



A National Statistics publication for Scotland



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
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PEOPLE, COMMUNITIES AND PLACES

SCOTTISH VACANT AND DERELICT LAND SURVEY 2020

Guidance Notes

Key steps in the Annual Process

1. Scottish Government Issue Guidance Note and Survey Templates.

A copy of the agreed previous year's survey is supplied to local authorities along with updated guidance.

2. Local Authorities Undertake Survey

Excel workbook SVDLS-A is used to record existing sites (new sites and sites that were in the previous survey that still need to be included). Workbook SVDLS-B is used to record sites wholly or partially brought back into productive use or naturalised since the last survey. It is also used to record sites that have not been included on SVDLS-A as they no longer meet the required definitions of vacant or derelict. Workbook SVDLS-C is used to record details of sites that have been split or joined with another site.

3. Local Authorities Submit Data to the Scottish Government

Local Authorities complete and return workbooks SVDLS-A, SVDLS-B and SVDLS-C to the Scottish Government by e-mail. They also supply GIS shapefiles for existing vacant and derelict sites (those that have been included on SVDLS-A). The Scottish Government then undertake a process of quality assurance and agree a final data set with each local authority.

4. Local Authorities undertake Local Analysis

Local Authorities analyse the data for their own purposes – feeding into Local Development Plans, Development Management, VDL Funding streams etc.

5. Meeting of SVDLS Working Group

Local Authorities and the Scottish Government meet to discuss any issues arising from the survey and any changes that may be required for future surveys.

6. Scottish Government publish the results

A summary of results from the survey are published on the Scottish Government website following confirmation of the statistics by local authorities along with a national vacant and derelict site register.

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1. Introduction

The Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Survey (SVDLS) is a survey undertaken to establish the extent and state of vacant and derelict land in Scotland. The survey has been operating since 1988 and is managed by the Scottish Government Communities Analysis Division.

Most Councils submit data annually with the survey base date of 31st March. The data collected provides an invaluable source of information relating to vacant and derelict sites and assists in reinforcing and justifying national policy established to bring about the re-use and regeneration of these land resources.

The latest published statistics and site register can be found at:

<https://www.gov.scot/collections/planning-statistics/>

A copy of this guidance is available at:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-vacant-and-derelict-land-survey-guidance-notes/>

COVID-19 Pandemic Special Considerations

Based on data provider feedback we have moved the survey return date from October to December to allow additional time to complete. The Scottish Government are still hoping to process and publish this data to the regular timetable but this may be subject to change. As the demand increases for statistics and data to measure the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have had to change our data gathering and release practices, focussing efforts on priority analysis and statistics. Our [statement](#) explains this further.

We are aware that changing priorities and resourcing may impact on your ability to conduct the survey, or may have an impact on the quality of the data you can submit. An option has been provided in the SVDLS-A spreadsheet to allow you to provide details of any COVID-19 related impacts on your survey return.

We will review whether it will be possible to publish the register and national figures in April 2021 once we know how many authorities will be able to complete the survey and to what extent they feel the quality of any survey data has been impacted. As well as deciding what format this year's publication will take a decision may also need to be taken about the use of National Statistics status. Again this will depend on the number of survey returns achieved and the extent of any data quality issues.

2. Completing the Survey

You will have been provided with an SVDLS-A spreadsheet with details of sites from the previous survey. You can use this as a starting point for your return or you can delete the rows with last years data and start with a blank sheet. You will also have received blank SVDLS-B and SVDLS-C spreadsheets.

2.1 Check all existing sites

Survey all sites that were included in the SVDLS-A data in the previous year's survey. You need to identify any change to the size or characteristics of the site.

A site visit will be necessary to identify physical characteristics of the site (you may find that keeping a photographic record is helpful). A desktop assessment will also be required to determine changes to ownership or the planning status of the site, etc.

Where development has been started but abandoned, consideration should be given to the likelihood of completion and the state of dereliction/unsightliness in deciding whether the site should be classified as vacant, derelict or neither. Decisions should be based on whether the site meets the characteristics of vacant land, vacant land and buildings or derelict land on the day of the survey (see sections [4](#) and [5](#)).

The designation of a site (whether it is zoned for development, or has planning consent or not), should not affect whether it should be retained on or removed from the survey. The decision should be based on whether the site still meets the required characteristics of vacant/derelict land (see sections [4](#) and [5](#)).

2.2 Update SVDLS-A for existing sites

No change to a site

If there have been no changes to a site the entry on SVDLS-A should be left as it was for the previous survey.

Increase in size of a site

If there is evidence that an area adjoining an existing site has become vacant or derelict (with the same characteristics as the existing site) then the existing site can be increased in size to include the additional area rather than adding another new site. However, if the existing site is distinct from the adjoining area (for example by site boundary or characteristic of dereliction) then a new site with its own characteristics should be added (see [Section 2.6](#)).

The size may also increase as a result of revised measurements. To record any increase in size change the size in SVDLS-A, update the East and North co-ordinates to reflect the new centre of the site, and add a comment noting the size has increased and why it has increased. For example 'now includes an adjacent area of land' or 'the size has been revised due to more accurate measuring'.

Decrease in size of a site

If the size of the site decreases for any reason the corresponding details in the SVDLS-A data should be updated.

If the new site size is still 0.1ha or greater:-

Change the size in SVDLS-A, update the East and North co-ordinates to reflect the new centre of the site and add a comment noting the size has decreased and why it has decreased. For example 'the size has been revised due to more accurate measuring', 'part of the site has been taken up for re-use' or 'part of the site no longer meets the requirements'.

If the reduction in size is because part of the site has been reused, become naturalised or no longer meets the requirements for classification as vacant or derelict land then details should be recorded in SVDLS-B (see Sections [2.3](#) and [2.4](#)). If the decrease is due to revised measurements there is no need to record any details of the decrease on SVDLS-B.

If the new site size is less than 0.1ha:-

The site should be removed from SVDLS-A as it no longer meets the requirements for classification as vacant or derelict land in the survey. The removal should be recorded in SVDLS-B (see Section [2.4](#)).

Splitting a site

If a site reduces in size as a result of being partially brought back into use, the remaining vacant and derelict part may no longer form a single, contiguous site. Where this is the case, each discrete smaller site should be recorded separately in SVDLS-A.

The details for the original site should be changed to reflect the largest of the new areas, including updating the East and North co-ordinates to reflect the centre of the site. Each remaining discrete area should be added to SVDLS-A with a new site code but flagged as an existing site with the original site code noted in the 'prevcode' column. See [Section 6](#) for full details of what to record.

In addition the original site code and the associated new site code(s) should be recorded in SVDLS-C. This will be used to help us understand what has happened to the site. See [Section 8](#) for full details of what should be recorded in SVDLS-C.

Joining sites

Two or more sites may become linked as a result of the addition of land between them becoming vacant or derelict.

If there is no significant difference between the properties of the new composite site and the original sites the details for one of the original sites on SVDLS-A may be updated to reflect the size and properties of the composite site and a comment added noting the change due to inclusion of another site and adjoining area. The other original site should be removed from SVDLS-A and details of the join added to SVDLS-C recording the original site code and code of the site it has been joined with. See [Section 8](#) for full details of what to record in SVDLS-C.

Alternatively if the properties of the new composite site and original sites are notably different a new site should be created. The decision as to whether to describe the site as new or existing should be made on the basis of whether or not the area of new land significantly exceeds that formerly contained within the old sites.

The original sites should be removed from SVDLS-A and details of the join added to SVDLS-C recording the original site code and code of the site it has been replaced with. See [Section 8](#) for full details of what to record in SVDLS-C.

Change to other characteristics of a site

If changes have been identified to the characteristics of the site but the site still meets the criteria for being included as vacant or derelict then SVDLS-A should be updated accordingly and a comment added. Some changes may require changes to be made to several variables. For example if the site type is changing you will also need to change what has been recorded for derelict characteristics. See [Section 6](#) for full details of what should be recorded in SVDLS-A.

2.3 Populate SVDLS-B for any site or part-site re-used

If there is evidence that physical development is underway at a site consideration should be given to the likelihood of completion to determine if the site should be classed as re-used or remain listed as vacant or derelict. A site should no longer be considered vacant or derelict if development is complete.

If a site is in temporary use but is expected to revert to vacant or derelict status before the next survey it should remain listed.

If the full site is no longer considered vacant or derelict the site should be removed from SVDLS-A and added to SVDLS-B with details of the new use for the site and any funding received for its development. See [Section 7](#) for full details of what to record in each column of SVDLS-B.

If only part of a site is classed as re-used the site record in SVDLS-A should be updated to reflect the reduced size of the site that remains vacant or derelict, the East and North co-ordinates should be updated to reflect the new centre of the reduced site and where appropriate updates should be made to other characteristics. It would be helpful if a comment was added indicating that there had been part uptake of the site.

The site should also be added to SVDLS-B recording the size and co-ordinates for the part re-used along with details of the new use for the site and any funding received for its development. Details of all re-used areas should be recorded in SVDLS-B including part-uptake of less than 0.1 hectares. See [Section 7](#) for full details of what to record in SVDLS-B.

2.4 Populate SVDLS-B for any site or part-site no longer classed as vacant or derelict

Sites that have become naturalised

See [Section 5.3](#) for guidance on classifying sites as naturalised.

If the full site is considered to have naturalised, the site should be removed from SVDLS-A and the site added to SVDLS-B with a new use of 33 (naturalised). See [Section 7](#) for full details of what to record in SVDLS-B.

If only part of a site is considered to have naturalised the site record in SVDLS-A should be updated to reflect the reduced size of the site that remains vacant or derelict, the East and North co-ordinates should be updated to reflect the new centre of the reduced site and where appropriate updates should be made to other characteristics. It would be helpful if a comment was added indicating that part of the site had naturalised.

The site should also be added to SVDLS-B recording the size and co-ordinates for the part naturalised and any funding received for its development. New use should be set to 33 (naturalised). Details of all naturalised areas should be recorded in SVDLS-B including part-uptake of less than 0.1 hectares. See [Section 7](#) for full details of what to record in SVDLS-B.

Sites no longer greater than 0.1ha

If, as a result of revised measurements or partial re-use of the site, the remaining area classed as vacant or derelict is less than 0.1ha the site should be removed from SVDLS-A and details of the site recorded on SVDLS-B with a new use of 40 (site below 0.1ha). See [Section 7](#) for full details of what to record.

Sites that no longer meet the definitions of vacant and derelict land

This could include situations where the policy or future plans covering the site have changed or where new information is available which disqualifies the site from meeting the definitions. For example evidence is available showing that a greenbelt site formally considered to be contaminated is clear of contaminants.

The site should be removed from SVDLS-A and details of the site recorded in SVDLS-B with a new use of 34 (removed for definitional reasons). Where appropriate a comment should be added to the SVDLS-B entry noting why the land is being removed and if the removal should be applied just for the current year or if it was also incorrectly included in previous years and so should be removed from historical data. See [Section 7](#) for full details of what to record in SVDLS-B.

2.5 Identify new sites

Finding new sites

It is often difficult to identify new sites given that there is no requirement for land owners to notify local authorities that land has fallen out of use. The following suggested methods may be useful depending on local factors:

- Take note of any new sites you see incidentally while travelling or when surveying sites that were included in the previous year's survey.
- Visit sites that have been identified in other ways, such as via
 - planning systems
 - demolition warrants
 - dangerous building notices
 - planning officers
 - news articles or other publicity
 - information from Housing Land Audits/ Employment Land Audits
 - building control
 - committee reports
 - GIS/ historic maps/ aerial imagery
 - community councils
- Request information from other departments/ organisations – for example regeneration departments, the Scottish Property Network or the Corporate Address Gazetteer.

Sections [4](#) and [5](#) give details of requirements for sites to be included as vacant or derelict on the survey.

For stalled sites where development has been started but abandoned, or where a developer has built a few units but progress has stopped and there is an area of land that is left vacant, consideration should be given to the likelihood of completion, whether or not the developer has left the site, and the state of dereliction/ unsightliness in deciding whether the site, or part of the site, should be classified as vacant, derelict or neither. Decisions should be based on whether the site meets the characteristics of vacant land, vacant land and buildings or derelict land on the day of the survey.

The designation of a site (whether it is zoned for development, or has planning consent or not), should not affect whether it should be added to the survey. The decision should be based on whether the site meets the required characteristics of vacant/ derelict land.

Former surface coal mines

Opencast coal sites normally have an associated restoration bond in place that provides a financial guarantee so that land can be returned to its original condition upon the expiry of the relevant operating licence. Sites should not be reported in the survey results where the value of the bond covers the necessary restoration work, as there is an expectation that the necessary restoration work will be carried within a reasonable amount of time. However, if there is a shortfall in restoration bonds that means that the

level of financial guarantees fall short of the amount of money required to return all the land to its original condition then there may be areas that can be classified as derelict sites on the following basis:

- *Large areas should be broken down into smaller areas to distinguish between parcels of land that still need to be restored to their original condition, parcels that are unworked and parcels derelict or naturalised.*
- *Areas of abandoned sites where the only element of activity is the maintenance of the site for health and safety reasons can be considered derelict.*
- *Areas of land which have been subject to partial restoration and are identified as being unsafe or of very poor environmental quality and requiring further remediation can be recorded as derelict.*
- *Areas which have been subject to partial restoration which are below the standard expected within the original planning permissions, but which are not considered to be of such poor quality as they would present a significant health and safety danger or environmental risk, are not considered derelict.*
- *Any former compounds, coal wash areas or haul routes that are still being used for another operational site are not considered derelict.*

For examples of surface coal mines that have previously been included in see Section 3 of the [latest publication](#).

2.6 Add new sites to SVDLS-A

Details for any new sites should be added to SVDLS-A with a unique site code. See [Section 6](#) for details of what should be recorded.

3. Returning the Survey

3.1 Data Files to Return

The following excel files should be returned to the Scottish Government by each Local Authority:

- **SVDLS-A** containing details of all sites currently meeting the survey classification of vacant or derelict.
- **SVDLS-B** containing details of all sites or parts of sites that have been removed from the survey for any reason since the previous year.
- **SVDLS-C** containing details of any sites that have been split or amalgamated with other sites.
- **AREA SURVEYED** containing details of the total land area of settlements with a population of 2,000 or over and also the area of land surveyed for urban vacant land in settlements with a population of under 2,000.

Before returning the amended data, please run the error checks for SVDLS-A and SVDLS-B and where possible correct any issues identified. Details of any errors found when running the check will be displayed in the 'Error-Report' sheet and the cell in error will be highlighted on the data sheet.

3.2 GIS Files to Return

The following files should be returned to the Scottish Government by each Local Authority:

GIS shapefiles for existing vacant and derelict sites (those that you have included on the SVDLS-A List). The shapefile should contain a separate polygon for each vacant or derelict site.

The following attributes should be included:

- Site code – this should **match exactly** the value of the sitecode used in SVDLS-A
- Site name
- Site type

When returning the amended data, please return files that are compatible with ArcMap.

If shapefiles are not available when returning your data files please note in your return email when you expect these to be available. If you do not expect to be able to supply GIS files for the current survey please indicate whether or not you anticipate these being available for future surveys.

3.3 How to Return

Please return files by e-mail to Planning_Stats@gov.scot copying in Janice Blanc janice.blanc@gov.scot

If you have any questions about what files should be returned or how to return them or any queries about what they should include please contact:-

Janice Blanc

janice.blanc@gov.scot

0131 244 0439

or

Charles Brown

charles.brown@gov.scot

0131 244 0870

4. Vacant Sites

4.1 What sites should be classed as vacant land

Vacant land is previously developed land, without physical constraint, which the Planning Authority has indicated is currently available for redevelopment.

For the purposes of this survey, a site is categorised as vacant land if it satisfies all seven of the following conditions:

1. It must be at least 0.1 hectares in size;
2. It must be located within a settlement (as defined in the Development Plan);
3. It must have previously been developed or, if future development is proposed for previously undeveloped open space, the site should have been prepared in anticipation of this future development (i.e. there should at least have been basic ground preparatory works to create a development platform). If there is any uncertainty about whether a site should be considered vacant or open space then do not include as a vacant site on the survey.
4. It must not be in use (except as temporary open space). If the land appears to be open space or another soft-end use and is being used for the purpose for which it is held in the Development Plan then do not classify the land as vacant. However, if the land has a clear alternative intended purpose in the Development Plan (for example, development for housing or a plot in an industrial estate) then it may be classified as vacant if it also meets all the other required criteria.
5. It must be ready for new development (i.e. there are no physical impediments caused by a previous development which would prevent new development).
6. It must have a new use intended for it in the Plan (or via Planning Permission).
7. It must not include a useable building.

4.2 What sites should be classed a vacant land and buildings

This classification should only be used if it is not possible to identify a plot of vacant land on its own without including some associated non-derelict buildings.

The site must meet the first six of the criteria required for vacant land and also one of the following two additional criteria:

- The buildings are scheduled for demolition and are not currently classified as derelict.

Or

- Demolition of the buildings is not anticipated (or the buildings' future is unknown) but the buildings are a minor part of the site in relation to the vacant land element, and the site boundary cannot be easily redrawn to omit the building (see [ANNEX B](#) for some examples).

It can be difficult to decide if sites that contain newly vacated buildings (such as school buildings) should be included in the survey. There are often instances of old school buildings where the building takes up most of the plot area. The school may be boarded up but not scheduled for demolition, in which case this should not be included on the register as the survey does not cover vacant buildings on their own with no additional land component. However, if the building has remained vacant for 5 years or more then you may wish to consider including the site in the survey. The development potential of the site might help with this decision.

Buildings with a 'To Let' or 'For Sale' sign should not be included in the survey until such time that they acquire the characteristics of derelict buildings (i.e. they are in such a state of disrepair that they are incapable of development without rehabilitation or they have a previous un-remediated use that could constrain future development). If this is the case then classify the site as derelict. Minor repairs do not classify as rehabilitation.

It may be useful for you to keep your own record of vacant buildings that you can check for future surveys as a potential future supply of derelict sites.

4.3 Temporary use of vacant land for storage, parking etc.

In some cases, vacant sites may be being used on a temporary basis for activities such as over-spill car parking for a nearby attraction. If this kind of short term use is not identified in the latest adopted local plan or council approved replacement, then the site should still be included in the survey. However, if the land appears to be being used for development then, even if it has a clear alternative intended purpose, do not classify the land as vacant.

4.4 Reclassifying vacant land

If additional information becomes available that indicates the existence of constraints to development e.g. ground contamination, invasive species, etc. then the site can be reclassified as derelict land. This should be done by updating SVDLS-A with the new details and adding a comment to note why the classification has changed.

5. Derelict Sites

5.1 What sites should be classed as derelict

A site should be classed as derelict if it is on previously developed land which has a physical constraint caused by its previous use which hampers its redevelopment or naturalisation.

This category combines what was previously separately defined as derelict land, derelict buildings, derelict land and buildings and operational land defined as derelict.

For the purposes of this survey, a derelict site can be located anywhere in Scotland (both within and outwith settlements) but must satisfy all six of the conditions below:

1. It must be at least 0.1 hectares in size.
2. It must have previously been developed, this includes sites that have only had basic ground preparatory works to create a development platform.
3. It must not be in use (except as temporary open space). If the land appears to be open space and is being used for the purpose for which it is held in the Development Plan then do not classify the land as derelict. If not then it may be classified as derelict if it also meets all the other required criteria.
4. It must not be ready for new development without rehabilitation (i.e. there must be an impediment, caused by a previous development, which would prevent new development).
5. It must not be a Scheduled Ancient Monument or Cemetery.
6. It must not include a useable building.

Checking the history of a site may help inform the decision whether to classify as vacant or derelict. Where the previous use is likely to result in characteristics of dereliction (e.g. manufacturing works requiring the removal of concrete foundations) then consider defining the site as derelict. If you are unsure whether the site requires rehabilitation prior to new development classify the land as vacant not derelict. This can always be changed in a future survey if new information becomes available. Section 5.2 contains further information on types of rehabilitation that might be required for derelict land.

If part of an operational site appears to meet the criteria for inclusion as Derelict Land, then only that part of the site should be included. Where this is not possible, assess whether priority is given to the operational use or to rehabilitation of the site (within 5 years). If rehabilitation is not possible or appropriate within 5 years, exclude the entire site from the survey.

5.2 Rehabilitation categories of derelict sites

The survey seeks to identify what type of rehabilitation is required in order to bring land back into productive use. For the purposes of the survey three categories of rehabilitation have been identified.

Category 1 - The demolition, levelling or clearing of fixed structures or foundations

This includes any structures that require demolition, levelling or clearing such as:

- *Sites with buildings that are not useable, including buildings that are fire damaged, open to the elements (not wind or watertight), structurally unsound or remain only as a shell (just the external wall(s) remain);*
- *Sites with foundations / piles / fuel tanks and other subterranean structures;*
- *Sites with internal Roads / Parking Areas or other tarmac / asphalt / concrete surfaces.*

This category may include abandoned sites where development has ceased abruptly, where there is no developer activity and any of the above components are found on site e.g. abandoned foundations. It does not include stalled sites where the developer has postponed or delayed development, or where the site (or part of) is for sale. Stalled sites should only be included where the site has been abandoned.

Category 2 - The remediation of land where the presence of chemicals or other substances/elements/contaminants is removed from the site, capped or treated.

This includes any surface or subsurface contaminants which would require treatment, removal of substances, or capping such as:

- *Removal of radioactive substances, asbestos or other dangerous materials*
- *Capping of Landfill or other worked sites with inert material*
- *Treatment of Japanese Knotweed or other invasive plant species. A guide to the identification of invasive non-native plants can be found on the Scottish Natural Heritage website (<http://www.snh.gov.uk/protecting-scotlands-nature/safeguarding-biodiversity/nonnative-species/id-and-report/>).*

Category 3 - The clearing of large amounts of left over and inert material or dealing with other impediments associated with former mine workings.

This includes the remediation of:

- *Bings and other large amounts of rubble such as coal, slag, ash, whinstone, stone, and other extracted materials.*
- *Grouting of voids created by minerals or other historic activity.*

Note that some of the characteristics that indicate which category of remediation are required are not visible from a site visit and may need to be identified from other sources such as historic maps, site investigation (SI) reports or other desk top evidence.

5.3 Reclassifying derelict land

From derelict to vacant

Some sites will have had their impediments removed or treated (i.e. clearing of rubble or decontamination of the site) and therefore these sites should change status from Derelict Land to Vacant Land.

If the site is within a settlement this should be done by updating SVDLS-A with the new details and adding a comment to note why the classification has changed.

If the site is in the countryside the site should be removed from SVDLS-A as the survey does not cover vacant land in the countryside. Details of the site should be included in SVDLS-B with a new use of 25 (reclaimed to vacant land pending new use).

From derelict to naturalised

A site or part of a site should be removed from the register if it is considered to have naturalised. To be classed as naturalised the site must meet one of the following two conditions:

- *The site has reverted to a natural state;*
- Or
- *The site appears to have blended back through a degree of vegetation into the surrounding landscape*

In addition, the area to be re-classified as naturalised should no longer be limited in its ability to further mature in a naturalistic way by the legacy of activity that caused the site to first become derelict.

Sites where greening is temporary should remain on the register. For example, where a site is greened to improve the unsightliness or in anticipation of future development.

Naturalisation is a dynamic process that is best judged based on a review of the site over time through repeat visits. One option is to carry out regular inspections at similar times of the year and to photograph sites from similar locations on each visit. This could perhaps be supplemented by on-line aerial photography and GIS imagery that may be available internally.

If a full site is being re-classified as naturalised the site should be removed from SVDLS-A and details of the site included in SVDLS-B with a new use of 33 (naturalised site). See [Section 7](#) for full details of what to record in SVDLS-B.

If only part of the site is being re-classified as naturalised the entry for the site on SVDLS-A should be updated to reflect the reduced size still considered derelict and a comment should be added noting part of the site has been naturalised. Details of the part of the site that has naturalised should be included in SVDLS-B with a new use of 33 (Naturalised site). See [Section 7](#) for full details of what to record in SVDLS-B.

6. SVDLS-A

6.1 Variables in SVDLS-A

SVDLS-A should only be used to record land that should remain on the register.

Table 1 lists all the variables for which data should be recorded for sites in the SVDLS-A data set. Sections 6.2 to 6.19 give details of what needs to be recorded in each column.

All variables, apart from comments, must be populated.

Please do not remove or re-order the columns in the Excel worksheet. If you wish to add any additional information please add extra columns after the comments column. This will reduce the time spent on standardising data and help us process your returns more quickly.

Table 1 – SVDLS-A

Name	Description	Valid Values
COUNCODE	Council Code	See Table 2
SITECODE	Unique LA Reference for Site	Up to 20 characters
PREVCODE	Code used in previous survey	Up to 20 characters
DBHIST	Flag to indicate if new or existing site	1=new, 2=existing
NAME	Site Name	Up to 50 characters
ADDRESS1	Site Address 1	Up to 100 characters
ADDRESS2	Site Address 2	Up to 100 characters
ADDRESS3	Site Address 3	Up to 100 characters
SITESIZE	Site Size	To 2 decimal places
SITETYPE	Site Type (Vacant or Derelict)	See Table 3
OWNER1	Owner 1	See Table 4
OWNER2	Owner 2	See Table 4
INSPYY	Year of first Inspection	YYYY e.g. 2017
TIMEVD	Flag to indicate when became Vacant/Derelict	See Table 5
PREVUSE	Previous Use	See Table 6
DERCHAR	Derelict Characteristics	See Table 7
INTRLOCN2	Site Location (Settlement or countryside)	See Table 8
DEVPOT	Developability	See Table 9
EAST	East Coordinate	Must enter both East and North or enter OSGRID
NORTH	North Coordinate	Must enter both East and North or enter OSGRID
OSGRID	OS Grid Reference	Include 100km letters e.g. NT09767461 Leave blank if both East and North entered
Comment	Any comments to help identify reasons for change	

6.2 COUNCODE – Council code

Enter the appropriate code from Table 2.

Table 2 – Council codes

Council	Code	Council	Code
Aberdeen City	100	Inverclyde	280
Aberdeenshire	110	Loch Lomond & The Trossachs	15
Angus	120	Midlothian	290
Argyll & Bute	130	Moray	300
Clackmannanshire	150	North Ayrshire	310
Dumfries & Galloway	170	North Lanarkshire	320
Dundee City	180	Orkney Islands	330
East Ayrshire	190	Perth & Kinross	340
East Dunbartonshire	200	Renfrewshire	350
East Lothian	210	Scottish Borders	355
East Renfrewshire	220	Shetland Islands	360
Edinburgh, City of	230	South Ayrshire	370
Na h-Eileanan Siar	235	South Lanarkshire	380
Falkirk	240	Stirling	390
Fife	250	West Dunbartonshire	395
Glasgow City	260	West Lothian	400
Highland	270		

6.3 SITECODE – LA Reference Code for Site

Each site should be allocated a site code, which will uniquely identify the site within the authority. This can be up to 20 characters long. This can be the site reference that is used in your own audit processes.

New sites should be given codes that have NOT previously been used to refer to other sites.

6.4 PREVCODE – LA Reference used in previous survey

If the site was referenced using a different site code in the previous survey enter the previous code. Please leave blank if there has been no change in the LA reference for the site since the last survey.

This will generally be used when a site is partially developed and the remaining land is split into separate sites but may also be used if the sitecode is changed for other reasons.

6.5 DBHIST – Flag to indicate if new or existing site

Sites which were not included in the survey in the previous year should be flagged as new – set DBHIST to 1. This may include sites that were on the register several years previously, were re-claimed for a period of time and have fallen out of use again.

Sites which were included in the survey in the previous year should be flagged as existing – set DBHIST to 2. This includes sites which have been amended, reclaimed from derelict to vacant status or consist of a residual part of a site which has been partly brought back into use since the last survey.

6.6 NAME – Site Name

A site name must be entered.

6.7 ADDRESS1, ADDRESS2, ADDRESS3 – Site Address

An address must be entered and should be that by which the site is commonly known or will be known. Common abbreviations are acceptable e.g. ST for street.

All three address columns must be completed, NIL should be used if details for any of the address columns is not available.

6.8 SITESIZE – Site size in hectares

Enter the site size, in hectares, to two decimal places.

Sites must be at least 0.1 hectare to be included.

When defining the boundary of a large site that may have different projected end uses it may be best practice to define the largest extent as one site. As the site is taken up it can be split into different sites as required.

6.9 SITETYPE – Vacant or Derelict

Enter the code that matches the site type as listed in Table 3. See Sections [4](#) and [5](#) for guidance on classifying sites.

Table 3 – Site Type

Type	Code
Derelict	11
Vacant Land	21
Vacant Land and Buildings	22

6.10 OWNER1, OWNER2 – Site Ownership

OWNER1

Enter the code of the current owner or last known owner (see [Table 4](#)). Where sites have two or more owners, please enter the code for the predominant owner.

998 (Not Applicable) is not a valid code for OWNER1.

OWNER2

Enter the code of the current second owner or last known second owner (see [Table 4](#)). Where sites have more than two owners, please enter the code for the second most predominant owner.

If the site has a single owner enter 998 (Not applicable).

999 should only be entered for OWNER2 if ownership is unknown for the site and 999 has also been recorded for OWNER1.

Table 4 – Site Owner

Public		Private	
Scottish Government	102	Private Steel	401
Property Services Agency	103	Private Gas	402
Defence	104	Private Telecommunications	403
Health Boards	105	Scottish Power	404
Local Authority	106	Hydro Electric	405
Other National/Local Government	110	Harbour Trust	407
Royal Mail/Post Office	203	Network Rail/ Rail Franchise Holder	409
Public Port Authority	204	Private Coal Company	410
British Waterways	205	Private Port Company	411
Water Authority	206	Other Private	420
Coal Authority	207		
Other Nationalised Industry or Statutory undertakers	220		
Scottish Enterprise	301	Unknown/Not Applicable	
Highlands and Islands Enterprise	302	Unknown Public	100
Housing Association	303	Unknown Private	400
Urban Regeneration Company	304	Not applicable (i.e. only one owner)	998
Other non-Crown	310	Ownership unknown	999

6.11 INSPYY – Year of first inspection

Enter year of first inclusion in SVDLS. The format should be YYYY e.g. 2017. The value for INSPYY may differ from the time when a site became vacant/ derelict (see TIMEVD).

6.12 TIMEVD – When site became vacant or derelict

Enter the code from Table 5 to indicate the period when the site became vacant or derelict:

Table 5 - TIMEVD

Year	TimeVD	Year	TimeVD	Year	TimeVD
1980 or earlier	1	2005	7	2014	17
1981-1985	2	2006	8	2015	18
1986-1990	3	2007	10	2016	19
1991-1995	4	2008	11	2017	20
1996-2000	5	2009	12	2018	21
2001-2004	6	2010	13	2019	22
		2011	14	2020	23
		2012	15	Unknown	9
		2013	16		

6.13 PREVUSE – Previous use

Enter the code from Table 6 that indicates the predominant use made of the site before it became vacant/ derelict.

For vacant land, this field is used to confirm that the site is ‘brownfield’. For derelict land, this field is used to establish the use that resulted in dereliction – this may not necessarily be the last use of the site.

Table 6 – Previous use

PREVUSE	CODE
Agriculture includes animal husbandry, allotments etc.	10
Forestry/Woodland includes Sawmill etc.	20
Community & Health includes hospital, sewage works, refuse tip, scrapyards, recycling etc.	30
Defence includes munitions, oil storage, airfields, ranges etc.	40
Education	50
Passive Open Space	60
Recreation & Leisure (excluding Passive Open Space) includes swimming pool, ice rink, stadium, formal open space, commercial leisure (cinema, pub), etc.	70
Manufacturing includes chemical products, metal works, ship building, gas, paper, brickworks, food processing etc.	80
Other General industrial (excluding manufacturing)	90
Mineral Activity includes coal, crushed rock, sand/gravel, shale, fireclay, limestone etc.	100
Offices	110
Residential - Housing	120
Residential - Hotels, Hostels etc.	125
Retailing includes petrol station etc.	130
Storage includes oil, gas, other chemicals, etc.	140
Transport includes rail, vehicle parking etc.	150
Utility Services	160
Wholesale Distribution	170
Business Class	180
Nature Conservation	190
Green/Environmental includes renewable energy etc.	230
Prepared Ground	240
Other	888
Unknown	999

6.14 DERCHAR – Derelict Characteristics

For all sites classified as derelict, enter the code from Table 7 that indicates what characteristics the sites currently have that necessitate some form of rehabilitation prior to any new development or use.

Use code 99 (Not Applicable) for all sites classified as vacant and any derelict site where the characteristics are unknown.

The three categories of rehabilitation of Derelict Land used for this survey are summarised below. Further detail of the categories can be found in [Section 5.2](#).

Category 1 - *The remains of buildings (either whole or partial) in or on the land, associated with the previous use(s).*

Category 2 - *The possible presence of left-over chemicals or other substances/elements from a previous use(s) which may be in or on the land (this can include Japanese Knotweed¹).*

Category 3 - *Large amounts of left over rubble, stone deposits and other abandoned physical material typically associated with former mineral works, mines etc.*

Table 7 - DERCHAR

Categories	DERCHAR	Categories	DERCHAR
Category 1 Only	1	Categories 1 and 2	4
Category 2 Only	2	Categories 1 and 3	5
Category 3 Only	3	Categories 2 and 3	6
Unknown/Not Applicable	99	All 3 Categories	7

6.15 INTRLOCN2 – Settlement or countryside

Enter the appropriate code from Table 8 to indicate the location of the site. Note that, by definition, only derelict sites can be located within the countryside.

Table 8 – Intrlocn2

Location	Intrlocn2
Site in settlement with population equal to or over 2,000	1
Site in settlement with population under 2,000	2
Site in countryside	3

The website of the National Records of Scotland (NRS), includes a list of all Scottish settlements with populations greater than 500, and their size. This list can be used to identify settlements with populations greater than 2,000. It can be viewed at:

<https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/population/population-estimates/settlements-and-localities>

Shapefiles and maps of settlements are also available

<https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/geography/our-products/settlements-and-localities-dataset/settlements-and-localities-digital-boundaries>

¹ Japanese Knotweed also occurs in open spaces, fields, and parks etc. where it will not prevent the beneficial use of the land for its intended purpose. In this case it would be considered as an invasive weed rather than an impediment to the use of the land and would not make the land derelict.

Although NRS shape files give an overview of settlement boundaries, use of further local knowledge of greenbelt and brownfield areas within the LDP to help identify the location is also recommended.

6.16 DEVPOT – Development potential

This categorisation is intended to combine the recorded information and planning status of a site, with a considered view of the likelihood of its development for either 'hard' or 'soft' end use. This should be reviewed and updated as required at each survey.

Table 9 - DEVPOT

Development potential		DEVPOT
Developable - Short Term	<p>There is an expectation of development within the next five years.</p> <p>Land with current Planning permission (full planning permission, matters specified in conditions, or planning permission in principle) has been granted or is likely to be granted within the next year.</p> <p>There is local authority and other agency interest in the development of the site.</p> <p>There is current developer interest in the site.</p> <p>It should require minimal funding, or already have funding committed, to realise development.</p>	1
Developable - Medium Term	<p>There is an expectation of development in between five and ten years.</p> <p>Land on an effective or marketable land supply.</p> <p>May have planning permission in principle, or an expectation that this will be granted.</p>	2
Developable - Undetermined	<p>Unlikely to be developed for at least 10 years.</p> <p>Land on non-effective or potentially marketable land supply.</p> <p>Likely that significant funding would be required to realise development.</p>	3
Uneconomic to Develop/ Soft End Use	<p>Excessive funding would likely be required to bring the site to a developable state.</p> <p>A site identified for long term 'soft end' use in the current development plan (for example, open space, agriculture, woodland planting, landscaping etc.). Sites with temporary soft end uses should NOT be coded here.</p> <p>Sites with statutory constraints on development.</p>	4
Unknown (uncertain/ insufficient information)	<p>Land with no planning consent, which is not on a land supply and/or not obviously suitable for soft end use.</p> <p>Typically new sites where there is insufficient information to determine potential for development.</p>	9

6.17 EAST, NORTH – East and North co-ordinates

Please provide the Easting and Northing of the site centroid.

This information is used to help determine proximity to sites so please ensure the co-ordinates are updated to reflect the new centre after any changes to the site size or position.

If Easting and Northing co-ordinates are not available please leave these fields blank and enter the value for OSGRID.

Further information on how to record a site centroid along with some examples is available in [Annex A](#).

6.18 OSGRID – Ordnance Survey grid reference

This should be left blank if Easting and Northing co-ordinates have been entered.

Please provide the Ordnance Survey Grid Reference for the centroid of the site to the nearest 10m. Include the 100km letters e.g. NT09767461.

This information is used to help determine proximity to sites so please ensure the grid reference is updated to reflect the new centre after any changes to the site size or position.

6.19 COMMENTS

Please use this to record notes that indicate why changes have been made to the site since the last survey. This will help our understanding of the site and reduce the number of data queries we need to ask you about.

7. SVDLS-B

7.1 Variables in SVDLS-B

SVDLS-B should only be used to record details of land being removed from the register, including part uptake of sites where the area of uptake is less than 0.1 hectares.

Table 10 lists all the variables for which data should be recorded in SVDLS-B data set.

National Land Use Classification (NLUC) was recently added as a potential alternative to the New Use classifications that had been used historically. The option of using NLUC to report on the areas of land brought back into use is being reviewed using the data supplied for 2017 and 2018 and future surveys may no longer require both variables. However, for the 2019 survey please continue to enter values for both NEWUSE and NLUC.

Table 10 – Variables in SVDLS-B

Name	Description	Valid Values
<u>COUNCODE</u>	Council Code	<u>See Table 2</u>
<u>SITECODE</u>	Unique LA Reference for Site	Up to 20 characters
<u>PREVCODE</u>	LA Reference used in previous survey	Up to 20 characters
<u>NAME</u>	Site Name	Up to 50 characters
<u>ADDRESS1</u>	Site Address 1	Up to 100 characters
<u>ADDRESS2</u>	Site Address 2	Up to 100 characters
<u>ADDRESS3</u>	Site Address 3	Up to 100 characters
<u>SITESIZE</u>	Area brought back into use or reclaimed	To 2 decimal places
<u>EAST</u>	East Coordinate	Must enter both East and North or enter OSGRID
<u>NORTH</u>	North Coordinate	Must enter both East and North or enter OSGRID
<u>OSGRID</u>	OS Grid Reference	Leave blank if both East and North entered
<u>INUSEMM</u>	Month brought back into use	MM e.g. 03 for March
<u>INUSEYY</u>	Year brought into use	YYYY e.g. 2017
<u>NEWUSE</u>	New Use	<u>See Table 11</u>
<u>MIXED</u>	Flag to indicate if Mixed New Use	Yes=1, No=2
<u>NLUC</u>	National Land Use Classification	<u>See Table 13</u>
<u>FUND</u>	Funding source used	<u>See Table 14</u>
<u>VDLFUND</u>	Flag to indicate if funding from vacant and derelict land fund	Yes=1, No=2

Where possible these details should be taken directly from the previous entry in SVDLS-A. Requirements for any additional columns or columns where updates may be needed are detailed below.

7.2 EAST, NORTH – East and North co-ordinates

Please provide the Easting and Northing of the centroid of the re-used/ reclaimed area.

This information is used to help determine proximity to sites so please ensure the co-ordinates are updated to reflect the centre of the area of the site re-used/ reclaimed. This may differ from the values for the original site in SVDLS-A if only part of the original site is re-used/ reclaimed.

If Easting and Northing co-ordinates are not available please leave these fields blank and enter a value for OSGRID.

Further information on how to record a site centroid with some case examples is available in [Annex A](#).

7.3 OSGRID – Ordnance Survey grid reference

This should be left blank if Easting and Northing co-ordinates have been entered. Please provide the Ordnance Survey Grid Reference for the centroid of the site to the nearest 10m. Include the 100km letters e.g. NT09767461.

This information is used to help determine proximity to sites so please ensure the co-ordinates are updated to reflect the centre of the area of the site re-used/reclaimed. This may differ from the values for the original site in SVDLS-A if only part of the original site is re-used/reclaimed.

7.4 INUSEMM, INUSEYYYY – Date brought back into use

Please enter the month and year the site was brought into use, reclaimed or naturalised in the format as MM and YYYY. For example 03 2017 for March 2017. If the field is left blank default values of March and the Survey Year will be used.

If land is being taken off the survey for definitional reasons then please use the comment field to indicate if the site should be removed just from the current survey or if it had been included in error in previous surveys and should also be removed from historical data.

7.5 NEWUSE – Reason site removed from register

Where there is more than one category of new use for the site please enter the code from Table 11 that indicates the predominant new use for the site and where appropriate flag as mixed use.

If land is being taken off the survey for definitional reasons (NEWUSE = 34) please add a comment to the entry for the site to indicate if the site should be removed just from the current survey or if it had been included in error in previous surveys and should also be removed from historical data.

Table 11 – New Use

Description	NEWUSE
Agriculture	1
Community Health	3
Defence	4
Education	5
Passive Open Space	6
Recreation and Leisure	7
Manufacturing	8
Other General Industrial	9
Mineral Activity	10
Offices	11
Residential	12
Retailing	13
Storage	14
Transport	15
Utility Services	16
Wholesale Distribution	17
Business Class	18
Community-Based Woodland	20
Non-Community-Based Woodland	21
Green/Environmental	23
Reclaimed to vacant pending new use	25
Site has Naturalised	33
Taken out for Definitional Reasons	34
Remaining site less than 0.1 ha	40
Other	88
Unknown	99

7.6 MIXED – Flag to indicate if new use in multiple land use groups

A site is classed as mixed if the new use falls into two or more different land use categories as listed in table 12;

- *If land use is mixed set the value of MIXED to 1,*
- *If land use is not mixed or not known set MIXED to 2,*
- *Where a value for mixed is not applicable, as for Naturalised, set MIXED to 2.*

Examples

A site with new uses Residential (NEWUSE = 12) and Retailing (NEWUSE = 13) is classed as mixed because it falls into land use categories 1 and 3.

A site with new uses Transport (NEWUSE = 15) and Utility Services (NEWUSE = 16) is not classed as mixed because these uses are both in land use category 6.

A site with new uses Residential (12) and Passive Open Space (6) would not be classed as mixed since Passive Open Space has not been assigned to a land use category.

Table 12 – Land Use Categories

Land Use Category		NEWUSE Codes covered by category
1	Residential	12
2	Business & Industry	8, 9, 14, 17, 18
3	Offices/ Retailing	11, 13
4	Community/ Health/ Education	3, 5
5	Recreation/ Leisure	7
6	Other (defence, utility services, transport)	4, 15, 16, 88
7	Site specifically categorised as 'Mixed Use'	
	Uses not in a Land Use Category	1, 6, 10, 20, 21, 23, 25, 88, 99

7.7 NLUC – National Land Use Classification

Please use the detailed code from Table 13 to describe the new use of a reclaimed site. For example, a shop has code U091.

The summary code can be used if there is more than one use within the same category. For example, where there is a mixture of shops and restaurants then the new use can be described with code U090 (Retail).

Where there is more than one new use across different categories please use the code that indicates the predominant new use for the site.

Table 13 - NLUC

National Land Use Classification	
Summary Codes	Detailed Codes
U010 Agriculture and fisheries	U011 Agriculture U012 Fisheries
U020 Forestry	U021 Managed forest U022 Un-managed forest
U030 Minerals	U031 Mineral workings and quarries
U040 Recreation and leisure	U041 Outdoor amenity and open spaces U042 Amusement and show places U043 Libraries, museums and galleries U044 Sports facilities and grounds U045 Holiday parks and camps U046 Allotments, city farms and community growing
U050 Transport	U051 Transport tracks and ways U052 Transport terminals and interchanges U053 Car parks U054 Vehicle storage U055 Goods and freight terminals U056 Waterways
U060 Utilities and infrastructure	U061 Energy production and distribution U062 Water storage and treatment U063 Refuse disposal U064 Cemeteries and crematoria U065 Post and telecommunications
U070 Residential	U071 Dwellings U072 Hotels, boarding and guest houses U073 Residential institutions
U080 Community services	U081 Medical and health care services U082 Places of worship U083 Education U084 Community services
U090 Retail	U091 Shops U092 Financial and professional services U093 Restaurants and cafes U094 Public houses and bars
U100 Industry and business	U101 Manufacturing U102 Offices U103 Storage U104 Wholesale distribution
U120 Defence	U121 Defence
U700 Naturalised	U701 Naturalised
U800 Land taken out of the survey for definitional reasons	U801 Land taken out of the survey for definitional reasons
U999 Unknown	U999 Unknown

7.8 FUND – Development funding source

Select the code from Table 14 that indicates the development funding source used to bring the site back into productive use.

Public funding can include money used to prepare the land for development, e.g. decontamination. It may also include land that is sold by a public sector organisation at less than the market value, in order to encourage development.

If NEWUSE equals 33 or 34 (land removed for definitional reasons or due to naturalisation) then FUND must be set to 8 - None/ Not Applicable.

Table 14 - FUND

Funding Source	FUND
Public only	1
Private only	2
Mixed (public + private)	3
None / Not applicable	8
Unknown	9

7.9 VDLFUND – funding from Vacant and Derelict Land Fund

Please indicate if the vacant and derelict land fund was a funding source used to bring the site back into productive use. This includes money used to prepare the land for development, e.g. decontamination.

- *If VDLF funding was used set VDLFUND = 1*
- *If no VDLF funding was used set VDLFUND = 2.*

If no value is entered a default value of 2 – No VDLF funding used will be assumed.

8. SVDLS-C

8.1 Variables in SVDLS-C

SVDLS-C should be used to record details of any sites that are still included on the register but have been split into multiple smaller sites or amalgamated with another site.

This information will be used to help us more quickly identify where changes have been made and get a better understanding of what has happened to the site.

Please enter the current sitecode as used on SVDLS-A and a value for either SplitFrom or JoinedWith.

Table 15 – SVDLS-C

Name	Description	Valid Values
COUNCODE	Council Code	See Table 2
SITECODE	Unique LA Reference for Site	Up to 20 characters
SplitFrom	LA Reference for original larger site	Up to 20 characters
JoinedWith	LA Reference for site now joined with	Up to 20 characters
Comment	Any comments to help identify reasons for change	

8.2 SplitFrom

If the new site was formerly part of a larger site please enter the site code used in the previous survey for the original larger site.

8.3 JoinedWith

If an existing site on SVDLS-A now includes what was previously a separate site please enter the site code used in the previous survey for the site that it now includes.

There may be multiple entries for one SITECODE if a number of old sites have been joined with it in this survey.

If a new site has been created which consists of two or more sites from the previous survey for the original larger site please enter the site code used in the previous survey. Separate entries should be created for each of the previous sites.

ANNEX A - Assigning Grid References

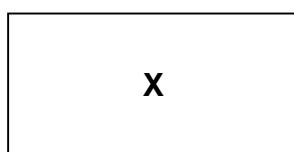
Please provide both the Easting and Northing of the site centroid (each to 6 digits). The site centroid should be as close as possible to a centre point of the site.

If the Easting and Northing are not available please provide the Ordnance Survey Grid Reference for the centroid of the site to the nearest 10m. Include the 100km letters e.g. NT09767461.

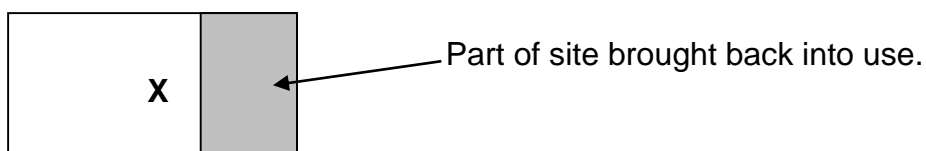
The following examples give guidance on how to record the centroid when splitting sites and for sites with irregular shapes.

Sites partially re-used

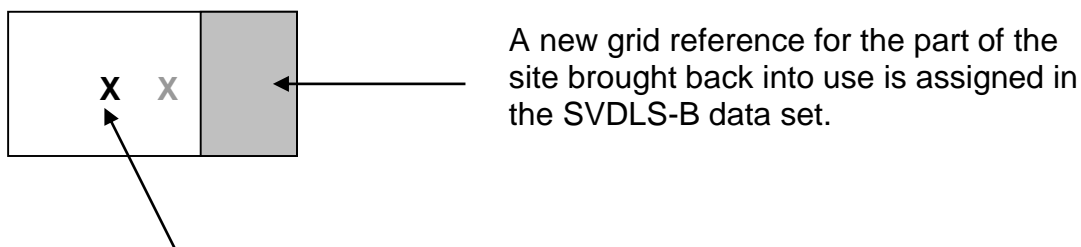
i) Site Before Split (Derelict land)



ii) Portion of site is reclaimed to a new use (shaded below)



iii) 2 new grid references are assigned (1 each for the reclaimed and the remaining part)



The site centroid information supplied for the site will be now have shifted to the left slightly (as part of the site has been reclaimed). The remaining part of the site in the SVDLS-A data set should now have a new grid reference supplied to reflect the change in the site's boundaries, and the reclaimed and remaining areas should be recorded in the B dataset.

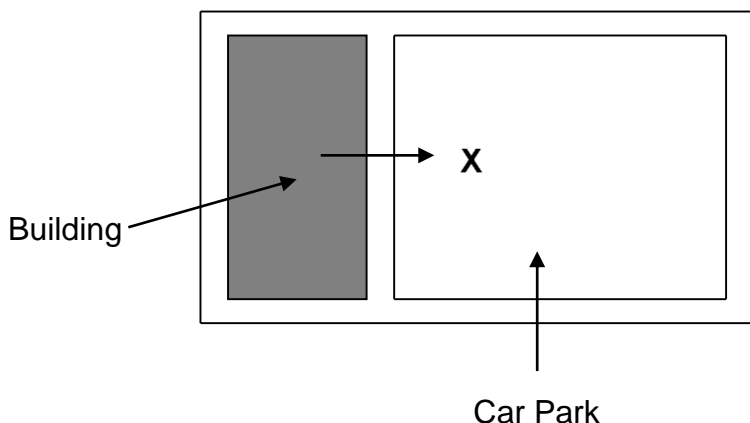
Former railway lines and other long strip sites

Sites may consist of a long strip. This is most common when dealing with former railway lines or abandoned roads. When entering data for these types of site, respondents should still look for a point mid-way along the site boundary to record the grid reference (X). They should not use a start or end point of the site boundary to record a grid reference.



Vacant land and building sites

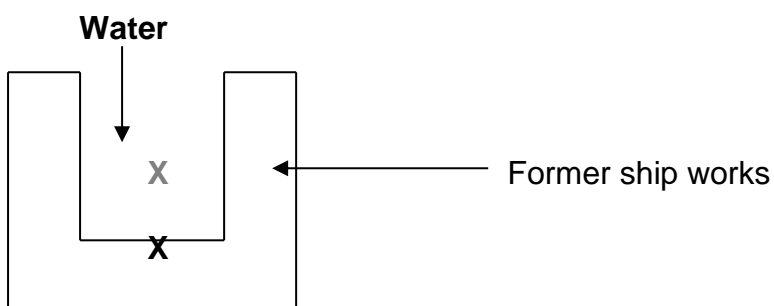
For example, a former factory building, now derelict, with an ex-car park attached. Although the building is the distinguishing part of the site, the site centroid (X) should still be used. In the above case, the building should not be recorded as the grid reference for the site as this would differ from the centroid of the overall site. The correct grid reference for the above site centroid will fall somewhere within the car park. As a rule, when recording grid references for sites, respondents should ignore any distinguishing features and always use the site centroid.



Centroids outwith site boundary

A sites centroid may be calculated to fall outwith the site's boundaries.

In such cases respondents should move the grid reference (X) to ensure that it falls within the site. This should be a point within the site boundary that is as close to the original site centroid as possible.



ANNEX B - Example Vacant Land and Buildings sites

For both the examples shown here there is a larger area of vacant land relative to the buildings. In both cases neither of the buildings are classed as derelict and because these buildings are a minor part of the site relative to the vacant land then the site can be classed as “vacant land and buildings”. This avoids chopping the site up into smaller vacant land sections and developers can see the whole site as a single site with potential for development.

Example 1



Example 2

