

# Brownfield First: EIC Report Launch

Thursday 30 September 2021

## Panelists



**Peter Atchison**  
PAGeotechnical Ltd



**Guto Davies**  
ACE/EIC



**Ian Grant**  
Environment Analyst UK



**Paul Shelley**  
Hydrock



**Andrew Whitaker**  
Home Builders Federation

## ‘BROWNFIELD FIRST’ CAMPAIGN

- Led by EIC’s Contaminated Land Working Group
- Working Group is chaired by **Peter Atchison**, Managing Director of PAGEoTechnical.
- **Report** makes a series of recommendations that aim to revitalise the contaminated land sector once more.
- Aim is to show brownfield’s viability in all senses of the term, placing it as the realistic alternative to building on greenfield sites and a key driver for levelling-up.



## WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?

### **Amend the current planning reforms to make new Local Plans a driver for targeted brownfield development by:**

- Implementing the Construction Leadership Council (CLC) recommendation of a 'regeneration' zone as part of the forthcoming planning reform legislation.
- Adding a greenfield surcharge to the Government's proposed new Infrastructure Levy.

### **Improve the economic viability of marginal brownfield projects by:**

- Increasing land remediation tax relief on sites with fewer than 25 units.
- Updating the tax relief definition of derelict land to incorporate all sites abandoned for more than 10 years.

### **Ensure levelling up funding incentivises brownfield by:**

- Designing the appraisal metrics for the National Infrastructure Bank and Levelling Up Fund to reward brownfield development proposals.

# REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

## **Recommendation 1:**

Increase land remediation tax relief on sites with fewer than 25 units from 150% to 200%.

## **Recommendation 2:**

Update the tax relief definition of “derelict land” to be land unused since 1 April 2011.

## **Recommendation 3:**

Avoid the over-restrictive interpretation of Definition of Waste Code of Practice.

## **Recommendation 4:**

Implement the CLC recommendation of a fourth zone under the planning reform proposals – i.e., a regeneration zone which would support large and complex sites for regeneration activity through a long-term growth designation.

## **Recommendation 5:**

Introduce a greenfield surcharge as part of the new Infrastructure Levy.

## **Recommendation 6:**

Project appraisal metrics for the National Infrastructure Bank and levelling up fund should reflect the wider social and economic benefits of brownfield development.

## **Recommendation 7:**

To achieve the governments brownfield objectives, greater resourcing of local authority planning departments, including that of Contaminated Land Officers, will be needed.

## **Recommendation 8:**

Improve training for Building Control Officers and require them to consider land remediation works in their on-site sign off functions.

## **Recommendation 9:**

Use the testing of the Construction Innovation Hub (CIH) Value Toolkit to promote a better understanding of the environmental benefits of brownfield development.

## Brownfield and levelling up, and our continued engagement with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities

*“The past year has created unprecedented challenges across the UK. In the immediate future, it is clear that some areas of the country will be hit harder economically than others. Those already facing a big levelling up challenge are also among the hardest hit by the pandemic.”*

Brownfield development is inextricably linked to a number of levelling up challenges:

- Housebuilding
- Productivity
- The Construction Industry
- Placemaking

It requires:

- A clear recognition of the challenges and opportunities by Government
- A collaborative approach with stakeholders
- A joining up of levelling up funding with brownfield
- A plan to ensure the National Infrastructure Bank (UKNIB) appraisal metrics and Levelling Up Funding rewards brownfield development

## The link between Brownfield and Levelling Up

### Housebuilding

- The Government aims to have 300,000 homes built each year in England and Wales.

Enough brownfield land is available to meet the needs of most housebuilding. It is estimated that more than 1,061,246 homes could be developed.

### Productivity

- 72% of the country's high-skilled productive jobs are hosted by just 8% of land.

An increase in the use of brownfield for economic activity and social/economic infrastructure can reduce regional disparities in productivity.

### Construction

- The industry encompasses 11.2% of UK GVA and employs over 2.7 million of the British workforce

Removing economic barriers to smaller scale brownfield land can support SMEs operating in left behind communities.

# The Levelling up Fund and National Infrastructure Bank

- **Investment themes with a focus on brownfield.**
  - Bids welcome with regards to *'site acquisition and remediation of abandoned or brownfield sites, for both commercial and new residential use.'*
- **Brownfield can deliver the Bank's mission:**
  - *'support regional and local economic growth through better connectivity, opportunities for new jobs and higher levels of productivity.'*

**Recommendation 6:**  
Project appraisal metrics for the National Infrastructure Bank and levelling up fund should reflect the wider social and economic benefits of brownfield development.



*“It is often the smaller derelict sites in our urban communities that have the biggest impact on their wellbeing and safety. There is evidence that neglected sites can deter investment or mitigate the introduction of new income streams such as tourism and local communities can feel forgotten.”*

# BROWNFIELD FIRST

## The market and developers moving more to greenfield

\*Traditional reasons

\*Costs

\*Availability of suitable sites

\*Family homes in vogue

\*Opportunity for policy changes

# Levelling up, brownfield and Michael Gove

- **Social capital and local loyalties**
- **Previous statements**
- **Dangers of levelling up**
- **Current thinking**
- **Direction and options**

# Funding Pots and Brownfield

- \* **Gap funding and loans**
- \* **Levelling Up Fund**
- \* **UK Community Renewal Fund**
- \* **Home Building Fund**
- \* **Brownfield Land Fund and Brownfield Release Fund**



**Environmental Industries Commission**  
Alliance House, 12 Caxton Street, London, SW1H 0QL  
T: 020 7222 4148 - [info@eic-uk.co.uk](mailto:info@eic-uk.co.uk) - [eic-uk.co.uk](http://eic-uk.co.uk)  
Follow us on twitter: [@EIC\\_Updates](https://twitter.com/EIC_Updates)