

UPDATE: Hemingford Quarry Reopening

At the beginning of September this year, the Parish Council were made aware that Tarmac had awarded Land Logical a contract to resume sand and gravel extraction alongside the existing Marsh Lane gravel pits.

Cambridgeshire County Council, as the Waste & Minerals Planning Authority, had granted consent for the last phase of quarrying in August 2019. Although it must be noted that this was not a new application, but an updating of the Conditions and Consents for an existing permission dating back to 1995.

It is understood that at present Land Logical are planning to deliver the first equipment to site - to enable the construction of the culvert over Lake Brook, and for earth moving - via a farm access off the A1307 (old A14) lay-by imminently. Thereafter, all the traffic in and out of the site will be via the Marsh Lane access.

The Parish Council have been and will continue to be in contact with both Tarmac and Land Logical to ensure they uphold the planning conditions set by the County Council and to impress upon them our concerns about this development. They have provided the following answers to the questions we posed.

Question	Answer
Where is the land to be quarried, and how much material is involved?	<p>The rectangular parcel of land earmarked for mineral extraction, which is located immediately to the south of Wakeboard Lake, and between Lake Brook and Long Marsh Brook, comprises some 11.3 hectares (28 Acres) in all. However, following an archaeological survey, only two thirds of this area will actually be worked to avoid any potential disturbance to the site of an Iron Age farmstead.</p> <p>The total estimated recoverable mineral reserve is approximately 200,000 tonnes of sand and gravel. By way of comparison, Needingworth Quarry, 6 kilometres to the north east, has an output of approximately 1 million tonnes annually.</p>

<p>When will the site works start, and how long will the quarrying go on for?</p>	<p>Enabling works, such as re-opening up of the old quarry access onto Marsh Lane, installation of weighbridge and wheel wash facilities, and improvements to the internal haul road needed for safe working to and from the extraction area, are expected to start before the end of October.</p> <p>Extraction of the mineral reserve itself is likely to commence in early Spring 2021. The planning consent allows for up to five years of working but, in practice, this is more likely to be completed in no more than three years or so. It is not possible to be any more specific at this stage, as the rate of removal will be dependent upon the market value and demand for the aggregates.</p>
<p>How much lorry traffic is going to be generated, and how is it going to be managed?</p>	<p>The number of lorry movements will inevitably vary from day to day and, although there is no actual maximum number stipulated in the planning consent, in practice the number of daily movements in and out is unlikely to exceed 30-50. The hours of working are restricted to 7am to 9pm Mondays to Fridays, and 8am to 2pm on Saturdays, with no working on Sundays and Bank Holidays.</p> <p>All HGV's will be obliged to turn right out of the site towards London Road, reinforced by signage. It is appreciated that the junction onto London Road can be very busy at peak times. Hauliers visiting the site will be advised as to the consideration expected of drivers to other road users in the vicinity of the Quarry, as it is their responsibility to enforce once the lorries are on the public highway.</p>

<p>Will there still be public access to the fishing lakes during quarrying?</p>	<p>At present there is permissive access to the eastern end of Wakeboard Lake - managed by London Anglers Association bailiffs the - with access possible via the entrance off Marsh Lane. Once quarry plant and machinery are on site, and with the prospect of lorry movements five or six days a week, for reasons of safety and security the permissive access will need to be suspended. The operators will, nonetheless, use best endeavours to work with the bailiffs to maintain other lake access through ongoing communication, appropriate site signage and fencing.</p>
<p>How is the nature conservation quality of the site going to be protected?</p>	<p>Both Tarmac and Land Logical are well aware of the nature conservation value of the lake margins, surrounding scrubland and trees that have been largely undisturbed since the previous quarrying – now over 40 years ago. This includes valuable habitat for nightingales and other rare avian species.</p> <p>All the infrastructure necessary for the safe and efficient working of the new mineral workings will be installed with the objective of minimising disturbance, and initial site set-up will be completed prior to the next bird-breeding season. Further, the operator expects to be working with a local wildlife expert to advise on suitable mitigation and monitor potential impacts during the extraction phase.</p>
<p>How is the site going to be restored?</p>	<p>The approved restoration plan, which will be implemented in phases as work proceeds, is based around creating another open water body designed with enhanced biodiversity in mind. This includes shallow margins, encouraging the establishment of reed beds and other varied aquatic habitat. And the surrounding land will be reinstated as a mix of lowland meadow and mixed deciduous woodland.</p>