

Leicester City
**local
development
framework**

**Supplementary
Planning Document**



Leicester
City Council



**EMPLOYMENT
LAND**

December 2007

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1. Objectives and Status of Document

This Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is intended to clarify appropriate uses of employment land. It is supplementary to saved policies E02 (Key Employment Areas), E03 (Primarily Employment Areas) & E06 (Primarily Office Areas), of the Adopted City of Leicester Local Plan 2006.

These Local Plan policies are saved until 2009 and will be reviewed /replaced through the Local Development Framework. This may result in a change in policy and therefore a review of this SPD.

- a) The SPD provides guidance on how Leicester's Employment Land Study Area Assessments (see Appendix 3) are relevant to the use of the following policies:
 - E02. To re-emphasise that only B class uses will be permitted on Key Employment Land under Policy E02;
 - E03. To clarify that a more flexible approach will be taken on the land that is D graded by Leicester's Employment Land Study and that the D/E and E graded sites are no longer needed for employment use;
 - E06. Primarily Office Areas - "A" graded sites by Leicester's Employment Land Study, to be predominantly retained for offices.

The SPD also clarifies the use of criteria (a-f) of policy E03:

- E03a. For non-viable uses (excludes housing);
 - E03b. For uses which are ancillary or complementary to an existing B class use;
 - E03c. Uses which provide a significant number of jobs;
 - E03d. Where redevelopment of a site would make an important contribution to improving the wider urban environment;
 - E03e. A balance needs to be made for applications for residential development in Primarily Employment Areas between the need for employment and the need for housing. This will be informed by the evidence base provided by the City's Employment Land Study. It will also need to reflect the provision of affordable housing in line with Policy H09 and PPS3 and the supporting Housing Needs Survey. A range of dwellings needs to be provided in accordance with policy H06;
 - E03f. For local community uses.
- b) Information is also provided on the following policies, to provide a complete picture of employment issues in the city:
 - E04. Business Parks - which B class uses are acceptable where;
 - E05. Major Office Development - where this needs to be located;

E07. Warehouse restriction Zone; how this applies;

E16. Waste Facility - Sunningdale Road.

2. The City's Economy

The importance of the economy of the City has been steadily rising up the agenda, following the research for the Leicester Regeneration Company Masterplan in 2002. This identified the need to enable the office based sector to grow, and proposed the New Business Quarter and Science Park among its 5 intervention projects.

The recent East Midlands Land Provision Study 2006 (Roger Tym) has again highlighted the significant predicted growth across the East Midlands by 2016 in office employment and a corresponding reduction in the industrial sector, such as manufacturing. Little overall growth is predicted across the East Midlands by 2016, due to a structural shift in the economy away from industrial space into offices. Floor space per worker is much lower for offices, reducing the demand for floor space and hence for land. (Standard floor space worker ratios are 18 sqm for offices, 31 sqm for industrial and 88 sqm for warehousing).

www.emra.gov.uk/files/file1040.pdf

Although manufacturing in Leicester is now declining and the office sector growing, the manufacturing sector is still well above the national average. The 2004 Annual Business Inquiry showed 17.3% of employees in Leicester are in manufacturing, compared with 12.6% nationally. However this has dropped dramatically from 24% in Leicester in 2000. The largest employers and greatest number of employees are now concentrated in the public administration, education and health sectors in Leicester totalling 31.7%, compared with 26.4% nationally.

Leicester has a tradition of small firms and has a high rate of business formulation. There were 10,450 business units in the City in 2004. 95% of Leicester's businesses employed fewer than 50 people in 2004.

Leicester's Employment Land Study 2006 (see next section) has made a significant contribution to the evidence base for Leicester's Local Development Framework. In particular this has highlighted the need for additional land in the short term to provide for relocations from the 5 Leicester Regeneration Company areas.

The Local Development Framework will explore in detail the amount of employment land that will be required in Leicester to 2016. A key priority is therefore the continued restructuring and regeneration of the City's economy.

3. Leicester's Employment Land Study

BE Group were appointed by Leicester Shire Economic Partnership and Leicester City Council to assess the supply and demand for employment premises in the City of Leicester. The study has three main elements:

- An assessment of the City's economy that informs the amount, location and type of employment land and premises required to facilitate its development and growth;
- A review of the current portfolio of employment land and premises; (see The Area Assessments Plan, in Appendix 3 on Map 1, at the end of this document);
- Recommendations on the future allocation of employment land and premises to maintain the City's economic growth.

The Study involved consultation with those public sector agencies with responsibility for the study area; dialogue with private sector property market stakeholders; site visits, physical survey and inspection; discussions with landowners; and a major company survey, which has been used to identify occupier demand from a five percent sample of the City's businesses.

The findings of the Study were reported in January 2006 and the full findings are available on the City Council's website www.leicester.gov.uk/index.asp?pgid=34472

The Employment Land Study highlighted a potential future shortage of employment land in the city. This issue cannot be addressed in this Supplementary Planning Document and will be considered through the Local Development Framework.

4. Assessment of Employment Land

The Employment Land Study developed a grading system to reflect the quality of existing Employment Areas. The gradings of the sites are shown on the Area Assessments Plan, on Map 1 in Appendix 3, at the end of this document.

The sites have been graded hierarchically from A to E based on the area assessment template below:

Map Location Number	Address			PEA, KEA or PDA Where applicable
Description				Grade
Total Number of Units	Vacant/Derelict Units	Occupancy Rate, percent		
Buildings Type, number of offices				
Buildings Age, number of units - Pre 1945	Post 1945	Post 1990	New	
Buildings Quality, number of units - Derelict	Poor	Average	Good	
Area Size, ha				
Total Floorspace, sqm				

Source: BE Group

The grades were defined as follows:

Table 1. Grade Definitions

Grade	Definition
A	High quality, prestigious, flagship business area due to their scale, location and setting. Capable of competing for investment in the regional market place. These are prime sites for marketing to a cross section of users including new inward investors. They can also meet the needs of image-conscious, aspirational companies already in the City.
B	Good employment sites due to their scale, location and setting. Capable of competing for investment in the sub-regional market place. These are prime sites for marketing to a cross section of users, B1 light industrial, B2 and B8 uses.
B/C & C	Important employment sites with an influence over the whole City, but primarily geared towards local businesses and B1 light industrial, B2 and B8 uses.
C/D & D	Lower quality locations in residential areas suffering from poor accessibility and massing.
D/E & E	Very poor quality areas. Widespread vacancy and dereliction in poor environments.

Table 2. The ELS Graded Employment Land

Grade	A	B	B/C	C	C/D	D	D/E and E	Total
No allocations	4	7	4	32	5	11	12	75
Amount land (ha) Total	28	268	59	145	12	35	17	564
Amount land (ha) Business Park	-	-	-	7	-	-	-	7 1%
Amount land (ha) Primarily Office Areas	28	-	-	-	-	-	-	28 5%
Amount land (ha) Key Employment Area	-	180	44	8	-	-	-	232 41%
Amount land (ha) Primarily Employment Areas	-	88	15	130	12	35	17	297 53%

The results of Table 2 are shown in the four charts below:

Chart 1. Number of Hectares in each Type of Employment Land

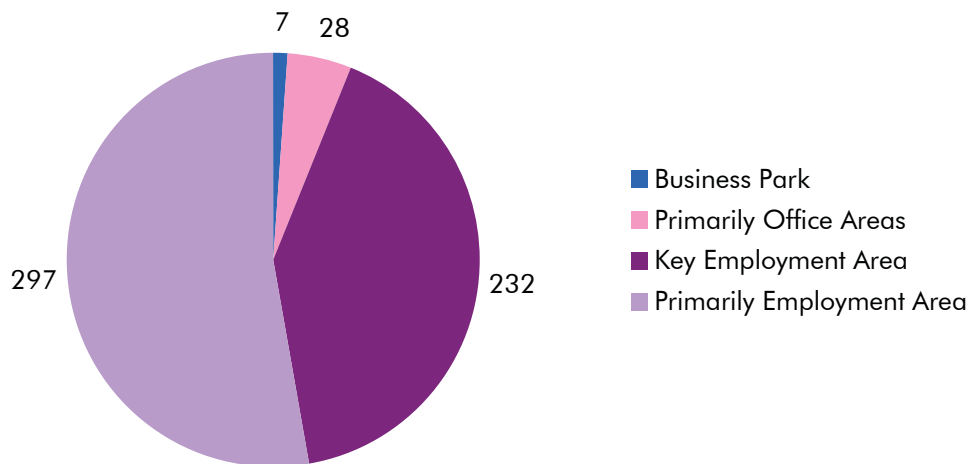


Chart 2. Number of Allocations in each Type of Employment Land

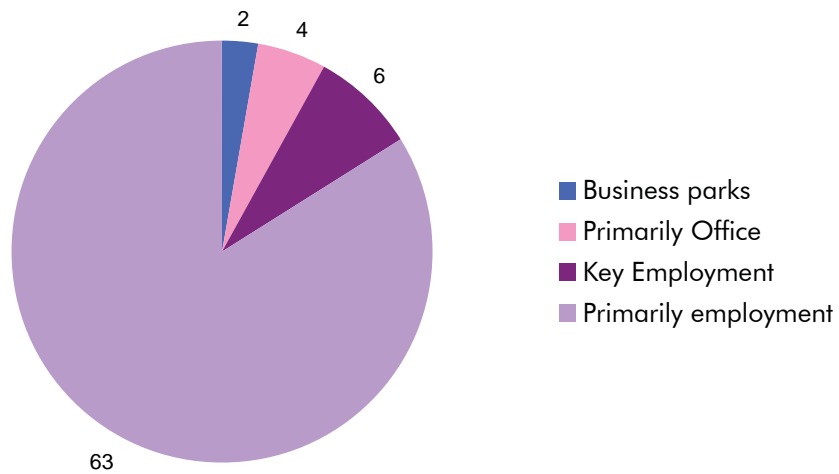


Chart 3. Number of Hectares in each Grade

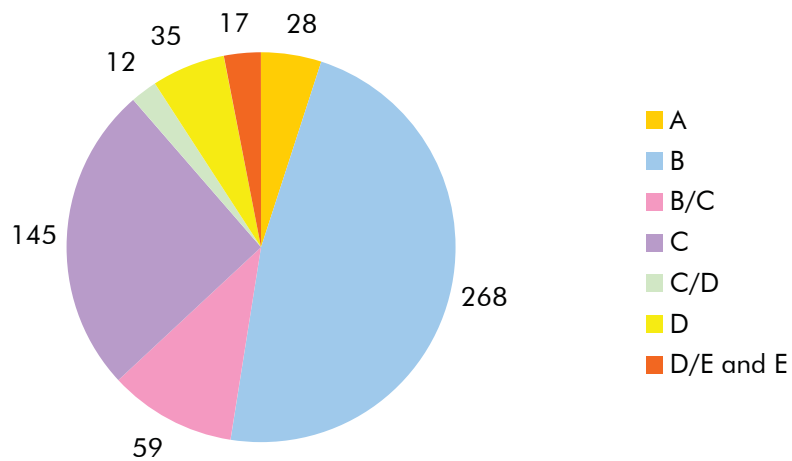
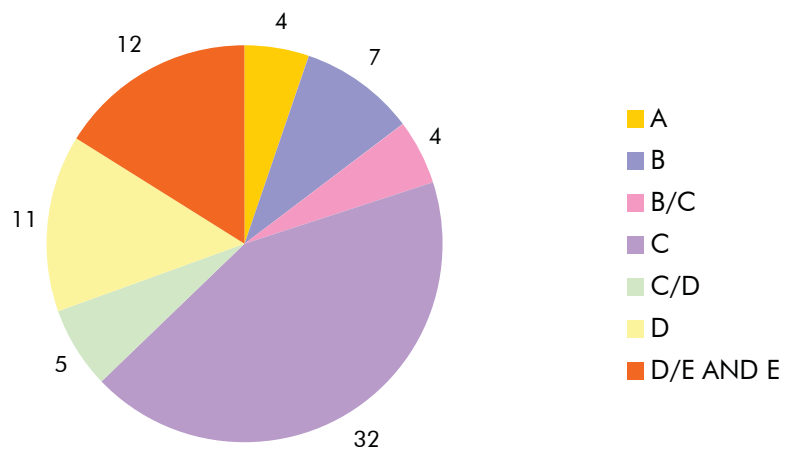


Chart 4. Number of Allocations in each Grade



5. The Different Types of Land Uses Acceptable within Employment Designations/their Policy Implications

This section relates to the following designations on the adopted Local Plan proposals map: Employment Proposals, Key Employment Areas, Primarily Employment Areas, Proposed Business Parks, Business Parks and Primarily Office Areas.

Highways Implications

All planning applications for employment uses will need to demonstrate how their impact on the highway network is acceptable. In particular this should include a requirement for new employment uses to have detailed Transport Assessments including measures to encourage modal shift and the incorporation of Travel Plans. Reference should be made to DfT's Guidance on Transport Assessments in Appendix 4.

Developers should consult with the relevant highways authorities prior to the submission of any planning application in order to seek agreement to the Transport Assessments and Travel Plan(s) for the sites identified. The council will seek to negotiate contributions in line with Local Plan Policies for any improvements of highways and transportation.

i) Major Office Development

- Policy E05 applies (see Appendix 1, Section D2);
- Use class B1 (a), major office use (defined locally as over 1,000 sqm in floorspace) is identified by PPS6 as a Town Centre use and is therefore subject to a sequential test;
- This type of development is directed to the New Business Quarter near to the Station in the City Centre;
- This type of development was not covered by the Employment Land study, since it is one of the 5 Intervention projects of the LRC;
- Policy PS05 relates to the New Business Quarter; (see Appendix 1, Section D2);

ii) Primarily Office Areas

- Policy E06 applies (see Appendix 1, Section D2);
- All Primarily Office Areas have been assessed as "A" grade by the Employment Land Study;
- There are 4 of these areas on 28 ha (5% of total employment land);
- These are "specialised" concentrations of offices which are generally particularly well suited for B1 (a) office use;
- B1(b) research will only be allowed if it meets specified criteria;
- The council intends these areas to be retained and developed as predominantly office areas under policy E06;
- Some properties were originally residential and an ancillary housing mix within the office area is still acceptable, for example on New Walk providing activity and surveillance and contributing to its unique character;
- However residential use will only be acceptable where premises or land are under used or redundant;

- Smaller “own front door” type offices that are less than 1,000 sqm per unit are suitable here;
- The Primarily Office Areas are generally located close to the city centre and are characterised by narrow street patterns and include some areas of pedestrianisation;
- They are not therefore suitable for B2 and B8 uses.

iii) Business Parks

- Policy E04 applies (see Appendix 1, Section D2);
- The Regional Spatial Strategy for the East Midlands (RSS8), March 2005 highlighted the need for more quality employment sites within Leicester, Nottingham and Derby;
- The 2 Existing Business Parks at Bede Island and Freemens Common were assessed as “C” grade, covering only 7 ha (1% of total employment land);
- High quality B1 and B2 development within an attractive landscaped environment is generally expected;
- Some complementary uses such as hotel, conference centre etc. will be considered on their merits, where they provide a service for the business community;
- Construction has since started on:
 - ◇ Gipsy Lane Brickworks Business Park on the Eastern part of that site, where policy E13b applies; B1/B2;
 - ◇ The Bursom Business Park, now known as the Ashton Business Park, where policy E14 applies; includes B1, B2 and limited B8;
 - ◇ The Abbey Lane Research and Technology Park, where policy E15 applies; B1(b) research only.

iv) Key Employment Areas

- Policy E02 applies (see Appendix 1, Section D2);
- Policy E02 only allows B1, B2 and B8 uses on these sites which are the most strongly protected employment land in the City;
- There are 6 of these very significant Key areas covering 232 ha (41% of total employment land);
- Almost all the Key Employment Areas have been assessed as B or B/C grade, i.e. very high quality (only one 8 ha designation, by far the smallest is graded as a “C”);
- The Key Employment Areas tend to be large scale in size and to be located close to the outer ring road (largest is over 100 ha!);
- They are close to strategic road routes and have the potential for public transport and yet their distribution means that they are still near to the major housing areas, i.e. to the local workforce;
- They are intended to be recognisable, distinct, self contained employment opportunities which allow general industry to be separate from residential areas. They have an important role in providing land for manufacturing and distribution industries;
- They have an industrial nature and include the following Industrial Estates: Bursom, Gorse Hill, Braunstone Frith, Wanstead, Freemens Common, Scudamore Road, Hamilton, Troon, Barkby Road, Eastfield (Lewisher Road).

v) Primarily Employment Areas

V)A

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Policy E03 applies; (see Appendix 1, Section D2);
- There are 63 of these generally much smaller, very well dispersed Primarily Employment areas, which make up the largest proportion of the City's employment land, on 297 ha (53% of total employment land);
- The Primarily Employment Areas tend to abut residential development and are scattered throughout the city;
- 100 ha has been graded as B or B/C;
- 130 ha has been graded as C;
- 12 ha has been graded as C/D;
- Only 17 ha falls within the bottom two grades D/E and E (see Section V)B below);
- 35 ha has been graded as D (see Section V)C below);
- Although B1, B2 and B8 uses are the predominant expected land uses within these areas, 6 criteria are included in policy E03 to allow for limited non-B Class uses;
- Policy E03 makes provision for ancillary or complimentary uses; those which provide for significant numbers of jobs; redevelopment which makes an important contribution to the wider urban environment; local community facilities and housing, (but only where there is no greater need for site to be retained for employment uses); (see Section V)D).
- Any proposed alternative use would need to comply with other policies in the Local Plan.

V)B

LAND NO LONGER NEEDED FOR EMPLOYMENT USE - GRADES D/E AND E

The Employment Land Study (ELS) found that some of the smallest existing employment designations, totalling 17 ha of land within the Primarily Employment Areas are far too small to provide the "presence" that modern business requires. In particular, they are also very poorly located and do not have good access. They are therefore graded by the ELS as being of very poor quality and are often also dominated by buildings coming to the end of their economic life.

These areas have been graded D/E or E in the ELS and are no longer needed for employment use, since they are least well suited to the City's future employment needs.

A description of the 12 sites is given in Table 3 in Appendix 2.

Each of these 12 sites is appraised in detail in Appendix 1 of the Sustainability Appraisal.

The locations of the sites are shown on the Area Assessments Plan (Grades D/E & E), at the end of this document in Appendix 3 on Map 1 and individual sites are shown in Appendix 3 on Map 3 on 12 small scale plans.

a) Uses

Because of the residential context of these sites, residential uses are likely to be appropriate as an alternative use for the majority of sites, subject to the issues set out below. Under policy E03(f), they could also be considered for community uses.

The Abbey Meadows Supplementary Planning Document identifies a potential need for the expansion of the existing Abbey Junior School, to serve the future communities of that area. The Ross Walk / Bruin Street site may be needed to meet that potential Educational need. This will need to be examined further.

Any development proposals would have to meet other relevant policies in the Local Plan. For example, retail use is not likely to be acceptable in these locations, which are all outside Existing Shopping Centres, in accordance with policy R06.

b) Nature Conservation / Historic Environment

When a planning application is made for the re-use or the redevelopment of these sites, it would provide an opportunity for contributions to be sought to enhance / mitigate the impact on the Historic Environment, Nature Conservation, the biodiversity network, important sites, habitats and species and green infrastructure.

The need for a protected species surveys will be identified on a site by site basis. The following sites are adjacent to suitable bat foraging habitat and a bat survey should be submitted with any application as a precautionary measure:
Sites 1, 3, 9, 10 and 11.

No buildings within these 12 sites are Listed nationally. Buildings of Local Interest which merit protection should be considered for re-use rather than redevelopment, in accordance with Policy BE08. All the buildings within site 2 are Locally Listed.

c) Flooding

PPS 25 is clear in stating its aim to 'ensure that flood risk is taken into account at all stages in the planning process to avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding, and to direct development away from areas at highest risk'.

Residential development is more vulnerable to flood risk than employment use. PPS25 places emphasis on the need for a sequential approach to be taken. It will be necessary to satisfy the exception test (Table D3, PPS25).

The City Council is in the process of updating the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. This is expected to be completed in early 2008. Based on this information, residential development would only be acceptable in the sites identified below where the applicants can demonstrate that the flood risk can be mitigated to the satisfaction of the Environment Agency.

Sites 2, 3, 7, 9, 10 & 12 have been identified as being in or on the edge of Flood Zones. The Environment Agency will advise on a site by site basis.

d) Comprehensive Development

Any re-development of the “D/E and “E” grade sites will need to be comprehensive, i.e. it will not usually be acceptable to re-develop one building in isolation. In order to maximise the benefits of redevelopment it will usually be necessary to redevelop all of the land within that particular employment designation. This will therefore often require the co-operation of several land owners.

e) Highway Implications

Development of any of the sites for other uses in the case of sites graded D/E or E in the ELS must take full consideration of the development’s impact on the strategic road network. Developers should incorporate measures that seek to improve accessibility and strengthen linkages by modes other than the private car. Developers should refer to the site specific highway comments and to DfT’s Guidance on Transport Assessments in Appendix 4sa & b.

f) Retail Uses

Proposals for retail uses will not normally be acceptable on these sites. They would be assessed against Policies R01 (Major Retail Development), R03 (Local and District Shopping Centres), and R06 (Local Shopping Development Outside the Shopping Centres), as appropriate, which seek to restrict this use to shopping centres.

V)C

MORE FLEXIBLE APPROACH IN “D” GRADED SITES

The Employment Land Study also recommends that the “D” grade sites should be reviewed through the Local Development Framework. It is therefore appropriate to recognise that these sites are also at the lower end of the grading system and tend to be less well located in terms of access and contain many older industrial buildings. Mixed use development including a smaller proportion of the site for residential use may enable these sites to continue to make a contribution towards modern employment use. Under policy E03(f), they could also be considered for community uses.

Any re-development of the “D” grade sites will need to be comprehensive, i.e. it will not usually be acceptable to re-develop one building on its own. In order to maximise the benefits of redevelopment it will usually be necessary to redevelop all of the land within that particular employment designation. This will therefore often require the co-operation of several land owners.

It will also be necessary to ensure that the mixed use scheme ensures that there is no loss of residential amenity for the occupants of the proposed housing from the occupants of both the new and any exiting employment uses, in accordance with policy PS10.

V)D

POLICY E03 OTHER NON B CLASS USES

It is worth emphasising that the criteria in Policy E03 are in effect mutually exclusive, since only one of the following criteria has to be met if a change to another land use is to be considered. This SPD provides further direction as to when and where other uses will be considered.

Criterion a) of Policy E03

The land and buildings are no longer viable for employment purposes

1. This criterion was included to enable the release of the poorest quality land and buildings in employment use, which are no longer viable. It should be noted that it specifically includes the land as well as the buildings. Therefore even if the existing buildings are not viable, it also needs to be demonstrated that the land cannot be viably redeveloped for employment use.
2. It is important to note that applications for housing must be considered under criterion (e) in terms of need for the land. Viability therefore does not apply to housing applications.

Criterion b) of Policy E03

The use is ancillary or complementary to an existing or proposed B Class Use

1. This enables a wider class of uses to be considered, provided that it can be demonstrated that there is a link to an existing or proposed B1, B2 or B8 class use.

Criterion c) of Policy E03

The use would provide a significant number of jobs

1. For the purposes of this criterion "a significant number of jobs" is considered to be a level of employment that is generally similar to the potential of the site in either its last authorised use, or its previous maximum use, rather than a site's minimum potential employment use.
2. For example a car sales and associated vehicle repair workshop may provide a significant number of jobs when compared with the jobs created by a former site in B8 employment use.
3. However, if a site had formerly been in B2 use, employing 30 people, comparison with a potential B8 use employing only 10 would not be classed as "significant".
4. These would be expected to be permanent full time equivalent posts.
5. If information can be provided to show that the comparative skill levels between the jobs would increase for the proposed use, it would be an advantage.

Criterion d) of Policy E03

Redevelopment of the site would make an important contribution to improving the wider urban environment

1. Applications that would fall under this category would be expected to be major, comprehensive redevelopment schemes, covering a number of adjacent sites, rather than applications on one individual site. Just improving or redeveloping the buildings within a particular site will not be expected to meet the requirements of this category.
2. The City Council needs to be convinced that:
 - The new use is desirable in a particular location;
 - The environmental, social or economic benefits would have significant positive urban regeneration repercussions.
3. The loss of employment land will only be considered if the proposal has a significant impact on a far wider area than merely the site itself.

For example:

- A proposal on land adjacent to the River Soar where improved public access and improvements to the wider environment of the Riverside are achieved.

Criterion e) of Policy E03

The use would be for housing on a site without a greater need to be retained for employment purposes

Different weight will be given to the need to retain the site for employment use according to the grading of the site in the Employment Land Study, with higher weight given to the retention of grades A - C sites accordingly.

The City's Housing Needs Survey 2002 and the subsequent updates (please contact Russell Taylor, 0116 252799 for a copy) should be used to target the provision of the types of housing in particular areas of the City that are lacking.

The provision of affordable housing will also be required in accordance with policy H09 and PPS3. Large new housing developments should provide a suitable range of dwelling sizes and types in accordance with policy H06.

After considering the grade of the site, the location and size of site will be considered in the context of meeting the City's requirements for affordable and market housing.

The 12 sites (in Table 3 in Appendix 3) are not needed to be retained for employment use. Because of the residential context of these sites, residential uses are likely to be appropriate as an alternative use (see Section V) B.

Criterion f) of Policy E03

The use proposed is a local community facility for which there are no alternative sites available, for which there is a demonstrable need in the area and which will not have unacceptably adverse effects on existing businesses

1. This policy first requires that a clear need for the community building be demonstrated from residents within a particular sector of the City.
2. In order to confirm that there are no other sites available, a list of alternative buildings that have been considered should be submitted, including details explaining why each one was not suitable.
3. Given the findings of the Employment Land Study, that the lowest graded land is least well suited to future employment use, the land within the grades Grade "D", "D/E" and "E" in the Employment Land Study should now be considered first for proposals for new local community facilities.
4. Other higher graded sites within employment allocations should only be considered after it has been demonstrated that the need cannot be met by these lower grade sites due to their geographical location, i.e. where need has been demonstrated in a physically different location.
5. This policy only applies to Primarily Employment Areas. Policy E02 does not provide for Community Uses within Key Employment Areas.
6. Any proposal for a community building that has the potential to have an adverse effect on existing business in the area will not be acceptable. It would also need to accord with policy PS10 if close to any residential development.

vi Warehousing

- Policy E07 applies within the Restriction Zone (see Appendix 1, Section D2).
- Storage and distribution uses are restricted mainly around the city centre, including a mixed employment/residential area to the east, to avoid drawing additional traffic through these areas.
- It also prevents the loss of land to low density employers, resulting in a reduction in net employment, in particular near where there are already high levels of unemployment.
- The permitted development threshold is used by this policy (235 sqm) for B8 uses;
- The limit of the Restriction Zone is shown on Map 2 in Appendix 3 and on the Local Plan Proposals Map.

vii Waste Facility - Sunningdale Road

- Policy E16 Sunningdale Road Waste Facility (see Appendix 1, Section D2).
- 0.8 ha is allocated for a waste facility.
- This site is one of three in Leicester being taken forward in the joint Leicestershire and Leicester Waste Development Framework, following the consultation on potential waste management sites that was undertaken in January 2006.

6. Employment Premises within Residential Areas

There are a vast number of former employment buildings in the city which are actually within Primarily Residential Areas. Many are still in employment use. There is no policy requirement to retain these in employment use. The policies in the Housing chapter of the Local Plan would therefore apply to these.

7. Historic Changes

A) Previous Review of Employment Land 2001

The City Council has already previously reviewed its employment land in 2001, as part of the early preparation of the recently adopted Local Plan 2006. All employment designations were assessed and changes were made that allowed for mixed use redevelopment on underused and vacant industrial land.

Around 150 ha of former employment designations in the 1994 Local Plan, were reallocated to form a total of 275 ha as Potential Development Areas (PDA) in the Adopted Local Plan 2006. These were the older industrial and commercial areas and are now proposed for a range of uses indicated within policy PS09, all including potential residential use.

The second radical change introduced in the 2006 Local Plan is that the most restrictive policy limiting the uses solely to "B" Class are only now applied to Key Employment Areas and not to all employment allocations.

Already a more flexible approach has therefore been introduced (in addition to the 257 ha of PDAs), in a further 297 ha of Primarily Employment Areas and 28 ha of Primarily Office Areas, where non-B Class uses may be considered under various circumstances. This is a very significant change from the former Local Plan (1994).

B) PPG3 & PPS3

Although the review of employment land through the Local Plan process predated the guidance in PPG3 Update January 2005 "Supporting the Delivery of New Housing", it was in line with the requirements later set out in this Government Guidance, i.e. not to unnecessarily hold on to redundant land or buildings in industrial or commercial use, which are no longer needed for such use and to reallocate that land for mixed use.

It is also noted that the updated guidance in Paragraph 44 of Planning Policy Statement 3 (Housing) (November 2006) now states that "in considering their previously developed land strategies, Local Authorities should consider whether sites that are currently allocated for industrial use could be more appropriately re-allocated for housing development."

PPS3 is weighted very differently from paragraph 42 (a) of PPG3 Update January 2005; Supporting the Delivery of New Housing. It provides far less opportunity for residential development on employment allocations than the previous guidance. However, the last of the bullet points from Paragraph 42 (a) is still also very pertinent, since an up to date Employment Land Study (ELS) was only completed in January 2006.

With regard to the opportunity to reallocate land, the City Council started work on the Core Strategy for the Local Development Framework in January 2007. We will begin to review the balance of land uses within the City as part of this process. (Adoption is time tabled for March 2010).

8. Further Information

1. For further information on this document and on other Planning Policy issues, please contact: Rachael Mkanza 252 7271.
2. For advice regarding potential planning applications and for any pre-application advice, please contact the Planning Management and Delivery Group. It is preferable to make these enquiries in writing to:-

The Planning Management and Delivery Group
Leicester City Council
Regeneration & Culture Department
New Walk Centre
Welford Place
Leicester
LE1 6ZG

Or call 0116 252 7260

3. Sustainability Appraisal
This Supplementary Planning Document has been subject to a Sustainability Appraisal, which is available to view on the City Council's website at:

<http://www.leicester.gov.uk/your-council--services/ep/planning/plansandpolicy/ldf/spd/employment-land-spd>

Appendix 1. Policy Context and Other Relevant Studies

Section A. National

A1. Planning Policy Statement 1. Delivering Sustainable Development (2005)

PPS1 states that:

“Planning should facilitate and promote sustainable and inclusive patterns of urban and rural development by making land available for development in line with economic, social and environmental objectives to improve people’s quality of life”.

The PPS goes on to say:

“Planning authorities should ensure that suitable locations are available for industrial, commercial, retail, public sector (e.g. health and education) tourism and leisure developments, so that the economy can prosper.”

A2. Planning Policy Statement 3. Housing (November 2006)

Paragraph 44 of Planning Policy Statement 3 (Housing), states that:

“.... in considering their previously developed land strategies, Local Authorities should consider whether sites that are currently allocated for industrial use could be more appropriately re-allocated for housing development.”

A3. Planning Policy Guidance 4. Industrial & Commercial Development/Small Firms (November 1992)

This PPG contains increased emphasis on the need for development plans to take account of both the locational demands of business and wider environmental objectives. It emphasises how local authorities can help small firms, through the planning system and stresses that careful consideration should be given to whether new development may be compatible with existing industrial and commercial activities.

Section B. Regional

B1. RSS8

The Regional Spatial Strategy for the East Midlands (RSS8) provides strategic planning policy for the region up to 2021. One of its ten objectives is “to promote and improve economic prosperity, employment opportunities and regional competitiveness”.

Leicester falls within the Three Cities sub-area and is one of the five Principal Urban Areas (PUAs) defined within the Region. Development is focused on these PUAs as the major commercial, industrial, administrative and cultural centres of the region.

The RSS requires that employment land within the three cities sub-area should be made available to meet the expansion needs of indigenous manufacturing and distribution uses and to encourage new investment. The RSS also requires that:

- An adequate supply of good quality land for office and industrial uses is available for development in sustainable locations;
- That local authorities should promote the bringing forward of good quality allocated employment sites to meet the specific requirements of potential investors; and
- Ensure that allocations are relevant to need.

RSS8 is currently being reviewed and will be informed by the Employment Land Provision Study described in paragraph 3 below.

B2. Quality of Employment Land Study (2002) (QUELS)

The Quality of Employment Land Study (QUELS) assessed the quantity and quality of employment land across the East Midlands.

The report identified at the time, a shortage of employment land in Leicester despite a high demand, particularly for B8 distribution uses.

The Study concluded that throughout the three cities sub-area, on the basis of historical take-up, the forward land supply was not sufficient to provide for the needs of the next ten years. Because of this shortfall, the Study stressed that any employment land lost to other uses must be replaced if future demand is to be met. This was particularly so in the Three Cities Sub-area, where employment land was in short supply, particularly for industrial and distribution uses.

B3. East Midlands Employment Land Provision Study (2006)

This work was undertaken by Roger Tym. The purpose of the study is:

- To forecast the future market demand for employment (B Use Class) land to 2021 and 2026, by Housing Market Area and local authority area across the East Midlands, based on “policy-on” employment projections produced by East Midlands Development Agency;

- To estimate the current planned supply of employment land, based on data provided by local authorities;
- To estimate the quantitative market balance, equal to the difference between planned supply and market demand.

It is part of the evidence base for the review of the Regional Spatial Strategy.

Section C. Sub-Regional

Consultants SQW undertook the Sub-Regional Employment Land and Premises Study, for all of Leicestershire, to combine the findings of the 8 individual employment land studies, including Leicester's, and produced their final report on 26th June 2007.

Their consultation with the 8 Local Authorities showed a willingness to collaborate in identifying a strategic approach to realising the economic potential of the sub-region.

Development possibilities include inner city regeneration, provision for the City's unmet needs in adjoining areas, opportunities for science, technology and business parks and strategic warehouse provision. It is recommended that LSEP establish partnership arrangements, to promote the proposed Sub-Regional Employment Land and premises Strategy and Action Plan.

It concludes that their Sub regional Employment Land and Premises Strategy and Action Plan provides a balanced range of projects to meet local and sub regional employment needs across Leicestershire, from inner urban regeneration, through city edge development to market town development and redevelopment projects. It also provides a flexible framework to guide LSEP in promoting and implementing employment land and premises projects in its catalytic role with its partners and stakeholders and in monitoring changing circumstances and progress with project delivery to review and adjust the strategy on a periodic basis.

Section D. Local

Section D1. The Strategy for Leicester

The Strategy for Leicester 2006 provided the framework for Leicester to develop into a prosperous, sustainable and cohesive city over the next 20 years. The Strategy integrated the Community Strategy and the Local Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy into a single document.

It is structured on the four themes of:

1. Economic Prosperity;
2. Cohesive, Safe, Strong and Sustainable Communities;
3. Children and Young People; and
4. Healthier Communities and Older People.

Reference should now be made to its emerging successor "**The Sustainable Communities Strategy**".

Section D2. City of Leicester Local Plan (January 2006)

The Local Plan includes a variety of policies that are related to employment land. The following policies, in particular are relevant to employment uses:-

E02. Key Employment Areas

Within the Key Employment Areas shown on the Proposals Map planning permission will only be granted for development of B1 (except major office development), B2 and B8 uses.

E03. Primarily Employment Areas

Within Primarily Employment Areas planning permission will be granted for development of B1, B2 and B8 uses as appropriate, and not for changes to other land uses unless it can be shown that:

- a) The land and buildings are no longer viable for employment purposes; or
- b) The use is ancillary or complementary to an existing or proposed B Class Use; or
- c) The use would provide a significant number of jobs; or
- d) Redevelopment of the site would make an important contribution to improving the wider urban environment; or
- e) The use would be for housing on a site without a greater need to be retained for employment purposes; or
- f) The use proposed is a local community facility for which there are no alternative sites available, for which there is a demonstrable need in the area and which will not have unacceptably adverse effects on existing businesses.

Major office development will not be allowed in Primarily Employment Areas outside the Commercial Zones of the City Centre, Beaumont Leys and Hamilton Town Centres. (See Policies SPA05 and SPA08)

E04. Existing Business Parks

Within the Business Parks shown on the Proposals map planning permission will be granted for appropriate high quality B1 and B2 uses. Major office development in Business Parks will be subject to the sequential test set out in Policy E05. Other uses which are complementary to a Business Park will be considered on their merits. A high level of design and landscaping will be expected within Business Parks.

Section D2. (Continued)

E05. Major Office Development

Planning permission will be given for office development of over 1,000 square metres floorspace within the Central Office Core of the City Centre and Abbey Lane Research Business Park. In the latter, office development must satisfy the criteria set out in Policy E15.

If there are no suitable or available sites within the Central Office Core or Abbey Lane Research Business Park planning permission will be given for sites in the remainder of the City Centre as shown on the Proposals Map.

If there are no suitable or available sites within the City Centre of Abbey Lane Research Business Park planning permission will be given for the sites within Beaumont Leys and Hamilton Town Centres.

All other sites will be out of centre in terms of a sequential test and will only be considered if there are no suitable sites within the City Centre, the Town Centres or Abbey Lane Research Business Park. Any out of centre sites should be well served by public transport.

The expansion of existing offices in out of centre locations into major “stand alone” office developments will not be permitted unless they are well served by public transport.

E06. Primarily Office Areas

Within the Primarily Office Area shown on the Proposals Map planning permission will be granted for the development of B1 offices.

B1 light industry and research and development will not be allowed unless it can be shown that:

- a) There will be no detrimental impact in terms of traffic generation, loading and unloading on the character and function of the Primarily Office Area; and
- b) There will be no loss of viable office or residential units.

Development of B2 general industry and B8 storage and distribution will not be allowed. Planning permission will be granted for residential use where premises are or land is underused or redundant. Other uses will not be allowed unless they are ancillary or complementary to the main office use.

PS05. Central Office Core (New Business Quarter)

Planning permission will be granted for comprehensive development that contributes towards the creation of a prime office area within the Central Office Core as shown on the Proposals Map. In assessing development proposals the following factors will be taken into consideration:

- a) The provision of comprehensively designed schemes which maximise the development potential of the area in accordance with an agreed development framework and the principles of sustainable development, which should include:
 - b) The provision of at least 50,000 sqm of office floorspace;
 - c) The provision of complementary ground floor retail and leisure floorspace;
 - d) The provision of transport and highway measures, including the possible realignment of St. George’s Way, agreed with the local authority that contribute to a reduction of the severance effect of the Central Ring Road;
 - e) The provision of a new integrated transport interchange; and
 - f) The provision of links to integrate the Central Office Core with the Central Shopping Core, the New Community (Policy PS06) and the Cultural Quarter.

E07. Warehousing

Planning permission will not be granted for storage and distribution industries (Use Class B8) over the permitted development threshold within the Restriction Zone as defined on the Proposals Map.

Throughout the City B8 uses will only be permitted within Key Employment Areas and Primarily Employment Areas with good access to the specified road network or the railway network.

Trade showrooms associated with B8 uses should not give the appearance of a shop front.

New Business Parks

E13b. GIPSY LANE BRICKWORKS - Business Park

E13b. Eastern Half

- i) Within the eastern half of the Gipsy Lane Brickworks Policy Area, shown on the Proposals Map, planning permission will be granted for high quality B1 (except major office development) and B2 uses.
- ii) Other uses that are complementary to a high quality business park and to the wider employment area will be considered on their merits.

Development will not be allowed on the scheduled Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and the area of the Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) at the centre of the policy area, shown as Green Space on the Proposals Map. Plans for the development of the employment areas should include provision for the management and maintenance of the SSSI and SINC areas.

Development of the majority of the Gipsy Lane Brickworks Policy Area will be accessed from Victoria Road East Extension.

Planning applications for any part of the Gipsy Lane Brickworks Policy Area which would prejudice the comprehensive development of the site will be refused.

Section D2. (Continued)

E14. BURSOM BUSINESS PARK

Within the Bursom Business Park shown on the Proposals Map permission will be granted for high quality B1 (except major office development) and B2 uses.

Some B8 uses will be permitted provided that:

- a) They do not occupy more than 25% of the total floorspace of the business park; and
- b) No B8 units are sited along the Beaumont Leys Lane frontage.

Other uses that are complementary to a high quality business park and to the wider employment area will be considered on their merits. Development will be guided by the Bursom Business Park Site Development Guidance which will include reference to the height of buildings. Development and landscaping should be of a high quality throughout with particular attention paid to the Beaumont Leys Lane frontage. Planning applications for any part of the Bursom Business Park which would prejudice the comprehensive development of the site will be refused.

E15. ABBEY LANE RESEARCH BUSINESS PARK

In the Abbey Lane Research Business Park shown on the Proposals Map planning permission will be granted for development within use class B1(b) "research and development".

Planning Permission will be given for other uses that are complementary or ancillary to the uses specified above or to the National Space Centre.

Planning applications for any part of Abbey Lane Research Business Park which would prejudice the comprehensive development of the whole site will be refused.

Development of this site will require a new access road through the site from Abbey Lane to the National Space Centre.

The Riverside should be a key focus both visually and physically for new development. A high standard of pedestrian and cycle links should be incorporated within the site and into adjoining areas.

Appendix 2.

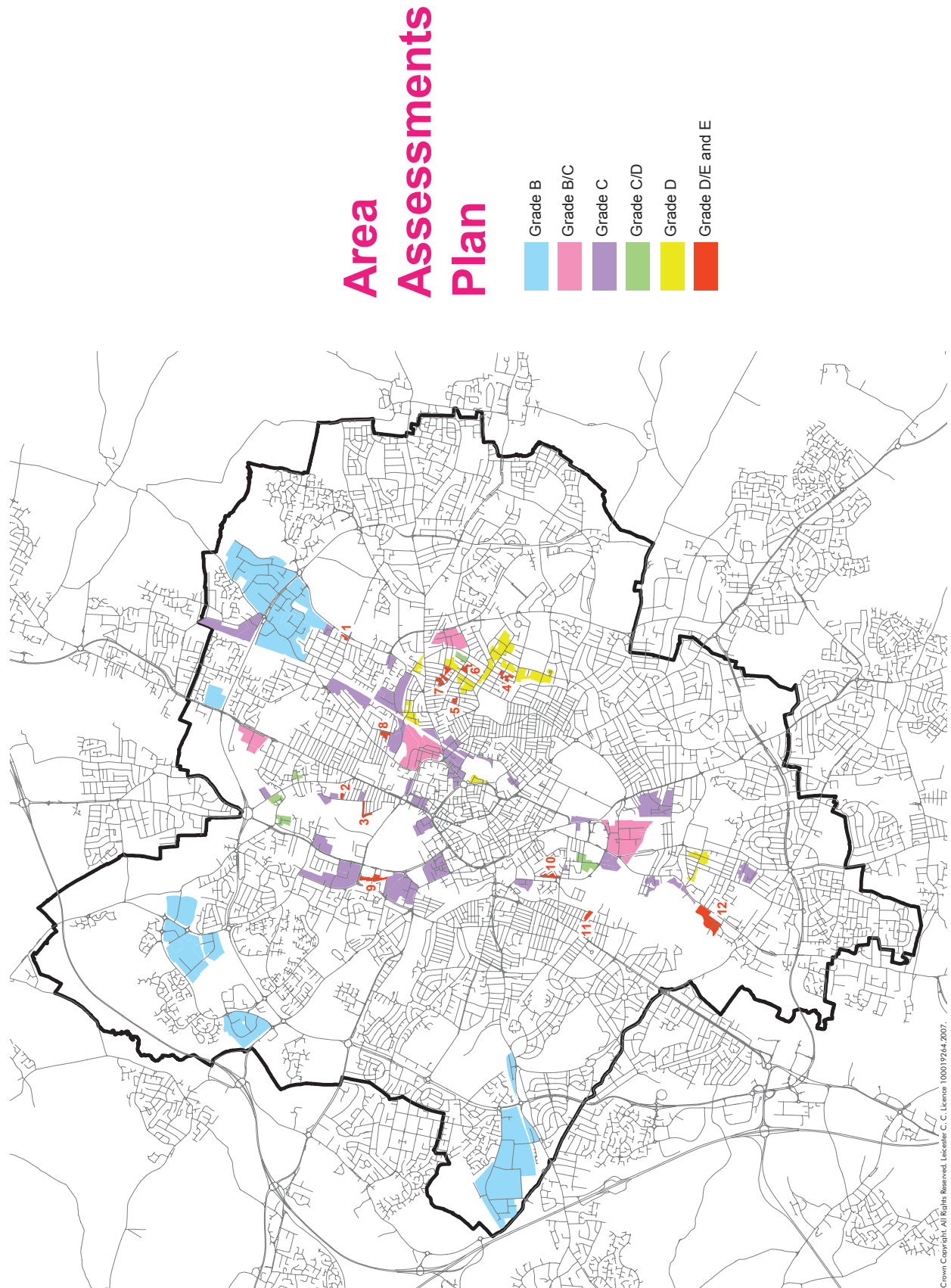
Table 3. Sites graded D/E or E in the Employment Land Study

Site	Description
1. Gipsy Lane/ Hampden Road	Prominent, large, isolated, pre-war building with reasonable access. Building likely to be coming to the end of its economic life.
2. Ross Walk/Bruin Street	Isolated pre-war buildings. Poor access and prominence in dense residential area.
3. Marjorie Street/ Hildyard Road	Small area of pre and post war buildings. Poor access and prominence in dense residential area. Provides a mix of small business accommodation.
4. Dorothy Road	Area of large, poor quality buildings coming to end of economic life. In dense residential area which suffers from poor access. Lacks prominence and critical mass.
5. Prospect Road	Small area of poor quality buildings in dense residential area, which suffers from very poor access. Relatively busy business area. Designated area does not cover all the employment uses in the immediate vicinity. Lacks prominence and critical mass.
6. Lancaster Street	Moderate quality space with a mix of small businesses. Very poor road access. Lacks prominence and critical mass. Designated area does not cover all the employment uses in the immediate vicinity.
7. Spence Street	Area of poor quality buildings coming to the end of their economic life in dense residential area which suffers from very poor access. Lacks prominence and critical mass. Relatively busy business area.
8. Weymouth Street/ Bardolph Street	Area of large, poor quality buildings coming to end of economic life in dense residential area which suffers from very poor access. Relatively busy business area. Quite distinct character from neighbouring Ulverscroft Road. Lacks prominence and critical mass.
9. Blackbird Road/ Devonshire Road	Isolated occupiers of ageing properties.
10. Eastern Boulevard/ Ullswater Street/ Rydal Street	Area of predominantly older buildings along Eastern Boulevard. Located next to De Montfort University and near to city centre. Area however lacks critical mass and its ribbon form does not create a contained entity.
11. Bisley Street/ adjacent to former railway line/ Western Road	Ageing brick buildings, generally subdivided factories occupied by small businesses. Busy area. Extremely poor access through residential area fringe. Lacks prominence and critical mass.

Site	Description
12. Disraeli Street/ Granby Road/ Canal Street	Low grade small business area, with relatively poor access and prominence, although reasonably good servicing areas. Large, multi-storey buildings at end of economic life lie derelict. Large cleared site to north.

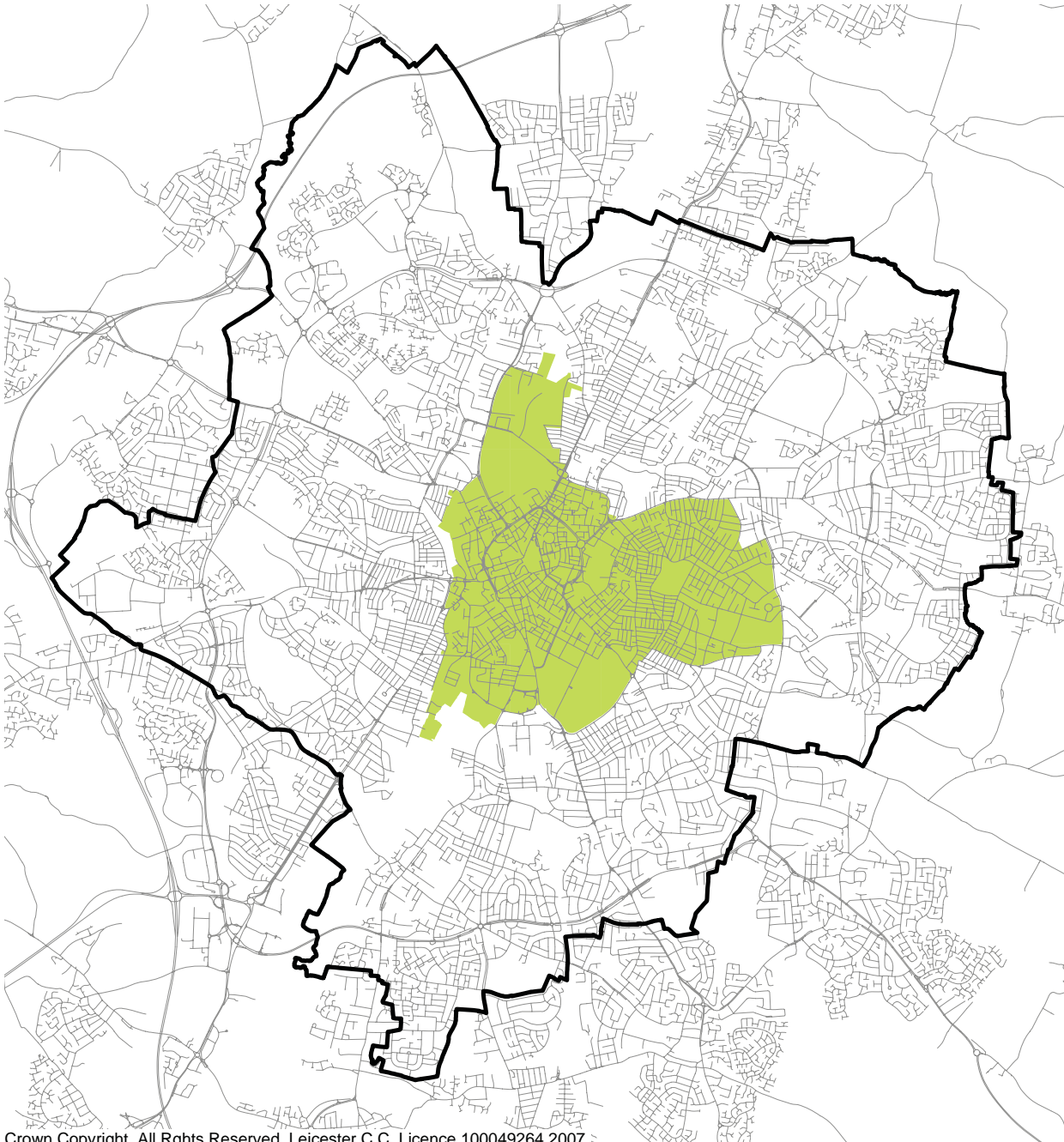
Appendix 3. Maps

Map 1. Area Assessments Plan - showing grading of sites



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Map 2. Map of Storage and Distribution Restriction Zone



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 Storage and Distribution Restriction Zone

Map 3 (1-12)

Sites graded D/E or E in the Employment Land Study

Map 3 (1) - ELS 10 Gipsy Lane / Hampden Road



Map 3 (2) - ELS 20 Ross Walk / Bruin Street



Map 3 (3) - ELS 22 Marjorie Street



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Map 3 (4) - ELS 29 Dorothy Road



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Map 3 (5) - ELS 32 Prospect Road



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Map 3 (6) - ELS 36 Lancaster Street

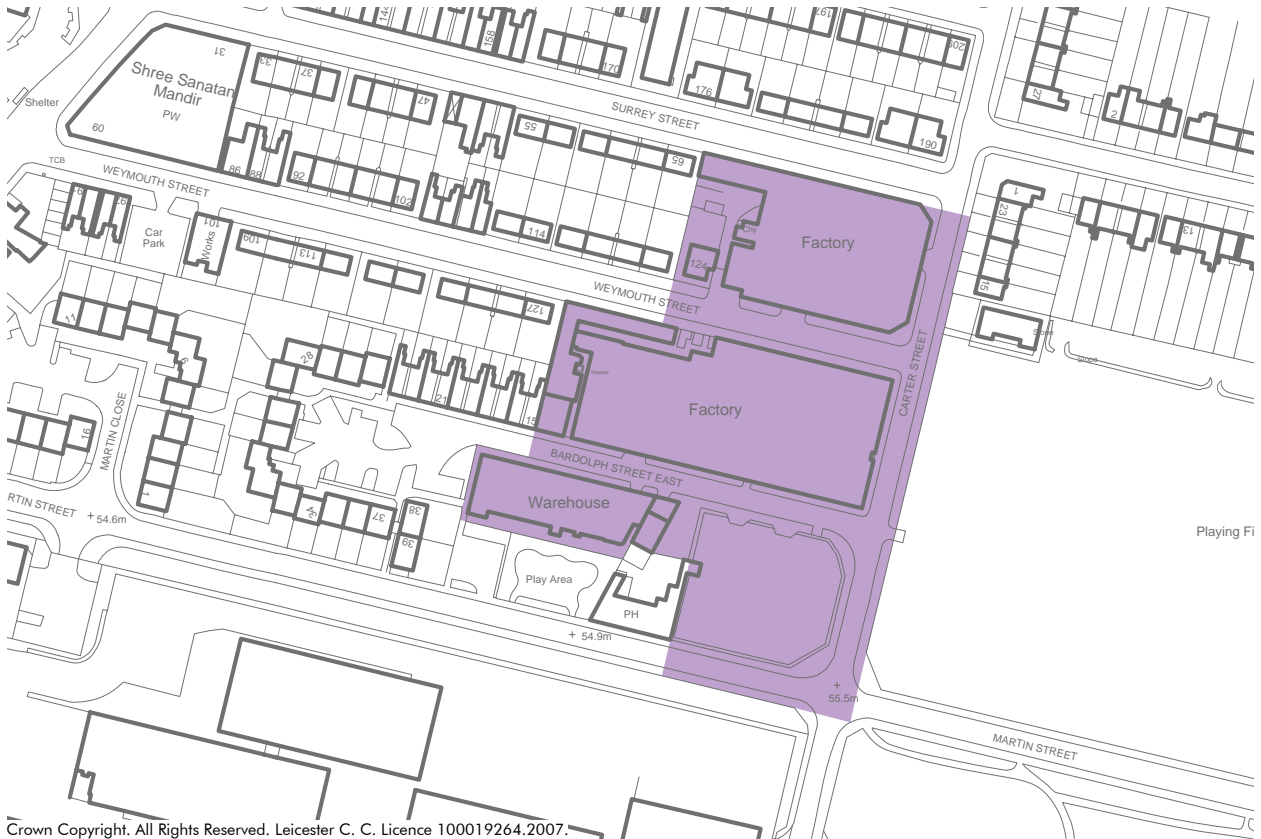


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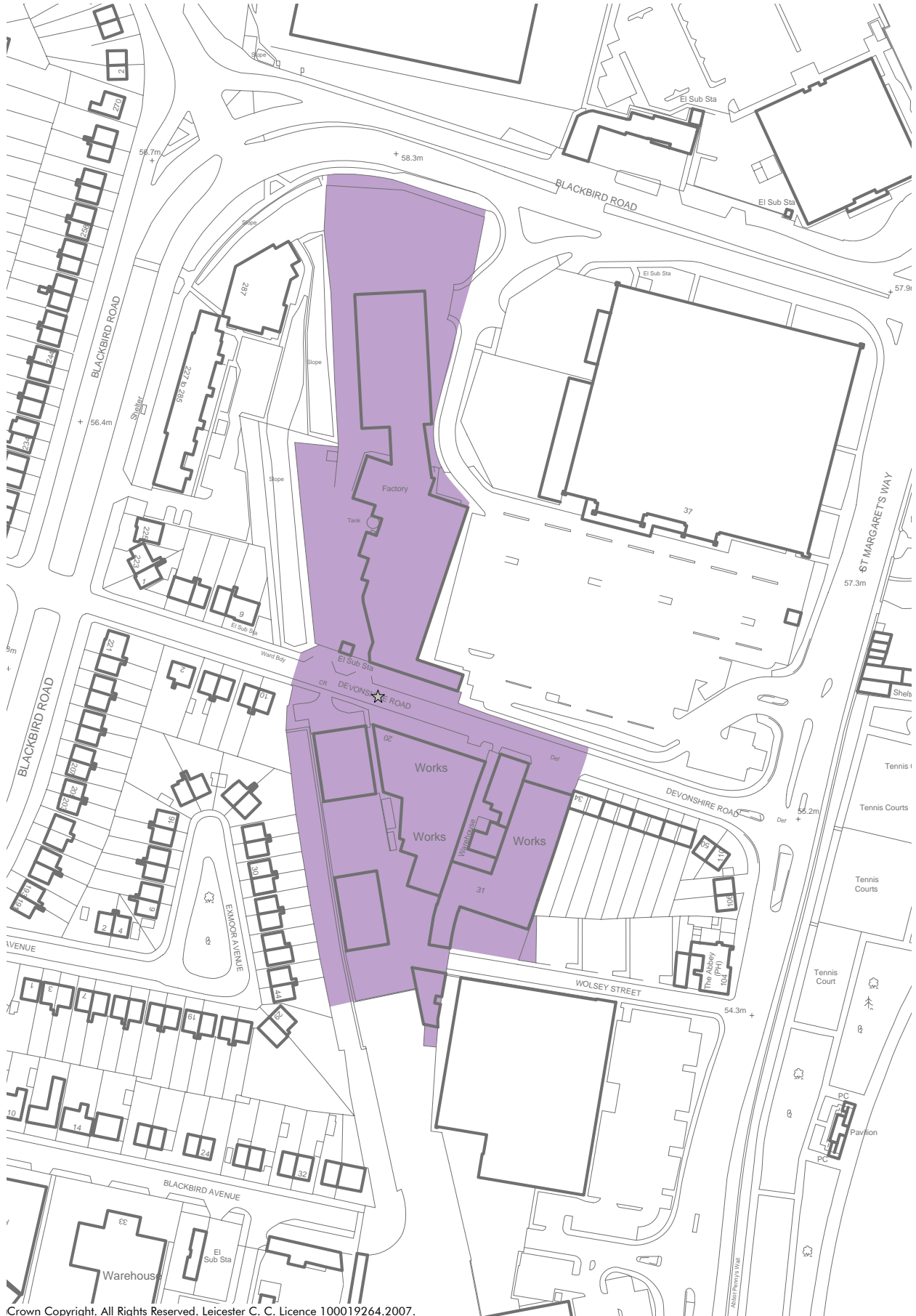
Map 3 (7) - ELS 37 Spence Street



Map 3 (8) - ELS 43 Weymouth Street / Bardolph Street

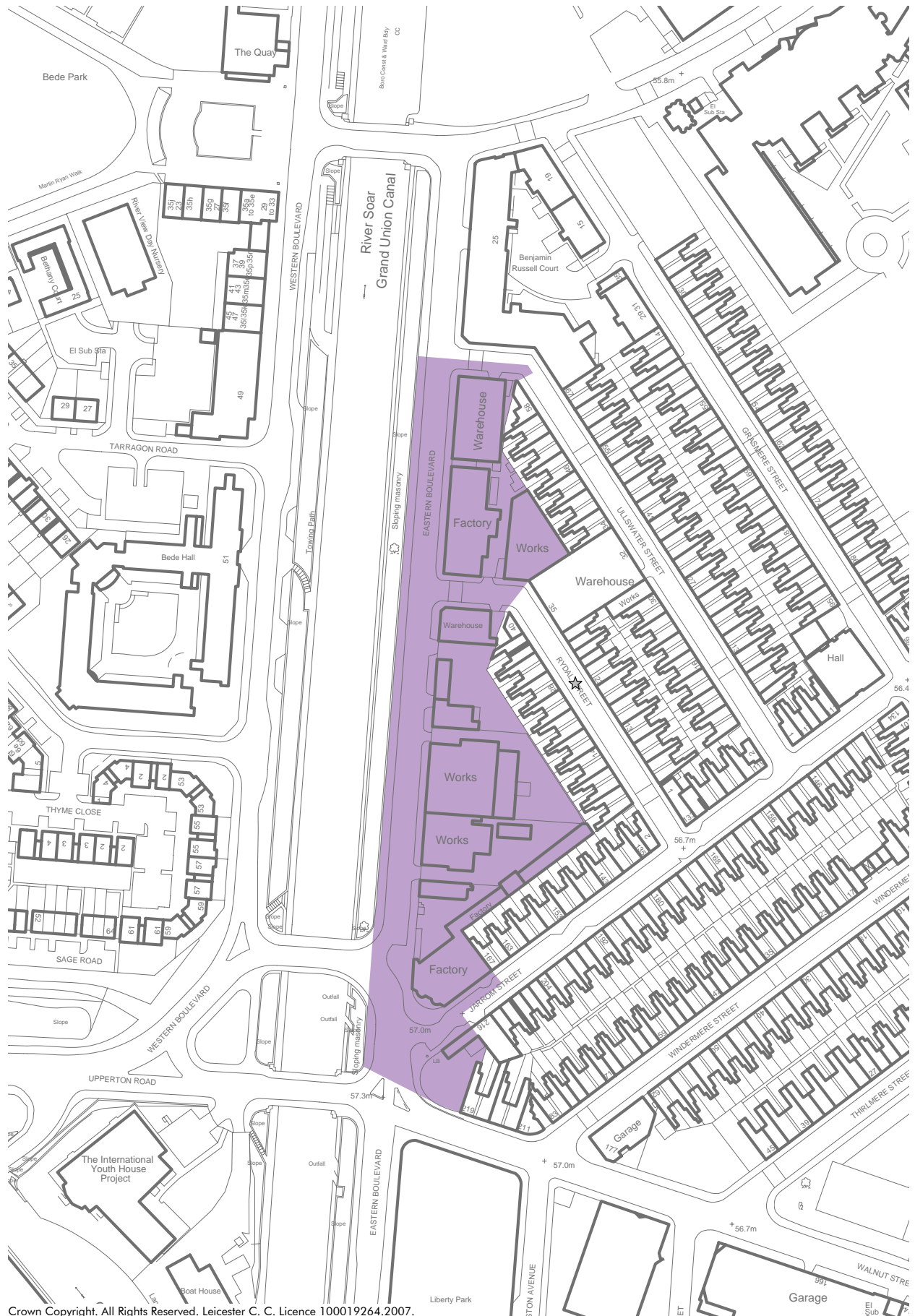


Map 3 (9) - ELS 46 Blackbird Road / Devonshire Road



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Map 3 (10) - ELS 56 Eastern Boulevard / Ullswater Street / Rydal Street

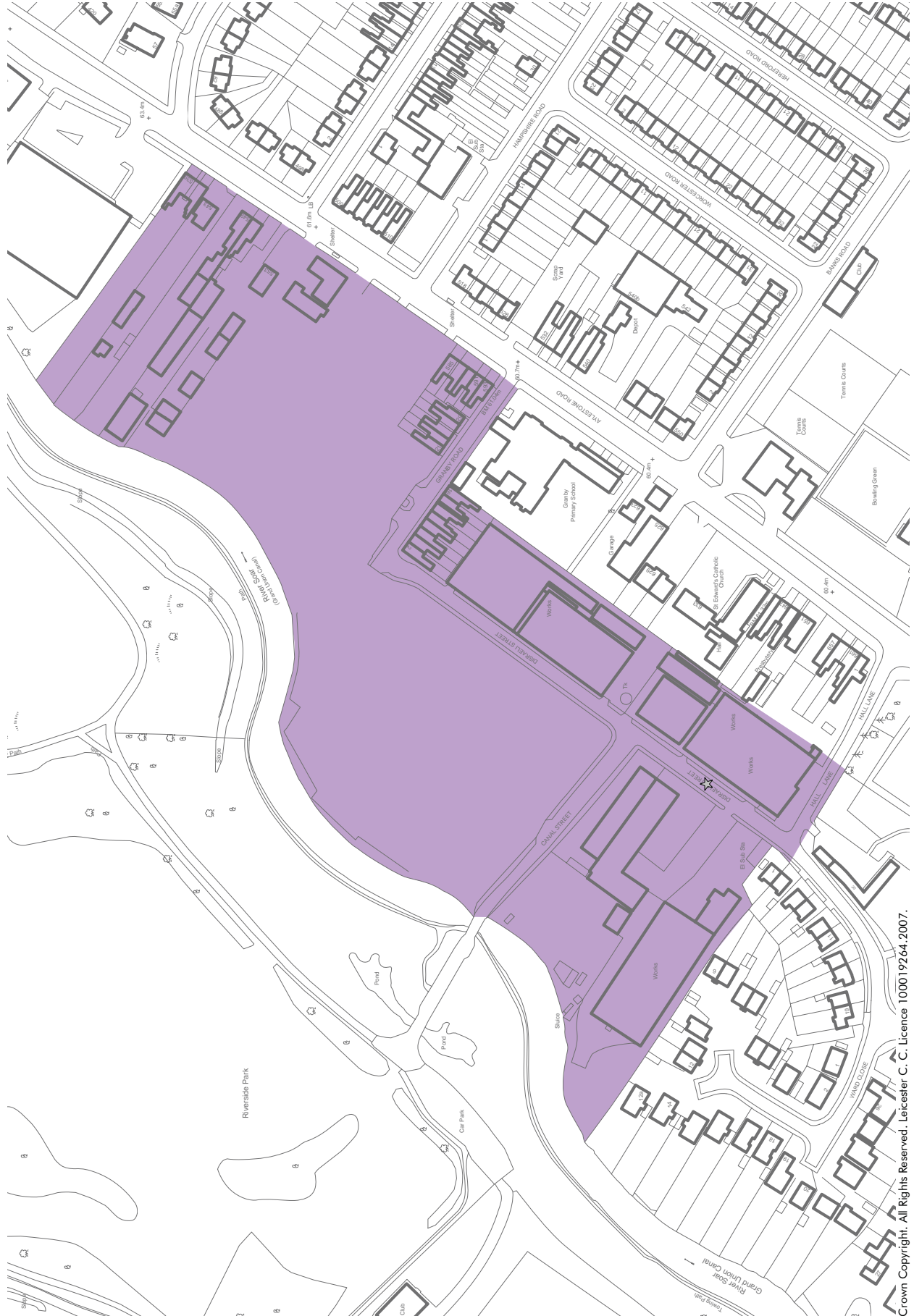


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Map 3 (11) - ELS 60 Bisley Street / adjacent former railway line / Western Road



Map 3 (12) - ELS 69 - Disraeli Street / Granby Road / Canal Street



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Appendix 4a. Guidance on Transport Assessments

This is an extract from DfT's Guidance on Transport Assessments. The full guidance is available from the web site at:

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/regional/transportassessments/guidanceonta>

Indicative Thresholds for Transport Assessments

These thresholds are for guidance purposes and should not be read as absolutes. Local authorities may interpret them in light of their own circumstances. There are several qualitative factors that need to be taken into account and that are not captured by this document. There will also be site-specific issues that assessments will need to cover. In some circumstances, a TA may be appropriate for a smaller development than suggested by the thresholds. In others, a TS may be appropriate for a larger development than suggested by the thresholds. Early pre-application discussions between a developer and the relevant authorities are strongly recommended. In these, it is important for high-way authorities to combine the appropriate quantitative and qualitative thresholds in deciding the level of assessment that may be required.

Thresholds based on size or scale of land use						
	Land use	Use/description of development	Size	No assessment	TS	TA/TP
1	Food retail (A1)	Retail sale of food goods to the public – food superstores, supermarkets, convenience food stores.	GFA	<250 sq. m	>250 <800 sq. m	>800 sq. m
2	Non food retail (A1)	Retail sale of non food goods to the public; but includes sandwich bars – sandwiches or other cold food purchased and consumed off the premises, internet cafés.	GFA	<800 sq. m	>800 <1500 sq. m	>1500 sq. m
3	A2 Financial and professional services	Financial services – banks, building societies and bureaux de change, professional services (other than health or medical services) – estate agents and employment agencies, other services – betting shops, principally where services are provided to visiting members of the public.	GFA	<1000 sq. m	>1000 <2500 sq. m	>2500 sq. m
4	A3 Restaurants and cafés	Restaurants and cafés – use for the sale of food for consumption on the premises, excludes internet cafés (now A1).	GFA	<300 sq. m	>300 <2500 sq. m	>2500 sq. m

Thresholds based on size or scale of land use						
	Land use	Use/description of development	Size	No assessment	TS	TA/TP
5	A4 Drinking establishments	Use as a public house, wine bar or other drinking establishment.	GFA	<300 sq. m	>300 <600 sq. m	>600 sq. m
6	A5 Hot food takeaway	Use for the sale of hot food for consumption on or off the premises.	GFA	<250 sq. m	>250 <500 sq. m	>500 sq. m
7	B1 Business	(a) Offices other than in use within Class A2 (financial and professional services) (b) research and development – laboratories, studios (c) light industry	GFA	<1500 sq. m	>1500 <2500 sq. m	>2,500 sq. m
8	B2 General industrial	General industry (other than classified as in B1). The former 'special industrial' use classes, B3 – B7, are now all encompassed in the B2 use class.	GFA	<2500 sq. m	>2500 <4000 sq. m	>4000 sq. m
9	B8 Storage or distribution	Storage or distribution centres – wholesale warehouses, distribution centres and repositories.	GFA	<3000 sq. m	>3000 <5000 sq. m	>5000 sq. m
10	C1 Hotels	Hotels, boarding houses and guest houses, development falls within this class if 'no significant element of care is provided'.	Bedroom	<75 bedrooms	>75 <100 bedrooms	>100 bedrooms
11	C2 Residential institutions hospitals, nursing homes	Used for the provision of residential accommodation and care to people in need of care.	Beds	<30 beds	>30 <50 beds	>50 beds
12	C2 Residential institutions – residential education	Boarding schools and training centres.	Student	<50 students	>50 <150 students	>150 students

Thresholds based on size or scale of land use						
	Land use	Use/description of development	Size	No assessment	TS	TA/TP
13	C2 Residential institutions – institutional hostels	Homeless shelters, accommodation for people with learning difficulties and people on probation.	Resident	<250 residents	>250 <400 residents	>400 residents
14	C3 Dwelling houses	Dwellings for individuals, families or not more than six people living together as a single household. Not more than six people living together includes – students or young people sharing a dwelling and small group homes for disabled or handicapped people living together in the community.	Dwelling unit	<50 units	>50 <80 units	>80 units
15	D1 Non-residential Institutions	Medical and health services – clinics and health centres, crèches, day nurseries, day centres and consulting rooms (not attached to the consultant's or doctor's house), museums, public libraries, art galleries, exhibition halls, nonresidential education and training centres, places of worship, religious instruction and church halls.	GFA	<500 sq. m	>500 <1000 sq. m	>1000 sq. m
16	D2 Assembly and leisure	Cinemas, dance and concert halls, sports halls, swimming baths, skating rinks, gymnasiums, bingo halls and casinos. Other indoor and outdoor sports and leisure uses not involving motorised vehicles or firearms.	GFA	<500 sq. m	>500 <1500 sq. m	>1500 sq. m

Thresholds based on size or scale of land use						
	Land use	Use/description of development	Size	No assessment	TS	TA/TP
17	Others	For example: stadium, retail warehouse clubs, amusement arcades, launderettes, petrol filling stations, taxi businesses, car/vehicle hire businesses and the selling and displaying of motor vehicles, nightclubs, theatres, hostels, builders' yards, garden centres, POs, travel and ticket agencies, hairdressers, funeral directors, hire shops, dry cleaners.	TBD	Discuss with appropriate highway authority	Discuss with appropriate highway authority	Discuss with appropriate highway authority

Thresholds based on other considerations				
	Other considerations	TS	TA	TA/TP
1	Any development that is not in conformity with the adopted development plan.			✓
2	Any development generating 30 or more two way vehicle movements in any hour.		✓	
3	Any development generating 100 or more two way vehicle movements per day.		✓	
5	Any development that is likely to increase accidents or conflicts among motorised users and nonmotorised users, particularly vulnerable road users such as children, disabled and elderly people.		✓	✓
6	Any development generating significant freight or HGV movements per day, or significant abnormal loads per year.		✓	
7	Any development proposed in a location where the local transport infrastructure is inadequate. – for example, substandard roads, poor pedestrian/cyclist facilities and inadequate public transport provisions.		✓	
8	Any development proposed in a location within or adjacent to an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA).		✓	

Appendix 4b. Individual Site Comments

Developers should refer to the Highway design Guide. There will be a requirement for detailed Transport Assessments, including measures to encourage modal shift and the incorporation of Travel Plans.

ELS 10 - No direct access off VRE or Gipsy Lane.

ELS 20 - Would need to look at site with reference to adjacent BUSM site.

ELS 22 - Would need to look at site with reference to adjacent BUSM site.

ELS 29 - No detailed comments.

ELS 32 - No detailed comments.

ELS 36 - No detailed comments.

ELS 37 - No detailed comments.

ELS 43 - No detailed comments.

ELS 46 - Utilise existing access off Blackbird Road or preferably use Devonshire Road.

ELS 56 - Would not want any direct access onto gyratory.

ELS 60 - The kink in the footpath should be removed to improve personal security.

ELS 69 - It would be desirable for there to be direct access onto Aylestone Road at the junction with Duncan Road, junction to be signalised. This will facilitate a pedestrian/cycle route from the Aylestone Meadows area to Aylestone Road. It would also remove traffic from outside Granby School and on Hall Lane and negate the need for a contrived emergency access onto Aylestone Road. As part of the development footways should be provided on Canal Street.