



**British  
Geological Survey**  
NATURAL ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH COUNCIL

# User Guide Historic Land Use

Open Report OR/14/021





BRITISH GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

OPEN REPORT OR/14/021

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Maps and diagrams in this book use topography based on Ordnance Survey mapping.

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# Summary

The historic land use dataset contains the hand drawn boundaries for areas of land which have previously been affected by the extraction of minerals, including derelict land, restored quarries (filled and unfilled), tips and spoil heaps and wet areas resulting from mineral working for England and Wales.

The data was extracted from a set of paper maps formerly held by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government and show mineral planning information collated from the 1940s (retrospective to the 1930) to the mid 1980s when responsibility for mineral planning and the subsequent land use was devolved from central to local government for England and to the Welsh Assembly for Wales.

The dataset represents a ‘snapshot’ in time and although there is extensive coverage (approximately 14000 polygons) the extent and attribution is incomplete due to the limitations of the source material.

# 1 Introduction

Founded in 1835, the British Geological Survey (BGS) is the world's oldest national geological survey and the United Kingdom's premier centre for earth science information and expertise. The BGS provides expert services and impartial advice in all areas of geoscience. Our client base is drawn from the public and private sectors both in the UK and internationally.

Our innovative digital data products aim to help describe the ground surface and what's beneath across the whole of Great Britain. These digital products are based on the outputs of the BGS survey and research programmes and our substantial national data holdings. This data coupled with our in-house geo-scientific knowledge are combined to provide products relevant to a wide range of users in central and local government, insurance, housing and other industry, engineering and environmental business, and the British public.

Further information on all the digital data provided by the BGS can be found on our website at [BGS Our products](#). For further details on mineral planning and resources visit [Minerals UK](#) or by contacting:

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## 2 About the Historic Land Use Dataset

### 2.1 BACKGROUND

Between 2001 and 2003 the BGS received approximately 1400 1:25 000 scale paper maps and associated card index from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (now Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)). The maps, originally compiled by the Minerals Division of the Ministry of Housing and Local Government (MHLG), (DCLGs historic predecessor), contain hand drawn boundaries indicating land use present in areas of land that have been affected by the extraction of minerals in England. These 'MHLG' maps show mineral related land use collated from the 1940s (retrospectively to 1930) to the mid 1980s. The index cards provide supplementary information regarding name, operator, dates and relevant local planning authority.

In 2006 BGS obtained the equivalent maps, 200 in number, for Wales from the Welsh Assembly Government. However, the associated card index file no longer exists.

Attempts have been made to find the equivalent MHLG maps for Scotland. However, these have been unsuccessful.

The variable completeness of the datasets should be kept in mind when this material is being used. The principal aim of the data is to show areas of land that have received planning permission for the extraction of minerals.

Other datasets that are currently under development include:

### **Historic mineral planning permission data**

This dataset has been extracted from the same MHLG source map and indicates sites where mineral planning permission has been sought.

Categories include:

- mineral commodity
- Planning status (valid, withdrawn, revoked, refused)
- Notes on application progress, reconsideration

The principle aim of the data is to show areas where permission has been sought for the extraction of minerals.

### **BritPits**

The BritPits (an abbreviation of British Pits, and the word 'pits' is used here to include both surface quarries and underground mines) database holds information on:

- name of active mines and quarries
- geographic location
- address
- operator
- mineral planning authority
- geology
- mineral commodities produced
- end-uses where known

## **2.2 WHO MIGHT REQUIRE THIS DATA?**

This legacy dataset is important in the identification of areas which might formerly have been used for mineral extraction. Its historic nature means that no surface manifestation of previous workings may exist. The dataset may indicate restoration in terms of filled or unfilled quarries, but does not detail the criteria imposed by the MHLG or provide evidence as to the suitability for the future redevelopment of sites.

The identification of former mineral workings can assist land-use planners; rapidly identifying areas with potential problems and aid local government offices in making development plans by helping to define land suited to different uses. Other users of the data may include developers, homeowners, solicitors, loss adjusters, the insurance industry, architects and surveyors.

## **2.3 WHAT THE DATASET SHOWS?**

Data depicted on the source maps (for both England and Wales) and included in the dataset is the land use at each locality. Categories as: derelict areas, restored quarries (filled and unfilled), tips, heaps and spoil heaps and wet areas. The maintenance of the maps ended (mid 1985), some authority information had been updated recently but other areas had not been visited for many years.

The dataset contains a significant number of overlapping polygons where multiple mineral planning applications have been made in the same area. These may represent completion of multiple phases of working and subsequent abandonment, partial restoration of sites, phased or



total abandonment and consequent dereliction. It should be noted that overlapping polygon boundaries may be coincident in size and extent but in many cases they are not.

The dataset does not give any indication of areas where later applications to work have been made and carried out.

## 3 Technical Information

### 3.1 SCALE

The historic land use dataset was produced for use at 1:25 000 scale providing 25 m ground resolution.

### 3.2 FIELD DESCRIPTIONS

**Table 1 Attribute table field descriptions**

FIELD NAME	FIELD TYPE	DESCRIPTION
SITE_NAME	String	Name of the planning permission (provided by the Mineral Planning Authority (MPA) )
SITE_TYPE	String	Indicates whether a working is at surface, underground or both
EASTING	Double	Grid coordinate in metres, all numeric, of the centre of the site
NORTHING	Double	Grid coordinate in metres, all numeric, of the centre of the site
LAND_USE	String	Type of land use: derelict areas, tip and spoil heaps, restored quarry (filled and unfilled) wet areas.
SHEET	String	The national grid square which the application falls in
SOURCE_REF	String	MHLG reference number recorded from the original card index or map
PP_DB_NO	String	Internal BGS reference number
VERSION	String	This is version 1 of the dataset. It is a static dataset and no further updates are expected

### 3.3 CREATION OF THE DATASET

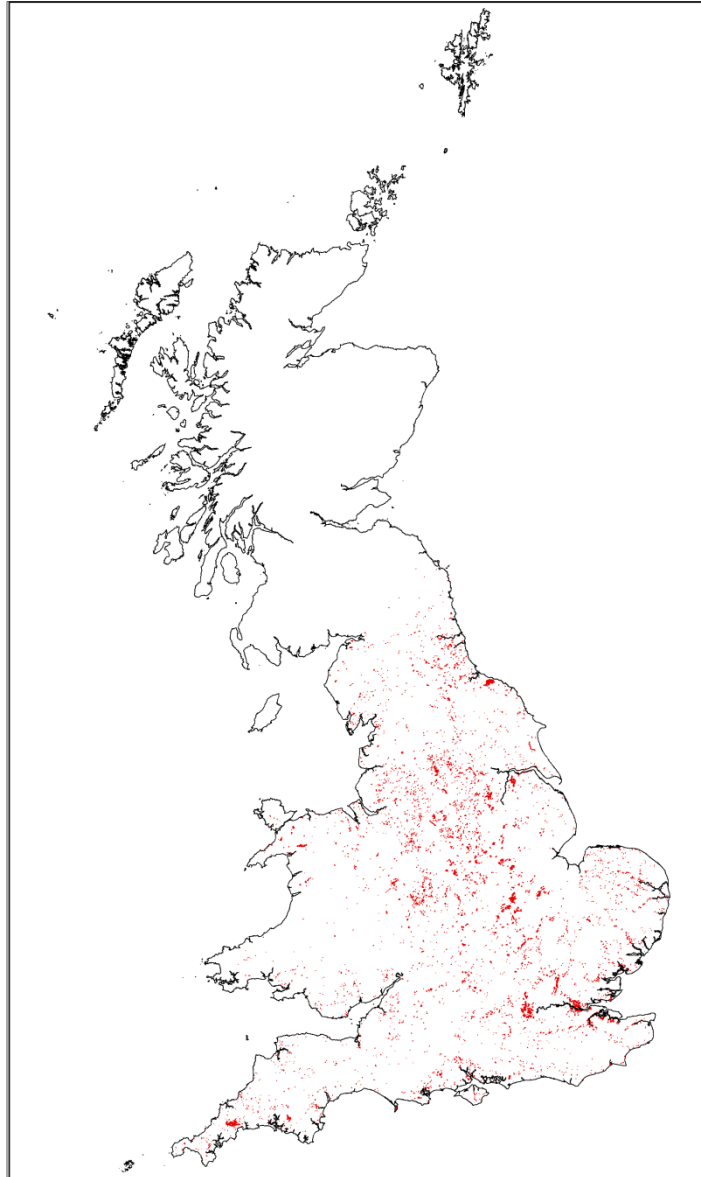
Historic land use data was digitised from the MHLG maps. Attribute information was gathered from the associated card index, map face, where available additional information was gathered from the back of the maps sheets and the map legend.

### 3.4 DATASET HISTORY

No previous digital versions of the dataset exist. It is not anticipated that the dataset will be updated in the foreseeable future.

### 3.5 COVERAGE

Dataset covers England and Wales, but no data is available for Scotland or the Isle of Man.



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**Figure 1 Coverage of the historic land use dataset**

### **3.6 DATA FORMAT**

The historic land use dataset has been created as vector polygons and are available in a range of GIS formats, including ArcGIS (.shp), ArcInfo Coverages and MapInfo (.tab). More specialised formats may be available but may incur additional processing costs.

### **3.7 LIMITATIONS**

- The historic land use dataset has been developed at 1:25 000 scale and must not be used at larger scales. All spatial searches against the data should therefore be conducted using a minimum 25 m buffer.
- This dataset has been produced by the collation and interpretation of data provided to the British Geological Survey. The data presented are based on the best available information, but are not comprehensive and their quality is variable. Any boundaries shown are, therefore, approximate.
- Data recorded should be treated as historic.

- Data recorded only applies to land use associated with permitted, withdrawn and refused mineral planning permission sites.
- Whilst every effort has been made to ensure consistency of approach during the capture of the data, the level of detail in any area reflects the accuracy of the information recorded on the original paper map.
- The variable completeness of the dataset should be kept in mind when using this data.
- Attribution is limited to the information available on the accompanying index card – in the case of permissions for Wales no supplementary information was available due to the lack of a card index.
- Whilst every effort has been made to ensure consistency of approach during the capture of the data, the level of detail in any area reflects the accuracy of the information recorded on the original paper MHLG map.
- The dataset represents a historic ‘snapshot’ in time and does not show subsequent applications, resubmissions or later reworking e.g. opencast reworking of waste tips. Details of these are held by Local Authority Mineral Planning Departments.

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