

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

### **Weeford (Sawpits Lane) SK126025**

A small triangle of woodland labelled 'The Oaks' adjacent to the northern tip of the proposed site boundary is Priority Habitat Deciduous woodland, as recorded on MAGIC map. It is also present on the 1884 OS map. As it is under 2 ha in size, there is potential for the woodland to be ancient – quarrying plans should avoid any impacts on surrounding woodlands by maintaining an adequate buffer, and further checks should be made on The Oaks woodland as part of any ecological impact assessment.

Areas adjacent the site may have developed sufficient interest to be designated as Local Wildlife Sites – as the proposal would not directly affect these, such information is not required now but should be considered as part of any future ecological impact assessment.

There are a number of waterbodies nearby meaning great crested newts could be an issue.

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.

Littelhay Brook forms the western boundary and flows into the Black Brook, which downstream is designated as a Local Wildlife Site in many sections. An adequate stand-off is required and opportunities to enhance the brook through channel restoration or adjacent wetland creation should be taken. This would also support the Staffordshire Rivers Living Landscape project within which the site falls.

Potential afteruse opportunities are good re. the Cannock Chase Heaths Ecosystem Action Plan – some bare ground and heathland might also be desirable in the restoration scheme.

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