



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

**Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local
Government**

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Dear Mr Boros

Thank you for your email of 7 February about the definition of previously developed ('brownfield') land. I am sorry that the Department cannot offer *ad hoc* guidance on the interpretation of the Framework and its Glossary (Annex 2) or comment on the way in which a local authority ought to interpret it. The Framework was designed to be locally interpreted and applied.

Speaking informally, however, I suggest that former quarries are excluded from the definition of brownfield only if there are planning conditions or other enforceable measures in place to require their remediation. That is so that the work of planning authorities in putting such requirements in place is not wasted, and that the local community can have confidence that the land will be put back into a good state once quarrying has ended. In many cases, the original permission to quarry would have been granted only on condition the land will be remedied afterwards, and local people will understandably expect to see that restoration work carried out.

It is likely that the local authority will regard any other quarry as brownfield. The presence or absence of contamination or of buildings would not affect the issue (though these things may, of course, influence the local authority's view of what should happen to the site).

This Government is very keen to encourage re-use of suitable brownfield sites, especially for new homes, and on 5 March we will be putting forward for consultation our proposed revision of the National Planning Policy Framework including changes to the wording of policy on this issue. Yet it is important to say that the brownfield status of any land is no guarantee that planning permission will be granted for its redevelopment. The site may have taken on importance to wildlife, or else be in a poor location for sustainable re-use, or the form of redevelopment proposed may have unwelcome impacts.

In any event I would strongly encourage you to be guided by the local authority – and above all the Local Plan - as to what would be acceptable on a given site.

Yours sincerely,

ALAN C SCOTT

Planning policy adviser