



Current work on site

Mineral continues to be extracted from Phase 1 and operations will be moving south into Phase 2 within the next 9-12 months. 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.

Ecological surveying is currently taking place in Phase 2.

Work continues to remove the remaining tree stumps from Phase 1 and 2, which are chipped on site by renewable energy suppliers SDL Solutions and taken to their depot in Gloucestershire for distribution to customers with biomass boilers.

Preparations are underway for the creation of a new silt lagoon which was granted permission in 2011 ([BDB/74592](#)) as a Variation of conditions attached to original Planning Permission BDB53439 to allow for the construction of additional silt disposal facilities.

Liaison committee

The seventh meeting of the Mortimer Quarry liaison committee took place on 05 September. Read the minutes online [here](#). The next meeting will be held in 2020. 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.



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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 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.