



Current work on site

Mineral continues to be extracted from Phase 1 and operations will be moving south into Phase 2 once the ground conveyor has been extended as planned.

This will allow the southern section of Phase 1 to be restored as quickly as possible and the intention is to make sure the ground conditions are correct for the planting scheme to establish successfully.

Earthmoving equipment will be brought back to the site in July and August 2019 to soil strip the unexcavated areas of Phase 1 and to extend the bund to the west of the site. Work was carried out in April and May to remove the remaining tree stumps from Phase 1 and 2, which were chipped on site by renewable energy suppliers SDL Solutions and taken to their depot in Gloucestershire for distribution to customers with biomass boilers.

Bagging plant now open

Hills Quarry Products has enabled Day Aggregates to open a bagging plant at the quarry.

Jonathan Day, merchant sales director of Day Aggregates (pictured left) explains: "Building a bagging plant at Mortimer Quarry was a perfect opportunity for us to work with Hills again and this was also due to the success of our other two bagging plants already operating at Hills' Cerney Wick and Woodsford quarries".

The bagging plant employs six people to provide bagged sand and aggregates for customers including Travis Perkins, Jewson and Buildbase.



(l-r) Jonathan Day, merchant sales director of Day Aggregates with Peter Andrew, Group director of Hills Quarry Products

Day Aggregates is bagging 370 tonnes of aggregate per day at Mortimer Quarry. Peter Andrew, Group director of Hills Quarry Products added: “The partnership between Hills and Day Aggregates is mutually beneficial and the continued success of the bagging plants at our quarries strengthens the possibility of extending the relationship to other Hills’ sites in the future”.

Live It. Dig It event

Volvo dealership SMT hosted its ‘Live It. Dig It’ event at the quarry on Friday 10 and Saturday 11 May. SMT invited their customers to “try Volvo machines in a real-life setting”.



New play area for local children

Hills and Englefield Estate have recently donated gravel and toy vehicles to create a new outdoor play area at Silchester Primary School.

An Early Years Teacher has said: *“The children and staff would like to thank you for your very kind donation. You have made a truly amazing contribution to our early years’ outdoor provision and the children love it.*

The learning to be gained is extensive - Understanding the World, Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Maths. There was an amazing team effort from the parents putting it all together too - the impact of your donation has been fantastic”.



Vacancy

We are recruiting for an apprentice to start working at Mortimer Quarry in September.

This role will suit a hard working person with a willingness to learn and who enjoys working outside in all weather conditions. The successful candidate will complete the course in approximately 15 months and will then be qualified as a mobile and static plant operator. As part of the apprenticeship, the candidate will gain qualifications and develop their skills whilst earning money, as well as having the opportunity to further their career within Hills Quarry Products' division.



If you are interested in the position or know someone who might be, please visit our website [here](#), call 01793 781193 or email join@hills-group.co.uk for more information.

Liaison committee

The sixth meeting of the Mortimer Quarry liaison committee took place on 12 June. Read the minutes online [here](#). The next meeting will be held on 05 September. These meetings enable Hills to provide updates to the liaison committee members on the current workings at the quarry, as well as face-to-face discussion and answering any queries.

FOR REFERENCE:

As we progress through each phase of the quarry, we repeat certain activities many times over. This guide explains some of the terminology we use in our workings:

Timber harvesting: Mortimer Quarry is located within part of the large area of commercial forest owned by Englefield Estate. The timber is harvested in phases to allow the sand and gravel to be excavated following which the phases are restored to mixed forest including biodiversity areas with public access.

Soil stripping: This is the removal of top soils which are placed into amenity bunds on the site. Archaeologists are on site to record any finds as the work is undertaken. See [more](#) on how Hills has worked with archaeologists on other sites.

Creating bunds: The topsoils in each working phase are not removed from the site, but are retained within the area and used to create amenity bunds. These bunds are a requirement of the planning permission and they create a visual barrier into the site along with helping to reduce noise. The bunds will become covered with vegetation such as ferns and heathers which are in keeping with the surroundings. Once the sand and gravel has been extracted, the bunds are used in the restoration of the site. For more details on the overall restoration of Mortimer Quarry and examples of other Hills' restoration projects – click [here](#)

Ecological mitigation: Moving reptiles, (also known as translocation) is always undertaken by qualified ecologists who first erect special fencing to prevent any additional reptiles entering the donor site. This is



Mortimer Quarry Summer Newsletter 2019

done before any timber harvesting takes place and remains in place until ecologists are satisfied that the site is 'clear'. Reptile refugia (such as roofing felt and corrugated metal tins) are set up in the donor site and inspected regularly. Any reptiles found in the refugia are moved by the ecologists to the receptor sites – this take a number of months. This is followed by habitat manipulation works, under the ecologists' supervision, where vegetation is cleared to ground level using a tractor-mounted flail followed by clearance of the top layer of vegetation using an excavator. The top soils are then placed into piles (called windrows) and the ecologists inspect and monitor these to capture the final remaining reptiles. Click [here](#) to see the ecology reports for Mortimer Quarry.