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https://www.theplanner.co.uk/news/brownfield-registers-don%E2%80%99t-consider-small-sites-%E2%80%93-cpre?utm_source=Adestra&utm_medium=email&utm_term=

The Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) has said brownfield land registers are failing to record the small plots that could deliver an extra 188,734 homes across the country.

A more “proactive process” and access to Land Registry data could help to build homes without “wasting precious countryside,” added the campaign group.

Local authorities have until 31 December 2017 to produce an up-to-date register of brownfield sites that are both available and suitable for development.

CPRE noted that in the Autumn Budget, chancellor Philip Hammond said 20 per cent of new homes be built on small sites so that brownfield land is used “as efficiently as possible”.

However, the organisation feels that the government should amend brownfield policy and guidance so that it encourages the identification of the full range of appropriate brownfield sites for housing if that aim is to be met.

CPRE has undertaken an initial audit of already submitted brownfield registers, which it said suggested that less than 4 per cent of current registered brownfield land is on small sites of up to 10 homes. If councils are to meet the chancellor’s 20 per cent small site target on brownfield, an additional 188,734 homes across England could be unlocked.

CPRE also commissioned *Unlocking Potential* – research investigating how local authorities are identifying brownfield sites for the new registers. It says that local authorities “routinely” disregard small brownfield sites, despite the fact that these usually have existing infrastructure such as good rail and road links, access to local amenities and are near existing communities. They are particularly valuable in rural areas where much-needed development could be provided without encroaching on the surrounding countryside.

CPRE said the reasons given for not including these sites include a lack of local authority resources to identify small brownfield sites and the perception among builders that the planning system is too burdensome and complex when considering small sites.

Rebecca Pullinger, planning campaigner at the CPRE, said: “Up and down the country tens of thousands of small brownfield sites are not included in brownfield

land registers and their housing development potential is missed. The current system of collecting this data must be improved if we are to unlock the potential of brownfield, and stop developers finding an excuse to build on greenfield areas.”

The CPRE’s research contrasts with a report [The Planner considered yesterday](#) (11 December). It suggests that just two regions taking part in the pilot have sufficient capacity to accommodate their five-year housing requirement once planning attrition has been factored in.

“Brownfield land can make a significant impact on the housing crisis, but it cannot solve it.”

The report – *Brownfield: The Housing Crisis Solved?* – says greenfield land will be necessary if housing demand is to be met.

CPRE, which supports a ‘brownfield first’ policy, wants the government to amend brownfield policy and guidance to encourage the identification of the full range of appropriate brownfield sites for housing, including small sites.