

## Media Release

# 21 Per Cent Rise in Public Sector Bodies Releasing Land for Development in Next 12 Months, Says Lend Lease/Comres Report

**London, 2 May 2014:** THE number of state bodies bringing forward publicly owned land for development in the next 12 months will rise by more than a fifth, according to a major new report.

The inaugural Lend Lease/ComRes Land and Regeneration Index interviewed 200 public sector officials with direct responsibility for land holdings. Three quarters of officers (76 per cent) expect to release publicly owned land for development in the next 12 months compared with just 63 per cent who had done so during the previous year – a rise of more than a fifth.

The new public sector land will predominately be used for residential development. Of those respondents who plan to bring forward publicly owned land for development in the next year, 89 per cent said that it would be used for social housing (compared with 62 per cent in the last 12 months); and 86 per cent said that it would be used for private housing (compared with 59 per cent in the last 12 months).

The sharp rise in the number of public sector officials expecting to bring forward land for social and private housing respectively (27 percentage points on both measures) suggests that the Government's long-stated objective of boosting the supply of new homes by releasing more state-owned land is finally being realised.

Other key findings include:

- More than half of respondents (53 per cent) say that they expect to bring forward more publicly owned land in the year ahead than they did last year.
- Two in five (38 per cent) expect to bring forward the same amount of land while only eight per cent expect to bring forward less.
- More officials will also be releasing publicly owned land for retail development. 68 per cent intend to bring forward land for smaller commercial development such as shops (a rise of eight percentage points compared with the last 12 months) and 54 per cent will do the same for larger commercial developments such as supermarkets and shopping centres (up by 20 percentage points compared with the last 12 months).



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- Bringing publicly owned land forward is primarily a local government activity. Three quarters (74 per cent) of local planning officers say that their council has released land in the last 12 months while nine in ten (89 per cent) plan to do so in the next 12 months.
- The corresponding figures for central government respondents are 28 per cent for the last 12 months and 34 per cent for the year ahead.
- A fifth (22 per cent) of those in central government say a main barrier to them bringing land forward is that they have no surplus land to bring forward at all – compared with zero per cent in local government.
- Nine in ten officers from all branches of government (89 per cent) intend to bring forward brownfield land compared with seven in ten who plan to bring forward greenfield land (71 per cent).
- Public officials in the South and Midlands are less likely to bring forward greenfield land than their counterparts in the North (65 per cent: 83 per cent).
- The most common barriers nationally to releasing publicly owned land for development are economic factors (26 per cent) and the availability of viable land (19 per cent).
- Two additional major barriers in the South are green belt/environmental concerns (cited by 24 per cent of respondents) and concerns from the local community (20 per cent).
- An additional major barrier in the North is a lack of demand for development (23 per cent compared with just three per cent in the South).
- The pressure on those responsible for planning and estates is overwhelmingly to bring publicly owned land forward more quickly. More than half (55 per cent) say that they feel under pressure to do so while just one in ten (10 per cent) say they feel under pressure to bring land forward more slowly.
- Of those who feel under pressure to bring land forward more quickly, more than nine in ten (93 per cent) say that this pressure is coming directly from Central Government.
- Of the small proportion who feel under pressure to bring land forward more slowly, 80 per cent say that this pressure is coming from local people.

The Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, said:

“I welcome this new survey, which shows the scope for releasing surplus and redundant public sector property. This will help provide more land for new homes and ensure value for taxpayers’ money. Central government is delivering on its promise to release thousands of acres of brownfield land, and all public sector bodies need to follow our example, so we can build more homes and safeguard environmentally protected land like the Green Belt.”

Dan Labbad, Lend Lease's Group Chief Operating Officer and Chief Executive in Europe, said: "The release of more publicly owned land is what the residential sector needs. With the UK economy recovering, releasing public land will allow the industry to work to meet essential housing and infrastructural needs. The challenge for developers is to work with both the public sector and local communities to deliver the balanced and sustainable developments which are needed to increase the supply of housing and the accessibility of social infrastructure."

## NOTES TO EDITORS:

1. For further information please contact: Duncan Pelham, Media Relations Officer at Lend Lease, on 02034309765, 07740407068 or [duncan.pelham@lendlease.com](mailto:duncan.pelham@lendlease.com) or visit [www.lendlease.com](http://www.lendlease.com)
2. Lend Lease is a leading international property and infrastructure group. In the UK, it is the only fully integrated retail, residential and commercial provider delivering end-to-end property solutions. The company has core capabilities in development, investment management, construction, asset and property management.
3. Lend Lease is behind some of London's largest and most exciting mixed-use regeneration projects such as Elephant & Castle and The International Quarter. The company is also behind the Green Quarter residential development in Manchester.
4. Lend Lease is listed on the Australian Stock Exchange and operates in four key regions – Australia, Asia, Americas and EMEA (Europe, Middle East, Africa). The group has more than 16,000 employees worldwide.
5. Lend Lease is listed on the Dow Jones World Sustainability Index (DJSI) and in 2012 ranked in the top eight per cent of property companies, achieving scores of 90 per cent or higher in a range of categories
6. ComRes is one of Europe's leading research consultancies with global reach. We support clients with opinion research and actionable insight to enable them to enhance their reputation, to communicate with their audiences better, and to manage their wider public policy environment.
7. ComRes interviewed 200 officers in local and central government across Britain by telephone between 20th January and 28th February 2014. 150 respondents were senior local planning officers, while 50 were responsible for managing the estates in the following organisations:
  - a. The NHS (44 respondents);
  - b. Other central government bodies (6 respondents).
8. ComRes is a member of the British Polling Council and abides by its rules. Data tables are available on the ComRes website, [www.comres.co.uk](http://www.comres.co.uk)

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