

LAND FORUM: What is a brownfield?

1. The present government's land use policy is placing a great deal of emphasis on the use of 'brownfield' sites for development for housing. The 'permission in principle' that land on the 'brownfields suitable for development' registers gives the status of being a brownfield enormous and novel significance.
2. The current definition used by DCLG is that in the NPPF which uses the term as a synonym of previously developed land.

Previously developed land: Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure.

This excludes: land that is or has been occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill purposes where provision for restoration has been made through development control procedures; land in built-up areas such as private residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously-developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape in the process of time.

3. Yet the House of Commons Select Committee in its recommendations to the Department recommends that the "*Department draws up an **authoritative definition** of brownfield sites to which the presumption in favour of development proposed in the consultation will apply.*"
4. CABERNET proposed the following definition of brownfield:
 - **Brownfields are areas that:**
 - are affected by the former use and surrounding land;
 - are derelict or underused;
 - **may** have real or perceived contaminant problems;
 - are mainly in developed, urban areas, &
 - require intervention to bring them back to beneficial use.
5. Recommendation – the Land Forum should follow and where appropriate engage with any ongoing discussion on the definition of brownfield in the coming weeks and months.

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