

Brownfield vs Greenfield Sites: What are the issues involved?

- Brownfield- A site that has been built on before. Normally associated with urban areas.
- Greenfield- Sites that have not been built on before. Often rural / countryside areas.

As a decision maker you are faced with two options:

1. Develop existing Brownfield sites
2. Develop new Greenfield sites

However, there are issues associated with both land options, some of which are discussed below (all mixed up):

- ❖ *Brownfield redevelopment eases pressure on Greenfield sites and is more sustainable*
- ❖ *Greenfield sites are often on the edge of towns and cities and may have better access, have less congestion, be in a more pleasant environment and have more space and room to expand*
- ❖ *House prices would increase in inner city areas as people are encouraged back to the area. This might mean that local people can not afford the houses, and the council will have the problem of providing for them*
- ❖ *Infrastructure already exists in urban areas- in Greenfield sites new drainage, electricity, roads etc. would all have to be produced*
- ❖ *Light industry and things like Science Parks favour out of town locations on Greenfield sites-they prefer them to Brownfield sites, and crucially so do their workers who are happier to live away from urban areas*
- ❖ *New employment opportunities if Brownfield sites are developed*
- ❖ *New housing can lead to gentrification (old housing done up- area becomes more trendy and affluent) so the area will improve and things like crime rates will improve*
- ❖ *New sites are easier to build on as there is a fresh start, where remains of previous land use do not need to be cleared and is more attractive to retail parks, housing developers etc.*
- ❖ *Providing public transport networks is easier in central areas where the population densities are high- investment is focussed in central areas*
- ❖ *There is an issue of contamination and making sites safe for development, given what the land may have been used for before*
- ❖ *Towns and cities do not want their areas to decay- redevelopment results in more people coming to the area, which helps local businesses. Building on Greenfield sites 'sucks' out the core from towns as shop etc. locate on the edge of towns/cities*
- ❖ *Using Greenfield sites is not sustainable- there is too much pressure on the rural-urban fringe and the use of Brownfield sites has to be a better option*

Task:

What you need to do is to read through the statements and decide whether they are one of the following: -

- Brownfield Positive
- Brownfield Negative
- Greenfield Positive
- Greenfield Negative

You need to decide on a way to categorise and display the information when you write the statements out. Are you going to write them in columns? Spider diagrams with some sort of colour coding? The decision is up to you.

Once you have completed this task and understood the theories/issues involved we will complete a decision making exercise based on the construction of new housing in our local area.