

Eddisons

APSE Housing, Construction & Building Maintenance Network

**Introduction to Brownfield Land Release Fund
(BLRF) and Other Funding**

15 January 2026

PRESENTED BY

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Agenda

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About Eddisons

- Eddisons is advising public sector across the whole development and asset management lifecycle
- Direct call offs via Crown Commercial Services, Homes England and ESPO



About Us Guest Panel



Simon Matthews -
Principal



Ben O'Connor - Principal



Berkshire and Isle of Wight OPE Support

- Support reviewing sites for BLRF applications
- Provide feedback on drafting and appendices including valuations and development appraisal
- Managed monitoring returns for county
- Successful applications made in Bracknell, Wokingham and Reading including over £2 million for demolition of multi storey car park that had previously been condemned.
- Successful BLRF applications in Isle of Wight for a number of small to medium sites with capacity from 3 to 50 units.



Isle of Wight Council

- Ongoing appointment to review sites for grant funding and make applications when suitable
- Successful applications for 5 sites with potential deliver 80-100 homes
- Focus on smaller, quicker sites which are easier to deliver within the context of an island economy
- Additional funding provided through Prisoner Building Homes
- Strategic deliver advice provided for LUF funded project in East Cowes including refurbishment and disposal of 90,000 sqft boat yard building, new sailing school, public realm and 2 residential development sites.



Reading Borough Council

- Minster Quarter, Reading
- 5 acres / 2.2 ha in Reading Town Centre – former Civic Centre and surrounding land and public realm
- Adopted Development Brief for over 1,200 new homes and associated uses
- Significant infrastructure costs : 1960s concrete podium across most of site with road / access to car park at lower level
- BLRF £2m grant awarded prior to commencement of marketing
- Adjoining site awarding £10m LUF fund for new studio theatre
- Marketed for development partner and McLaren Living appointed



2025 BLRF 2.4 – The Headlines

- Funding is for capital works on council-owned, brownfield land only, to address viability issues arising from abnormal costs of the proposed development.
- The land which will be released for housing must be council-owned at the time of submitting an Investment Case.
- Speed of delivery is a key priority. Projects must be able to demonstrate they can procure and be in contract for the BLRF2.4-funded works by 31 March 2026.
- Projects must be able to demonstrate they can release land by 30 September 2027.
- GET IN QUICK: Applications for funding will be accepted until available funding has been exhausted, at which point the funding round will close.
- BE ORGANISED: One Public Estate partnerships are no longer required to coordinate applications on behalf of their partnership, as in previous rounds of BLRF funding. Instead, councils will submit applications directly to OPE.
- LIMITED FUNDS: Up to £19.8 million of capital grant funding is available.
- LESS COMPLEX SITES: BLRF2.4 targets small sites that can release land swiftly. Therefore, we anticipate projects will typically have a funding ask of up to £2m.

2025 BLRF 2.4 – The Small Print

- The fund is open to councils across England, specifically: Borough, County, District, London Borough, Metropolitan Borough, and Unitary Councils.
- Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCAs) are also eligible, as are their constituent councils. For BLRF2.4, Greater Manchester Combined Authority, West Midlands Combined Authority, and their constituent councils with full voting rights, will not be eligible to receive funding, as an Integrated Settlement has been provided. Councils in these MCAs should approach their Combined Authority to understand local funding opportunities.



BLRF 2.4 - Matters to Consider

How ready is your site(s) to progress through a successful BLRF application?

1. TIMING – In contract to carry out works by March 2026 meaning only oven ready sites with clear procurement strategy / contracting partners ready can proceed
2. Do you have the capacity to complete the applications and appoint the consultant teams to produce supporting feasibility studies / reports / cost plans / valuations.
3. Will the land be released by 30 September 2027 Do you need to carry out a formal marketing exercise and will the transaction need to be subject to planning deal?
4. What is your procurement route for contracting and disposal or development – needs to be as simple and quick as possible
5. Do you really know the site constraints and do you have feasibility reports to back this up
6. What will your housing mix be and are you confident of your numbers
7. What do your BEFORE and AFTER BLRF appraisals / Red Books look like? Needs to show move from negative to positive viability
8. Do you have a development partner and / or contracting framework to carry out the works PDQ
9. Be ready with a pipeline of sites and due diligence ready to go

Homes England Social and Affordable Homes Programme

- The Social and Affordable Homes Programme 2026 to 2036 (SAHP) provides grant funding to support the capital costs of developing affordable housing in England (outside London).
- Affordable housing is defined as ‘housing for sale or rent for those whose needs are not met by the market’ in the National Planning Policy Framework.
- Homes England has at least £27.3 billion of government funding — including £1.2 billion in bridge funding announced in March 2025 — to deliver new social and affordable homes outside of London. We will work closely with a diverse range of partners — both existing and those we haven’t previously worked with — to maximise the impact of this funding.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/social-and-affordable-homes-programme-sahp-2026-to-2036#what-the-funding-is-for>

Prisoners Building Homes

- PBH is on a mission to change lives and reduce re-offending
- Up front funding for site due diligence up to pre-app on the basis that future construction tenders allow for PBH model to be introduced in partnership with MOJ and Probation Service.
- Pre-app work incorporates remote design support as well as testing AI technology to prepare pre-app applications saving significant time and money

<https://www.pbh.org.uk>

Benefits

- Land owners – up front due diligence and site de-risking
- Prisoner – upskilling ready for when they leave / complete probation
- Housebuilders – provide valuable workforce.

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Any Questions



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