

Consultation Response Form

Consultation from: Staffordshire Moorlands District Council	Contact: Jane Curley
Your reference: SMD/2026/0050	Our reference: SCC/26/0037/CON
Received date: 18/03/2026	Response date: 01/05/2026
Application Type: Mineral Safeguarding Area	Case Officer: Matthew Griffin
Description of Proposed Development: Engineering works for agricultural land improvements.	
Location of Development: Land Off Rownall Road, Wetley Rocks, Staffordshire.	
Reasons for Exemption from Safeguarding Policies: [See Table 7 of Appendix 6 to the Minerals Local Plan for details] None	
Mineral Safeguarding Areas (MSA):	Silica Sand and Fire Clay
Mineral Infrastructure Site nearby: N/A	
Waste Safeguarding considerations: N/A	
Waste Management Facilities nearby: N/A	
Relevant extract from our Standing Advice: N/A	
Recommendation Summary: Holding Objection	
Details and Reasoning: The proposal involves the movement and deposition of clay soil from agricultural land which will be transported to land off Rownall Road. The excavation works are required to facilitate approved works under planning permission SMD/2022/0444, granted on 22 December 2022. In total, the Planning Statement indicates that 6,440 m ³ of topsoil and 32,335 m ³ of clean and natural (CAN) soil (total = 38,775 m ³) would be taken from the Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) site and deposited within the application site. Condition 21 of permission SMD/2022/0444 requires that the BESS site is restored to a pasture field in accordance with details approved by the District Planning Authority. A concern raised in our response to the consultation relating to the Materials Management Plan (MMP) for the BESS site (SMDC ref: DOC/2025/0082) was that the District Planning Authority should be satisfied that the MMP ensures that there are sufficient fill materials and soils to achieve a sustainable after use of the site following the decommissioning of the facility.	

Having regard to our previous concerns about the reclamation of the BESS site, clarification should be provided prior to determination of the application that the proposal does not hinder restoration works on the BESS site necessary to achieve a sustainable agricultural afteruse (taking into account requirements for an appropriate depth of soils for cultivation, and formation of gradients for drainage and use of agricultural machinery).

Similarly, having considered the requirements for restoration materials for the BESS site, the District Planning Authority should be assured that there are sufficient suitable materials to achieve the proposed agricultural improvements within the application site without the need for importing materials from other sources. In addition, clarification should be provided on the programme of the proposed engineering work and its linkage with works necessary for the preparation of the BESS site. The District Planning Authority should be also assured that there is no unacceptable adverse cumulative impact caused by traffic, noise, dust or disturbance to the landscape.

In this case, given the nature and extent of the proposed engineering operations there are no concerns that the proposals will significantly sterilise important mineral resources within the application site.

NOTE TO PLANNING OFFICER