

GLA 60 Bourne Wood Thanet Sand, RIGS

London Borough of Bromley, TQ 503 683 (access)
Ownership: Bourne Wood Sand & Gravel

In 2013 Bourne Wood Sand Pit, quarrying the Thanet Sand was the only quarry in Greater London quarrying the Thanet Sand. In 2021 quarrying had come to a halt but the faces of Thanet Sand were still visible. It is possible that planning permission may be sought to expand the area.

The Thanet Sand within the pit is fine-grained and it is not easy to see any stratigraphy within it. One sample showed evidence of burrowing and probably the c.9m face had been thoroughly bioturbated. No glauconite was evident in samples studied with the hand lens and for the most part the sand was a pale yellow.

Bourne Wood Sand & Gravel had formerly extracted Thanet Sand to the south of the present excavation, adjacent to the railway. That pit went deeper than the present one and although Thanet Sand has been proven at depth here, they were worried about the water table as one area of the quarry was prone to flooding. Trials have taken place in an adjacent field to the north where a greater depth of sand has been proven and the 'grade' is more suitable for construction. It is possible that this includes Upnor Formation. The maximum depth of Thanet Sand in this area is between 20 and 25m (BGS Memoir, Fig. 9).

In 2020 planning permission has not yet been sought for extraction from the adjacent site. The current pit in 2013 was 14 acres and we were told that they began excavations in 1997 with permission for extraction until 2018 after which it will be used as landfill with an obligation to return for use as agricultural land. There seems little likelihood of being able to conserve a face in the current pit but Bromley Council has been alerted to the fact that a Potential RIGS exists in their borough with the aim to include an element of conservation on any future planning permissions. A visit in 2019 confirmed that the extraction was completed but no information on future plans was gathered.

Access

Car only with permission of the owners: Bourne Wood Sand & Gravel, Quarry Drive, A20 Swanley Bypass, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7QH (access A20 going towards London – a small turning to the quarry only).



Main face of Bourne Wood in May 2013. Photo: Diana Clements

Site Map

OS Topography © Crown Copyright

