

# **Batts Combe Quarry**

## **Site Biodiversity Action Plan**



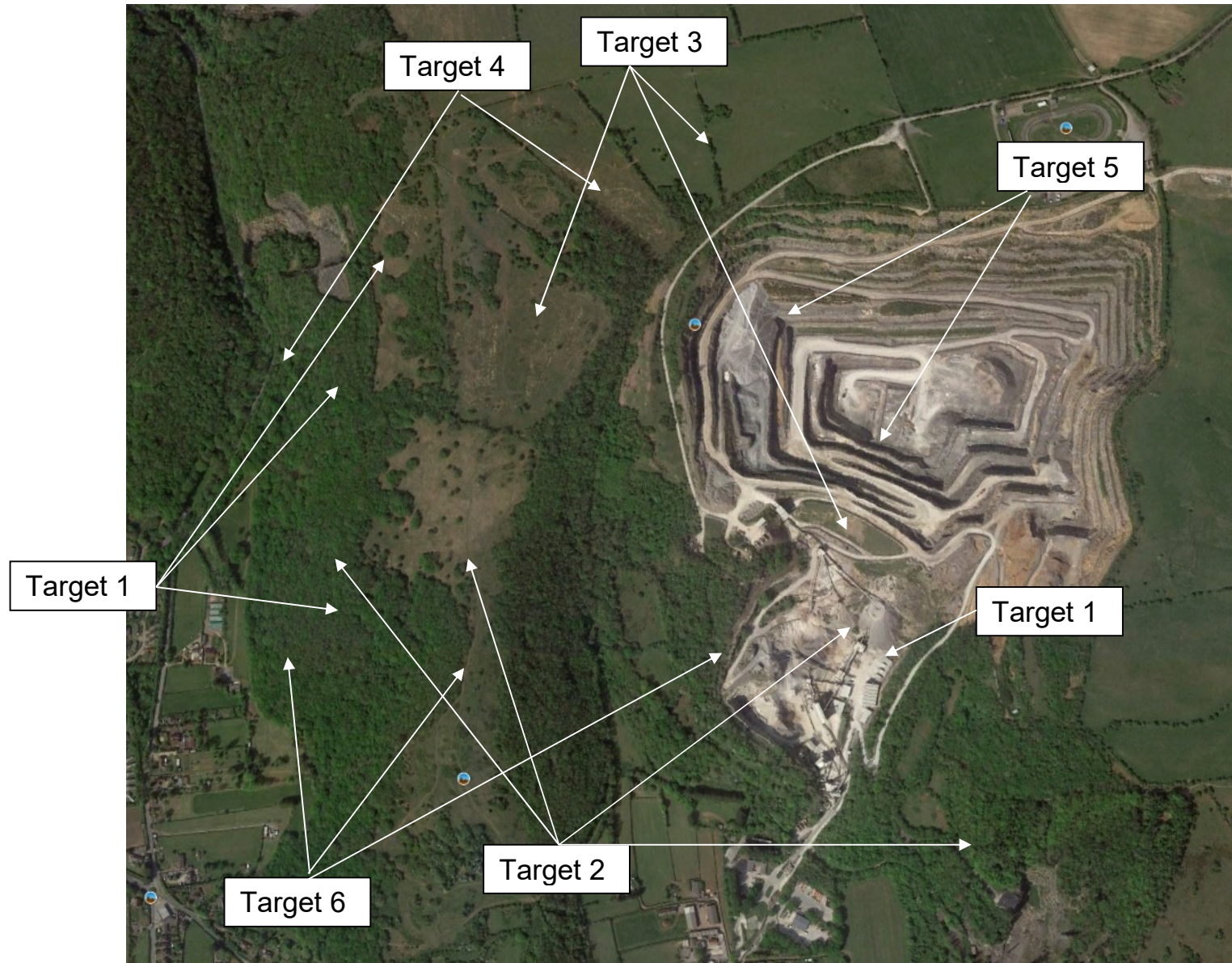
**Prepared: August 2006**

**Updated: August 2023  
November 2018  
July 2016  
October 2013**

### Site Information- Batts Combe Quarry

<b>Site Name and Location (incl. Grid Ref.)</b>	Batts Combe Quarry, Cheddar, Somerset ST 45870 54433 (site entrance)
<b>Heidelberg Materials Company</b>	Aggregates
<b>BAP(s) that will be targeted</b>	Mendip Hills AONB Nature Recovery Plan, Somerset Wildlife Trusts Ecological Network, UK BAP
<b>Habitat(s) to be developed</b>	Calcareous grassland Lowland meadow Neutral grassland Lowland broadleaved woodland
<b>BAP species to be encouraged</b>	Dormice, Bat species including lesser and greater horseshoe Pearl bordered fritillary Cheddar pink
<b>Designated Natural Area</b>	Mendip Hills
<b>Background and site description</b>	Large carboniferous limestone quarry (c. 50ha excavation set in a total landholding of 180ha) located to the north of Cheddar on the southern slopes of the Mendip Hills just on the border of the Mendip Hills AONB. To the west lies The Perch SSSI and to the east the site is bordered with pasture, woodland and scrub encroached grassland. The BAP was revised in 2013 and then regularly since after the majority of the 2006 targets were achieved resulting in The Perch SSSI condition changing from 'unfavourable declining' to unfavourable improving', large amounts of scrub being cleared to favour grassland habitats, woodland management and planting carried out to favour dormice and a reduction of non-native nurse tree species. The BAP seeks to maintain the habitats restored and created through the 2006 plan and extend them through ongoing management and restoration.
<b>National Designations (SSSI, SAC, SPAs, RAMSARs and NPs) within 500m</b>	The Perch SSSI lies within Hanson ownership and within 500m of the quarry excavation. Designated due to its calcareous grassland, woodland and notable species including the lesser and greater horseshoe bat, dormice and Cheddar pink. The Cheddar Complex SSSI is also within 500m of the quarry landholding.
<b>Resource Requirements- comment on cost if appropriate</b>	The HLS was extended for 5 years in 2023 providing funding for habitat management. The restoration fund will cover works outside the HLS area and the deficit in funds to achieve management targets within the HLS zone.
<b>Contribution to biodiversity</b>	Further areas of priority habitat to be created and positively managed including lowland meadow, woodland, dormice and bat corridors
<b>Partners and Local initiatives</b>	Somerset Wildlife Trust, Natural England, volunteer dormice surveyors, Reptile and Amphibian Group Somerset, Butterfly Conservation, Aggregates Industries and Somerset County Council
<b>Other documents supporting the site BAP</b>	Restoration design B25m/113, The Perch SSSI citation, HLS agreement

## Site Layout



## Action Plan

Item No.	Objective	Biodiversity Feature	Targets	Tasks	Assessing Indicator	Responsible Person	Timescale (Completion)
1	Maintain and improve species rich grassland habitats	Limestone grassland, bracken, pearl bordered fritillary (PBF), Cheddar pink	Maintain, restore and increase extent of species rich grassland  Achieve 'Favourable' status of The Perch SSSI	1. Grazing regime maintained on previously cleared areas to ensure positive management and open sward	'Favourable' SSSI condition achieved	Site Manager	Ongoing
				2. Ongoing monitoring and management of scrub cover	Scrub levels managed at c. 25% coverage		Annual scrub management ongoing
				3. Annual bracken management regime established to favour SPBFs	Bracken elements but not dominating sward		Ongoing
				4. Appropriate management regime determined for rank grassland sward	Management agreed with Natural England		Appropriate management implemented by Q4 2026
2	Maintain and improve existing woodland	Dormouse, bat sp, lowland broadleaved woodland	Maintain favourable dormouse population by appropriate woodland management	1. Review woodland management plan and draw up a new FC approved plan in the face of ash die back and in liaison with dormice ecologists	Plan produced	Landscape Architect	Q4 2027

				2. Implement management plan to establish long term rotational coppice regime and manage ash die back	Area coppiced, no hazardous trees	Landscape Architect	Ongoing
3	Maintain species rich grassland	Limestone grassland, lowland meadow	Ensure continuing management of grassland on historic and recent tips and green hay donor site so that they not recolonized by scrub	1. Monitor scrub encroachment	Scrub coverage kept to <25%	Landscape Architect	Biennially
				2. Control scrub growth with mechanical or chemical means	Area of scrub cleared	Landscape Architect	Ongoing
4	Reduce extent of invasive non-native species from plantations and native woodland	Native broadleaved woodland	Decrease extent of non-native species e.g. <i>Alnus cordata</i> and <i>Quercus cerris</i>	1. Remove all remaining, difficult to access, non-native species including non-native alder and Swedish whitebeam by ring barking from quarry areas	No. of trees killed	Landscape Architect	Q4 2028
				2. Monitor surrounding woodland for any remnant non-native Turkey oaks	No Turkey oaks	Landscape Architect	Ongoing
5	Increase the extent of grassland and woodland habitats	Broadleaved woodland, calcareous grassland, bare ground	Quarry restoration works to provide corridors and stepping stones for grassland and woodland species across the site through appropriate	1. Ensure correct placement of quarry bench restoration material prior to final face development	Soil placement prior to removal of safe access	Site Manager	Ongoing
				2. Plant and/or seed restoration in first available season after creation	Vegetation established	Site Manager	Ongoing

				<p><b>3.</b> Manage feral sheep, goat and deer populations in conjunction with other landowners to remove browsing pressure on new planting and woodland groundflora</p> <p><b>4.</b> Maintain and enhance perimeter dormice and bat corridor</p> <p><b>5.</b> Consider use of green hay in future restoration and enhancing existing swards where appropriate</p>	<p>Annual survey counts showing reduced numbers, new trees no longer browsed</p> <p>Continuous vegetated corridor</p> <p>Diverse grassland habitats created</p>	<p>Landscape Architect</p> <p>Landscape Architect</p> <p>Landscape Architect</p>	<p>Stalking licence in place Q4 2024</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<b>6</b>	Improve site knowledge	Dormice, bats, butterflies incl PBFs	Monitor target species by maintaining existing partnerships and establishing new partners	<p><b>1.</b> Ensure continued dormice monitoring on The Perch and Batts Combe East</p> <p><b>2.</b> Extend if possible, dormice monitoring on The Perch SSSI with local volunteers or consultants.</p> <p><b>3.</b> Collaborate with other volunteer surveyors and educational groups on an ad hoc basis e.g. SRAG,</p>	<p>Annual reports received</p> <p>Perch survey carried out</p> <p>Survey data collected</p>	<p>Landscape Architect</p> <p>Landscape Architect</p> <p>Landscape Architect</p>	<p>Annually</p> <p>Q2 2027</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

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