

Meeting:	Joint Committee on Mineral and Waste Planning
Date:	8 November 2024
From:	David Arnold, Head of Planning and Environment, Nottinghamshire County Council

Update on Significant Minerals Planning Applications in the County / City

1 Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an update on some major planning applications that both the county council and, in one instance, the city council, as minerals planning authorities, are dealing with or have dealt with.

2 Background

a) Extraction of sand and gravel on land at Barton in Fabis

- 2.1 Planning applications seeking permission to develop a new sand and gravel quarry on land across the county and city boundaries were withdrawn in 2022 after a number of complex environmental issues could not be resolved. The majority of the site lies within the jurisdiction of the County Council (within Rushcliffe Borough), including the proposed processing site and access onto the public highway at Green Street, close to the Mill Hill roundabout on the A453. The application site is outlined red on the plan attached at Appendix A.
- 2.2 Land within the county area is allocated for mineral extraction in the County Council's adopted Minerals Local Plan, however the expected operational commencement date (2021) has slipped owing to the protracted planning application process.
- 2.3 A new applicant and minerals operator submitted revised planning applications to both authorities in February 2024 to extract approximately 2.55 million tonnes of sand and gravel from the site: around 2.05 million tonnes from within Nottinghamshire and 0.5 million tonnes from within Nottingham. The application proposes to work the site in four phases with land progressively restored following completion of extraction in each phase. The concept restoration plan is attached at Appendix B.
- 2.4 The application site lies within the Green Belt close to the Attenborough Gravel Pits and Holme Pit Sites of Special Scientific Interest. Clifton Village Conservation Area and Clifton Hall Registered Park and Garden are to the north east of the site and a public footpath and bridleway cross the site.
- 2.5 As with the first proposals, the application has generated a considerable level of public objection. Various technical consultees have also made requests for additional technical assessments.
- 2.6 Planning officers from the County Council and City Council are working closely together on the assessment of the applications and are currently awaiting the submission of further information following the two councils' requests under Regulation 25 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations. The submission is expected this autumn/winter and will thereafter be subjected to a further round of joint consultation and publicity. A date for when the applications will be considered at each Authority's respective planning committees has yet to be determined, but is likely to be in 2025.

b) Extraction of gypsum from land to the north of Ratcliffe on Soar Power Station

- 2.7 An application has been submitted to Nottinghamshire County Council for the phased working and restoration of up to 1 million tonnes of commercial grade gypsum at land to the north of Ratcliffe on Soar Power Station, within the Borough of Rushcliffe. The proposed rate of extraction would be up to 300,000 tonnes per annum over 4 years. There would be two proposed extraction areas – West Pit and East Pit. The extraction would take a phased approach moving across the site from the West Pit to the East pit and backfilling with overburden as works progress. The seams are relatively shallow and extraction is anticipated to be between 10-35 metres below current ground levels. The Proposed Development Plan is attached at Appendix C and the Proposed Restoration Scheme is attached at Appendix D.
- 2.8 The application site lies within the Green Belt, and nearby there is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (Redhill), a Site of Special Scientific Interest (Attenborough Gravel Pits) and several designated heritage assets. The proposal would require the provision of a new vehicular access point off Barton Lane and the permanent diversion of Ratcliffe on Soar Footpath 9 (which crosses the site north-south). The application proposes to extract the gypsum using blasting techniques and process the mineral on site to required sizes for onward transport to either the nearby British Gypsum factory at East Leake or further afield to their factory at Sherburn (Yorkshire).
- 2.9 The application has been submitted with an Environmental Statement pursuant to the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017, and a Regulation 25 request under this same legislation has been issued requesting more information on ecology, highways, Rights of Way, air quality, landscape and geo-environmental matters.
- 2.10 The application site is not allocated/identified for gypsum extraction within the adopted Minerals Local Plan. However, the application has come forward at this time so as to avoid sterilising a gypsum deposit which lies underneath an area designated for redevelopment under a Local Development Order.
- 2.11 The Ratcliffe-on-Soar Local Development Order (“the LDO”) grants planning permission for the redevelopment of the Ratcliffe-on-Soar Power Station Site. LDOs are recommended in national planning policy guidance as a means of simplifying and streamlining the planning process for certain sites and types of development. A large portion of the site is included within the East Midlands Freeport and the site is a focus of the East Midlands Development Company.
- 2.12 The extraction of minerals is not a form of development included within the LDO and therefore falls outwith the scope of this permission and requires a separate planning application to the County Council as the Mineral Planning Authority (MPA).

c) Extraction of Pulverised Fuel Ash from former ash disposal lagoons from land south of Lound, Retford

- 2.13 The County Council’s Planning and Rights of Way Committee resolved to grant planning permission in September for the extraction of approximately 6.5 million tonnes of pulverised fuel ash (PFA) over a 22-25 year period from former lagoons covering an area of over 100 hectares south of Lound, Retford in the north of the county. The PFA, generated by Cottam Power Station, had been deposited between the 1970s and 1990 in former sand and gravel

pits which themselves had been previously subject to mineral extraction after World War II. The site area is attached at Appendix E.

- 2.14 The applicant cited a significant national need for supplementary cementitious material, such as quality PFA, over the next 20 years or more in order to decarbonise the cement industry. The demand for cement is growing and emissions from its traditional production, involving the heating of dolomitic limestone to very high temperatures in cement kilns, are significant. In the absence of viable carbon capture and storage solutions at the present time, there are limited options to decarbonise this industry and PFA is the only material that is domestically available in large enough quantities to allow cement to be manufactured in a way which reduced CO₂ emissions. The applicant estimated that using the PFA for cement manufacture could lead indirectly to savings of circa 5 million tonnes equivalent of CO₂ over its lifetime as it substitutes traditional Portland cement.
- 2.15 There is strong national and local planning policy support for the extraction of PFA as a sustainable secondary aggregate, taking what was once considered to be a waste and putting it to beneficial reuse. This has happened in recent years with PFA used for block manufacture etc. These benefits were considered to be even greater given that the majority of PFA is to be utilised in the cement sector as it aids the decarbonisation of this sector.
- 2.16 The final restoration of the land to a lower landform, together with provision of a range of new habitats that would together deliver a biodiversity net gain of some 43% (and a 134% net gain for hedgerows), was considered significantly beneficial and would be progressively delivered over the expected lifetime of operations. The restoration scheme is attached at Appendix F. Impacts on the adjacent Site of Special Scientific Interest and heritage assets, including the Grade I listed St Bartholomew's church at Sutton cum Lound were considered acceptable and outweighed by the need to access the PFA to release the consequent public benefits flowing from its use, as well as the economic and environmental benefits arising at the site level, but also within the local economy.
- 2.17 The application demonstrates the increasing importance of using secondary/recycled aggregates, such as PFA and general demolition waste, instead of virgin aggregates. Mineral Planning Authorities need to take into account the use of these secondary/recycled aggregates when assessing the need for future virgin aggregates in their Minerals Local Plans. The application also highlights how the use of secondary/recycled aggregates can help tackle climate change.

3 Recommendation(s)

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Joint Committee notes the contents of this report.

4 Background papers referred to in compiling this report

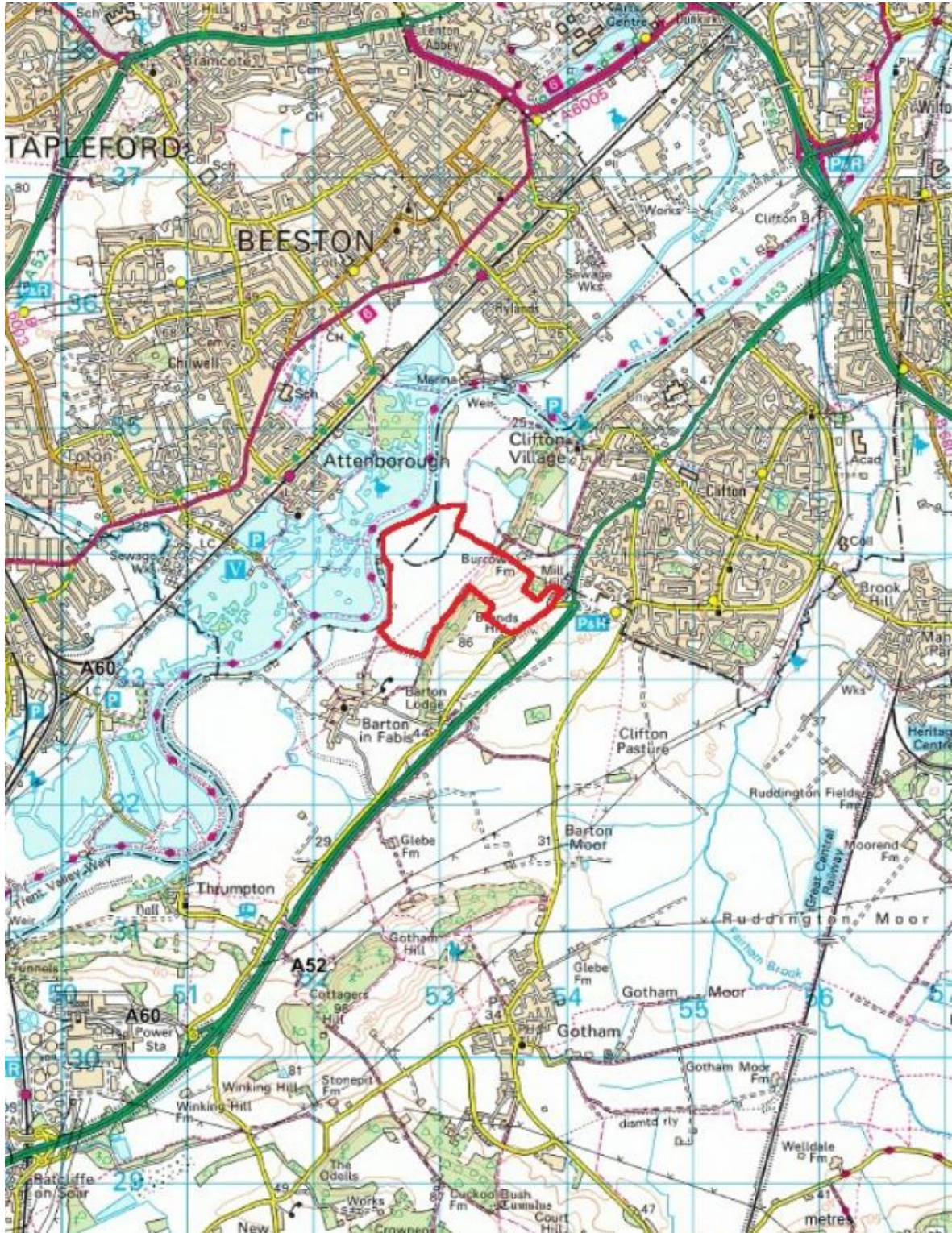
- 4.1 The application details can be found on each council's respective websites at:

Barton in Fabis : [Nottinghamshire County Council website](#), [Nottingham City Council website](#)
Ratcliffe on Soar : [Nottinghamshire County Council website](#)
Lound : [Nottinghamshire County Council website](#)

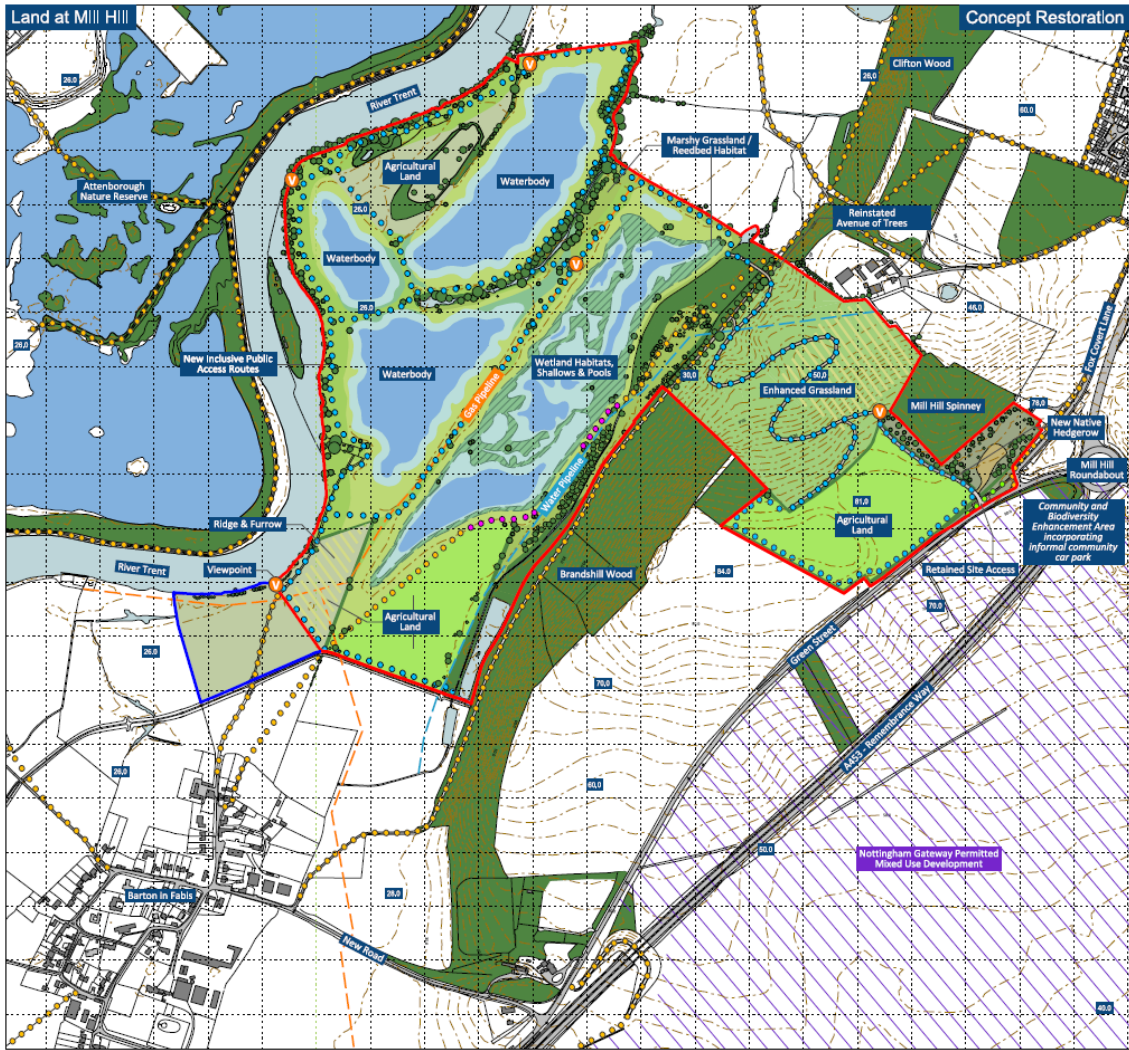
Contact Officer

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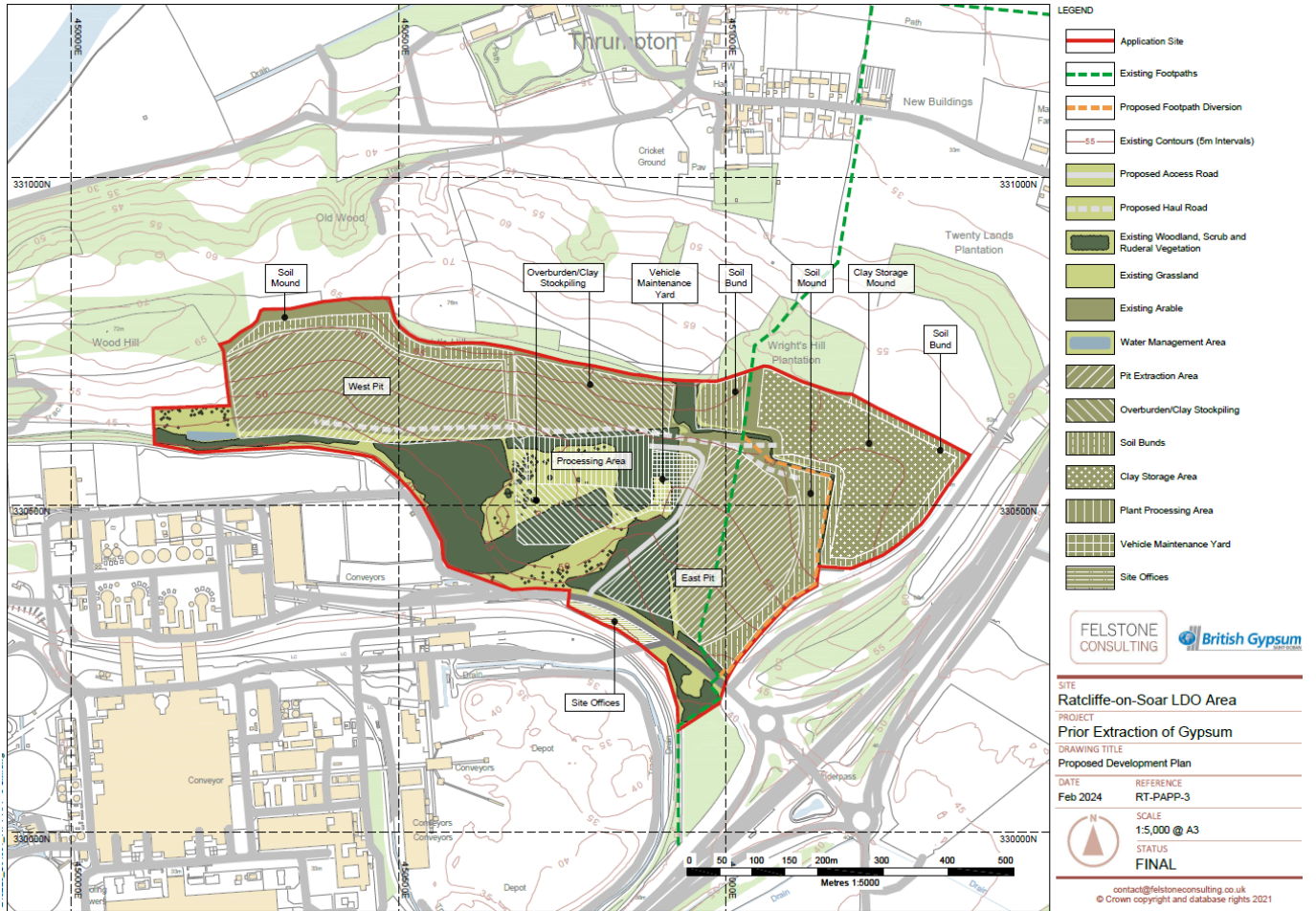
Appendix A – Site Location Plan – Barton in Fabis



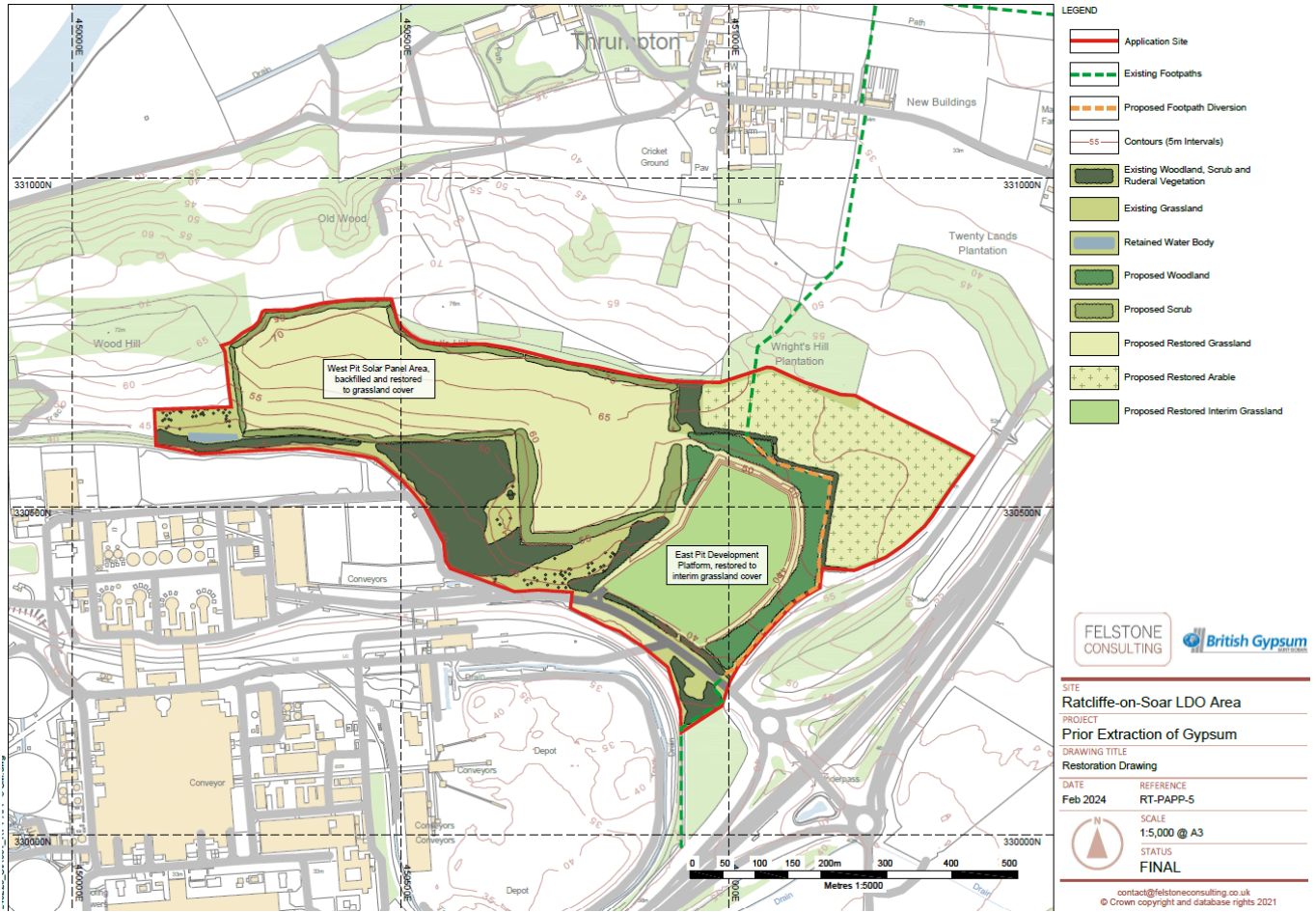
Appendix B – Proposed site restoration plan – Barton in Fabis



Appendix C – Proposed Development Plan – Ratcliffe on Soar



Appendix D – Proposed Restoration Scheme – Ratcliffe on Soar



Appendix E – Site Location Plan – Lound

