



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Rebecca Pow MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State

Seacole Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

T 03459 335577
defra.helpline@defra.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/defra

Mr Ian Evans
Chairman
SiLC Professional and Technical Panel
Devonshire House Business Centre
29-31 Elmfield Road
Bromley
BR1 1LT

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silc@silc.org.uk

Dear Ian,

Thank you for your letter of 18 June to the Secretary of State about sustainable and safe re-use of materials on brownfield development sites. I am replying as the Minister responsible for this policy area. I apologise for the delay in responding. Defra is currently dealing with high volumes of correspondence.

I welcome your input on this important issue and understand the difficulties associated with the redevelopment of historic landfill sites. We recognise the economic and social opportunities offered by the redevelopment of brownfield sites such as historic landfills, whilst ensuring their safe remediation before they are brought back into use.

As you indicate in your letter, the Definition of Waste Code of Practice, owned by CL:AIRE, provides a framework for making beneficial use of excavated material arising from remediation or land development projects. I can confirm that this code of practice is currently undergoing review and the Environment Agency (EA) is working closely with CL:AIRE on this, however I note that the historic landfill sites are outside the scope of this code of practice.

I understand the EA has recently been in contact with you about these issues and indicated that they would welcome further information on your suggestions about waste recovery and the surrender of permit declarations. As the lead agency on this matter the EA would be best placed to receive your detailed recommendations.

Thank you once again for taking the time to write about this important issue. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance with this or any other matters in the future.

REBECCA POW MP