

The New Minerals Local Plan for Staffordshire (2015 – 2030) Consultation on Additional Site Options – October 2014

Hints and Hopwas Quarry – north western extension

No objection regarding ecology.

SBI Hopwas Hayes wood is around 590m from the site, not 1km.

The habitats along Knox's Grave Lane track adjacent the northern boundary could be of some value – bluebell has been recorded here, indicating possible long-established habitats, possible historical interest. This area would need to be assessed in more detail and protected from impacts.

There is a waterbody on the site and several in the surrounding area meaning great crested newts are likely to be an issue. The nearest GCN record is 800m to the south-east of the site.

Priority farmland birds such as skylark could be present due to the size and openness of the arable fields present and would be displaced – mitigation for priority birds during extraction and within site restoration should be included.

Restoration to woodland and heathland is appropriate – a water body or wetland to replace that lost should be included also.

Mile Flat

No objection regarding ecology.

Biodiversity Alert Site Swindon Rough is 150m to the north.

Checkhill Bogs SSSI is 1.59 km to the south-west.

Opportunities to enhance habitat corridor along the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal.

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Shire Oak

The southern proposed allocation site includes an area of habitat recorded as Deciduous Woodland BAP Priority Habitat. We object to this habitat being included in the allocation site and request the boundary be amended.

Priority farmland birds such as skylark could be present due to the size and openness of the arable fields present and would be displaced – mitigation for priority birds during extraction and within site restoration should be included.

Hedgerows, a UK Habitat of Principle Importance would be lost –suitable mitigation would be needed.

There is a waterbody nearby meaning great crested newts may be an issue.

Potential afteruse opportunities are appropriate.

Swindon Golf Club

We do not hold any data on the grassland habitat within the site – advise this is surveyed for its value before any allocation decision, as it could potentially be of Local Wildlife Site value.

Hedgerows, a UK Habitat of Principle Importance would be lost –suitable mitigation would be needed.

A waterbody near the western boundary supported a medium population of great crested newts recorded in 2009 by a consultancy survey. Avoidance of impacts by amending the allocation boundary to leave a suitable buffer area around the pond would be required, or if impacts are unavoidable, consideration of the 3 tests of the Habitat Regulations 2010 should be undertaken before allocation.

Potential afteruse opportunities are appropriate- any golfcourse extension should aim to create wildlife habitats appropriate to the area such as heathland.

Upper Whittimere

The site appears to potentially support heathland, open mosaic and grassland habitats which are likely to be of some value – we object to this site being allocated until it has been surveyed to assess its value as a potential Local Wildlife Site.

There is a waterbody nearby meaning great crested newts may be an issue. Nearest record 1.1 km south east.

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