

Leicester City
**local
development
framework**

**Core Strategy
Additional Consultation**



**MINERALS
SAFEGUARDING**

March 2009



Leicester
City Council



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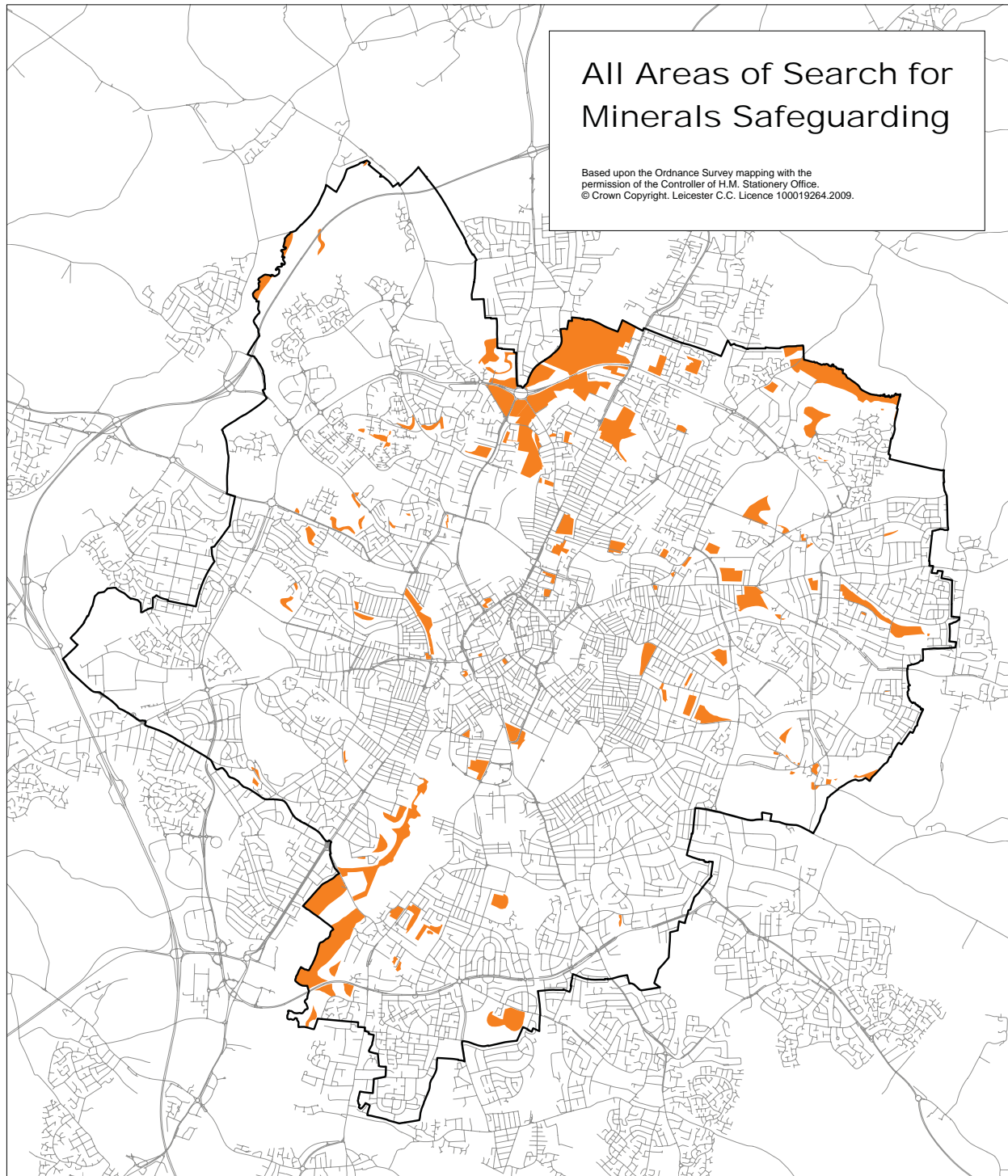
1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The county of Leicestershire is endowed with a wide range of indigenous minerals, and the continued pressure especially from the construction industry means that minerals such as sand & gravel, brick clay and gypsum are in high demand.
- 1.2 Leicester has historically had some significant mineral workings, with brickworks at Gipsy Lane and the various historic sand and gravel pits at Watermead Country Park & around the River Soar at Aylestone. However due to the relative size & location of settlements and the comparable amount of open areas all current mineral workings in Leicestershire are outside of the boundary of the City and it is unlikely that this is going to change in the near or distant future.
- 1.3 It is the purpose of the planning system to address competing demands on land-use, but it has historically given little weight to the protection of mineral resources in comparison with that afforded to environmental assets. Mineral Planning Statement (MPS) 1: Planning and Minerals, published in 2006, sets the requirement for Planning Authorities to protect known mineral deposits for future generations even if they are unlikely to be worked in the short, medium or long term. These areas are called Mineral Safeguarding Areas (MSA)s and it is the responsibility of the Mineral Planning Authority (MPA) to define these areas within their Core Planning Documents.

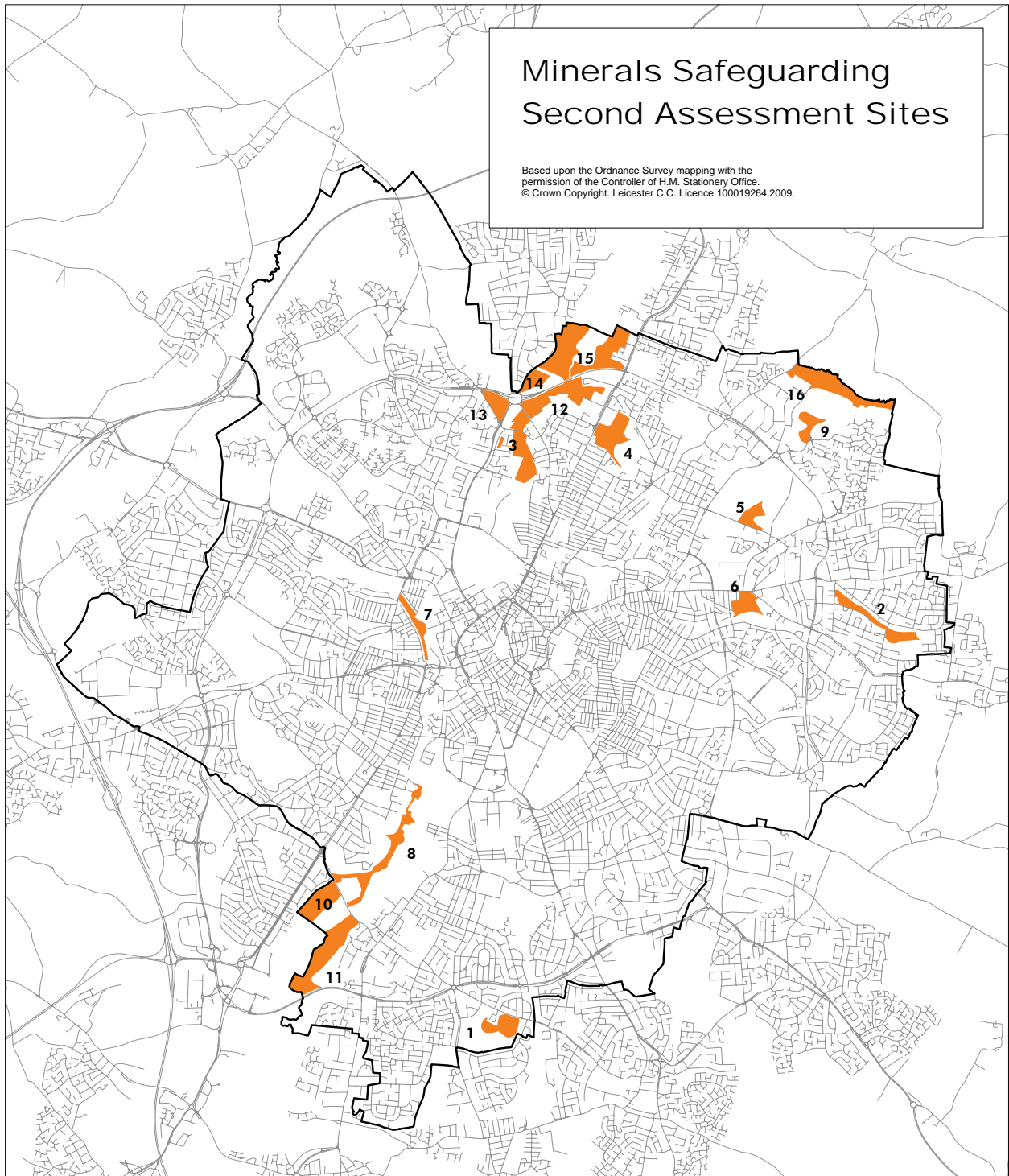
2.0 Methodology

- 2.1 The MSAs should be defined using the best available data to MPAs, in this case local knowledge and data provided by the British Geological Survey (BGS).
- 2.2 To help determine what sites will be safeguarded mineral survey data was acquired under licence from the BGS for the City of Leicester and 1km buffer around the boundary. The survey highlighted that there was potential for sand & gravel, brickclay and gypsum, within the city boundary.
- 2.3 Gypsum mines require extensive workings with associated processing facilities and due to the built up nature of the urban area, even where it has been highlighted that these minerals could exist, the decision has been made not to provide any specific safeguarding arrangements for these minerals.
- 2.3 MPS1 requires MPAs to safeguard brickclay only when it is either in short supply or a 'premium' clay such as fireclay. Fireclay in Leicestershire is only found within coal seams and therefore it can be assumed that fireclay is not present. However the housing allocation at Ashton Green is an area of search for brick clay and whilst it will not be safeguarded as such, policy in the emerging LDF Core Strategy will encourage the use of the brick clay if at all possible.
- 2.4 Leicester does however have some potential sand and gravel deposits which could be workable in the future and therefore an initial search was carried out showing all the potential areas within the city where sand and gravel is potentially located and where it hasn't as of yet been sterilised by development or other uses. Certain areas such as Abbey Park, which is a park of national historic importance, were excluded. A total area of about 387ha was indentified which was made up of 124 individual sites and the result of this initial search is shown on Map 1.
- 2.5 The second stage of the assessment looked at the initial list and excluded all sites below 5 ha in size as this was seen as the minimum size for a site to be worked, even for small scale mineral working in the future. This reduced the initial list of 124 to 16 sites with a total of 221 ha. The results of this are shown on Map 2.
- 2.6 The last stage of the assessment involved a desktop study of the 16 sites from stage two, choosing to safeguard the site or not safeguard the site.
- 2.7 The council also acknowledges its responsibility to alert potential developers if mineral deposits may be located on sites they plan to develop, even if these have not safeguarded.

Map 1

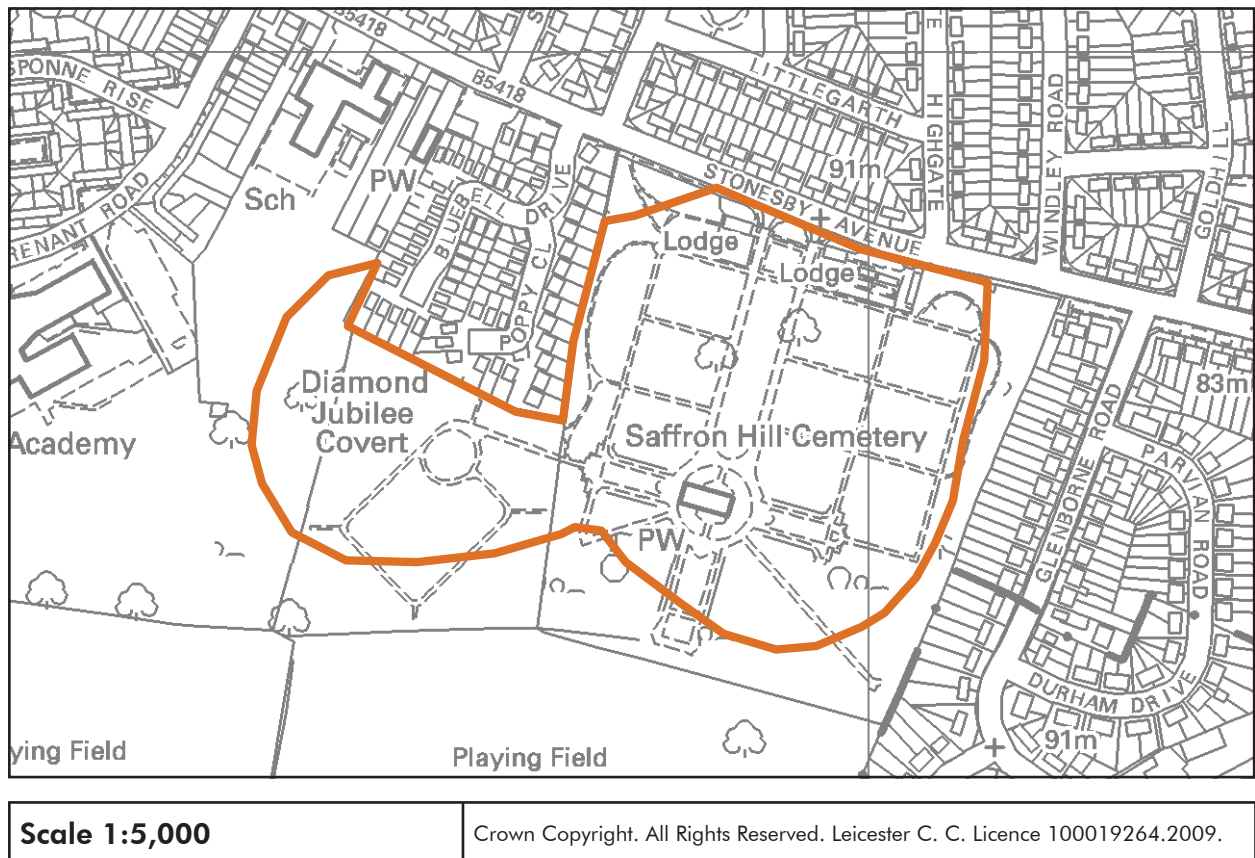


Map 2



3.0 Shortlisted Sites not being Safeguarded

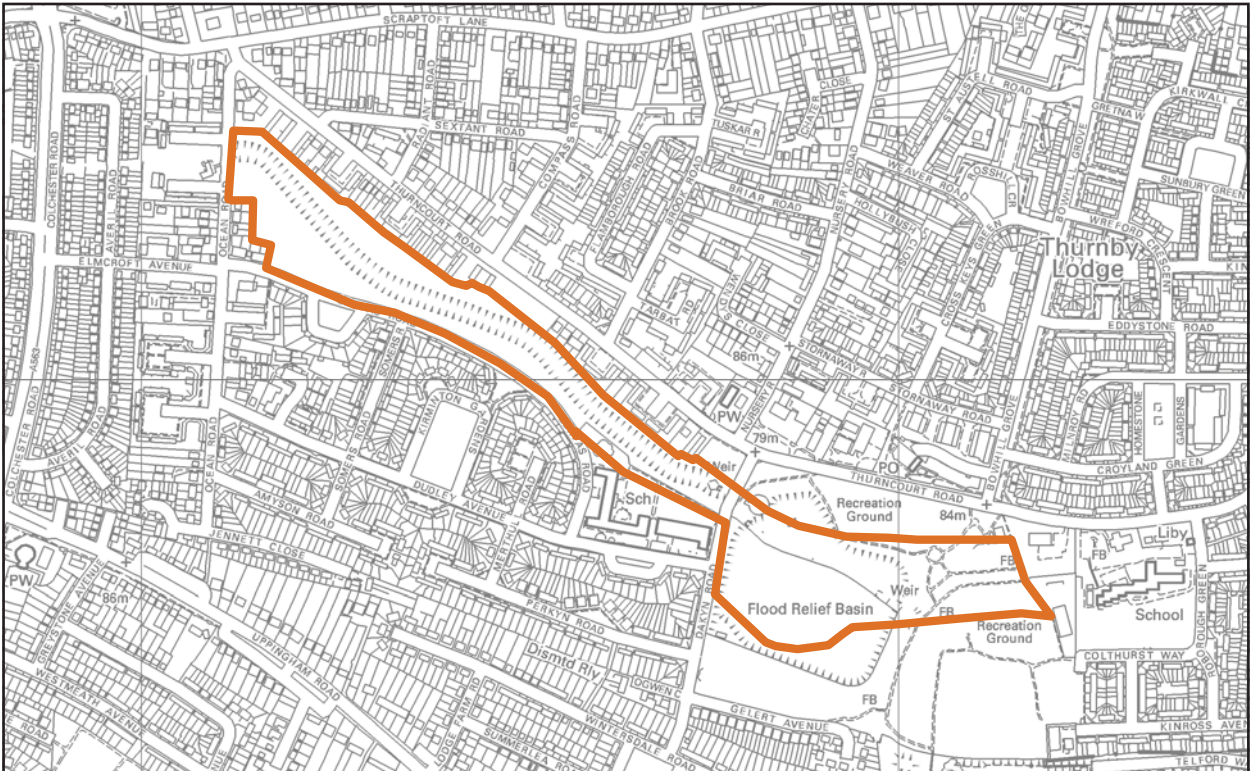
3.1 Site number 1: Saffron Hill Cemetery.



3.1.1 Reason site not being safeguarded.

The suggested deposit is glacial and it not connected to a larger deposit such as a river terrace. Most of the indicated area is an active cemetery and therefore it is extremely unlikely even in the long term that it will be workable for minerals. A cemetery is not a use which will sterilise any potential minerals so is not seen an important site to safeguard.

3.2 Site number 2: Ocean Road Open Space/ Willowbrook.



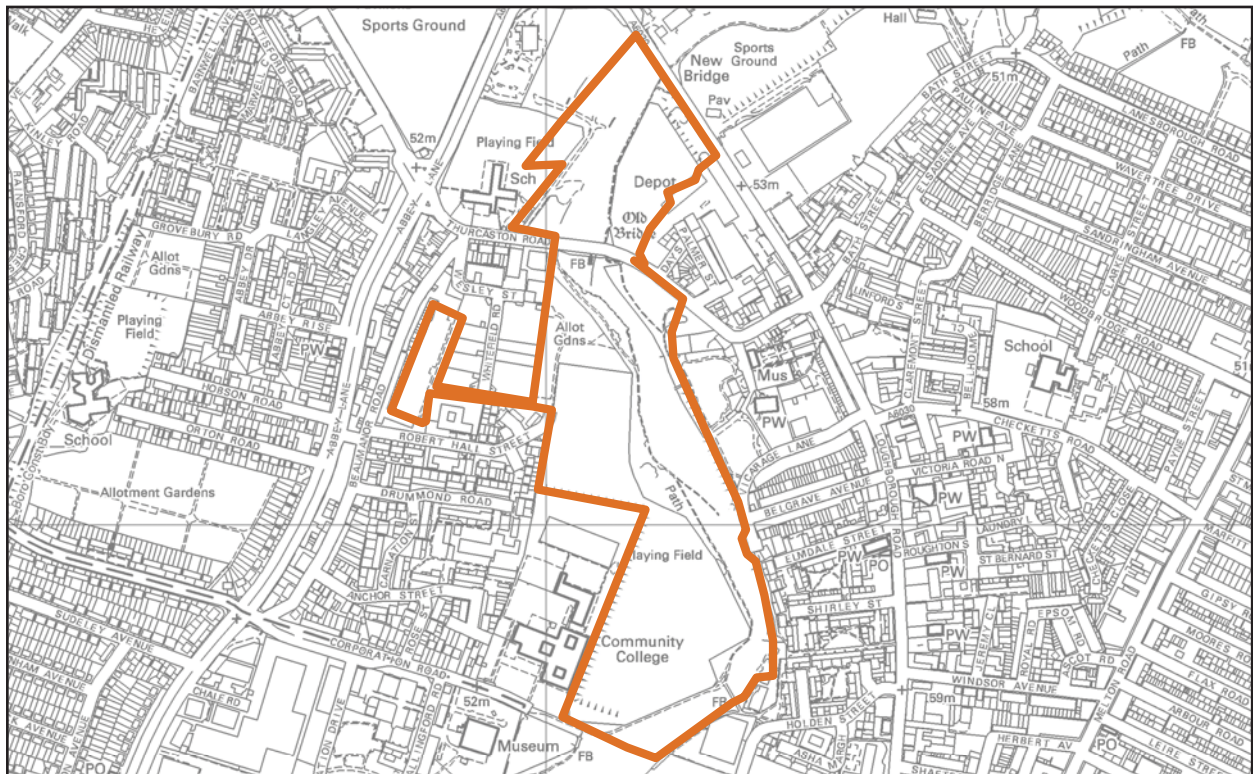
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3.2.1 Reason site not being safeguarded.

Site forms part of the flood protection system within Leicester and therefore mineral extraction would be strongly discouraged. The site is extremely constrained due to its shape and due to the fact that a large proportion of the site forms the course of the brook. The site is surrounded on both sites by residential development. There is evidence of previous mineral workings, especially in relation to the flood relief basin, so it is likely that any workable sand and gravel has been extracted.

3.3 Site number 3: Leicester Science Park.



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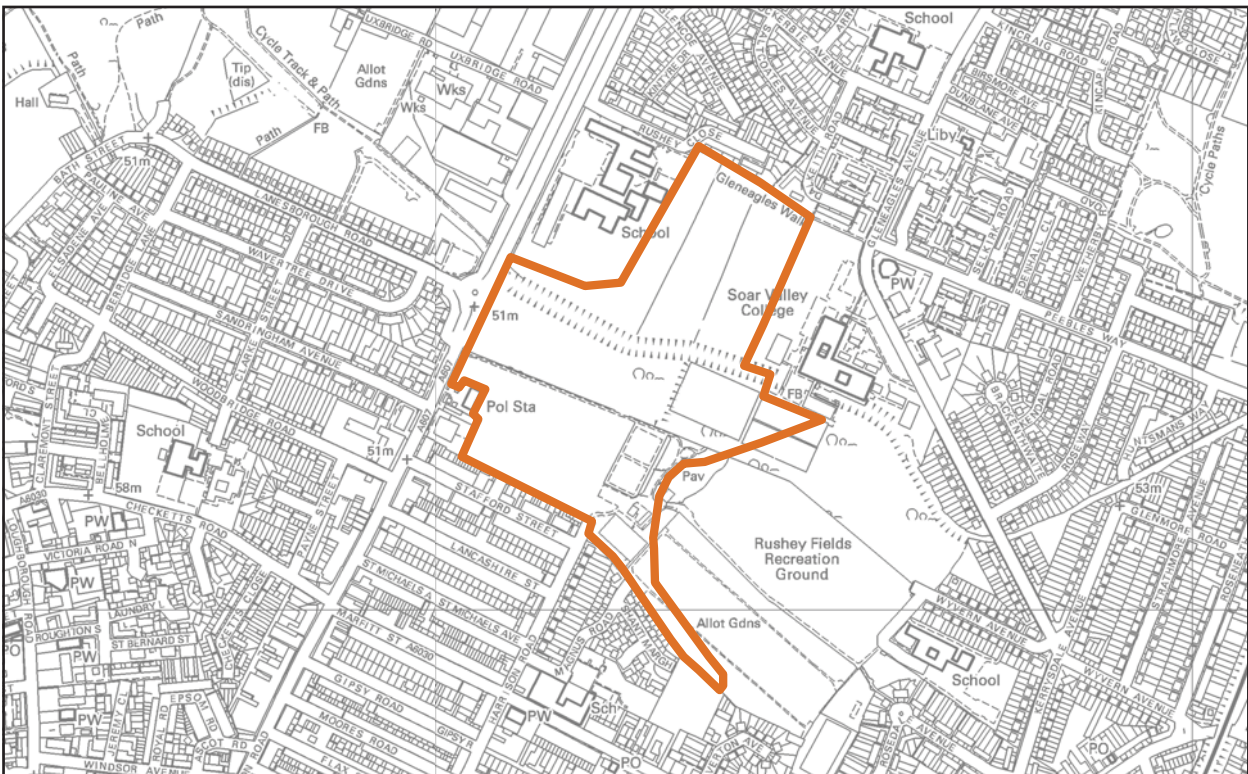
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3.3.1 Reason site not being safeguarded.

Site forms an important part of the Regeneration Master Plan for Leicester as a large part of the site is defined for associated development for the new science park for Leicester. This proposal has already been granted planning permission, which will sterilise most of the mineral reserves on the site.

The site is also close to existing & new residential areas and the workable area would be extremely limited. Therefore this site will not be safeguarded.

3.4 Site number 4: Rushey Mead Schools and Sports Ground.



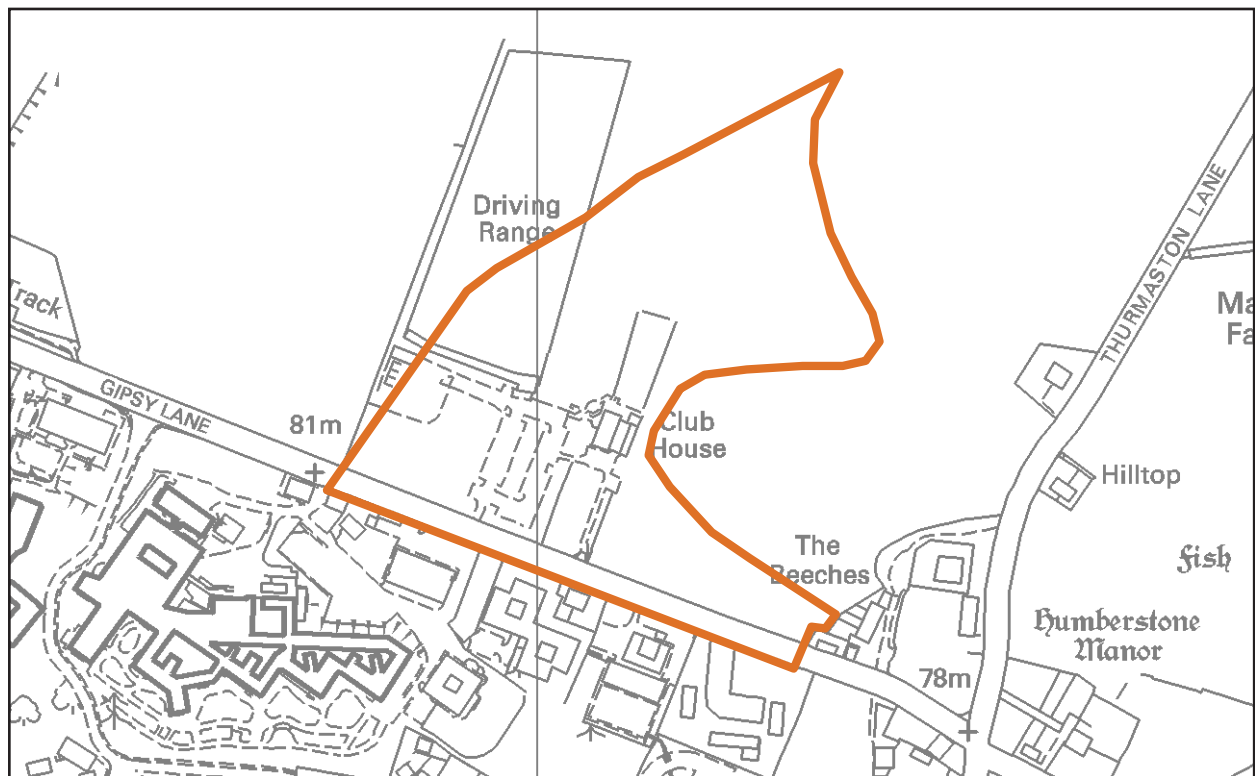
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3.4.1 Reason site not being safeguarded.

The playing fields of Soar Valley College & Rushey Mead School and the local sports grounds have the potential for a glacial deposit which may contain sand & gravel.

Soar Valley College is currently under going extensive regeneration as part of the Building Schools for the Future project, this development will sterilise a large proportion of the suggested deposit. The development was approved before the start of the safeguarding process and so wasn't a material consideration when the development was approved. The site is extremely constrained due to the nearby residential development, and therefore this site is not to be safeguarded.

3.5 Site number 5: Humberstone Heights Golf Course.



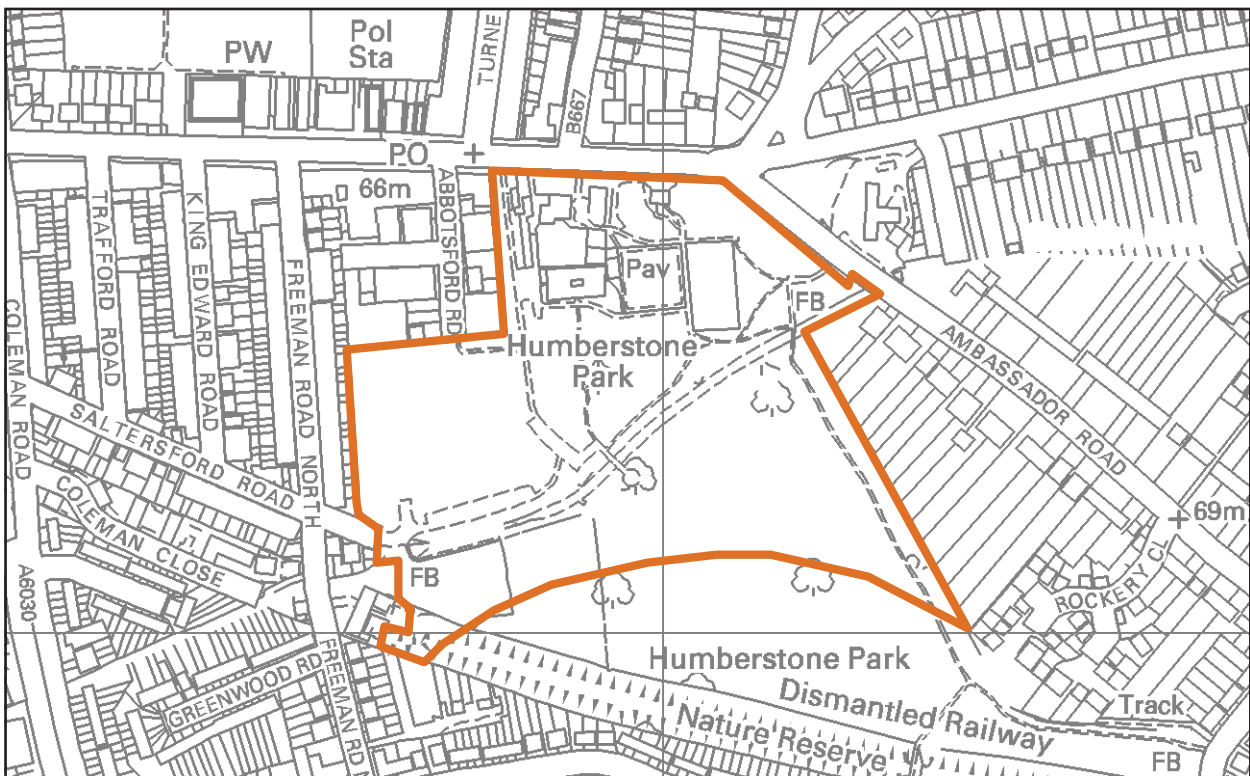
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3.5.1 Reason site not being safeguarded.

The site forms part of the Humberstone Heights Golf Course and is one of two municipal golf courses in Leicester. The area of search forms part of the pitch and put course, part of the driving range, part of the main golf course and club house and associated pro shop. The potential deposit is glacial in nature and is not part of a larger river deposit. The existing development on site has likely sterilised the significant part of the deposit and therefore the site is not to be safeguarded.

3.6 Site number 6: Humberstone Park.



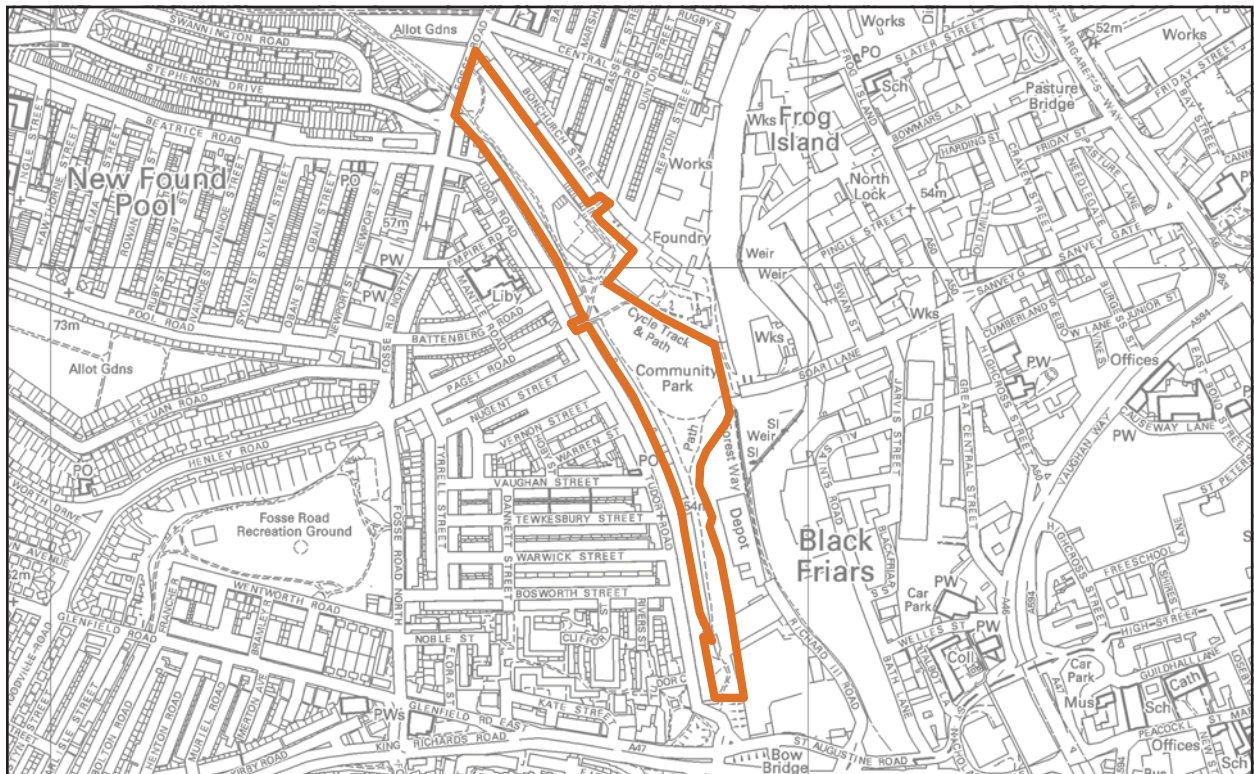
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3.6.1 Reason site not being safeguarded.

The suggested deposit is glacial in nature and is not connected to any other nearby mineral deposits. The site just comes above the set threshold of 5 ha and the park has considerable development in the form of a former railway line, a culverted brook and associated park buildings. Extensive work was carried out on the park in the 1950s including redirecting the brook and it is likely that if any sand and gravel deposits were found during this work they would have been extracted then. Therefore the site is not to be safeguarded.

3.7 Site number 7: The Rally Park.



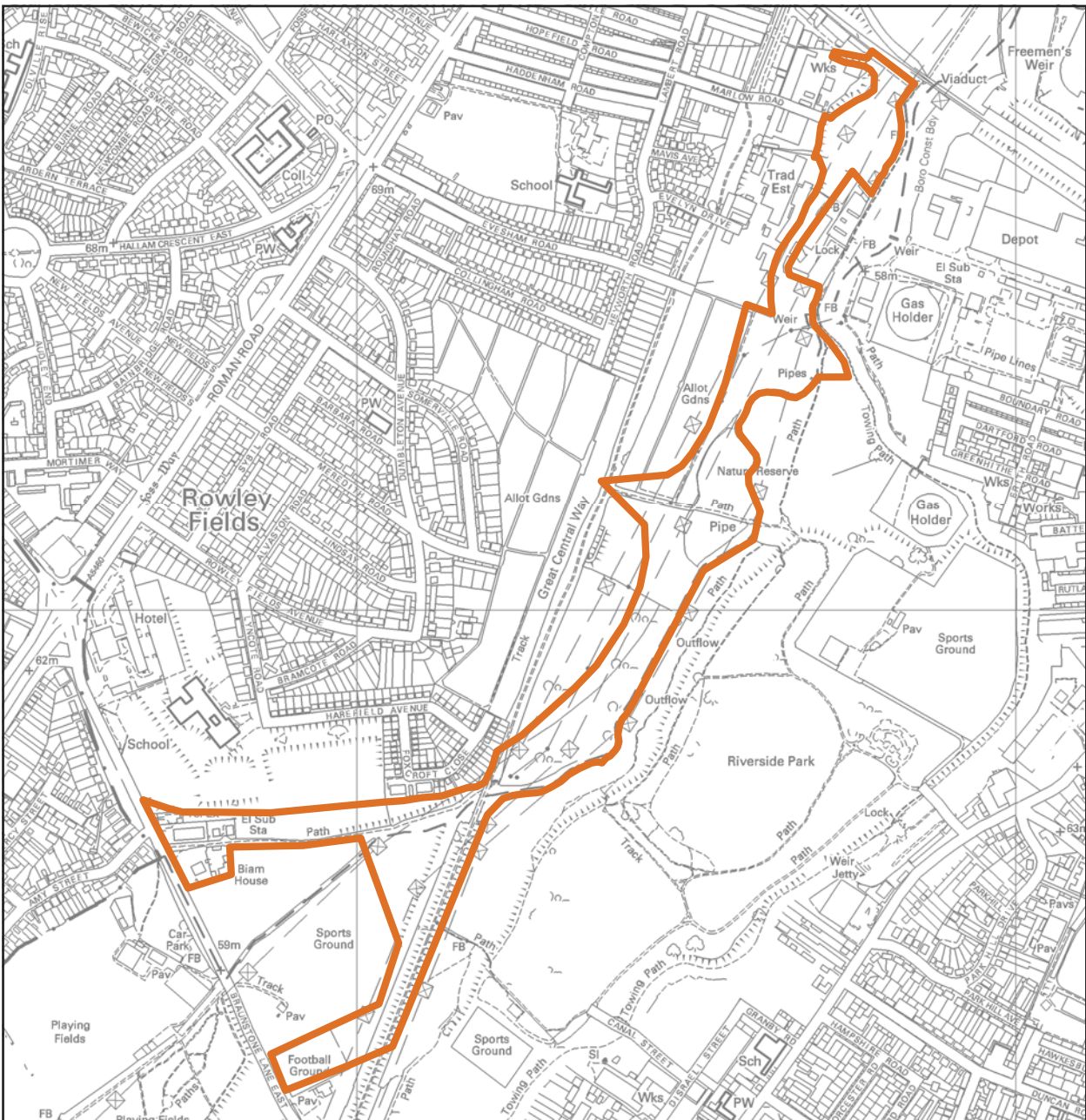
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3.7.1 Reason site not being safeguarded.

The site is part of the former Leicester to Swannington Railway line which now is used as a community park. The site was heavily engineered when used as part of the railway line and significant deposits would have likely have been extracted then. The site is located very close to the city centre and residential properties which, combined with its odd shape, make it the most constrained of the proposed locations. Therefore the site is not to be safeguarded.

3.8 Site number 8: Aylestone Meadows North.



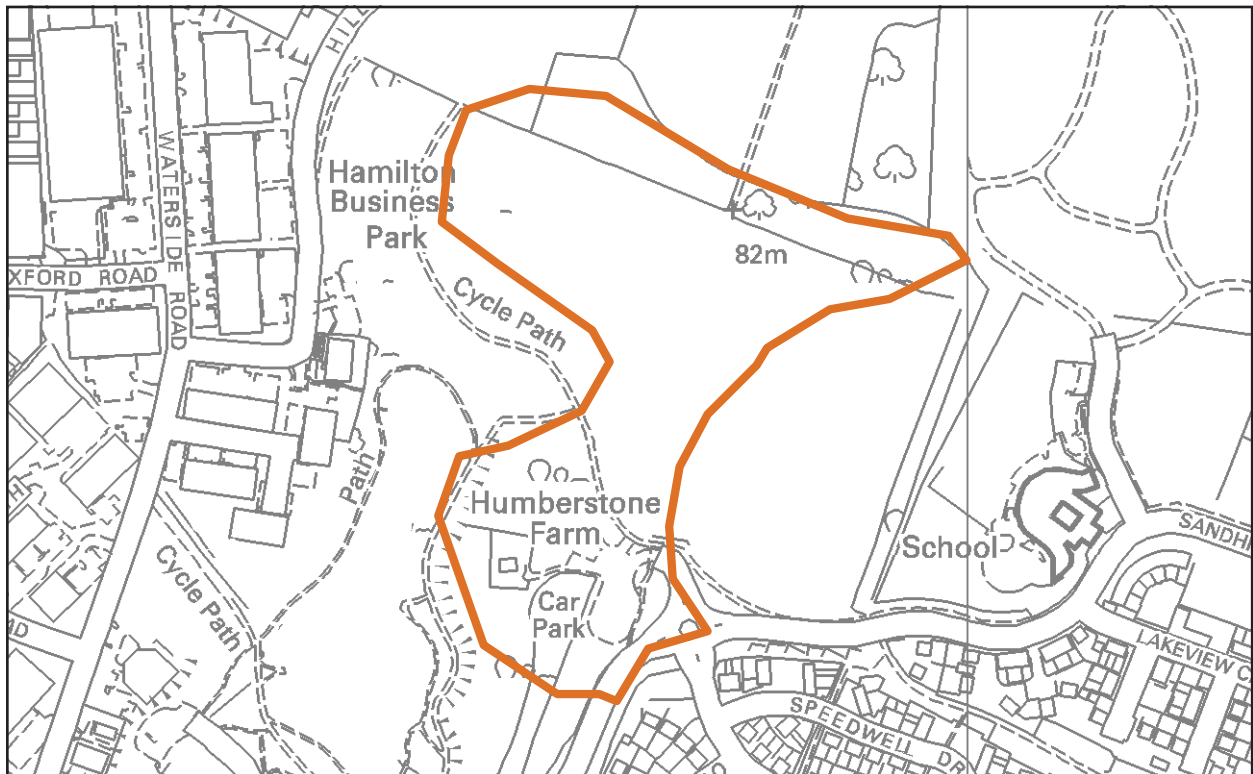
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3.8.1 Reason site not being safeguarded.

The site borders the former 50 ha Aylestone Meadows municipal landfill which accounts for a large proportion of the protected open space on the right of the site. It can be safely assumed that most of the workable mineral reserve has been extracted and therefore that limited reserves remain. The rest of the site is significantly constrained by the elevated section of the former Great Central Railway which is now used as a cycle route/footpath and is an important SINCR. There is other existing development including a former petrol station and associated workings related to a nearby gas works. Therefore the site has not been safeguarded.

3.9 Site number 9: Hamilton Park South.



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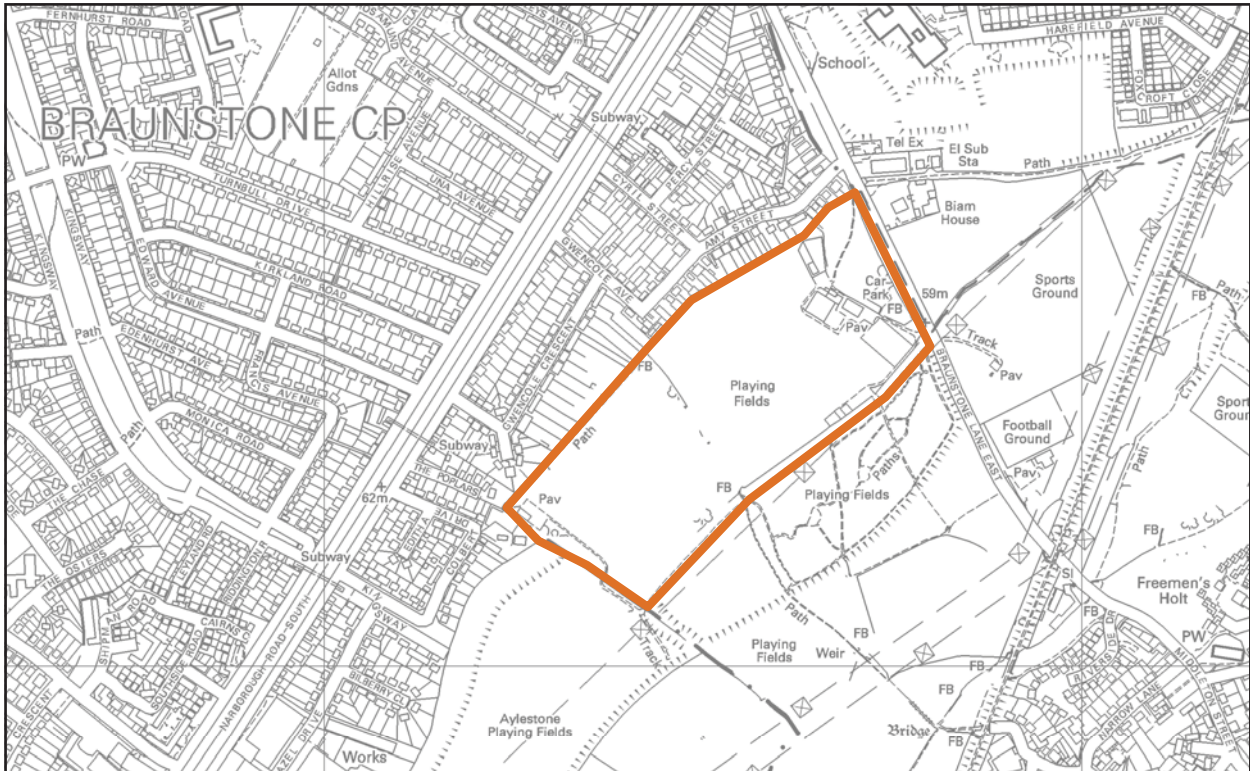
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3.2.1 Reason site not being safeguarded.

The site is about 6.2 ha which is just above the study threshold of 5 hectares. The site is glacial in nature and not attached to any larger deposit. Existing development on the site, mainly Humberstone Farm, will have sterilised a considerable portion of the site, which would reduce the workable asset to below the defined threshold. The site is constrained by its closeness to residential development but access to the site is generally good. However due to its size it has been decided not to safeguard this site.

4.0 Sites to be Safeguarded

4.1 Site number 10: Aylestone Meadows South.



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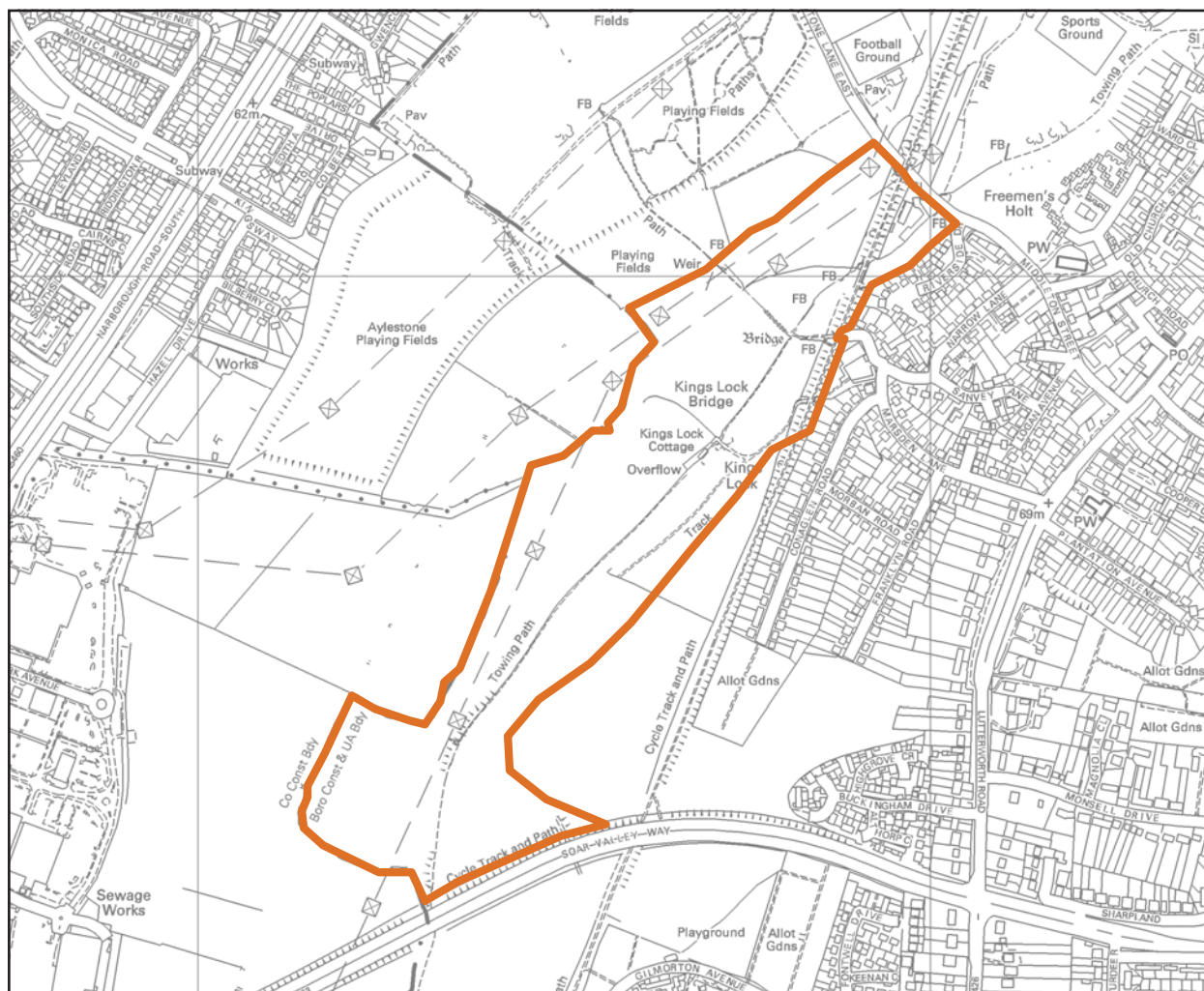
4.1.1 Site Information.

Location: South of the City
Ward: Aylestone
Size: 13.48 ha
Mineral: Sand & Gravel
Deposit Type: Sub-alluvial River Deposit

4.1.2 Reason for Safeguarding.

Site forms part of the green wedge south of the City where evidence exists of previous mineral extraction. The site is of a size that can accommodate potential mineral workings in the future. Site however is inappropriate for mineral extraction at the moment due to the protected nature of the green space and proximity to residential development.

4.2 Site number 11: Aylestone Farm



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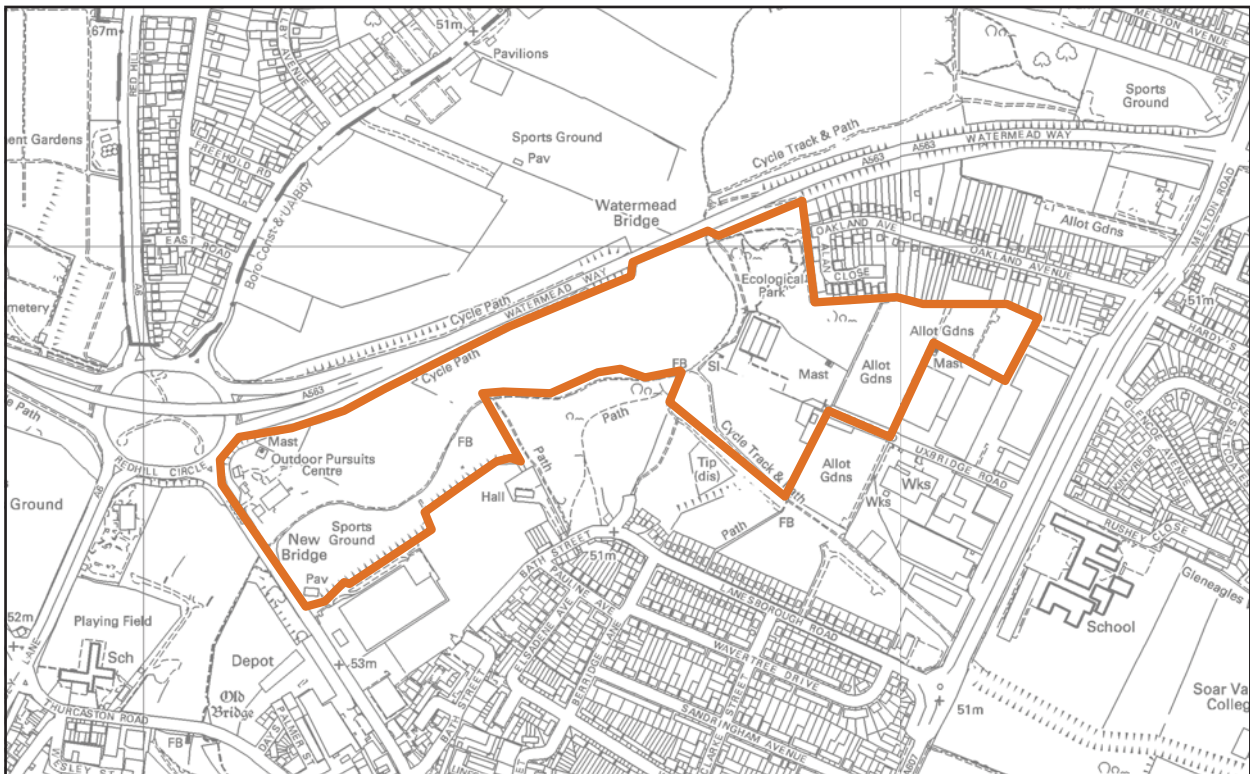
4.2.1 Site Information.

Location: South of the City
Ward: Aylestone
Size: 24.66 ha
Mineral: Sand & Gravel
Deposit Type: Sub-alluvial River Deposit

4.2.2 Reason for Safeguarding.

Site forms part of the green wedge south of the city where evidence exists of previous mineral extraction. The site is of a size that could accommodate potential mineral workings in the future. Site however is inappropriate for mineral extraction at the moment due to the protected nature of the green space and proximity of residential development.

4.3 Site number 12: Outdoor Pursuit Centre and Fields



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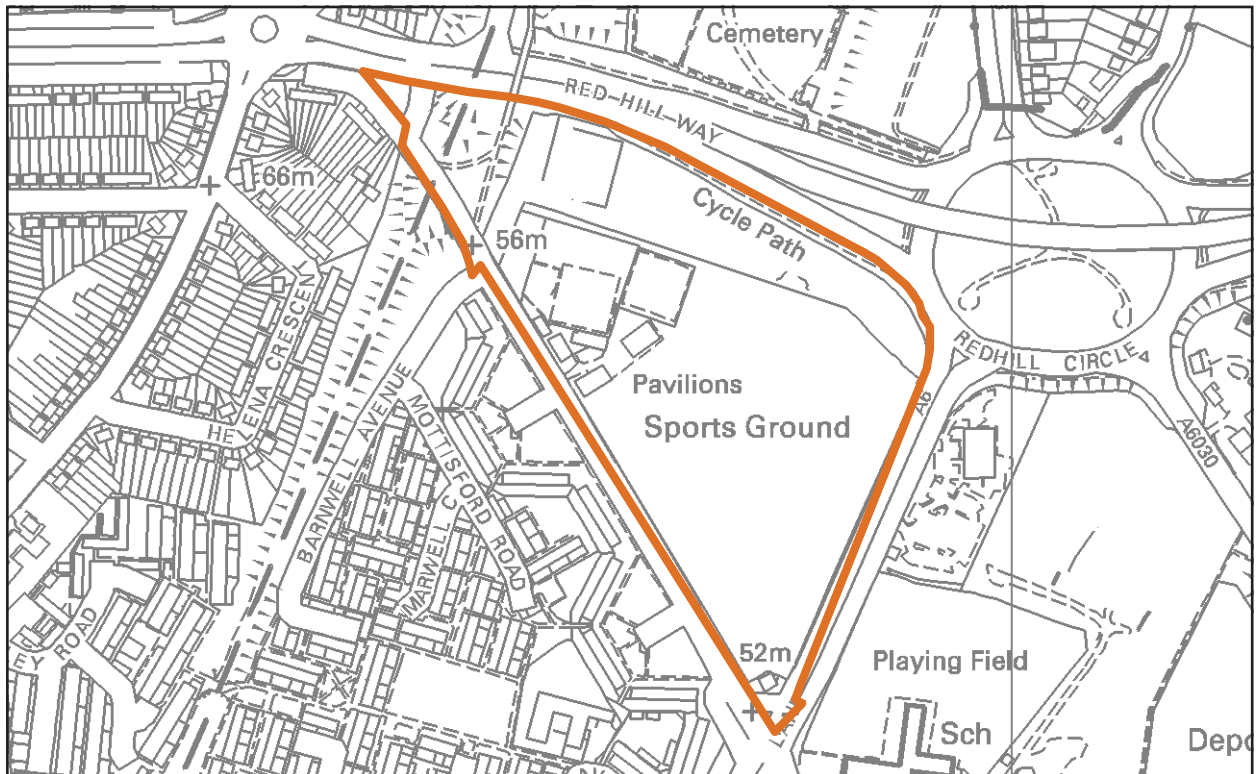
4.3.1 Site Information.

Location: North of the City
Ward: Rushey Mead
Size: 18.60 ha
Mineral: Sand & Gravel
Deposit Type: Sub-alluvial River Deposit

4.3.2 Reason for Safeguarding.

Site forms part of a wider area where known sand and gravel extraction has occurred. The site is easily accessible by routes that would avoid residential areas and is of a size that would be viable for small scale future mineral extraction. Site however is inappropriate for mineral extraction at the moment due to the protected nature of the green space and proximity of residential development.

4.4 Site number 13: Belgrave Sports Ground



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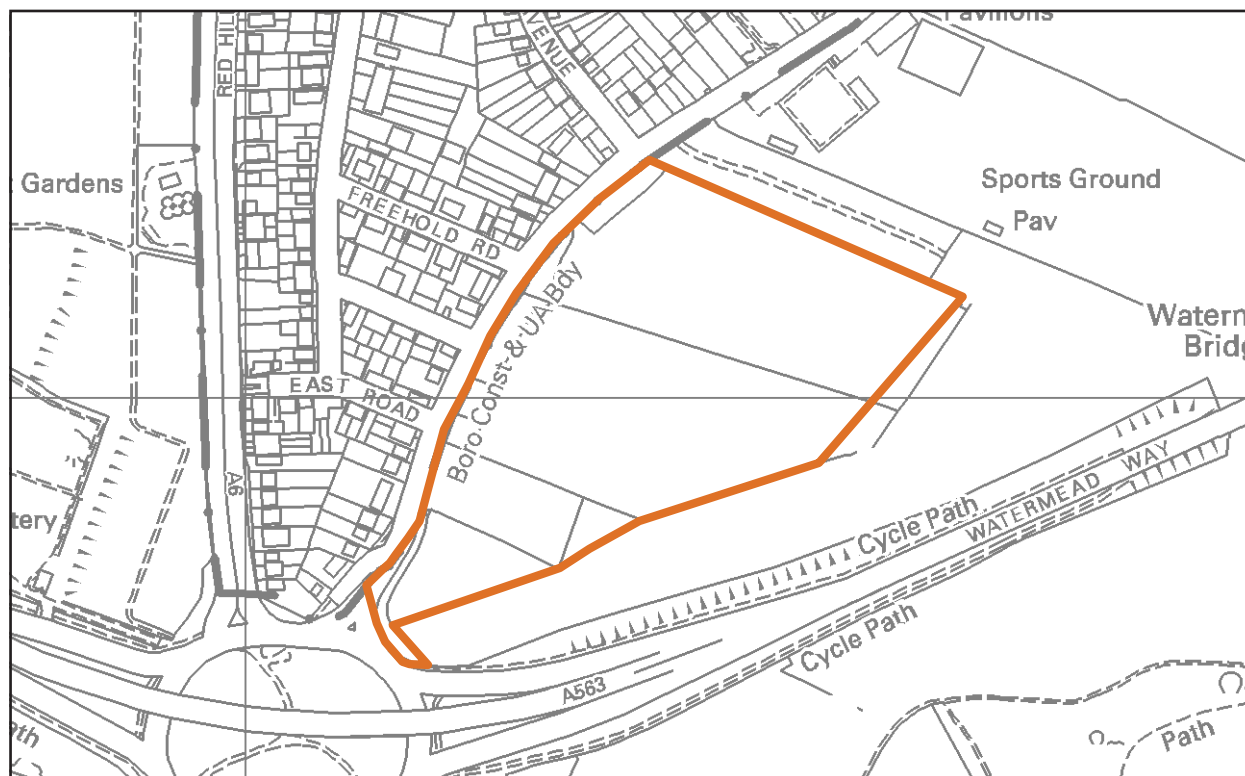
4.4.1 Site Information.

Location: North of the City
Ward: Belgrave
Size: 7.13 ha
Mineral: Sand & Gravel
Deposit Type: River Terrace Deposit

4.4.2 Reason for Safeguarding.

Site forms part of a wider area where known sand and gravel extraction has occurred. The site is easily accessible by routes that would avoid residential areas and is of a size that would be viable for small scale future mineral extraction. Site however is inappropriate for mineral extraction at the moment due to the protected nature of the green space and proximity of residential development.

4.5 Site number 14: Birstall Meadows.



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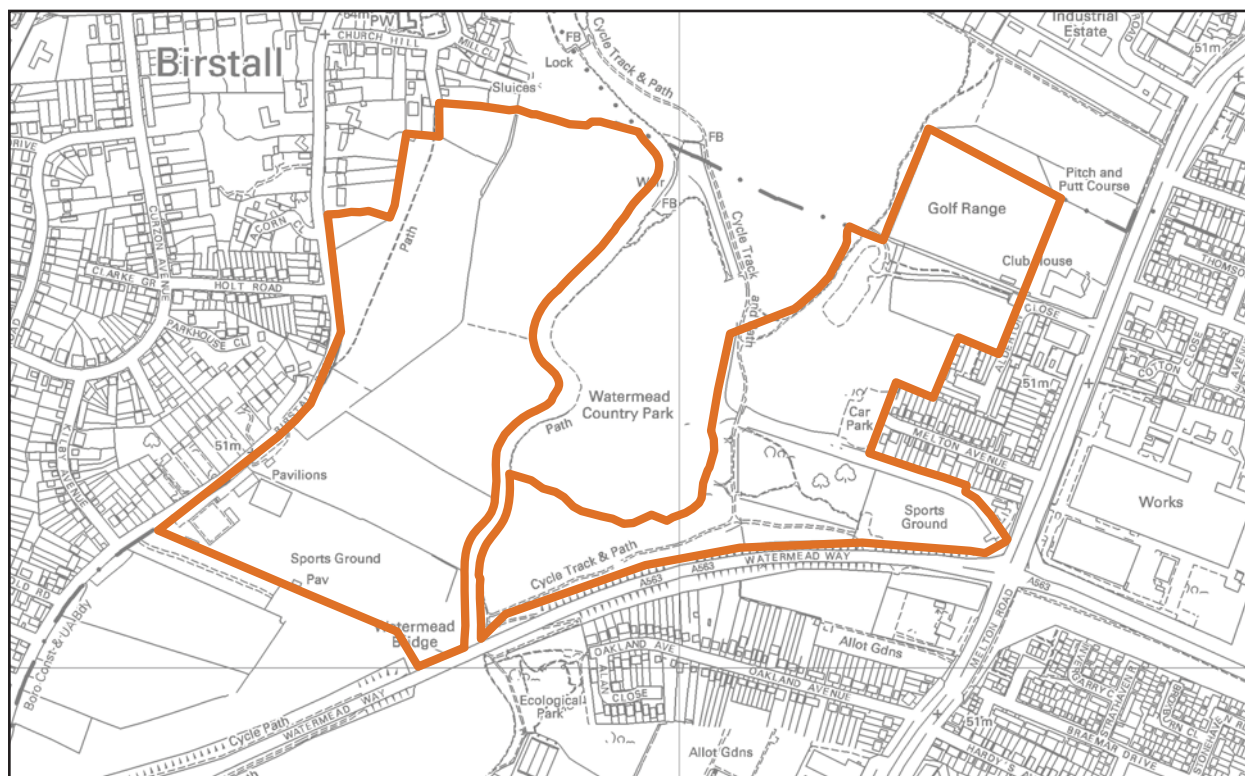
4.5.1 Site Information.

Location: North of the City
Ward: Rushey Mead
Size: 5.89 ha
Mineral: Sand & Gravel
Deposit Type: Sub-alluvial River Deposit

4.5.2 Reason For Safeguarding.

Site is part of same known sand and gravel reserve at Watermead Country Park & other proposed safeguarded sites around Red Hill Circle but is divided from these reserves by the Watermead Way capped municipal landfill & the Red Hill Roundabout. The site is easily accessible due its close proximity to the outer ring road. Whilst the site is the smallest proposed to be safeguarded, it forms an important part of a larger reserve and therefore is proposed to be safeguarded. Site is inappropriate for mineral extraction at the moment due to the protected nature of the green space and proximity of residential development.

4.6 Site number 15: Watermead Country Park.



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4.6.1 Site Information.

Location: North of the City
Ward: Rushey Mead
Size: 38.03 ha
Mineral: Sand & Gravel
Deposit Type: Sub-alluvial River Deposit

4.6.2 Reason For Safeguarding.

The lakes in Watermead Park & the extensive network of landfill sites north of the City were formed by previous sand and gravel extraction during the last century and therefore it can be assumed that there is sand & gravel in this area. The alert area covers most of the city part of Watermead Country Park however the known landfill and lake have been excluded from safeguarding. The site itself is a defined country park and SINC and therefore no mineral extraction would be allowed within the short, medium or long term, but it has been decided to safeguard due to the potential for mineral extraction in the future.

4.6 Site number 16: Hamilton Park North and Hamilton Meadows



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4.7.1 Location: North East of the City.

Wards: Rushey Mead & Humberstone and Hamilton

Size: 21.91 ha

Mineral: Sand & Gravel

Deposit Type: Sub-alluvial River Deposit

4.6.2 Reason For Safeguarding.

BGS data has identified a previously unknown location for sand & gravel, this being Hamilton Meadows and Hamilton Park. The site has not been previously worked so it is likely if mineral deposits exist they will be entirely intact and considering its size very much worth protecting. However access to the site is extremely difficult due to its location north of the Hamilton estate, and whilst it is not entirely surrounded by housing it will become very constrained once the later phases of Hamilton have been completed. Also Charnwood Borough Council have in their LDF Core Strategy Preferred Options identified the site due north as a potential location for a Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE), which would constrain the site further. However no similar previously unworked site of this size exists within Leicester and therefore it would be pertinent to safeguard it.

5.0 Final List of Safeguarded Sites

Name of Site	Size (ha)
Aylestone Meadows South	13.48
Aylestone Farm	24.66
Outdoor Pursuit Centre and Fields	18.60
Belgrave Sports Ground	7.13
Birstall Meadows	5.89
Watermead Country Park	38.03
Hamilton Park North and Hamilton Meadows	21.91
Total	129.7

Appendix 1

Draft Safeguarding Policy for LDF Core Strategy.

It is a requirement under MPS1: Planning and Minerals for unitary authorities to identify potential mineral locations to be safeguarded for future generations even if the mineral is not being worked due to market conditions or current site restraints.

The most recent data available indicates that along side the River Soar valley from Aylestone in the south to Birstall in the north there are River Terrace and Sub-alluvial River Deposits that could contain sand and gravel.

Sand and gravel are important materials in the construction industry and identifying local sources is important for the goals of sustainable development as it reduces the long journeys which are sometimes required to provide this important base material.

Leicester may have extensive gypsum deposits in the South East of the city and brick clay deposits in the North West. Due to the extensive size of workings required to extract gypsum no areas in the city exist where it would be possible now or in the future to sustainably extract this mineral. Also there are no specific national guidelines covering the provision of gypsum.

Brick clay may exist within the area defined as Ashton Green. MPS1 states that only 'premium' brick clay should be safeguarded in areas where it is scarce. There is no evidence that this is a premium resource or that there is a shortage of brick clay in Leicestershire.

The site is a long term housing allocation and therefore will not be allocated as a safeguarding area. Opportunities may exist however to use this valuable resource in the construction of the proposed Ashton Green development.

All the identified areas are extremely constrained due to existing development and uses or due to being important protected natural environments so whilst it is important not to constrain these sites it is not expected that extraction will happen in the life of the plan nor the foreseeable future. Also, even where sites are defined as Mineral Safeguarding Areas (MSA) this does not automatically mean that a planning application for mineral working will be looked at favourably now or in the future.

If any of these sites are to be taken forward for mineral development it would be down to the proposer of the mineral workings to provide a detailed survey of the proposed site to prove that workable minerals exist, and to follow the guidance within the Mineral Policy Statements (MPS)s on requirements for a minerals application.

Policy CS19: Safeguarding Mineral Deposits.

The areas highlighted in Map ## are defined as Mineral Safeguarding Areas (MSA) in order that proven resources are not needlessly sterilised by non-mineral development due to the potential for sand and gravel deposits. However there is no assumption at all that resources defined in the MSA will be worked.