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NEW RESEARCH WILL INVESTIGATE BROWNFIELD POLICES AND PRACTICES IN EUROPE

English Partnerships, the Government's regeneration and development agency, has commissioned a team from Sheffield Hallam University, the University of Nottingham and Parkman Consultants to review current practices and policies regarding the re-use of brownfield land in Europe.

Following the conclusion of English Partnerships' (EP) Review on 24 July 2002, the Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott, confirmed that English Partnerships would be responsible for producing and maintaining a national brownfield strategy. English Partnerships is undertaking the study on behalf of the Urban Policy International Division at the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. It will examine the policies and legislation in all European countries and how they work in practice.

For the purposes of the study, the term brownfield is used in its broadest context meaning 'previously developed' land, in accordance with the definition in Planning Policy Guidance note 3 (PPG3) on Housing. The study team will be looking at how policies can help to bring land back into productive use and will be seeking the opinions of developers, investors, CABERNET (a European Commission sponsored best practice network) as well as the professionals responsible for preparing the land for use.

Peter Hill, who is directing the study on behalf of English Partnerships, explained; "One of the aims of the study is to examine issues relating to State Aid. Recent reports commissioned by both the European Commission and the Local Government Association, suggest that State Aid rules can act as a constraint in the UK. This study will help us to assess whether or not this is the case in other European countries and to relate lessons learnt to practice in the UK. We will also be looking at how other Member States provide subsidies or fiscal incentives within the existing State Aid rules."

The study team would welcome hearing the views of property developers, surveyors, engineers and other professionals practising in the UK and across Europe. If you would like to participate in the study please contact either Professor Paul Syms at Sheffield Hallam University p.m.syms@shu.ac.uk or Ceri Sansom at Parkman cdsansom@parkman.co.uk or Peter Hill at English Partnerships peterhill@englishpartnerships.co.uk before September.

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For further information, please contact:

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English Partnerships is the national catalyst for sustainable regeneration and development. We are a key delivery agency for the urban renaissance and the government's new 'sustainable communities' agenda, which addresses housing shortages, homes for key workers, affordable housing and the problems of abandonment and decay.

Following the recent Review, our new focus is on accommodating household growth, maintaining a national brownfield strategy for the re-use of brownfield land, managing our land portfolio to deliver sustainable regeneration and the practical demonstration and dissemination of best practice in regeneration and development. We continue to work with our public and private sector partners on major initiatives such as the National Coalfields Programme, Urban Regeneration Companies and Millennium Communities, as well as internet-based property resources such as www.englishsites.com and the National Land Use Database (NLUD). Further information on our programmes and initiatives can be found at www.englishpartnerships.co.uk.

English Partnerships is the lead government representative on CABERNET.