



Current work on site

Mineral continues to be extracted from Phase 2 as planned and operations will be moving into Phase 3 next year.

Work has commenced on the first phase of restoration. Preparation works have started on an area to the south of the site, to regrade the area to required levels and install surface water management structures. Over winter, these will be monitored for their effectiveness and once proof of concept, soils will be placed over the area in the spring/summer of 2022 ready for planting in autumn.

The restoration will include sensitive landscaping that will enhance the biodiversity in the area by creating new habitats and wildlife corridors that link to surrounding habitats. At Mortimer Quarry southern extension, the site will be restored to commercial and mixed forest, and areas for increased biodiversity. No imported materials will be used in the restoration process and on completion of the final restoration work, the site will be subject to a further 10 year aftercare programme.

Application to vary planning condition granted

In 2020 Hills submitted a planning application 20/02636/CMA to vary Condition 3 to revise the end date to 31 October 2032. This reflects the same 14 year period of anticipated extraction and restoration as originally planned, albeit from the date that mineral was first extracted in 2018. The planning application also updated a number of conditions that had been discharged and provided a more accurate set of conditions for the current development with respect to compliance of approved schemes and similar.

Planning permission was granted in August 2021 and the requisite legal agreements have been finalised. Planning applications are available to view here:

<http://www.mortimerquarry.co.uk/planning-applications>



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Liaison committee

The minutes of the Mortimer Quarry local liaison committee meetings are available to read [here](#). The next liaison meeting will be held on Thursday 31 March at 15:00 – location to be advised closer to the time, depending on Coronavirus restrictions.

These meetings enable Hills to provide updates to community representatives on the current workings at the quarry and to answer any queries.

Donation to Mortimer West End Parish Council

Hills has recently donated £250 towards the instalment of automatic bollards at the parking area outside the parish's village hall. We have been advised by the Parish Council that the automatic bollards will be installed soon.

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 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 takes 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.