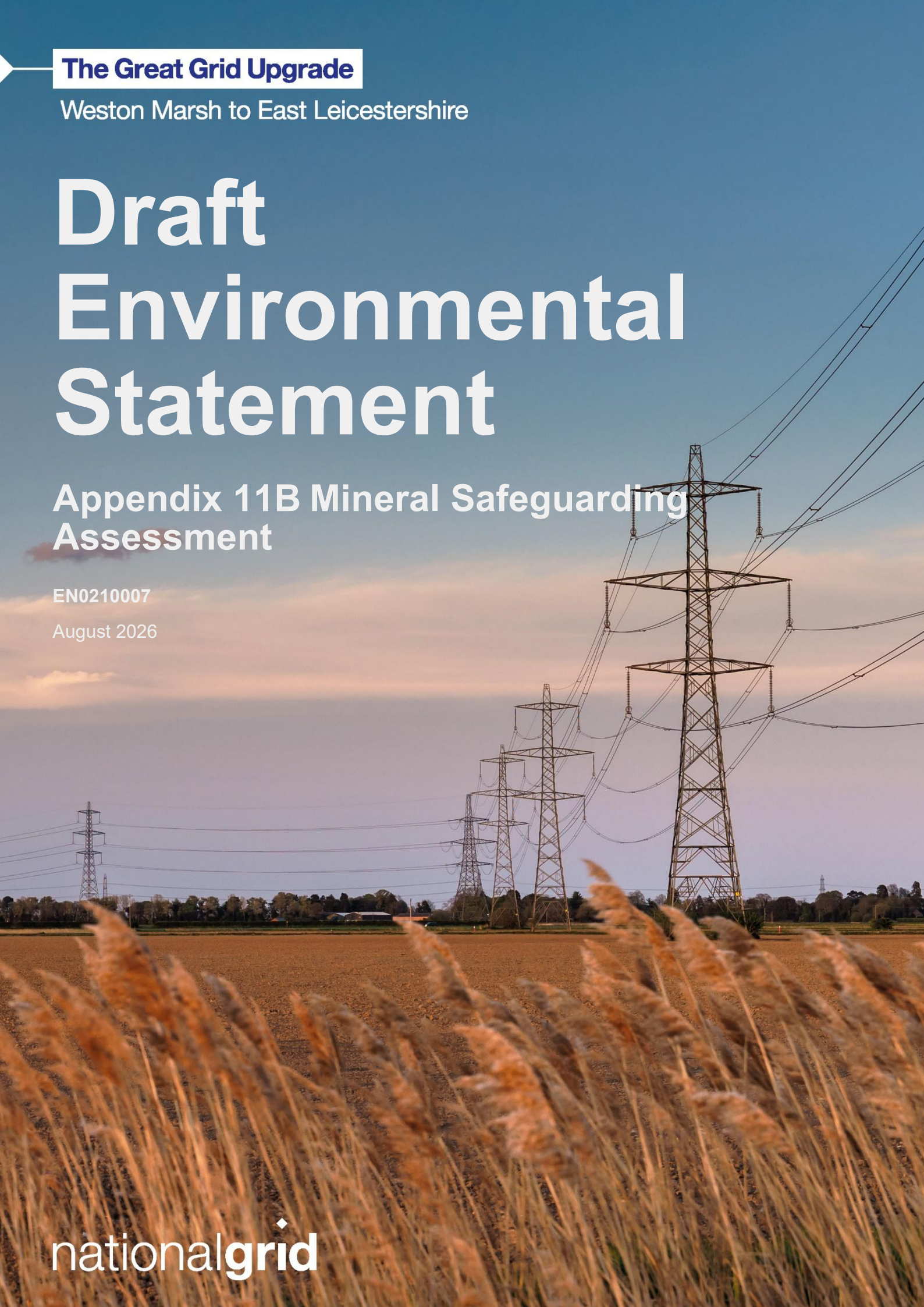




The Great Grid Upgrade

Weston Marsh to East Leicestershire

Draft Environmental Statement

Appendix 11B Mineral Safeguarding Assessment

EN0210007

August 2026

nationalgrid

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11B.Mineral Safeguarding Assessment

11B. Mineral Safeguarding Assessment

11B.1 Introduction

- 11B.1.1 The purpose of this Mineral Safeguarding Assessment is to address the requirements of national and local policies relating to Minerals and provide an assessment of the potential impact of the Project on Mineral Safeguarding Areas (MSA) and allocated mineral sites.
- 11B.1.2 This document is an appendix to the non-statutory Draft Environmental Statement (DES) (referred to in this document as “DES” and non-statutory DES”).
- 11B.1.3 The draft Order Limits comprise five sections (1-5) across two county councils: Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, and two unitary authorities: West Northamptonshire and North Northamptonshire. For the Environmental Statement, this Mineral Safeguarding Assessment will include the impact of the Project on:
- mineral landbanks including future demand and supply; and
 - MSAs and existing and allocated mineral sites.
- 11B.1.4 An updated Mineral Safeguarding Assessment will be provided at ES stage to include design refinements that may occur and potential updated data (local aggregates assessments and mineral and waste local plans).

11B.2 Legislation, Policy Framework and Guidance

Legislation and National Policy

- 11B.2.1 There is no legislation relevant to this assessment. National policy relevant to the Project and the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is described in **Chapter 2 Regulatory and Planning Policy Context** and supporting appendices **Appendix 2A Key Legislation**, **Appendix 2B National and Regional Policy** and **Appendix 2C Local Policy**, of this DES .

Local Policy

- 11B.2.2 **Chapter 2 Key Legislation and Planning Policy Context** and **Appendix 2C Local Policy** sets out local policy relevant to the EIA. Local plans or policies relevant to this assessment are as follows:
- Leicestershire County Council Minerals and Waste Local Plan Up to 2031 (Adopted 2019) (Ref 11B.1).
 - Leicestershire County Council Mineral and Waste Safeguarding [Harborough District] Document S3/2015 (Ref 11B.2).
 - Leicestershire County Council Mineral and Waste Safeguarding [Melton Borough] Document S3/2015 (Ref 11B.3).

- Lincolnshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (Adopted June 2016) (Ref 11B.4).
- Lincolnshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan Site Locations (Adopted 2017) (Ref 11B.5).
- Northamptonshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (Adopted 2017) (Ref 11B.6).

Leicestershire County Council Minerals and Waste Local Plan

Policy M11: Safeguarding of Mineral Resources

- 11B.2.3 Policy M11 explains the safeguarding of sand and gravel, limestone, igneous rock, surface coal, fireclay, gypsum resources and brickclay. It describes the protection of these mineral resources from permanent sterilisation by other development.
- 11B.2.4 Policy M11 notes that *‘Planning permission will be granted for development that is incompatible with safeguarding mineral within a Mineral Safeguarding Area if:*
- (i) the applicant can demonstrate that the mineral concerned is no longer of any value or potential value; or*
 - (ii) the mineral can be extracted satisfactorily prior to the incompatible development taking place; or*
 - (iii) the incompatible development is of a temporary nature and can be completed and the site restored to a condition that does not inhibit extraction within the timescale that the mineral is likely to be needed; or*
 - (iv) there is an overriding need for the incompatible development; or*
 - (v) the development comprises one of the types of development listed in Table 4.’*
(Exempt from safeguarding).

Policy M12: Safeguarding of Existing Mineral Sites and Associated Minerals Infrastructure

- 11B.2.5 Policy M12 states significant infrastructure associated with the supply of minerals will be safeguarded against development that would impact operations at an existing mineral site or limit the use of associated mineral infrastructure by the introduction of incompatible land uses nearby.

Policy M10: Conventional and Unconventional Hydrocarbons (Oil and Gas)

- 11B.2.6 Policy M10 explains that planning permissions will be granted for the exploration of conventional and unconventional hydrocarbons provided that:
- ‘(i) The well site and associated facilities are sited in the least sensitive location from which the target reservoir can be accessed; and that*
 - (ii) operations are for a temporary length of time.*
- Planning permissions will be granted for the production of conventional and unconventional hydrocarbons (oil and gas) provided that the proposal adheres to requirements (i) and (ii) above, and is consistent with a scheme which would facilitate the full development of the resource’.*

Lincolnshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan Core Strategy and Development Management Policies

Policy M11: Safeguarding of Mineral Resources

11B.2.7 Policy M11 explains sand and gravel, blown sand and limestone resources are of economic importance and will be protected by other developments from permanent sterilisation. Where a non-minerals development would sterilise mineral resources within the Mineral Safeguarding Areas or prevent future extraction, planning permission will be granted when:

- *‘The applicant can demonstrate to the Mineral Planning Authority that prior extraction of the mineral would be impracticable and that the development could not reasonably be sited elsewhere; or*
- *the incompatible development is of a temporary nature and can be completed and the site restored to the condition that does not inhibit extraction within the timescale that the mineral is likely to be needed; or*
- *there is an overriding need for the development to meet local economic needs, and the development could not be reasonably be sited elsewhere; or*
- *the development is of a minor nature which would have a negligible impact with respect to sterilising the mineral resource; or*
- *the development is, or forms part of, an allocation in the Development Plan’.*

Policy M12: Safeguarding of Existing Mineral Sites and Associated Minerals Infrastructure

11B.2.8 Policy M12 safeguards mineral sites and associated infrastructure which supports the supply of minerals in the County against sterilisation of sites and infrastructure, or the introduction of incompatible land uses nearby.

Updated plan

11B.2.9 Lincolnshire County Council is in the process of updating the minerals and waste local plan to cover the period to 2041.

Northamptonshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan

Policy 28: Minerals Safeguarding Areas

11B.2.10 Policy 28 explains the economic importance of safeguarding minerals from sterilisation by non-mineral development.

11B.2.11 Policy 28 states that: *‘Development of a non-mineral related nature within the Mineral Safeguarding Areas which is incompatible with the safeguarding of minerals should not proceed unless:*

- *It can be clearly demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Mineral Planning Authority that the mineral concerned is no longer of any value, or potential value, or that substantial (economically viable) deposits of a similar quality exist elsewhere in the country, or*

- *the mineral can be extracted, where practicable, prior to the development taking place or*
- *the incompatible development is of temporary nature and can be completed with the site restored to a condition that does not inhibit extraction within the timescale that the mineral is likely to be needed, or*
- *the development is of a minor nature which would not inhibit extraction of the mineral resource, or*
- *there is an overriding need for the development.'*

Policy 29: Safeguarding minerals and waste related development from alternative uses

- 11B.2.12 Policy 29 safeguards allocated sites for mineral processing use from non-minerals related development use unless:

'alternative provision in the vicinity can be made, or if it can be clearly demonstrated that there is no longer a need for waste management, or minerals processing facility, at that location'.

Guidance

- 11B.2.13 This Mineral Safeguarding Assessment has been written considering the following guidance documents:
- Mineral Safeguarding in England: Good Practice Advice, British Geological Survey Open Report OR/11/046 (2011) (Ref 11B.7).
 - Mineral Products Association and Planning Officers Society. Minerals Safeguarding Practice Guidance (2019) (Ref 11B.8).
 - Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) now Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals (ISEP) guide to: Materials and Waste in Environmental Impact Assessment (Ref 11B.9).

11B.3 Assessment Methodology

- 11B.3.1 The methodology for assessing the impact on existing and allocated mineral sites is detailed below using ISEP EIA guidance (Ref 11B.9).
- 11B.3.2 The ISEP EIA guidance does not set out a defined methodology for assessing impacts on MSAs. Instead, professional judgement will be applied to determine the likelihood of significant effects, informed by the baseline data presented in Section 11B.3. As such, sensitivity and magnitude will not be assigned for MSAs.

Study Area

- 11B.3.3 This assessment identifies existing and allocated mineral sites and MSAs within the draft Order Limits. No buffer has been applied, as the nature of the effects under consideration (mineral sterilisation) is not expected to extend beyond the draft Order Limits.

- 11B.3.4 The Mineral Planning Authorities are Lincolnshire County Council, Leicestershire County Council, North Northamptonshire Council and West Northamptonshire Council.

Sensitivity

- 11B.3.5 The sensitivity of mineral receptors presented in **Table 11B.1** has been adapted from ISEP EIA guidance.

Table 11B.1 Thresholds for considering the sensitivity of receptor (Ref 11B.9)

Negligible	Low	Medium	High	Very high
Are forecast (through trend analysis and other information) to be free from known issues regarding supply and stock;	Are forecast (through trend analysis and other information) to be generally free from known issues regarding supply and stock;	Are forecast (through trend analysis and other information) to suffer from some potential issues regarding supply and stock;	Are forecast (through trend analysis and other information) to suffer from known issues regarding supply and stock;	Are known to be insufficient in terms of production, supply and/or stock;

Magnitude

- 11B.3.6 The methodology for assessing the magnitude of impact on existing and allocated mineral sites comprises the potential to sterilise (substantially) or sever access to one or more sites. The criteria presented in **Table 11B.2** has been adapted from ISEP EIA guidance (Ref 11B.9).

Table 11B.2 Thresholds for considering the magnitude of impacts for allocated mineral sites (adapted Ref 11B.9)

No change	Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Major
No allocated and/or existing mineral sites are present.	No allocated and/or existing mineral sites are present.	The development has the potential to adversely and substantially [#] impact access to one or more allocated and/or existing mineral site (in their entirety), placing their future use at risk.	One allocated mineral and/or existing site is substantially [#] sterilised by the development rendering it inaccessible for future use.	More than one allocated and/or existing mineral site is substantially [#] sterilised by the development rendering it inaccessible for future use.

[#] Based on professional judgement based on the scale and nature of the allocated mineral site being assessed.

Significance

11B.3.7 The approach taken from ISEP EIA guidance adopted for evaluating the significance of effects considering the sensitivity of the receptor and the magnitude of impacts is outlined in **Table 11B.3**.

Table 11B.3 Determination of significance matrix (Ref 11B.9)

Magnitude of Impact						
		No change	Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Major
Sensitivity of Receptor	Very High	Neutral	Slight	Moderate or large	Large or very large	Very large
	High	Neutral	Slight	Slight or Moderate	Moderate or large	Large or very large
	Medium	Neutral	Neutral or Slight	Slight	Moderate	Moderate or large
	Low	Neutral	Neutral or Slight	Neutral or Slight	Slight	Slight or Moderate
	Negligible	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral or slight	Neutral or slight	Slight

11B.3.8 A Moderate and above effect is considered significant; a resultant effect of Slight or Neutral is considered not significant. This matrix approach provides a guide; however professional judgement will be used in concluding the significance of effect.

11B.4 Baseline

Data collection

- 11B.4.1 The following data sources have been used to inform this Mineral Safeguarding Assessment:
- Leicestershire County Council Local Aggregates Assessment 2024 (2023 data) (Ref 11B.10).
 - Lincolnshire Local Aggregate Assessment, January 2026 (reporting 2024 data) (Ref 11B.11).
 - North and West Northamptonshire Local Aggregate Assessment 2025 (reporting on 2024 data) (Ref 11B.12).
 - East Midlands Aggregates Working Party (EMAWP) Annual Report 2024 (reporting 2023 data) (Ref 11B.13).
 - British Geological Society Mineral Resource Maps. Mineral Resource Information in Support of Natural, Regional and Local Planning for Lincolnshire 2002 (Ref 11B.14), Leicestershire and Rutland 2002 (Ref 11B.15) and Northamptonshire 2022 (Ref 11B.16).

Geology

- 11B.4.2 The superficial and bedrock geology underlying the Project is presented in **Chapter 11 Geology and Hydrogeology** and is shown on **Figure 11.2 Superficial Geology** and **Figure 11.3 Bedrock Geology** of the DES . Further information on geology is presented in **Appendix 11A Phase 1 Geotechnical and Geo-environmental Desktop Studies**.
- 11B.4.3 A summary from British Geological Survey (BGS) mineral resource maps for each administrative county is presented below:

Lincolnshire

- 11B.4.4 The BGS mineral resource map for Lincolnshire (Ref 11B.14) describes the sand and gravel deposits across the draft Order Limits to be associated with sub-alluvial and River Terrace Deposits from the Quaternary period. Glaciofluvial sand and gravel are present from the products of deposition by glacial meltwaters.
- 11B.4.5 Crushed rock (limestone and chalk) is described in Lincolnshire as having limited suitability for crushed rock aggregate.

Leicestershire

- 11B.4.6 The BGS mineral resource map for Leicestershire (Ref 11B.15) describes the sand and gravel deposits across the draft Order Limits to be associated with sub-alluvial and River Terrace Deposits from the Quaternary period. Glaciofluvial sand and gravel are present from the products of deposition by glacial meltwaters.
- 11B.4.7 Coal resources are present in north west Leicestershire. The only area that has been worked in Leicestershire is Asfordby mine near Melton Mowbray however, this closed in 1997 after 2 years of operation.

North and West Northamptonshire

- 11B.4.8 The BGS mineral resource map for Northamptonshire (Ref 11B.16) describes the sand and gravel across the draft Order Limits as pre-glacial and glacial which runs in a belt to the south and north of Northampton. River gravels are present along the draft Order Limits along valleys of the River Nene and Welland.
- 11B.4.9 Limestone across the draft Order Limits consists of deposits from the Jurassic Lincolnshire Limestone which is used as crushed rock aggregate.
- 11B.4.10 Ironstone is located within the draft Order Limits as Northampton Sand Formation ironstone of Middle Jurassic age.

Mineral allocations relevant to the draft Order Limits

- 11B.4.11 The mineral allocations including Mineral Safeguarding Areas for each section are detailed in **Table 11B.4** and below:

Section 1: Lincolnshire

- 11B.4.12 The draft Order Limits for Section 1 do not cross any MSAs.

Section 2: Lincolnshire

11B.4.13 Parts of the draft Order Limits are located within a limestone MSA.

Sections 3 and 4: Leicestershire

11B.4.14 In Leicestershire sand and gravel is sourced from sub-alluvial and river terrace and glaciofluvial deposits. The draft Order Limits crosses sand and gravel MSAs.

Section 5: North and West Northamptonshire

11B.4.15 The main mineral resources in Northamptonshire are sand and gravel and limestone, the draft Order Limits crosses these MSAs.

Table 11B.4 Mineral Safeguarding Areas present in each section

Section	Mineral Planning Authority	Mineral Safeguarding Area
Section 1	Lincolnshire	No MSAs present in Section 1
Section 2	Lincolnshire	Limestone
Section 3	Leicestershire	Sand and gravel
Section 4	Leicestershire	
Section 5	North and West Northamptonshire	Sand and gravel Limestone

Mineral landbanks and trends

11B.4.16 Landbanks are required to be calculated by each Mineral Planning Authority (MPA) to plan for an adequate supply of aggregates using a rolling average of 10-years of sales data. The Government Planning Guidance (Ref 11B.17) for Minerals states MPAs should also use an average 3-year sales to identify general trend of demand.

11B.4.17 The landbanks, reserves and sales data for each Mineral Planning Authority are presented below.

Mineral Planning Authorities

Lincolnshire sales, landbank and reserves

Crushed rock: Limestone

11B.4.18 At the end of 2024, the landbank for crushed rock was 9.06 years, calculated using the 3-year average sales (Ref 11B.17). The estimated permitted reserves for limestone in Lincolnshire are 13.48 million tonnes (Mt) (Ref 11B.11). Based on 10-year average sales the landbank is 11.43 years, which is above the Government Planning Guidance of at least 10 years for crushed rock.

11B.4.19 Sales of limestone were mainly for aggregate purposes (94%) and there has been a variation in limestone sales over 2015 to 2024. Sales recovered after 2020 and 2024 was the highest recorded over the past ten years at 1.56 Mt.

- 11B.4.20 In 2023, crushed rock saw a significant increase in exports, 44.6% was sold in the county. Locations exported to include East of England (largest), Cambridgeshire, Peterborough and Norfolk.
- 11B.4.21 In 2024, seven active limestone quarries were present in Lincolnshire. With the remaining six quarries classed as inactive.

Leicestershire sales, landbank and reserves

Sand and Gravel

- 11B.4.22 Leicestershire Local Aggregates Assessment (2024) (Ref 11B.10) reported insufficient permitted reserves to maintain a landbank of at least seven years for sand and gravel. The county has a landbank of 1.01 Mt per annum for sand and gravel, with a potential shortfall in sand and gravel reserves of 7.67 Mt over the period to 2031. Estimated permitted reserves were 2.99 Mt at the end of 2023 which will provide permitted material for 2.96 years, which is below the Government Planning Guidance required landbank.
- 11B.4.23 Leicestershire Materials and Waste Local Plan (MWLP) (Ref 11B.1) estimates a shortfall of 9.53 Mt over the period to 2031. Planning applications submitted to the end of 2024 would provide an additional 4.95 Mt of reserves.
- 11B.4.24 Sales of sand and gravel were predominantly in Leicestershire and Rutland at 63%. Average sales have decreased over the past three years due to a decline in construction activity.
- 11B.4.25 There are five active sites for sand and gravel extraction in Leicestershire, these include sites at Cadeby, Husbands Bosworth, Brooksby, Lockington and Shawell (Ref 11B.1).

Oil and gas

- 11B.4.26 The Leicestershire MWLP highlights that '*landbanks are not appropriate for energy minerals (coal, oil and gas) as the Government advises that it is not for the planning system to limit any particular source or level of energy supply*'.
- 11B.4.27 In 2015, the Oil & Gas Authority (OGA) announced 27 onshore blocks from the 14th Onshore Oil and Gas Licensing Round which were formally offered to companies.
- 11B.4.28 One of these blocks located north of Melton Mowbray (Block 72a) was offered to Hutton Energy plc (Ref 11B.1). The Petroleum Exploration and Development Licence (PEDL) affords rights '*to search and bore for petroleum*' under the Petroleum act 1998 (Ref 11B.18). The licence for Block 72a was relinquished in 2020 due to uncertainty around fracking in the UK (Ref 11B.19, Ref 11B.20). A further relinquished PEDL Block 62 was located north west of Asfordby.

Northamptonshire sales, landbank and reserves

Sand and gravel

- 11B.4.29 The North and West Northamptonshire Local Aggregates Assessment (LAA) (2025) (Ref 11B.12) reported insufficient permitted reserves to maintain a landbank of at least seven years for sand and gravel. The landbank for sand and gravel is currently 6.8 years (2024), estimated permitted sand and gravel reserves are approximately 7.65Mt.

- 11B.4.30 Sales of sand and gravel have fluctuated over the last ten years and sales in 2024 have increased significantly due to production at Great Billing quarry. The county is a net importer of sand and gravel and 64% remained in Northamptonshire in 2024.
- 11B.4.31 There will continue to be a reliance on imports unless further sites are identified for development. Northamptonshire LAA notes this has been largely the case since 2009.
- 11B.4.32 In 2024, there were four active sand and gravel quarries in Northamptonshire.

Crushed rock: Limestone

- 11B.4.33 Based on 10-year average sales (2015-2024) and the provision rate, there are sufficient permitted reserves of crushed rock to maintain the Government Planning Guidance required landbank. The landbank is currently 24.6 years (2024) for crushed rock.
- 11B.4.34 Crushed rock sales have increased during 2015 to 2020; then declined from 2020 onwards; however, sales picked up in 2024. In 2019, Northamptonshire's imports of crushed rock outweighed exports by 0.69 Mt, with imports and exports varying over time due to the opening and closing of sites. In 2024, the county imported 0.95 Mt and 0.85 Mt exported, imports slightly outweighing exports.
- 11B.4.35 Higher quality igneous rock is not produced in the county and therefore, there will continue to be a dependence on crushed rock imports even if sites become viable for limestone extraction.
- 11B.4.36 In 2024, there were 12 permitted crushed rock (limestone, ironstone and sandstone) quarries in Northamptonshire, with five classed as active.

Ironstone

- 11B.4.37 The North and West Northamptonshire LAA (Ref 11B.12) reported that ironstone is no longer extracted in the county due to reduced demand and existing permissions remain dormant.

East Midlands Aggregates Working Party (EMAWP)

- 11B.4.38 The EMAWP covers the East Midlands region which includes Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire and Rutland. An overview of EMAWP Annual Report 2024 (2023 data) (Ref 11B.13) is provided below:
- Total land-won sand and gravel sales are down 20% on 2022 figures and reserves are down 4%.
 - Crushed rock sales are down 6% on 2022 figures and reserves are down 5%.
 - The East Midlands region is largely self-sufficient in sand and gravel and a significant crushed rock exporter.
 - Landbanks for sand and gravel are close to minimum requirements for a number of authorities.

Mineral replenishment on a national level

- 11B.4.39 In the UK, the replenishment rate for land-won sand and gravel had an average of 61% and crushed rock 33% using the ratio of new reserves granted permission relative to annual sales. Sand and gravel and crushed rock are being used at a higher rate than supply is being replenished. This may lead to shortfalls in supply and imports to maintain supply (Ref 11B.21). Sand and gravel are an important component of concrete and is widely used in construction.
- 11B.4.40 The Annual Mineral Planning Survey Report 2023 (Ref 11B.22) highlights that regions across the UK are facing challenges regarding both crushed rock and sand and gravel supply and maintaining reserves. Supply areas are under pressure as permitted new reserves remain below sales.

11B.5 Preliminary Assessment

- 11B.5.1 The mineral policy maps for each Mineral Planning Authority indicate that parts of the draft Order Limits are located within MSAs as shown on **Figure 11B.1 Mineral Safeguarding Areas**.
- 11B.5.2 The route is currently proposed to include overhead lines, substations and reconductoring as described in **Chapter 4 Description of the Project** of the DES. Reconductoring will be undertaken on towers already present along the route. Therefore, the assessment of permanent sterilisation is only relevant to new permanent infrastructure.

Effects of the Project on existing and allocated minerals sites including associated infrastructure

- 11B.5.3 The mineral resources present within the draft Order Limits are known to suffer from some potential issues regarding supply and stock based on landbank, supply and reserves data. Based on the sensitivity thresholds set out in **Table 11B.1**, the receptor sensitivity is considered Medium.
- 11B.5.4 The draft Order Limits do not cross any existing or allocated mineral sites within each Mineral Planning Authority therefore, the magnitude of impact is considered No Change, resulting in a neutral effect, which is **not significant**.

Effects of the Project on MSAs

Potential mineral sterilisation

- 11B.5.5 The draft Order Limits cross both sand and gravel and limestone MSAs as presented in **Table 11B.4**. A summary of the effects of the Project on MSAs based on professional judgement and baseline data as described in Section 11B.3 is presented below for each design component.
- 11B.5.6 The potential sterilisation of MSA in each section is summarised in **Table 11B.5**.

Overhead lines and towers

- 11B.5.7 Section 1 and 2 between Weston Marsh and WMEL-B substation, consists of a new overhead line and towers. Minerals underlying the tower foundations, sealing end compounds and underground cables would potentially be permanently sterilised.
- 11B.5.8 In addition, there will be a buffer zone surrounding the towers and overhead line where mineral excavation will not be undertaken.
- 11B.5.9 Due to the nature of the Project and small footprint of the towers, it is considered unlikely to generate a significant effect.

Substations

- 11B.5.10 The footprint of WMEL-A substation lies within a limestone MSA, which would lead to the permanent sterilisation of the underlying limestone mineral resource. It is considered unlikely to generate a significant effect as the area potentially sterilised is small relative to the wider extent of the limestone MSA in Lincolnshire. The landbank for crushed rock (limestone) in Lincolnshire based on 10-year average sales presented in Section 11B.4 is above the Government Planning Guidance.
- 11B.5.11 WMEL-B substation is not located within an MSA and therefore would not change the baseline and is unlikely to generate a significant effect

Haul routes and construction compounds

- 11B.5.12 Haul routes and construction compounds along the Project are temporary and will be in place during the construction phase only. Therefore, minerals will not be permanently sterilised and are unlikely to generate a significant effect.

Reconductoring

- 11B.5.13 The reconductoring works in Sections 3 (beyond WMEL-B substation), 4 and 5 will largely involve the replacement of the existing lines only. It is expected condition surveys will only identify a limited number of towers which may need replacing however, these would be in a similar location and in close proximity to existing towers. Therefore, MSAs will remain largely unchanged from the baseline and the reconductoring works are unlikely to generate significant effects.

Table 11B.5 Potential sterilisation of Mineral Safeguarding Areas

Section	Design	Mineral Safeguarding Area	Permanent or temporary sterilisation	Likelihood of significance effect
Section 1	Towers	None	-	-
	Construction compounds	None	-	-
Section 2	Towers WMEL-A substation	Limestone	Permanent	Not significant
	Construction compounds	Limestone	Temporary	Not significant
Section 3	Towers	None	-	-

Section	Design	Mineral Safeguarding Area	Permanent or temporary sterilisation	Likelihood of significance effect
	WMEL-B substation			
	Reconductoring	Sand and gravel	Temporary	
Section 4	Reconductoring	Sand and gravel	Temporary	Not significant
Section 5	Reconductoring	Sand and gravel Limestone	Temporary	Not significant
All sections	Haul roads and construction compounds	Sand and gravel Limestone	Temporary	Not significant
All sections	Cable Sealing End compounds and underground cables ¹	Sand and gravel Limestone	Permanent	Not significant

11B.5.14 The MSAs potentially impacted by permanent sterilisation are shown on **Figure 11B.1 Mineral Safeguarding Areas (MSAs)**.

Effects of the Project on Petroleum Exploration Development Licences: PEDLs (Policy M10)

11B.5.15 PEDLs were present in the draft Order Limits in Leicestershire as described in Section 11B.3. However, these licences have been relinquished. The nearest onshore licensed block is situated approximately 1.5km north of the draft Order Limits near Holwell (Block 72c). Therefore, due to the distance between the onshore licensed block and the draft Order Limits, the Project would not result in any significant effects.

11B.6 Conclusions

11B.6.1 The draft Order Limits are located within MSAs for sand and gravel and limestone. This covers the Mineral Planning Authorities of Lincolnshire County Council, Leicestershire County Council, North Northamptonshire Council and West Northamptonshire Council. The Mineral Planning Authorities have policies safeguarding existing and allocated mineral sites, associated mineral infrastructure and mineral safeguarding areas as outlined in Section 11B.2.

11B.6.2 The extent of the MSA potentially permanently sterilised by the Project is relatively small in comparison to the extent of the MSA. Therefore, the quantity of mineral potentially sterilised by the Project is considered not significant. As no existing or allocated mineral sites, or licensed PEDL blocks, are located within the draft Order Limits, no change from baseline is anticipated. In addition, potential mineral sterilisation associated with haul roads would be considered temporary, as access to

¹ Currently, no new 400 kV underground cables are proposed as part of this Project. Any potential underground cabling of existing line is expected to follow the same route as the existing route and is therefore unlikely to generate a significant effect.

the mineral resource would be restored once the infrastructure is decommissioned after the construction phase of the Project. An approximate percentage of the MSA that may be permanently sterilised by new permanent infrastructure (based on spatial coverage) will be calculated and presented within the ES.

- 11B.6.3 This Mineral Safeguarding Assessment supports the DES for the Project. An updated Mineral Safeguarding Assessment will be provided at ES stage to include design refinements that may occur and potential updated data (local aggregates assessments and mineral and waste local plans).

References

- Ref 11B.1 Leicestershire County Council, (2019). Leicestershire Minerals and Waste Local Plan, up to 2031. Available at: <https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/field/pdf/2019/10/3/Leicestershire-Minerals-and-Waste-Local-Plan-Up-to-2031-Adopted-2019.pdf>. [Accessed 08 April 2026].
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