

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

Fao Marc Vlessing

With compliments *Andrew Barry-Purcell*

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Graham Loveland  
Assistant Director (Planning and Strategy)  
London Borough of Hackney  
Town Hall  
Mare Street  
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our ref: ABP  
your ref:  
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Dear Mr Loveland

We have been asked by Pocket Housing to confirm the status of their product in terms of the definition of "intermediate housing" for the purposes of policies 3.10 – 3.12 of the London Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework, and I thought it might be helpful to set out our understanding.

The position is rather complicated by the publication of the NPPF. Under the definition of "affordable housing" in Annex 2 of the document, as long as the borough satisfies itself that the homes are provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market (and the London Plan provides London-specific eligibility thresholds for intermediate housing – see paragraph 3.61); that there are adequate provisions in place for the homes to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households; and that all the other conditions referred to in the NPPF (for example that the sales price is above social rent but below market levels) are met then these homes are to be treated as affordable.

Currently, Policy 3.10 of the London Plan does not reflect this precisely as it is based on the previous national definition of affordable housing, under which the important thing was that the homes should be affordable with regard to local housing prices, and for intermediate housing, affordable to households within the income band thresholds set out in the Plan. I do not think that this makes any practical difference, and we will shortly be consulting on alterations to the Plan to bring it fully in line with the NPPF.

With regard to design, our view is that as long as the local planning authority satisfies itself that these are intended for single person occupation, then the minimum space standard to apply should be 37sqm GIA, as set out in table 3.3, in the supporting text to London Plan Policy 3.5. Smaller units may be permitted if the development is demonstrated to be of exemplary design and contributes to other objectives and policies in the Plan.

As such, if these homes meet these criteria, then they should be counted by the borough as affordable housing in its monitoring return to the GLA.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Marc Vlessing at Pocket Homes.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Barry-Purcell  
Senior Manager – London Plan