



Release date: Tuesday 26 May 2009

## **Hills granted permission for new quarry at Upwood Park, Besselsleigh**

Planning permission has been granted by Oxfordshire County Council to Hills Quarry Products Limited for a new soft sand quarry at Upwood Park, Besselsleigh.

The site covers an area of 22.4 hectares and has a potential mineral reserve of 1.4 million tonnes. It is expected that average annual output from the site will be 85,000 tonnes, but permission has been granted for up to 100,000 tonnes per year, giving the site a 15 -18 years lifespan.

The new quarry will replace the Company's existing sand quarry at Tubney Wood when it closes in 2012 and is restored to woodland. Following the closure of Tubney Wood, sand output at Upwood Park will commence with extraction phased and land progressively restored within the field boundaries. The granting of permission for the site enables the planning authority to meet minimum government targets for maintaining sand mineral reserves in Oxfordshire.

The infrastructure of the site will be hidden from the view of walkers or riders on the extensive network of footpaths and bridleways in the area by existing woodland and grassed screen banks.

On completion of the operation at Upwood Park (in approximately 2030), three of the four fields will be returned to agricultural use. The fourth and largest field next to the National Nature Reserve will be handed over to Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT) to use for nature conservation.

Page 2/ .....

The quarrying and restoration work at Upwood Park will provide exciting opportunities to substantially increase the bio-diversity of the area when the site is restored. Hills has won a number of awards for restoration of its former quarry sites which include Spinnaker Lake (Sand & Gravel Association award 1994); Manor Farm (QPA award 1996); Watermark Development (QPA award 1999) and Langford Lakes (QPA award 2007).

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