Nearer to Zero: Central London
8th July 2014
Background & Aims

- **2011-12**: Harman Review established through HBF, LGA and NHBC.
- **Spring 2012**: Housing and construction ‘Red Tape Challenge’. Strong interest from the Centre
- **October 2012**: CLG Housing Standards Review launched. Consultation **August - October 2013**
- **Outcome announced - Prime Minister Jan 2013, and WMS March 2013.**

- Reduce **bureaucracy and costs** on house builders and others - supporting growth whilst delivering quality, sustainability, safety and accessibility.
- Reform and simplify framework of building regulations, guidance, local codes and standards.
- Make housebuilding process easier to navigate - reduce overlap and confusion between the Planning and Building Regulations regimes.
- Reduce contradictions and overlap between standards, to simplify and improve compliance.
- Allow local choice but within sensible parameters.
Resolving the untenable forest
Others also have views...

An end to 'rabbit hutch Britain'? House builders to be ordered to construct larger homes that have enough space for storage and furniture

- The average British home has shrunk in size by 40% in the last 80 years.
- Consultation would see minimum size requirements imposed on builders.
- But numerous other building standards would be scrapped under proposals.
- New measures would make building new homes quicker and easier.

By ASSOCIATED PRESS
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Squeezed into tiny, clad-walled boxes that are too small for people to live in, new builds will be subject to a new survey of living standards that would see design changes.

The new regulations would impose a 90 square yard space standard for people to live in, compared with the current 60 square yard standard. The government had planned to increase this to 95 square yards.

Cabinet ministers at a meeting on Tuesday failed to back calls for a crack down on 'rabbit hutch' homes, which was seen as the first move of a new crackdown.

Communities minister Don Foster said he hoped to get government support for minimum space standards for new homes.
Strategic Options & Review Process

- Choice offered in consultation –
  - A – standards as standalone suite (NPPF ref to “Nationally described Standards”) alongside Building Regs and Planning.
  - B – standards as stepping stone en route to Building Regulations. Govt Preferred option.
  - C – move standards into Building Regs.

- But not simple to move standards into Regs (One-In-Two-Out issues, Building Act considerations, strict tests, difficulties over “tiered” regulations – hence need for Primary Legislation).
The HSR standards ONLY include the **technical or functional performance of dwellings**; HSR does not cut across NPPF or other regimes.

Review is **cross-tenure** and applies to **whole of England** – technical aspects of **HQIs** included.

Outcome accompanied by **planning statement** (to ensure additional standards are not added on by authorities, beyond those left after Review).

HSR does not stop **market taking lead producing own standards** – but LAs will **not** be able to require these through planning policies.
Propositions


- **Water** – Baseline regulation (Part G). Higher standard available (105 lpd).

- **Access** – Baseline regulation (Part M). 2 additional areas (equivalent to LTH, and wheelchair housing).

- **Security** – Single minimum level proposed. Doors / windows

- **Space** – new standalone proposal (ie not access dependent) – will remain within planning sphere

- **Other themes** – materials, overheating, daylight, ventilation – no Regulations proposed because case not established. But necessary research ongoing.
Process Issues

- **Process** – proposed system still to operate under planning powers – local plans set policies from suite, and apply through planning conditions.

- **Needs and viability** – planning to undertake rigorous need and viability test for any standard. “Necessary” test – not a “nice to do” test.

- Planning authorities can relax requirements and not apply conditions

- **Building Control** – to undertake compliance check of conditions. Skills are suited for this more technical function.

- For **affordable sector** –
  a) NAHP 2015-18 bidding round “addendum” on technical standard. Govt considering next steps, post 2018.
  b) S.106 units would be covered by planning policy as above
Housing Standards Review & Planning Linkages

Steps to System

- Issue Approved Documents andRegs
- National Criteria are published (incl viability)
- Issue Planning Written Ministerial Statement

System comes into operation

Process

- Local Plan includes optional requirements policies, via EIP (based on national criteria test & viability)
- Pre-application discussions to ensure optional requirement is appropriate to specific applications
- LPA imposes and informs the developer in writing of the optional requirement planning condition
- Developer informs Building Control Body (BCB) of applicable optional requirement(s), if any
- BCB to carry out building control functions (approval of plans, inspection and certification) in normal way
Summer Consultation Package

• Covering explanatory paper – sets context, transitional issues.

• Draft Approved Documents – ie the new sections setting “optional requirements” and space standard

• Draft of Planning statement

• Impact Assessment

• Deregulation Bill – now in the Lords – potential secondary legislation in draft.

Next steps

• Implementation from Royal Assent / end of year?
ANY QUESTIONS?

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