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(John Vidal's Eco-Soundings column)

## **On stony ground**

Hopes are mounting that the Peak District National Park Authority may at last be gaining the upper hand in its three-year battle to stop quarrying at Backdale Quarry on Longstone Edge. Last week, park chiefs went cap-in-hand to rural affairs minister Jim Knight to ask for backing if new legal action went wrong. Increasingly slick local campaigners, the Save Longstone Edge Group, also sent an explosive agitprop DVD to Knight to press the case. Following the meeting, the park issued a press release promising action soon. Quarry operator Merrimans has declined to comment, but has brought two extra giant rock crushing machines on to the site to rip out even more of the hillside.