

# Mining searches in Scotland

## 'Other mineral' mining reports and ScotLIS

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**M**ining has a long and important role in the industrial history of Great Britain. Coal is only one of several minerals to have been extracted by mining and quarrying. The 'other' or 'non-coal' minerals include ironstone, limestone, fireclay, sandstone, and shale. Past mining and quarrying in 'other minerals' is widespread and can have an effect on surface property: a dramatic example from south-east Edinburgh is described in the article by Mike Browne on pages 20–21 of this issue.

In areas of former and current coal mining activity the Law Society of Scotland advises that practitioners should consider making a mining search

in any particular transaction dealing with land. The Coal Authority, which has responsibility for reporting on coal and minerals worked in association with coal, has been providing such a mining report service to the public for many years. However, until recently there has been no straightforward way of identifying where 'other minerals' may have been worked in areas where coal is absent or has not been extracted. In Scotland much of the information and many of the plans relating to 'other mineral' workings are held in the archives of the British Geological Survey on behalf of the Health and Safety Executive.

Within Scotland, the BGS and a number of government agencies including Registers of Scotland, The Coal Authority, and Glasgow City Council have been co-operating on the ScotLIS project. ScotLIS is a web-based 'one-stop-shop' providing easy and affordable access to a wide range of computer-based information about land and property for use in activities such as conveyancing, environmental assessments, planning, property searches, estate management, insurance assessment, and land monitoring.

Over the past two years the BGS has been working, in part funded by the government's 'Invest to Save' budget, to make an 'other mineral' or non-coal mining report service available under the umbrella of the ScotLIS pilot. Launched on 25th June 2001 the system is currently only in operation for the area within the city of Glasgow, but work is in progress to extend the service to cover the whole of Scotland.

### Description of the service

Following an initial search by postcode an enquirer is asked to select and confirm the property address. The system then checks the BGS database to advise if an 'other mineral' mining report is recommended for the property. Where a report is recommended the enquirer fills in an on-screen form which can be printed and posted to the BGS with a site plan and the appropriate fee.

The report provides the following information on mining and quarrying history:

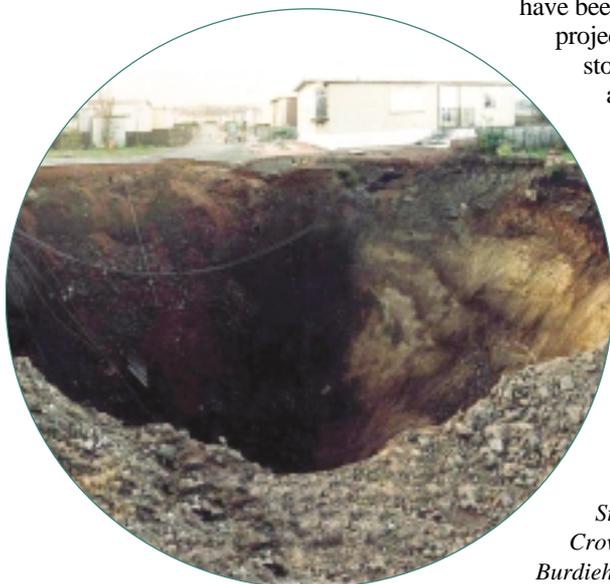
- Is the property thought to be underlain by, or immediately adjacent to, seams of non-coal minerals?
- Has the property been shown to be underlain, by or immediately adjacent to, recorded underground mineworkings in any non-coal minerals?
- Is there reason to suspect the presence of otherwise unrecorded former mineworkings in non-coal minerals?
- Does the BGS hold a record of any former shafts or mine entrances on or adjacent to the property?
- Is the property thought to be within the boundaries of, or immediately adjacent to, present or past quarry workings or opencast workings in any non-coal minerals?

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**ScotLIS website: [www.scotlis.com](http://www.scotlis.com)**

**BGS mining searches in Scotland website: [www.bgs.ac.uk/scotmine](http://www.bgs.ac.uk/scotmine)**



*Straiton Caravan Park, Midlothian. Crownhole over mineworkings in the Burdiehouse Limestone, 1986.*