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Dear Mr Penrose

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Thank you for your letter of 6 April to the Rt Hon Sajid Javid about the National Land Use Database (NLUD) and brownfield sites. I am replying as the Minister for Housing and Planning.

The NLUD database was a countrywide source of information on brownfield land using data from every local planning authority across England on an annual and voluntary basis. By 2012, response rates of data from local authorities were low (at around 50%) and falling. Raw, site-level data reported to the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) by local authorities was collated but due to the limited response, analyses and reports were not compiled. In the interests of openness and transparency the HCA published this raw data set in 2014. It is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-land-use-database-of-previously-developed-land-nlud-pdl>, together with data for 2010 and 2011.

In 2016 measures were brought forward in the Housing and Planning Act to require local authorities to compile and maintain local registers of available brownfield land. With effect from 16 April 2017, each local authority is required by law to create an easy-to-access Brownfield Register and publish it on its website by 31 December. However, only sites suitable for new homes are to be included.

The Act also introduced Permission in principle. With effect from 15 April the Town and Country Planning (Permission in Principle) Order 2017 enables local authorities to grant Permission in principle to housing-led development on suitable land entered on a Brownfield Register.

The National Planning Policy Framework asks local authorities to encourage re-use of brownfield sites if not of high environmental value, and the recent Housing White Paper included proposals to further increase the take-up of brownfield sites suitable for homes. A report of the responses to the associated consultation on these and the other proposals will be made available to the new government.


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