

Blaise Farm

Site Biodiversity Action Plan



Prepared: 2009

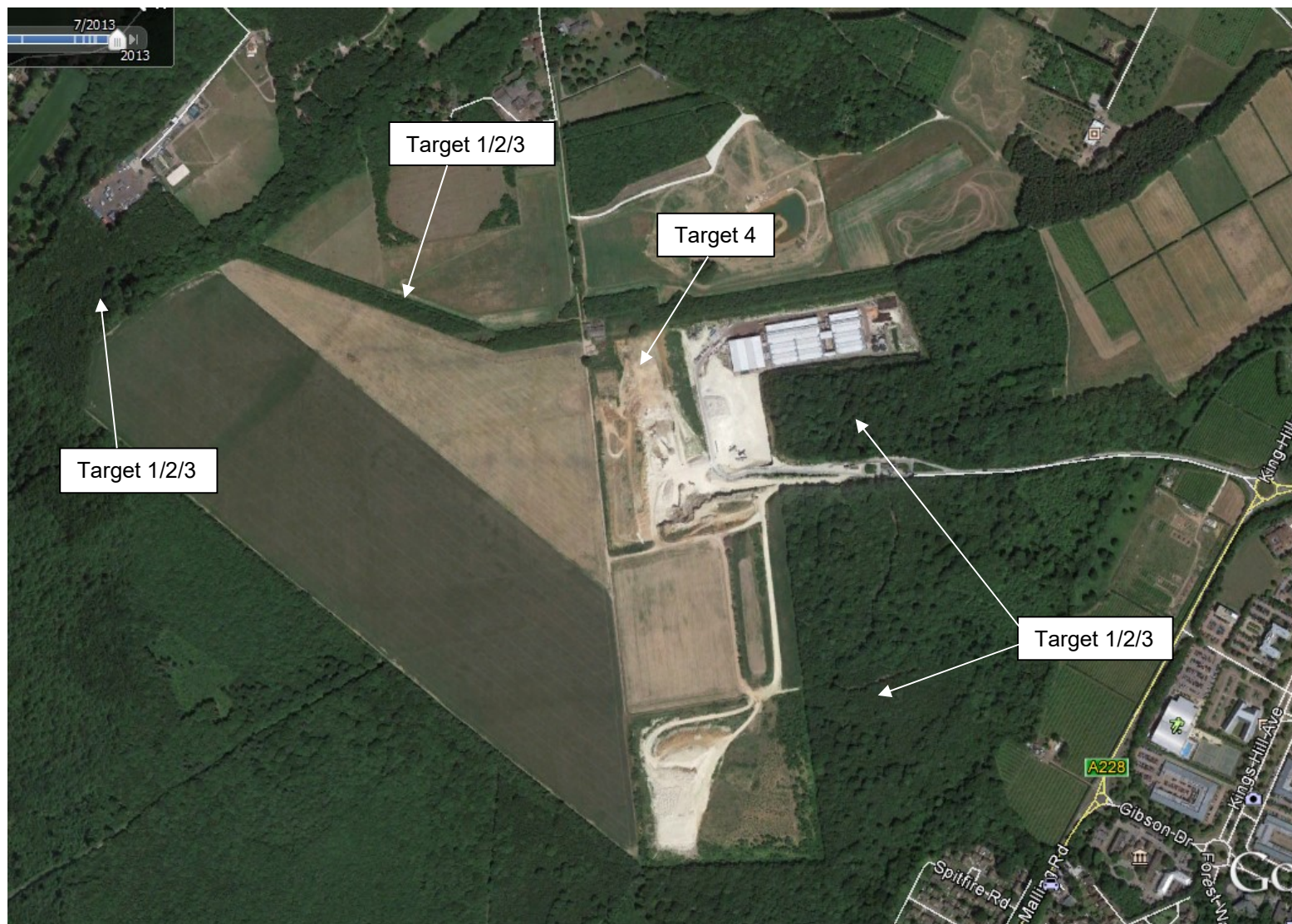
Updated: Mar 2014, Dec 2024

Site Information- Blaise Farm

Site Name and Location (incl. Grid Ref.)	Blaise Farm Quarry, Offham, Kent. Site Office Grid Reference TQ664 561 Access from East off Kings Hill roundabout
Heidelberg Company	Heidelberg Materials UK - Aggregates business line
BAP(s) that will be targeted	UK BAP Kent BAP (Action for Kent's Wildlife)
Habitat(s) to be developed	Kent BAP priority habitat: 'Mixed Broadleaved Woodland and Plantations' UKBAP priority habitat: Rock outcrop and scree
BAP species to be encouraged	Heath Fritillary Butterfly Dormouse Pipistrelle Bat Invertebrates
National Character Area	National Character Area 120 - Wealden Greensand (formerly Wealden Greensand Natural Area 70)
Background and site description	<p>Blaise Farm is an approx. 100ha landholding comprising Kentish ragstone quarry currently operated under Licence to Gallaghers, located within mainly agricultural land and bounded by a number of ancient woodlands and plantations. The quarry is currently in the early stages of extraction and reclamation with only the NE corner having been worked out, now sold and developed as a composting facility.</p> <p>Ragstone extraction will continue in a westerly direction with large areas occupied by temporary stockpiles of quarry waste hassock and overburden, due to be replaced into void to achieve low level landform once sufficient areas have been fully excavated. No working areas have yet been fully restored due to the presence of the composting facility and lack of worked-out void around site perimeters to date.</p> <p>Advance screen planting and landscaping operations took place prior to commencement of extraction and these pole-stage woodland blocks are located along the northern boundary of the site and beside site access road, but will require thinning to favour long-lived native species.</p> <p>Ancient Semi-Natural woodlands surround the site to the west, south and east, with a small area to the west and a larger block of St Leonards Wood to east of quarry excavation area within Company ownership. A Woodland Management Plan is a requirement of the quarry planning permission, which was originally drawn up for the woodland area in 1997 and has recently been updated into FC management plan format.</p>
National Designations (SSSI, etc) within 500m	None
Resource Requirements-	Funding sufficient from site Restoration budget supplemented by Forestry Commission grant aid for

comment on cost if appropriate	woodland management through Countryside Stewardship capital grants or annual Management Grant
Contribution to biodiversity	<p>Management of the ancient woodland will ensure long-term continuity of this habitat, and active management by coppicing, thinning and management of rides/glades will retain and improve the wood's structure and age-class diversity.</p> <p>Management of advance screen plantations will maintain habitat linkage around the periphery of the site for possible dormice and bat foraging corridors.</p> <p>Retention of open quarry faces with southerly aspect within Phase 2 working area (also adjacent to the compost facility) will add a rare element of open mosaic habitat and bare ground to benefit invertebrates</p>
Partners and Local initiatives	<p>"Tower shoot" sporting tenants</p> <p>Links to be developed with NGOs eg Kent Wildlife Trust to facilitate ecological surveys/monitoring</p> <p>Gallaghers responsible for planning compliance of quarry working and reclamation</p>
Other documents supporting the site BAP	<p>BAP plan W109r/49</p> <p>Woodland Management plans - original 1997, 2010 update and latest 2014 FC 10-year plan</p>

Site Layout



Action Plan

<u>Item No.</u>	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Biodiversity Feature</u>	<u>Targets</u>	<u>Tasks</u>	<u>Assessing Indicator</u>	<u>Responsible Person</u>	<u>Timescale (Completion)</u>
1	Renew and update Woodland Management Plan	Ancient Woodland flora and fauna	Update 1997 and 2014 Management Plans and submit as required by Condition 9 of planning permission TM/88/1002	1. Renew management plan in Forestry Commission WPG format 2. Submit to KCC for approval with next 5-year working and restoration scheme due in 2025	Woodland Management Plan in place and approved by KCC	Landscape Manager Lands and Planning Manager	Previous 10 year plan approved by FC March 2014 Submission to KCC by Q3 2025
2	Implement Woodland Management Plan	Ancient Woodland flora and fauna Bat spp. Dormice, heathland and acid grassland in open space within woodland	Implement stand management and maintenance of rides and open spaces in accordance with Management Plan. Increase deadwood within young plantations	1. Undertake ride creation and management in accordance with FC plan 2. Undertake coppicing and thinning as per plan 3. Thin northern screen plantation	Length of new rides created Area coppiced and thinned Area thinned	Landscape manager	Completion within first 5-year period of FC plan, by Q1 2030
3	Develop ecological database	Various	Increase knowledge of the existing ecology of the site.	1. Develop links with local volunteers or NGOs for ecological monitoring. 2. Undertake baseline ecological survey of ancient woodland, perimeter screen plantations and accessible	Survey records available including Dormouse records	Landscape Manager NGOs or volunteers	Baseline survey by Q4 2025 and updates at 5-year intervals

				operational areas			
				3. Update surveys periodically at 5-year intervals to coincide with planning submissions			
4	Habitat creation through quarry restoration	Open mosaic habitats/rock outcrop Invertebrates	Increase provision for biodiversity in restoration designs and aftercare schemes	1. Incorporate biodiversity aims in future restoration submissions. NB previous discussions with KCC have highlighted need for revisions to 1989 old approved scheme due to fundamental change of economic working depth limit	Features incorporated into submissions for 5-year working and restoration schemes	Lands and Planning Manager	Q4 2025
				2. Create species-rich rough grassland, lowland mixed broadleaved woodland and open mosaic habitats in future quarry restoration	Area of new habitat creation	Site Manager	Ongoing