

FAO: Ben Haywood,

Staffordshire
Moorlands District
Council,
Moorlands House,
Stockwell Street,
Leek,
Staffordshire,
ST13 6HQ

Planning, Policy & Development Control

1 Staffordshire Place, Stafford ST16 2LP
Postal Address: Planning, Policy & Development Control
Staffordshire County Council
2 Staffordshire Place, Tipping Street, Stafford ST16 2DH
Telephone: (01785) 276705
Email: Planning@staffordshire.gov.uk
Web site: www.staffordshire.gov.uk/planning
Please ask for: Andrew Christelow

Sent by email

Our Ref [SCC/21/0062/CON](#) Your Ref SMD/2021/0700 20 December 2021

Dear Mr Haywood,

Consultation from Staffordshire Moorlands District Council in connection with an application to them for planning permission to reinstate a railway track, with a new platform and replacement footpath, on former railway line between Cornhill, Leek and boundary of existing operational railway land at Leekbrook

I refer to your consultation letter dated 23 November 2021 in connection with the above and write to confirm the observations of Staffordshire County Council, acting as the Mineral and Waste Planning Authority.

Background

The application seeks permission to reinstate a short length of disused railway line between Leek and Leek Brook, to create a new segregated walkway alongside, and to build a new station at the edge of the Cornhill development.

This application appears to relate to the same length of disused railway line as an earlier application (Your ref. SMD/2018/0092). My colleague, Graham Allan, responded to that consultation on behalf of the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority (our Ref. [SMD/2018/0092 MSA](#)) and this letter reaches the same conclusions as his dated 19 March 2018.

Observations

Our records confirm that site falls within the Mineral Safeguarding Area for Bedrock Sand, as defined in the Minerals Local Plan for Staffordshire (2015 – 2030).

Paragraph 212, of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Policy 3 of the Minerals Local Plan for Staffordshire (2015 – 2030) aim to protect mineral resources from sterilisation by other forms of development.

Specifically, Policy 3.2 states that:

Within a Mineral Safeguarding Area, non-mineral development except for those types of development set out in Appendix 6, should not be permitted until the prospective developer has produced evidence prior to determination of the planning application to demonstrate:

- a) the existence, the quantity, the quality and the value of the underlying or adjacent mineral resource; and
- b) that proposals for non-mineral development in the vicinity of permitted mineral sites or mineral site allocations would not unduly restrict the mineral operations.

Furthermore, Policy 3.3 states:

Within a Mineral Safeguarding Area, where important mineral resources do exist, except for those types of development set out in appendix 6, non-mineral development should not be permitted unless it has been demonstrated that:

- a) the non-mineral development is temporary and does not permanently sterilise the mineral; or,
- b) the material planning benefits of the non-mineral development would outweigh the material planning benefits of the underlying or adjacent mineral; or,
- c) it is not practicable or environmentally acceptable in the foreseeable future to extract the mineral.

In this case, however, the nature of the proposed development is such that it is unlikely to have any significant impact on the underlying mineral resource.

Conclusions

Having regard to the policies, guidance and observations referred to above, it is reasonable to conclude that the proposed development would not lead to the sterilisation of significant mineral resources.

Therefore, in accordance with the powers contained in the 'Scheme of Delegation to Officers', this letter confirms that Staffordshire County Council, acting as the Mineral and Waste Planning Authority, has **no objection** to the planning application to reinstate a railway track, with a new platform and replacement footpath, on former railway line between Cornhill, Leek and boundary of existing operational railway land at Leekbrook, for the reasons described above.

I trust that Staffordshire County Council's observations will be taken into account in reaching a decision on the application.

Yours sincerely

Senior Planning Officer

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