

The Review of Old Mineral Permissions – Environmental Impact Assessment

April 2008



The Department has published its Consultation Paper on its proposals to apply the Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (NI) 1999 (1999 Regulations), with modifications, to applications for the review of old mineral planning permissions.

Since the first EIA Regulations in 1989 there has been consideration of the environmental effects of quarry development when granting planning permission. While planning permissions granted since 1990 have effective environmental conditions attached, there are a number of permissions dating from the 1970s and 1980s that do not. A number of dormant quarries have been able to return to active status, by virtue of their old permissions, without any review of their operating conditions.

The Planning Reform (NI) Order 2006 inserted provisions into the Planning (NI) Order 1991 which, when commenced, will require a review of old mineral planning permissions to ensure that they comply with modern environmental standards. The provisions will also prevent dormant quarries returning to active status, by virtue of their old permissions, without any review of their operating conditions. These provisions will be commenced at the same time as the proposed amendments to the 1999 EIA regulations are brought into operation.

The closing date for comments to the Consultation Paper is 4 July 2008.

Please note: The content of this article is for information purposes only and further advice should be sought from a professional advisor before any action is taken.