

## Appendix 1

It is not intended that this Council will respond to each question as there are no opencast coaling operations in the authority area and many of the questions are very specific to opencast coaling. However there are a number of issues raised in the consultation regarding restoration bonds and compliance monitoring that this applies also to quarries, landfill, offshore wind and shale gas extraction.

There is the need to be aware of risk in relation to these operations and any future collapse in the industry would have the same environmental impacts as the opencast coal industry. Although this consultation only addresses opencast coal many of the issues raised in the consultation could equally apply to quarries, landfill, offshore wind. Therefore it would be appropriate for Scottish Planning Policy to specify similar bond requirements for these industries and also to safeguard and mitigate potential future risks

The consultation highlights the need for effective bond arrangements to be in place as well as robust monitoring and enforcement of planning and other conditions. This is relevant not just for the restoration of opencast sites but should also apply to quarries and landfill sites. There have been recent press comments from the Auditor General regarding decommissioning and end of life restoration costs for sites such as quarries and landfill as well as opencast coal. It is believed that initial work has begun on this and further information is awaited. The purpose of restoration bonds is to address risk both financial and reputational and to safeguard and mitigate against potential negative environmental impacts and wider community concerns around the restoration of sites. This consultation does not address the adequacy of bond arrangements for quarries and landfill sites, etc. and it is recommended that similar arrangements are put in place for these industries as for opencast operations. Any failures in these industries could result in similar environmental and community concerns and potential financial and other repercussions to the Council.

The consultation also proposes that the Scottish Government and HOPS work to develop specific conditions for restoration and standard legal agreements. These proposals are welcomed and again should be extended to quarries, landfills, and wind farms.