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**The Shannon Solo mini dumper is controlled remotely so it can operate in hazardous areas without risk to health and safety. Tanya Weaver caught up with Stuart Selway and Ryan Symes, neither of them engineers, who designed and manufactured the unmanned vehicle in the field, through a fascinating process of trial and error**

The Shannon Solo is the UK's first production remote control, mini hi-tip dumper. From a distance of 100m the Solo can be operated to transport 500kg of materials travelling at a speed of up to eight miles per hour.



▲ **As the Shannon Solo is operated by remote control, it can be used in a variety of applications including hazardous areas such as quarries or demolition sites**

It was developed and manufactured by two entrepreneurs, Stuart Selway and Ryan Symes, over a period of three years. Although between them they have ample experience of the construction industry, they have virtually no design or engineering skills. However, through a process of trial and error they managed to create a final prototype of the Solo. It was only then that they had the 3D CAD model produced.

"We both had the same idea for the Solo dumper; we wanted to make something that was easy to maintain and simple to use," explains Selway. "We are quite proud of ourselves because we are literally from the contracting and hire industry, we aren't qualified engineers. But just through knowing what we wanted, we managed to get there."

Selway and Symes established Shannon Plant Sales and Hire near Bristol in 1999. The business involved both selling and hiring out plant equipment. However, in June 2010 they sold the hire centre and renamed the company **Shannon Plant (South West) Ltd.**

The plan was to sell a range of plant equipment including its very own forthcoming Solo range. "When we sold the hire centre we then had the money and time to actually put the efforts into getting the Solo dumper finished," says Selway.





▲ **The dumper can quickly and safely transport 500kg of materials up to 100m from the operator**



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