



Birch Quarry

Site Biodiversity Action Plan



Prepared: October 2009

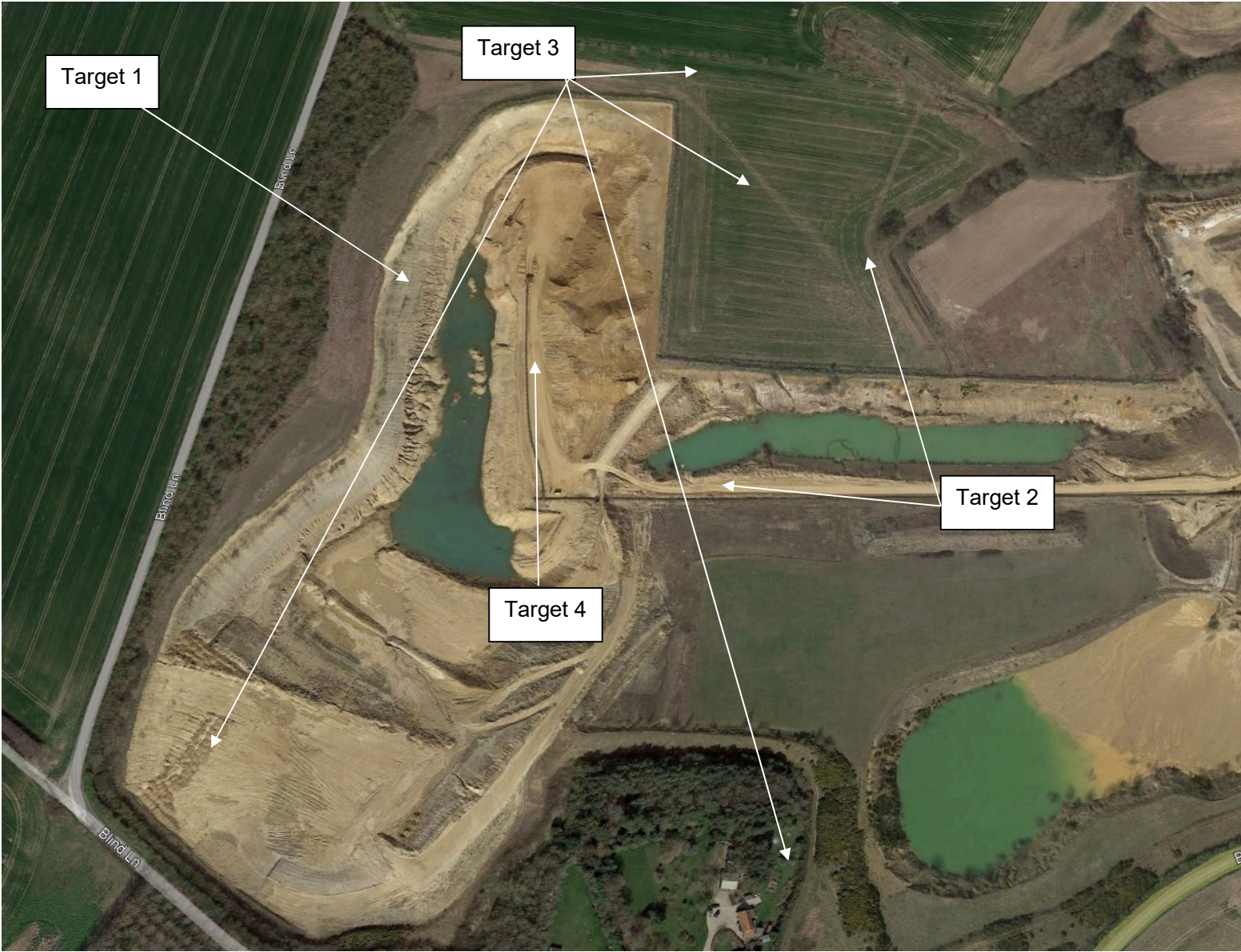
**Updated: December 2013
August 2018
August 2023**

Site Information- Birch Quarry

Site Name and Location (incl. Grid Ref.)	Birch Quarry, Birch, Nr Colchester TL 93076 19384 (site entrance)
Hanson Company	Hanson Aggregates
BAP(s) that will be targeted	Essex BAP UK BAP
Habitat(s) to be developed	Broadleaved woodland Hedgerows Lowland acidic grassland Ponds Reedbeds
BAP species to be encouraged	Brown hare Bat sp Grey partridge Reptiles
Designated Natural Area	London Basin
Background and site description	<p>Birch is a leasehold sand quarry that has been in operation for a number of years, with extraction works generally moving from east to west, firstly in the area east and north of 'Brakes Farm' then to the 'Island Lake' and 'Northern Extension' and currently in the western 'Airfield' area.</p> <p>Restoration of the eastern area comprised a lake for fishing surrounded by amenity grassland with clumps of native tree planting. A native hedgerow divides this area from the agricultural farmland to the north which, along with the northern extension have been restored to arable farmland cropped or used for a solar farm by the Estate.</p> <p>The western extension 'Airfield' is currently being worked and on completion will be restored to agricultural land, a lake comprising habitats for both amenity fishing and also reedbeds and wetland complexes for nature conservation with banks comprising a mosaic of woodland, scrub and acid grassland.</p> <p>The landowner requires where possible, for restoration to comprise agriculture and on completion of 5 years of statutory aftercare, Hanson are obliged to hand over responsibility and management of the restored agricultural land to the Estate. Biodiversity restoration has a long term management duration of 15 years that covers woodland, grassland and wetlands.</p> <p>The landowner has been handed back all previous working areas at Brakes Farm, Northern Extension and Island Lake leaving only the western extension 'Airfield' and the plant site in Hanson control.</p>
National Designations (SSSI, SAC, SPAs, RAMSARs and NPs) within 500m	None

Resource Requirements- comment on cost if appropriate	Restoration and biodiversity works will be paid for out of the site restoration and stripping budgets.
Contribution to biodiversity	Provision of habitats through restoration to woodland, open water, unimproved grassland.
Partners and Local initiatives	Essex County Council
Other documents supporting the site BAP	Minerals Habitat Action Plan Approved restoration and working plans Birch Quarry Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP)

Site Layout



Action Plan

Item No.	Objective	Biodiversity Feature	Targets	Tasks	Assessing Indicator	Responsible Person	Timescale (Completion)
1	Revise working and restoration plans	Grassland, woodland, wetlands, reedbeds	Draw up new working and restoration plans with a biodiversity objective, in conjunction with Estate	1. Draw up new scheme	Plans produced and agreed with Estate and Local Authority	Geologist/ Landscape Architect	Complete
2	Increase the extent of species rich grassland	Basking habitat for reptiles, butterfly and invertebrate populations	Include species rich grassland within future restoration plans Increase extent of temporary grassland habitats	1. Draw up new scheme	Area of habitat included.	Landscape Architect	Complete
				2. Implement species rich seeding using native seed source	Area of established grassland	Site Manger/ Landscape Architect	Ongoing
				3. Incorporate habitat features to encourage target species e.g. log and stone piles	No. of habitat features	Site Manager/ Landscape Architect	Ongoing
				4. Seed temporary wildflower lay on to arable areas until they can be farmed	Ha seeded	Landscape Architect	Ongoing 2.3ha seeded 2019
3	Increase and enhance mixed native broadleaved woodland and hedgerows	Broadleaved woodland and associated flora and fauna	Enhance and manage existing resource of woodland	1. Identify existing resource and management requirements in conjunction with Estate Forester	Management plan liaison carried out	Landscape Architect	Complete
			Introduce suitable hedgerow management to	2. Lay Maldon Roadside hedge	Hedge laid	Landscape Architect	Complete

			<p>maximise biodiversity potential</p> <p>Increase extent of broadleaved woodland and hedgerow habitat</p>	<p>3. Manage and protect retained Oak hedge and perimeter vegetation to ensure retained features are not harmed by adjacent works through implementation of CEMP proposals.</p> <p>4. Lay Blind Lane hedge to improve hedge structure</p> <p>5. Increase amount of woodland and hedgerow in new restoration plan.</p> <p>6. Carry out planting within 2 years of completing restoration</p>	<p>Oaks retained</p> <p>No. of plants</p> <p>Hedge laid</p> <p>No. of trees planted</p>	<p>Landscape Architect</p> <p>Landscape Architect</p> <p>Landscape Architect</p> <p>Landscape Architect</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Q1 2027</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Ongoing 390m hedge and 375 trees and shrubs planted 2023</p>
4	Increase the extent of reedbed and wetland features	Reedbed, ponds, pools and scrapes	<p>Include wetland habitat creation within future restoration plans</p> <p>Maximise reedbed and wetland creation where backfill volumes allow</p>	<p>1. Plans drawn up</p> <p>2. Implement reed planting and wetland microtopography creation at earliest opportunity.</p>	<p>Plans approved</p> <p>Ha of reed planted and wetland features completed</p>	<p>Landscape Architect</p> <p>Landscape Architect</p>	<p>Complete</p> <p>Ongoing</p>