



Viscount Camrose
Department for Science, Innovation and Technology
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We are writing to thank you for your attention to amendment 252 to the Data Protection and Digital Information Bill, and to ask you if you would consider reviewing the related Government decision from 2016.

As you will recall, amendment 252 would have required the Secretary of State to make a list of UK postal addresses freely available for reuse. Address data is a vital resource for building digital services that rely on locations, and is part of our national data infrastructure.

During our informative debate in Parliament, you said:

The Government explored opening address data in 2016. At that time, it became clear that the Government would have to pay to make this data available openly or to recreate it... As such, it was determined at that time that the changes would result in significant additional cost to taxpayers and represent low value for money.

We believe the digital economy has changed significantly since 2016, and the economic case now strongly favours opening up. The importance of high-quality, freely available address data has only increased.

Address data is no longer just about sending letters, or even about online deliveries: it is crucial geospatial data infrastructure, used by tens of thousands of UK businesses. High-quality address data is vital for delivering commercial and public



services, and for joining together other geospatial datasets; opening it up would improve its quality and support our digital economy.

In the light of this, many of our competitor economies have already made postal address data freely available. The EU now requires its member states to make address data available openly, as part of its mission to support SMEs to drive economic growth. The US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand all either have or are developing open address datasets.

We would be very grateful if you would consider commissioning new analysis to inform a review of the 2016 decision, in the light of these changes.

S.40(2)

The Lord Clement-Jones CBE
Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle
Baroness Harding of Winscombe
The Rt Hon Lord Maude of Horsham
The Lord Watson of Wyre Forest