

**Labour's  
pledge to  
tackle  
housing  
supply**

**DLP BRIEFING NOTE 180**

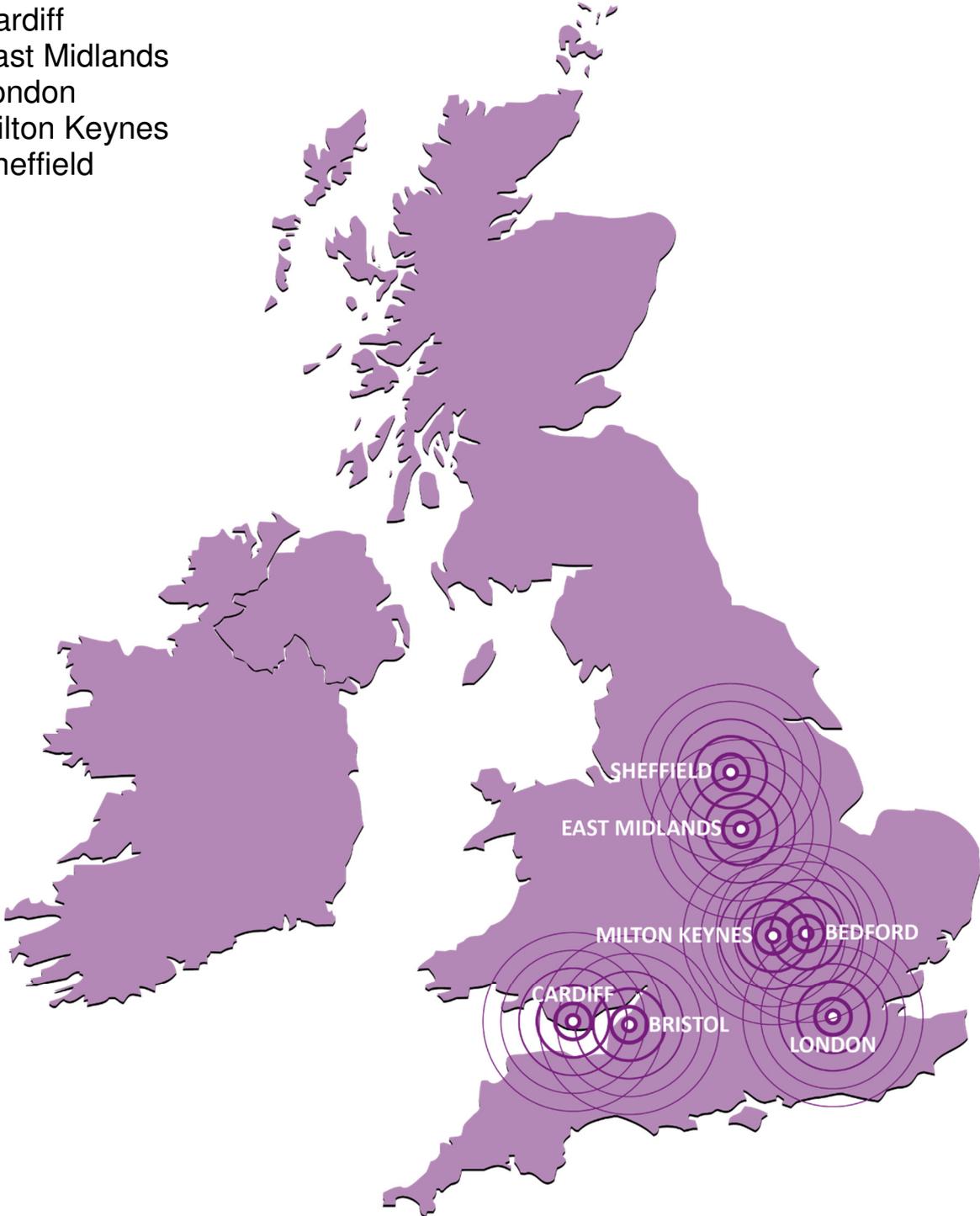
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## **Labour's position on tackling the housing supply deficiency**

Despite a steady increase and recovery from the recession, housing supply is still lagging behind within the UK, thus making it one of the most important topics to address amongst political parties. Ed Miliband's speech over the two-day labour conference touched upon some very important aspects of the housing crisis. With promises of 200,000 homes per year and the creation of new Olympic-style delivery agencies to deliver large scale housing, Labour sets to make building new homes a top priority in their capital investment programme over the next parliament.

Alongside this local communities will be able to tackle developers who negatively impact communities by hoarding land unnecessarily, with the proposed 'use it or lose it' policy which will see occupied vacant land reduced far more quickly.

His speech has been received with mixed responses, generally welcoming the proposed promises but specialists in the built environment have added that there are further complex elements that have to be taken into consideration.

## **Responses from the development and planning sphere**

The Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors have been concerned with the range of housing that has been promised, recognising that Labour's efforts well placed but further work needs to be applied to providing housing all levels of society;

*"Home ownership is central to society, but we need to build across all tenures, more social and affordable homes, as much as owner occupied. Labour's New Homes Corporations are a step on the right direction and they need to look at building for rent, refitting existing homes and small schemes in rural communities".* **Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors**

New homes and delivering a new generation of Garden Cities, giving landlocked councils the possibility to grow shows Labour's intentions towards growth and the future, however the TCPA was quick to notice that there is a lack of information regarding regeneration possibilities.

*"While the TCPA firmly believes new Garden Cities have a role to play, they must sit alongside investment and regeneration of our existing towns and cities. Regeneration remains a key priority and the TCPA has shown how the Garden City principles can also be applied to this task."* **Town and Country Planning Association**

## **The role of brownfield development and urban extensions**

This follows on from two significant announcements that have recently had an impact in the planning world, the first being '*Adonis backing urban extensions over garden cities*' and the second being '*Labour pledges to strengthen brownfield first policy*'.

The recent years has seen the revival of the idea of garden cities and the creation of urban extensions, which have been sparked by the housing crisis. The Town and Country Planning Association first identified the need for reform in the principles of Ebenezer Howard's garden city model through its suite of publications. In response to this the Government stipulated in the National Planning Policy Framework, Paragraph 52, "the supply of new homes can sometimes best be achieved through planning for large scale developments, such as new settlements or extensions to existing villages and towns that follow the principle of Garden Cities".

Andrew Adonis, whose growth review was published in July told the session, organised by Think-Tank the Institute for Public Policy Research: "The right course ... is urban extensions." He also made the bold statement of saying "I am now persuaded that developing new towns from scratch is going to be a very tough and tall order", at the Labourer Party conference fringe session in Manchester.

In order to encourage development of sustainable houses and meet housing demands the government has promoted the use of previously developed land via the National Planning Policy Framework.

Roberta Blackman-Wood, speaking at a Labour Party conference fringe session in Manchester, emphasised that Labour would change the framework to "strengthen brownfield first and put it back to what was a successful policy under Labour"

### **Pledge to strengthen 'Brownfield First' policy**

Roberta's statement on brownfield redevelopment manifested from calls earlier at the conference from Labour peer Lord Rogers. In building sustainable new towns within cities as he mentions "the centre of Croydon is big enough to get a whole new town in without any problems. The centre is full of holes, full of empty spaces, here is a logical place to put a town in a city".

The government's aim is to provide 200,000 permissions for new homes by 2020 which has embarked a radical step in putting Local Development Orders on over 90% of brownfield sites that are suitable for housing. This means development on these sites will be pre-approved assisting homebuilder to plan suitable schemes to get work started on sites quicker while at the same time protecting green space.

A new £5 million fund will be launched before the summer to support the first wave of new local development orders. The Mayor will also be offered powers to drive forward local development orders to get work speeded up.

It is palpable that redevelopment of brownfield land alone will not cater for the housing crisis and a mixture of strategic approaches are required. Blackman-Woods emphasises this "because of the huge uplift that we need in housing supply, brownfield is just not going to be enough. I think we have to be honest about that. It's not just garden cities, it can be garden villages, it can be urban extensions....but I think to try to suggest that we don't need some of those larger developments would be wrong".

### **DLP's role and expertise**

DLP is committed to providing the best form of advice and keeping up to date with not just emerging and current policies but also in keeping up to date with changes and shifts in development and planning trends.

DLP Planning Ltd has considerable knowledge of the national planning system and have experience and a proven track record in dealing with development issues and changes, as well as providing expert guidance to developers, community groups and stakeholders.

If you wish to utilise DLP's considerable planning expertise to maximise your opportunity, please contact us. Senior staff within the practice would be very happy to explain its potential implications for you.

If you require more information or would like to discuss the issues mentioned in further detail please contact:

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