

Public drop-in

We are holding a public drop-in session on our amended proposals for Westdown quarry. Our aim is to set out the reasons for revising the plans to reopen the quarry.

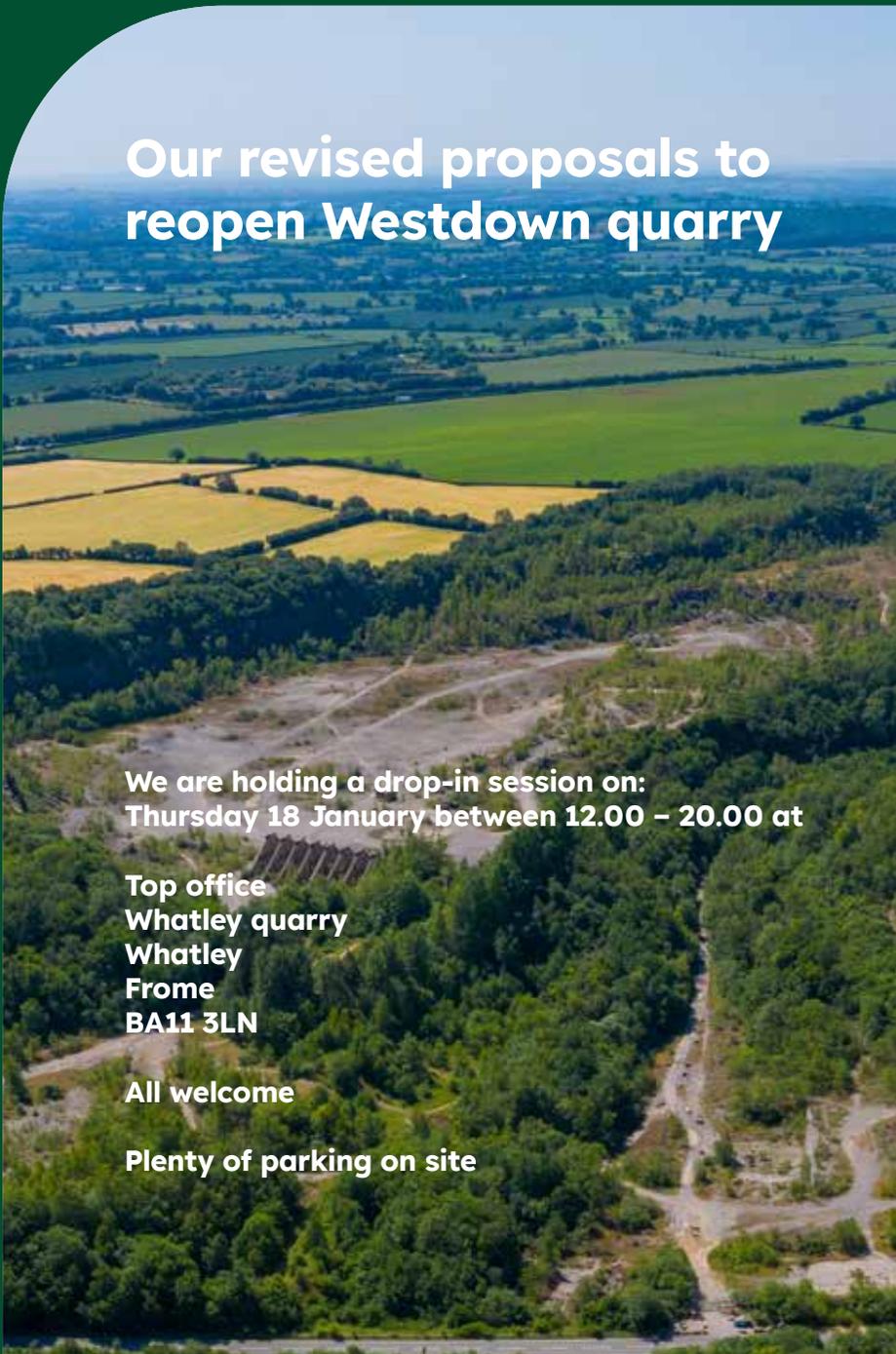
We hope you can attend between 12.00 - 20.00 on Thursday 18 January. Members of our team will be on hand to provide more detail about how our proposals have been revised and answer your questions.

More information is also available on our website:
heidelbergmaterials.co.uk/whatley/future-vision

Next steps:

We hope our proposals will be determined by Somerset Council early in 2024.

Our full plans are available to view via its website at:
planning.somerset.gov.uk/Planning



Our revised proposals to reopen Westdown quarry

We are holding a drop-in session on:
Thursday 18 January between 12.00 – 20.00 at

Top office
Whatley quarry
Whatley
Frome
BA11 3LN

All welcome

Plenty of parking on site

Securing future supplies

Limestone from our Whatley quarry is recognised as a nationally significant resource, but its mineral bank is becoming constrained.

To ensure consistent and secure supplies of limestone for use in construction, including nationally significant infrastructure projects as well as local schemes, we want to reopen Westdown quarry, which has been dormant since the 1980s.

Uncoupling Asham quarry void

We first submitted plans to update existing planning conditions for Westdown in January 2021 and refinements to our proposals mean that all issues raised by statutory consultees have been satisfactorily addressed. However, this application is still undetermined. That's why we have taken a stop-gap step to uncouple the use of Asham quarry void from our plans. We believe that this simpler approach could be consented sooner, allowing us to reopen Westdown and secure supplies by 2025.

Revised proposals

Proposals for a simpler interim scheme were submitted to Somerset Council in November 2023. They now see quarrying operations limited to within the existing boundary of Westdown quarry, with the proposed use of Asham quarry void removed completely from the revised approach.

Scope of new plans

This proposed new scheme of working will require some double handling of material and it will also constrain the extraction of around 20 million tonnes of Westdown's mineral reserve. Regretfully, it also means that the

significant legacy benefit that would have been realised through the restoration of Asham quarry void, including restoration representative of its original woodland habitat and the creation of new public rights of way, would no longer take place.

Transport approach remains

This revised scheme of working will not change our commitment to HGV volumes, with these remaining the same, or less, than the current permitted levels for Whatley.

Material from Whatley quarry will focus on supplying national markets by rail, with Westdown supporting local demand. A new safer entrance would also still be created onto the Bulls Green Link Road, which offers direct access to key routes so that HGVs are kept away from local villages.

Protecting the natural environment

Our earlier applications, as well as this latest revision, have always sought to fully protect Asham Wood SSSI, with our underlying aim being to enhance it. Proposals for an offsite mitigation area also remain, with the creation of 44 hectares of well-connected woodland and grassland habitat to the

north of Westdown quarry to enhance biodiversity.

Responsible operator

Our proposals for Westdown have always sought to resume mineral extraction using modern practices and the best available approaches for progressive and final restoration. We are only uncoupling Asham quarry void from our proposals now as an interim measure as we believe it will allow us to get on with reopening Westdown.

We currently have no plans to withdraw our original 2021 Asham Wood application, which includes the use and full restoration of Asham quarry void, and will keep this in abeyance. We will continue to pursue this in the longer term as part of more detailed on-going discussions with Somerset Council.



Asham quarry void (hashed area) will be completely outside of the revised scheme boundary