

# PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

## DOUBLE DOSE OF GOOD NEWS OVER BROWNFIELD RESIDENTIAL SITES



Owners of brownfield sites with development potential have a double dose of good news to celebrate.

Changes to the way such sites are dealt with in the planning system means it is now free of cost to get a site onto a local authority's brownfield site register, newly-introduced by the Government, and, once this has been achieved, the cost of gaining full consent has come down.

"Legislation just introduced requires all local authorities to establish a register of brownfield sites," explains planning expert David Long, of BCM Rural Property Specialists in Newport, Isle of Wight.

"There is a two stage process, the first stage establishing whether a site is suitable in principle for residential development which will mean it then enters onto the local authority's brownfield land register if the majority of floor space within the scheme is for residential use.

"Getting a qualifying site onto the Stage 2 register is cost-free in terms of planning fees and, once on the register, a site is deemed to have planning consent in principle, leading to the second stage where detailed proposals are assessed to gain technical details consent.

"This means that a suitable scheme for the land has to be approved, itself a potential cost-cutter. But the fees for submitting an application are now based on the land area rather than the units that will occupy the land and this also has the potential for considerable savings.

"Technical details consent is based on a fee of £402 for each 0.1 of a hectare, considerably less than the old system which involved a fee per unit now at £462.

"A word of warning, though; schemes must fit with relevant policies within a development plan unless there are considerations that would suggest otherwise.

"But to temper that, rural land is as much a viable development opportunity as urban land under this new scheme and with pressure for housing construction all across the country it would be a good idea for landowners to identify potentially suitable sites and get the process under way before the system gets flooded with new proposals.



“I also consider it inadvisable to leave a local authority to its own devices to determine the ‘planning in principle’. It is at that stage the local authority would determine what they believe to be the correct density, which as many landowners and developers may know can lead to strong differences of opinion. Landowners should assess realistic densities before submitting a proposal and negotiate sensitively to ensure they are achieved.”

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For more information, contact David Long, BCM LLP.  
Call: +44(0)1983 828 800 Email: [dlong@bcm.co.uk](mailto:dlong@bcm.co.uk)

