting suite of rocks in the form of pebbles and cobbles which have been picked up by the river on its journey to the sea over hundreds of thousands of years. These rocks are not only locally derived (e.g. blocks of the iron-cemented conglomerate known as ferricrete) but also 'exotic' rocks picked up from much older gravels (the Kesgrave Sands and Gravels) laid down by an early route of the Thames.

Several vertebrate fossils, such as mammoth teeth, and bones of other medium-sized mammals, have been recovered from the terrace gravels and from laminated lake deposits associated with the gravels. The age of these fossils is unclear and research is ongoing.

References: Lucy 1999, Mercer & Mercer 2022



Colemans Farm pit (photo R Mercer 2018)



Gravel at Coleman's Farm Pit (photo R Mercer 2018)



Colemans Farm Pit (photo R Mercer 2020)



*Ferricrete at Coleman's Farm
photo Ros Mercer 2020*



*Mammoth tooth found at Coleman's Farm.
Photo Ros Mercer 2020*



*Mammoth tusk found at Coleman's Farm
Photo Ian Mercer 2020*