

3 April 2007

Rt Hon David Milliband MP  
Secretary of State, DEFRA  
17 Smith Square  
London SW1P 3JR

Dear Secretary of State

**Your comment about restored quarries on BBC Radio 4 Farming Today**

I thought I should write to you to put the record straight following your comments on the radio last week about restored quarries being “ *not terribly green.* ”.

Were you aware that over 53% of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in the UK started out as quarries? Thorpe Park in Surrey was once a wet sand and gravel pit. The Eden Project in Cornwall was once a china clay pit. These are internationally known tourist amenity areas. Even in my own village of Doune in Perthshire we have a nature reserve known as Doune Ponds which was at one time a wet sand pit. It is home to all kinds of different wildfowl.

I could go on and on quoting examples of how old quarries have been turned into amenity areas throughout the land. Suffice to say that our industry is working very closely with the RSPB in developing sanctuaries and wetlands when quarries become worked out. Recently one of our member companies, Marshalls plc, were awarded The Wildlife Trusts' Biodiversity Benchmark for their environmental work at their Maltby site. Another member company, Cullimore's of Stroud, are heavily involved with the Cotswold Water Park. As an industry we take green matters very seriously indeed!

Not only that, but like farming we are a rural industry. We employ people in the countryside and that helps to sustain village communities and we provide the raw materials like Portland Stone for the Whitehall buildings and the red asphalt on The Mall which helps to make London the city that it is..

Secretary of State I look forward to hearing your next broadcast on Farming Today, maybe then you will say that despite the wrong perception by some, the quarrying industry is “ *in fact quite green indeed* ”.

Yours sincerely

Richard Bird  
Executive Officer