

Welcome



Wensley Quarry

Welcome and thank you for attending. This event forms part of our public consultation on our updated planning proposals for Wensley Quarry.

We're here to:

- Explain how the quarry operates.
- Outline the planning conditions we propose to update.
- Introduce our proposed working schemes for the permitted phases.
- Share our revised restoration plans.
- Provide you with the opportunity to ask questions and share feedback.

Wensley Quarry is a long-established limestone quarry located to the north of Preston-under-Scar, and provides around 20 to 30 percent of North Yorkshire's limestone. Stone from Wensley is used in various local and regional construction and infrastructure projects. The limestone is used in concrete and asphalt to build and maintain our roads, homes, schools and hospitals.

The site team

Wensley Quarry is operated by a dedicated site team of eight people who manage the day-to-day operations of the site, as well as over 40 more in the supply chain. The quarry team includes:

- A site manager responsible for day-to-day operations, safety and compliance.
- Supervisors and operators working in extraction, processing and maintenance.
- Environmental and technical specialists who support monitoring and management plans.
- Administrative and weighbridge staff who help manage deliveries and customer service.
- A range of contractors including hauliers, blasting consultants, equipment maintenance, cleaners etc.

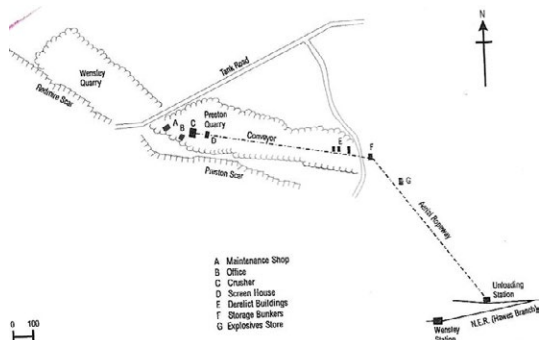
About Tarmac

Tarmac is the UK's leading supplier of construction materials, with over 150 years' experience providing materials such as stone, gravel, concrete, asphalt, cement and mortar that are used in the building and maintenance of homes, roads and critical national infrastructure. Tarmac, part of CRH Group, is the leading producer of aggregates, asphalt, cement and concrete blocks in the UK. We are a major UK employer, with around 7,000 people across more than 350 sites.

The history of Wensley Quarry



The aerial ropeway connecting Redmire Quarry to Redmire Station (Credit: Frank Woodall)



Wensley and Preston-under-Scar Quarries in 1971, mapped from estate papers (Credit: David Johnson, "Limestone Industries of the Yorkshire Dales: Second Edition" (2010))

A proud industrial heritage

For more than 80 years, Wensley Quarry has been part of the Yorkshire Dales landscape, continuing a tradition that stretches back centuries. Quarrying and lead mining have shaped this region providing stone for homes, roads – and steelworks, and supporting local communities along the way.

Today, Wensley Quarry is the last active site of four original quarries in the area: Thorny Bank, Redmire, Wensley, and Preston-under-Scar. These quarries once worked independently or together to supply limestone for the steel mills of Teesside. While many sites now stand silent, Wensley Quarry remains a vital contributor — providing local employment and essential limestone for construction and infrastructure projects.

Redmire Quarry

The story begins in 1650 with the discovery of the Cobscar Lead Vein near Redmire Scar and Thorny Bank. By the late 19th century, lead mining and coal extraction were in decline, but the Thorny Bank Lime Company continued producing coal to burn limestone until around 1912.

Industrial growth accelerated in 1919, when Stringer Calvert installed an aerial ropeway capable of moving 140 tonnes of crushed stone daily to Redmire Station – an impressive 42,000 tonnes per year.

In 1929, Dorman Long Ltd acquired the quarry, using limestone as flux for Teesside steelworks. Later, British Steel and Tarmac modernised operations with mechanised extraction and steel ropeway supports. Redmire Quarry eventually closed in 1992 as steel demand declined, leaving behind a proud industrial legacy.

Wensley and Preston-under-Scar Quarries

Wensley Quarry's history is closely linked with Preston-under-Scar Quarry. Quarrying began at Wensley in the early 1900s, with formal planning consent granted in 1947. From 1964, South Durham Steel and Iron Co. Ltd operated both sites together, connected by a bridge under Scarth Nick Road. At their peak, they employed 21 people and processed around 350,000 tonnes of stone annually.

Originally, Wensley lacked its own processing facilities, so stone was transported to Preston-under-Scar Quarry for processing. Significant investment followed, including the installation of a 740m conveyor.

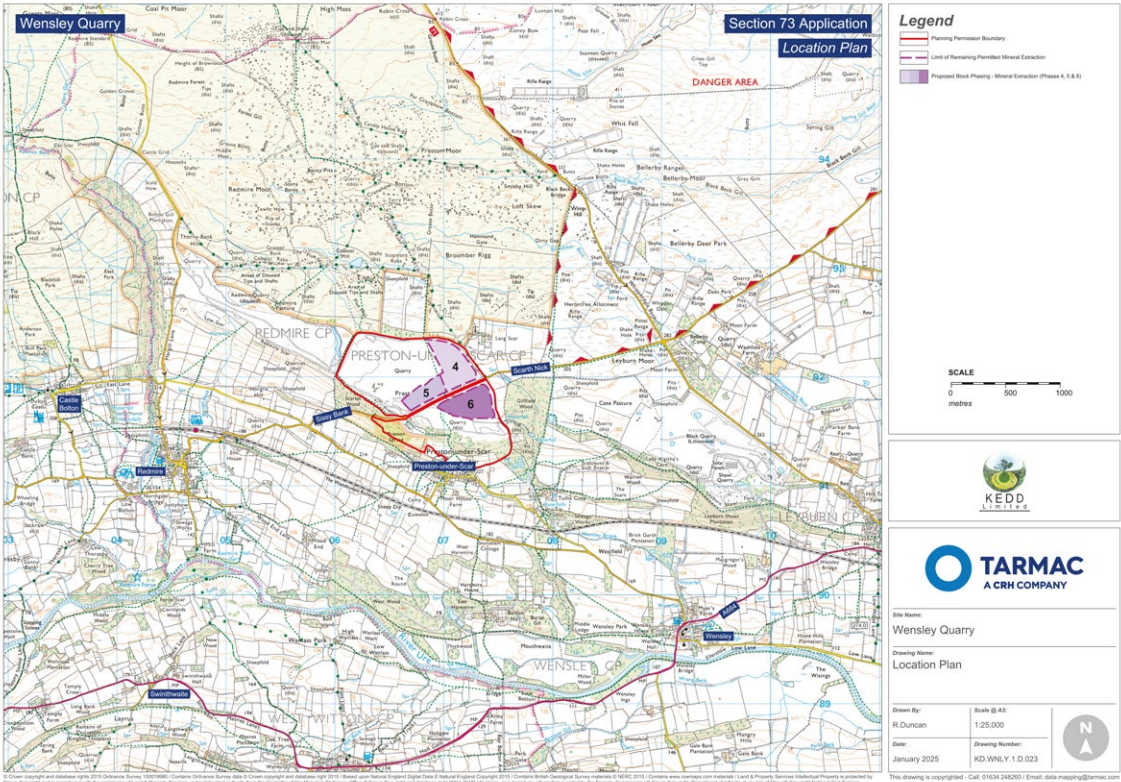
As the steel industry declined, Preston-under-Scar was mothballed, although its planning consent remains in place under Tarmac's control as part of Phase 6. Today, Wensley Quarry operates as an aggregate quarry, extracting up to 450,000 tonnes of limestone annually for local and regional construction and infrastructure projects.

From the lime kilns of Thornybank to Wensley's modern machinery, quarrying is a thread woven through the history of the Yorkshire Dales – a story of resilience, innovation and community.

Did you know?

Quarrying for lime burning began in the 18th century at the eastern end of the site, in what is now Phase 6, located south of the ruined barn. Back then it was known as Preston-under-Scar Quarry.

What we're proposing



Location plan

Due to the height of faces and quality of underlying limestone, access to the remaining extraction phases are required earlier than planned through the previous planning application. The quarry already has permission to extract stone in Phases 4, 5 and 6; however, the existing consent requires updated conditions to ensure we are meeting modern standards and detailed working plans.

We are therefore submitting what is known as a Section 73 application to vary the planning conditions, along with an Environmental Impact Assessment to ensure that we have assessed the potential impact of our proposed working schemes.

About the Section 73 application

We are submitting a Section 73 application in order to:

- Modernise our planning conditions.
- Extend the working life of the quarry by 11 years to 2053.
- Complete final restoration by 2055.
- Agree a detailed working scheme for remaining permitted phases (4, 5 and 6).
- Enable a modern, comprehensive final restoration scheme that responds to feedback.
- Provide certainty for local supply chains, contractors, hauliers and employees.

There would be no change to existing operations. The current working and processing methods, vehicle access, traffic levels and operational hours would remain the same.

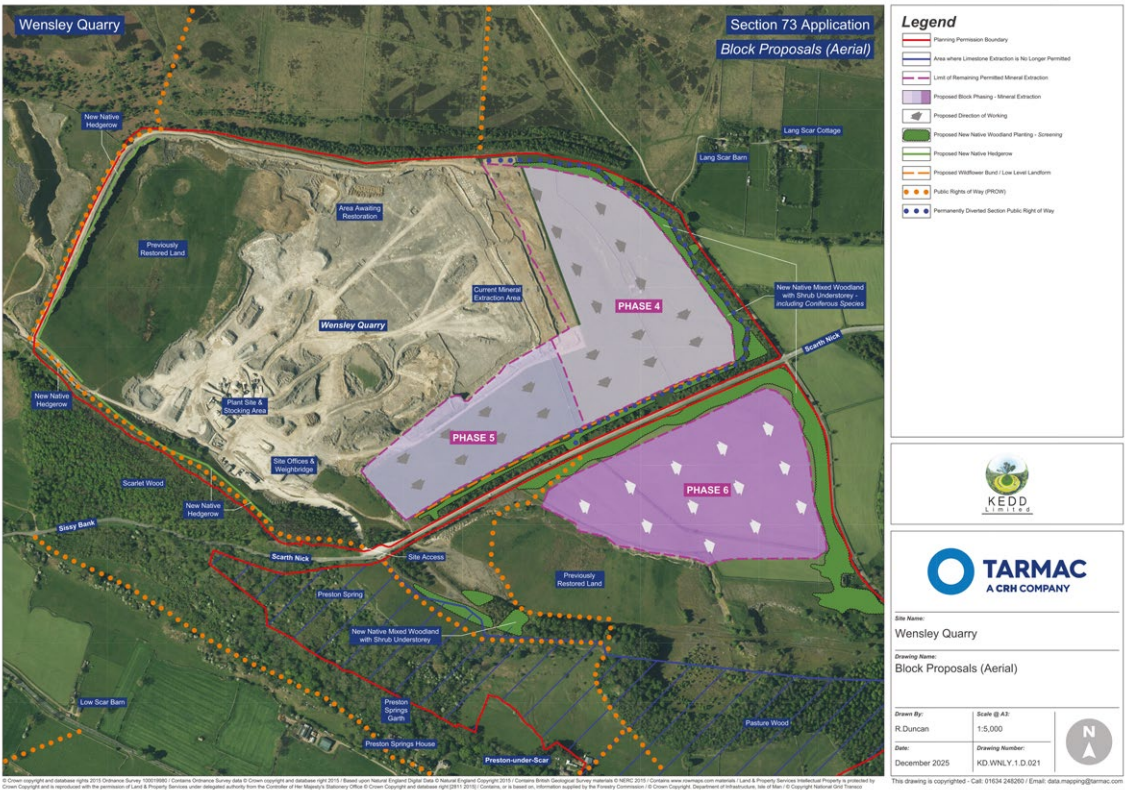
This is not a lateral extension to the quarry. Wensley Quarry already has planning consent dating back to 1947 to extract the remaining mineral within Phases 4, 5 and 6. We are therefore not submitting an application to laterally extend the site as that principle has already been established.

Responding to feedback

We previously submitted a Section 73 application in 2025 following the pre-application advice provided by North Yorkshire Council. However, we withdrew that application after concerns were raised during the statutory consultation. We have listened to that feedback and taken additional time to:

- Complete further environmental and technical studies.
- Review our working and restoration plans.
- Strengthen management, monitoring and communication measures.
- Engage earlier and more openly with local residents and stakeholders.

Site layout and proposed working schemes



Block Phasing Plan with advanced planting proposals

Mineral extraction in Phases 1, 2 and 3 is complete and restoration is ongoing. Phases 4, 5 and 6 are the remaining extraction phases which will take place over the course of 28 years. We are proposing the following working schemes for these phases as part of our application.

Phase 4

- We would continue extraction eastwards and then in a southerly direction and it is expected to take around 13 years to complete.
- Soil stripping would take place, with soils being temporarily stored within the quarry void or used to restore the extracted northern area.
- In the next available planting season following the issue of the consent, native tree planting would take place along the roadside boundaries and the Preston Scar ridge to improve visual screening.

Phase 5

- Extraction would continue in a southerly direction and would take around six years.
- Soil stripping would commence, with soils used for the restoration of Phase 4.
- This would be the final extraction phase north of Scarth Nick Road.

Phase 6

- Soil stripping would initially be used to create bunds on the outer boundaries.
- Extraction would start in the southwest and move northeastwards, and would take around eight years.

- The mineral would be transported to the existing processing plant site via the existing tunnel beneath Scarth Nick.

Progressive restoration would commence in each phase once extraction has been completed.

How extraction works

Extraction methods would remain the same as they are now: limestone would be drilled and blasted, then transported to the existing processing plant by dump truck for crushing and screening. A small amount of mineral in the quarry floor is shallower than normal, so this would be scraped using machinery rather than blasted.

The existing plant, access road, offices, weighbridge and site infrastructure would all remain in use. The proposal would simply allow the remaining permitted mineral to be worked within the existing quarry footprint. Operating hours would also remain the same: 06.00 to 18.00 Mondays to Fridays and 06.00 to 13.00 Saturdays, with no working on Sundays or public holidays.

There is only about two years' supply of mineral reserves left available. This application would allow us to access the remaining reserves in Phases 4-6, enabling us to continue operations and avoid a shortfall in local supply.

Road transport and public rights of way



Site entrance off Scarth Nick Road

Road transport

Once processed, limestone from Wensley Quarry is transported by road to local construction sites and regional infrastructure projects. In summary:

- We propose to continue using the existing, well-established access onto Scarth Nick Road.
- There would not be an increase in output beyond the level already permitted. In recent years, production has been lower, but the application would maintain the ability to return to historic levels if needed.
- All existing HGV routing restrictions would remain in place: vehicles cannot travel west from the quarry or south down the road to Leyburn, ensuring haulage continues along suitable routes.
- Access between the northern and southern parts of the site (to reach Phase 6) would take place through an existing underpass beneath Scarth Nick Road.

We are liaising with the North Yorkshire Highways and Bridges teams and carrying out further assessment work to ensure the crossing would operate safely throughout the quarry's life.



The underpass that was historically used to access Preston-under-Scar Quarry and would continue to be used to access Phase 6

Minimising the impact on local roads

The quarry already operates under strict planning conditions to control vehicle cleanliness and prevent debris on the highway. The measures we adopt include all HGVs being sheeted before leaving site and the quarry entrance and public roads being regularly swept and maintained. These controls have been in place for many years and would continue unchanged. However, we have still received some complaints regarding the condition of the access road. We have therefore increased the number of times the road sweeper is used on site, and we will be installing a wheel wash in the next few weeks.

If there is ever an issue with lorries depositing debris on local roads, please contact the site immediately with the time and vehicle registration, and we will take appropriate action.

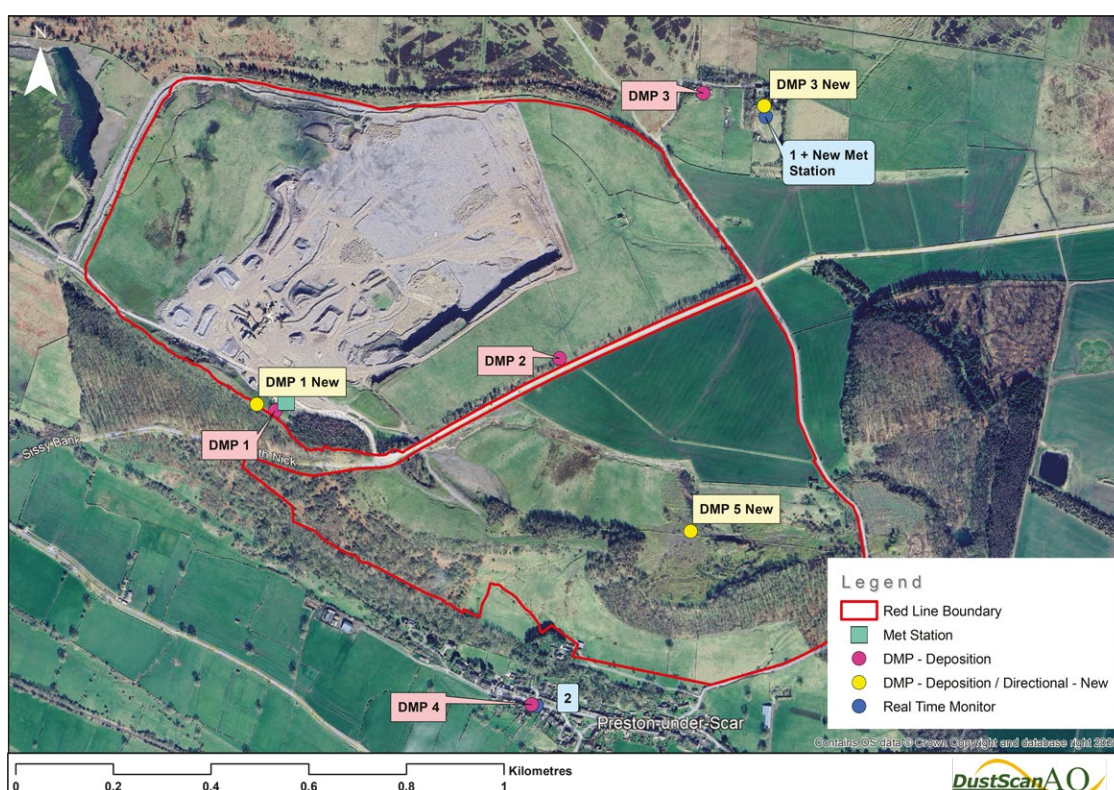
Public rights of way

Footpath PROW 20.54/3/1 which crosses Phase 6, would remain open throughout the extraction period. A dedicated crossing point with good visibility would be provided where the path meets the internal haul road, and pedestrians would be given priority.

There are no other requirements to divert or stop up existing footpaths.

We would propose some additional routes as part of the revised restoration plan. Further details can be found on the Restoration Board, or you can speak to a member of the project team.

Dust and air quality



Proposed dust monitoring

We understand that reducing our impact on the environment and our communities is important. This includes reducing the impact of noise, dust and blasting from our operations, which is essential to being a good neighbour.

Dust and air quality

Wensley Quarry already operates under an approved Dust Management Plan (DMP). However, we recognise there have been concerns regarding our dust management, and have therefore introduced a series of new measures to control dust over the last year, including:

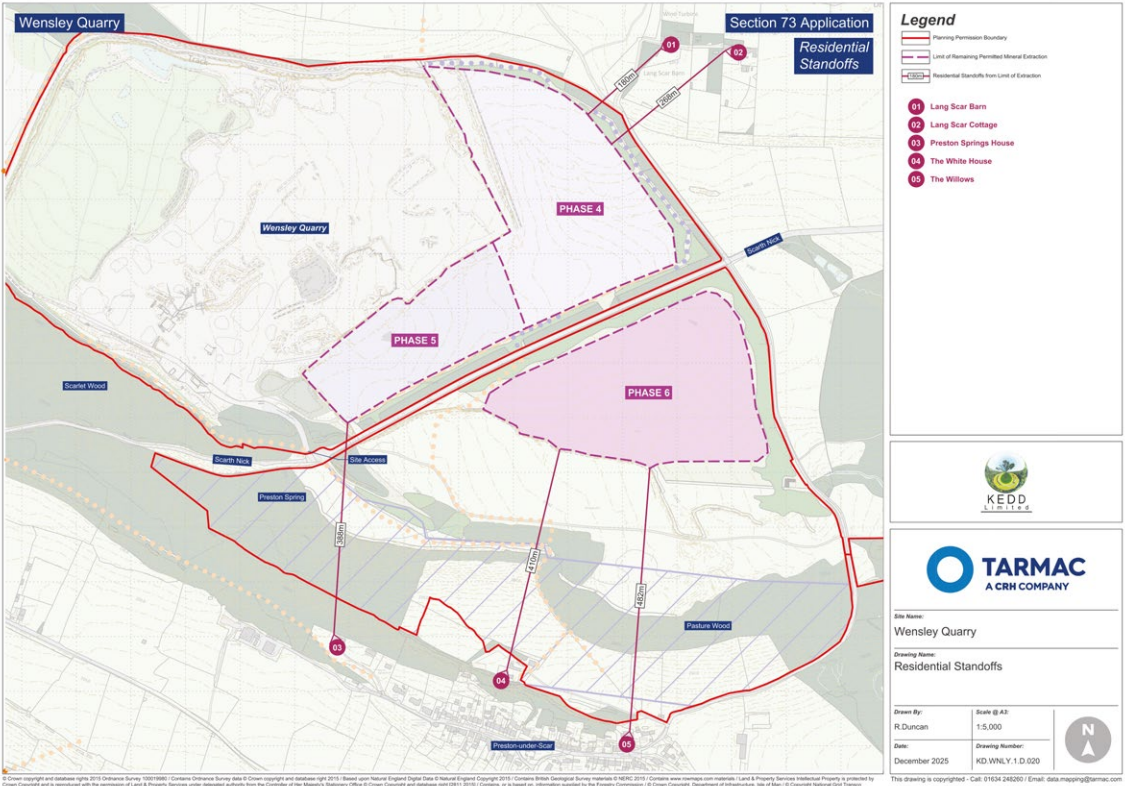
- New spray nozzles fitted to all existing product conveyors to dampen the mineral.
- Upgrading the primary crusher sprays.
- New pump installed on main plant to increase available water sprays.
- Additional sheeting at transfer points.

One of the best ways to improve our dust management is to have more detailed data to inform decisions and our DMP. We are therefore investing in our dust monitoring network by upgrading the dust monitors to provide more detailed information. This should enable us to have a clearer picture of the issues that are leading to complaints from our neighbours.

As part of the planning application preparation, we have completed an Air Quality Assessment and have also updated our DMP so that it continues to focus on controlling dust at its source through well-established, best-practice mitigation techniques, along with improved monitoring. It also details how we will log and respond to complaints received.

Should we receive planning consent we will continue to report the results of our air quality monitoring to the environmental health authority and regularly review our DMP. We welcome feedback from residents on our proposed dust mitigation and monitoring prior to the submission of our application, or as part of our future operations.

Noise and blasting



Residential standoffs

Noise

Noise from quarry operations is already controlled through a Noise Management Plan, which sets strict noise limits for sensitive receptors along with regular monitoring.

In preparing this application, we have carried out a Noise Assessment, which concludes we can operate within set limits as long as we implement appropriate mitigation measures. We have also updated and revised our Noise Management Plan to this effect.

We welcome feedback from residents on our proposed noise mitigation and monitoring prior to the submission of our application, or as part of our future operations.

Blasting

Blasting at Wensley Quarry is closely controlled and subject to strict vibration limits under conditions associated with the current permission. Blasting only takes place within a defined daytime window on weekdays (between 09.00 and 16.00), in line with planning conditions. Key controls and mitigation include:

- Professional design and supervision of each blast to ensure charge weights and timing remain within approved vibration thresholds.
- Use of modern electronic detonators to precisely control delay timing and reduce ground vibration and air overpressure.

- Smaller, well-sequenced blasts near sensitive areas (e.g. reduced instantaneous charge).

Monitoring and historic data show that vibration levels at nearby dwellings remain well below accepted guideline values. These controls would continue to ensure that blasting does not damage property, cause unacceptable disturbance or create any risk of instability to land outside of the quarry boundary.

We currently only blast every two to three months, although we understand that the impacts from air overpressure waves can be alarming if not understood properly.

The remaining phases are not any closer to Preston-under-Scar village than operations have been to date, although they will move closer to other residential properties. Although the distance from the extraction area to certain properties is still considered acceptable and within industry standards, we will of course look to reduce nuisance as much as possible by operating in accordance with vibration limits and restricting operations to certain times of the day.

If you would like to join our mailing list, which will include alerts for when blasting will take place, please contact wensleyquarry@tarmac.com.

Protecting wildlife, landscape and heritage



A bat roosting in a tree cavity

Wildlife

Detailed ecological surveys have been undertaken across the remaining phases to record habitats, including birds, bats and other protected species. The scope of the surveys was agreed in advance with the Council's ecology officer.

The surveys confirm that the land mainly comprises improved and semi-improved grassland with low ecological value, alongside hedgerows and small patches of scrub and woodland that offer some potential for nesting birds and foraging bats. Some key findings and mitigation include:

- Birds: curlew were recorded using adjacent pasture, but no breeding curlew territories were found within the extraction areas; other birds recorded – such as skylarks, meadow pipits and linnets – will be safeguarded by avoiding soil stripping and vegetation clearance in the main bird breeding season (March–August) unless pre-works checks confirm an absence of active nests.
- Bats: activity was low and concentrated along hedgerows and tree lines. These features will be retained wherever possible, and replacement planting provided as part of the phased restoration.

Landscape

All extraction would remain within the existing quarry boundary, at similar depths and scales to current operations. There are, and will continue to be, no significant views of working areas from the nearby villages.

There would be some views into the working areas from Scarth Nick Road and the footpath that runs along the site boundary, although progressive restoration would return the land to grassland and planting, helping it blend back into the wider landscape. As such, the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment concludes there will be no significant visual or landscape effects.

Archaeology

Detailed archaeological and geophysical surveys were carried out across the remaining phases in 2024. The findings show no evidence of significant buried archaeology within the proposed extraction zones.

To further understand and identify any physical buried features, we have committed to completing further test pits, targeted excavation for the potential cairns and a strip, map and sample excavation when removing the topsoils. The assessment therefore confirms that there will be no significant impact on archaeological or heritage assets.

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Keldheads Cave overlaid onto Working Scheme

Water management is integral to how we operate and restore the site. We have undertaken hydrological and hydrogeological assessments, as well as a flood risk assessment. These confirm that the quarry – including Phases 4 to 6 – all lie within Flood Zone 1, meaning there is a very low probability of flooding.

The quarry is located on elevated ground above Wensley and Preston-under-Scar, well outside the River Ure floodplain. Our assessments have therefore concluded that there would be no increased flood risk to the village or downstream properties, now or after restoration.

We are not proposing to change how we manage our surface water, which currently naturally drains into the quarry void and filters through the limestone to the underlying groundwater. There are no surface discharges from the site or outflows to nearby streams or settlements. Our assessments therefore conclude that there would be no measurable effect on water quality, flow or ecology in Bella Gill Beck, Wensley Brook or the River Ure.

The entrance of Keldheads Cave lies to the east of Phase 6. Part of the cave network has been mapped, and has been overlaid with our proposed working plans.

Our initial research suggests that the mapped cave network lies within the limestone horizon that we are extracting. It has shown that only a small section of the cave lies within our extraction boundary. We are confident that our operations would not impact the main cave network, although we would work through some of the smaller caverns which inevitably run through the limestone.

We are proposing to continue to gather data and assess a suitable standoff from the cave entrance. We are proposing to continue this work and agree a condition with the Mineral Planning Authority that we can not extract within 50m of the mapped cave network without submitting further information. As we are not proposing to work Phase 6 for another 20 years, this should allow sufficient time to monitor and gather more data and assess any trends and potential impacts, which can then fully inform a detailed working scheme when working Phase 6.

We currently blast and extract up to 120m of a candidate world heritage site and Scheduled Ancient Monument cave which contain the only UK examples of in-situ Late Palaeolithic rock art. This shows how we can protect the main cave network and extract the surrounding limestone. We also blast within 36m of a Victorian brick arch railway tunnel.

Restoring the quarry



Restoration at Nosterfield Quarry, completed in partnership with Lower Ure Conservation Trust

Planting, managing and restoring areas on and around the site on a progressive basis would give us an opportunity to create a diverse environment that contributes positively to the area's ecology, landscape and water environment.

We have revised the permitted restoration scheme in response to comments received during the previous applications' statutory consultation. We are aiming to produce a restoration scheme that is more focused on biodiversity and nature conservation, particularly providing habitats suitable for curlew. The revised restoration design has been informed by ecological surveys and local landscape character, creating a diverse and natural landform that blends into the surrounding countryside.

The revised plan includes recreating the ephemeral riverbed, woodland planting and enhanced wetland areas. It is hoped that we can create a landscape that both Tarmac and the local community can enjoy and be proud of.

As is customary across the sites that we operate, we would be responsible for the aftercare of restored land for at least five years. Our proposed restoration plan is available on the tables at this event.

We have won awards for our restoration schemes in and around Yorkshire, such as our work at Nosterfield, Marfield, Scorton Lakes, Arcow and Dry Rigg.

Boosting biodiversity

The legal requirements for Biodiversity Net Gain under the Environment Act 2021 do not apply, as the original permission for the next phases was granted before February 2024. However, the revised scheme has been designed with biodiversity in mind.

Working with the community



Quarry tour for the volunteers and children from Richmond Bike Park

It is important to us that we are a good neighbour to people living close to our operations. To achieve this, we look to manage our operations responsibly, as well as communicate effectively with our neighbours and support local projects and charities.

Liaison group

As part of our commitment to improve our communications with residents, we will be restarting the quarry liaison group. It will include representatives from local parish councils, the local authority and members of the site team. This will act as a regular mechanism through which to communicate effectively with the community. In addition, we're always happy to speak with residents directly – whether by phone or email.

Supporting projects and charities

Being part of the local community is very important to us, and we are always looking for local groups and projects to support. One recent project we've supported is Richmond Bike Park, where we provided stone for the foundations of the new trails. The bike park is being delivered in phases, with the first features expected to open later this year.

There are two ways in which people can apply to us for funding: either directly through the quarry or through the Tarmac Landfill Communities Fund.

The Landfill Communities Fund is a fund that enables landfill operators to donate part of their annual tax liability to a variety of approved community and environmental projects. Since it was established in 1996, we have donated more than £20 million to local communities and projects throughout the UK. Even though Wensley does not operate a landfill, local communities are still eligible to apply for funding. If you would like to apply for funding, or simply would like to know more, please visit: www.entrust.org.uk

Complaints

We acknowledge that some residents feel their past complaints about noise, dust and blasting were not handled as well or as promptly as they should have been. We take this seriously and have reviewed our complaints and response procedure. Going forward, we are committing to better monitoring, logging and responding to complaints received.

If you have any concerns or issues you'd like to raise, please get in contact with the quarry – our contact information is available on the handout.

Next steps



Thanks for taking the time to attend our public exhibition. We hope you have found this event useful and that we have been able to answer your questions.

Share your views

Please take a moment to provide us with your comments on our proposals. The deadline for receipt of comments is Monday 9 February 2026.

Next steps

- We have been reviewing the feedback received from the previous applications' consultation and will continue to do so on the revised proposals, and if needed make amends to our planning application.
- We anticipate submitting an application to North Yorkshire Council in early 2026, following which the Council will conduct its own statutory consultation. This will give you a further opportunity to submit your views.

- Following the statutory consultation, the application will go to North Yorkshire's Strategic Planning Committee, who will determine the application.
- If you are interested in reading about any of the studies that we have discussed today, they will be available to read via North Yorkshire Council's planning portal once we have submitted the planning application.

Keep in touch

If you have any further questions on the information that you have read today or regarding the application, please contact our community liaison manager, Che, at che@eqcommunications.co.uk or via phone on 020 3617 6359.

If you have any comments or questions about our operations, please contact wensleyquarry@tarmac.com.

These details are also available in your handout.