



National Trust

# Save Wenlock Edge Quarries

The National Trust is trying to acquire three disused quarries to save their geology and wildlife and to allow more people to enjoy the spectacular countryside along Wenlock Edge. A new planning application is jeopardising this vision. Please read on to find out what's happening and how you can help.

## Support our vision

The National Trust and the local community have been working together to create an exciting future for three disused quarries near Much Wenlock.

The project aims to safeguard and protect an important piece of countryside to preserve its peace and tranquillity. It will also create fun leisure facilities and activities that will provide a gateway to Wenlock Edge.

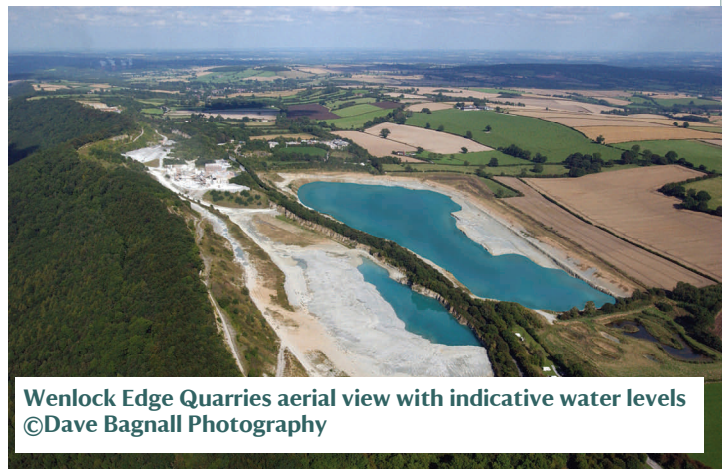
The Trust already owns 12km of woodland on this breathtaking escarpment right next to the quarries and by connecting these important places we can open up the countryside

so that people can enjoy even greater access to the wider Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

Now that quarrying has come to an end at Wenlock Edge and the future ownership is being considered, the National Trust is seeking support to resist the threat of inappropriate development in this special part of the Shropshire countryside.



Globally important geology



Wenlock Edge Quarries aerial view with indicative water levels ©Dave Bagnall Photography

### Our vision for Wenlock Edge Quarries

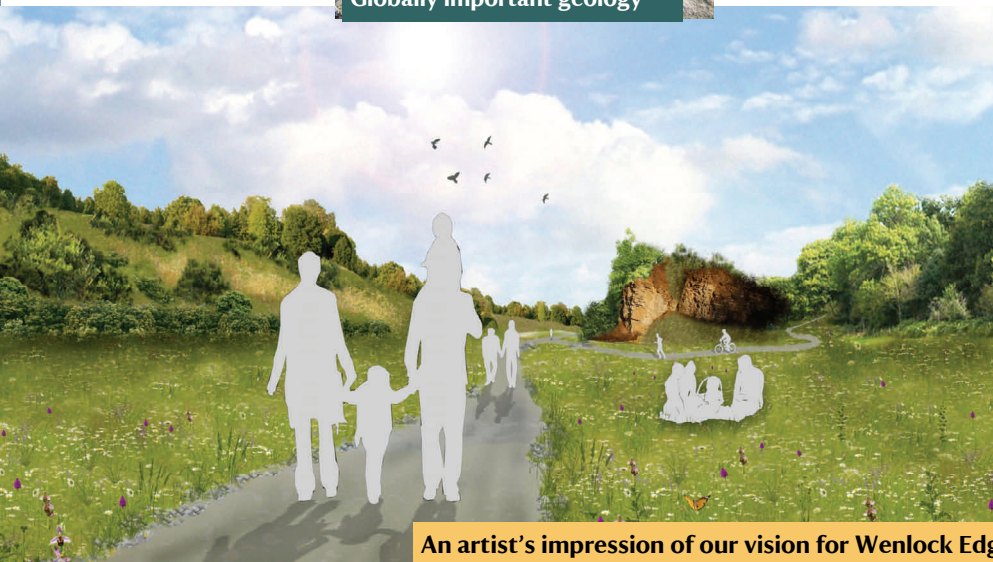
*Amidst iconic landscape, geology and wildlife, Wenlock Edge Quarries will unlock our potential for innovation, fun, adventure and discovery. We will create a space full of surprise and excitement, inspiring more people to experience and connect with the outdoors.*

### Huge conservation and recreational gains

Our project aims to return the quarries to nature, retain the peace and tranquillity of Wenlock Edge, whilst also developing an area for fun recreational facilities and activities.

The quarries will become an informal hub from which to discover the great outdoors all year round, with plenty to see and do for people of all ages in a vibrant and spectacular setting.

For updates on our exciting plans, please visit: [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/wenlockquarries](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/wenlockquarries)



An artist's impression of our vision for Wenlock Edge Quarries ©Pleydell Smithyman



## Our aims

- To safeguard the future conservation and public access to three quarries.
- To preserve and showcase the natural and historic beauty of Wenlock Edge, so that people can discover and enjoy the landscape.
- To create a high quality outdoors attraction for the area which is developed and delivered in collaboration with the local community.
- To secure new jobs, increase tourism and learning opportunities as well as encouraging health and wellbeing.



Restoring the countryside  
©Pete Johnson

## Why are we objecting?

The National Trust is seeking support to resist the imminent threat of inappropriate development at Wenlock Edge.

A planning application has been submitted by renewable energy company, Edge Renewables, to gain permission for light industrial use of the site as part of their plans to acquire the land and establish their operation on a more permanent basis.

Quarrying was a temporary use of the site and should be followed by a restoration plan. It should not be considered Brownfield land, but a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) with globally important geology and spectacular wildlife.

The proposal being considered by Shropshire Council is incompatible with the aims of quarry restoration which would enhance nature conservation and

have huge public benefit.

It is also incongruous with our vision to create greater access to the countryside, and bring about long-term sustainable development for the benefit of local jobs, tourism and the economy.

This expansion of industry in the Shropshire Hills AONB is likely to have irreversible consequences for this stunning landscape, its globally important geology and wildlife, and the peace and tranquillity of the area.



The disused quarries have already developed a spectacular flora and fauna, including fantastic orchids, but this is under threat.

## How you can help...

Urgent and decisive action is needed to protect Wenlock Edge Quarries and prevent a dangerous precedent being set.

Public consultation has opened and objections can be lodged against the Edge Renewables application until **28 August 2012**. These are our grounds for objecting:

**Significant impact on the iconic landscape:** from conservation and aesthetic perspectives.

**These quarries should not be considered a Brownfield site:** there is no overriding need for the operation to be set up in this sensitive location as opposed to specified industrial sites.

**Reduced public benefit:** access and enjoyment will be severely restricted.

**Impact on the peaceful enjoyment of the AONB:** the processing of woodchip is likely to be very noisy, intrusive and disruptive.

## World class conservation

The quarries are of incredible conservation importance:

**World famous geology:** the quarries are a magnificent example of a prehistoric marine ecosystem. The geology is globally significant for its Wenlockian limestone. Lea North Quarry is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and it is a Regionally Important Geological Site (RIGS).

**Spectacular wildlife:** the disused quarries have already developed a spectacular flora which holds a number of rarities and specialist species associated with lime rich soils which are SSSI for their botanical interest.

**Quarrying heritage:** the area has been quarried since at

least the Middle Ages to provide stone for some of the most important buildings in Much Wenlock. Abraham Darby used Wenlock limestone as a fluxing agent in his iron furnaces at the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

**Cultural importance:**

A.E. Houseman, Mary Webb and Vaughn Williams have connections with Wenlock Edge and it provides inspiration for Much Wenlock's annual poetry festival.

**Access & recreation:** the quarries are a crucial link to the existing countryside network at Wenlock Edge; the Shropshire Way and Jack Mytton routes pass along the Edge with a network of bridleways, footpaths, and an old railway line.

**Harm to a SSSI designated area:** the scale of the operation is harming ecological recovery with a detrimental effect on the important wildlife and geology of the quarry.

**A detailed alternative use is available:** The local community and the National Trust have developed a vision for the future use of the quarries which will address the community's priorities for local jobs, conservation, improved facilities and services.

To join in the public consultation, please comment online quoting application reference **12/03034/MAW**

<http://planningpa.shropshire.gov.uk/online-applications/>

Or write (also quoting the reference number) to:  
**Shropshire Council  
Development Services  
Shirehall,  
Abbey Foregate  
Shrewsbury  
Shropshire  
SY2 6ND**