

Making Planning Popular


Popular agency, online discourse and English public planning

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This thesis represents partial submission for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the Royal College of Art. I confirm that the work presented here is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Knight', written over a light grey rectangular background.

25 June 2018

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Abstract

Making Planning Popular explores the extent to which the design of new forms of online communication platform might enable a more mutual, agonistic relationship between popular discourse and public planning in England. Building upon an analysis of extant 'planning' discourse on popular online forums in the UK, a process of research through design led to a prototype platform, *Building Rights*, which provides a provisional test of how such a relationship might be created and reinforced online, in a manner that builds on the sympathies and practices already present in the popular domain.

By failing to address the dichotomy between planning and the popular, the promise of a wider citizen engagement in public planning made in the era of Localism (for instance DCLG, 2012A: 6) has not been fulfilled, both on its own terms and in the context of a wider societal rejection of extant models of representative democracy. Meanwhile, recent critiques of contemporary public planning and of the democratic project in which it sits, such as in the work of Colin Ward, Leonie Sandercock and Chantal Mouffe, strongly suggest that a more mutual, agonistic relationship between planning and its 'people' is not only possible but desirable.

Can the planning system, or part of it, be reconceptualised as an 'open', 'agonistic' political space in which the role of the public is as vital as the role of the trained professional? Can the emerging paradigm of the 'collaborative' planner be fulfilled or expanded upon by exposure to the popular? Can the paradigm shift represented by the ever-increasing significance of social media, and new forms of design, be used to aid in these transformations?

This research firstly explores contemporary popular on-line discourse related to building activity and built environment decision-making in order to explore how the English public currently relate to and understand the planning system, and the terms through which 'planning discourse' is actually undertaken using social media and online discourse platforms. In parallel, a design research practice led to the development of a prototype digital platform, *Building Rights*. To test this prototype, a charrette (a design workshop wherein the on-line life of the platform

could be simulated and tested) was staged, the results from which form an analysis of the potential and limitations of such platforms in reconnecting English public planning with its public.

Making Planning Popular is the first investigation of popular online discourse concerning public planning, the first to explore popular perceptions of public planning within social media and online discourse, and the first to test the role of the designer in expanding the significance of that discourse in the transformation of the built environment.

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This thesis is in memory of Patricia Jones, who truly understood both people and planners, and of Colin Ward. It is offered to Cristina Monteiro and Amelia Monteiro Knight, with love.

Author's Declaration

During the period of registered study in which this thesis was prepared the author has not been registered for any other academic award or qualification. The material included in this thesis has not been submitted wholly or in part for any academic award or qualification other than that for which it is now submitted.

Signature

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Date

25 June 2018

1 Introduction

Making Planning Popular is a study into the relationship between public planning and the activities and discourses of wider society, and proposes a transformation of that relationship. Though critical of the current relationship between planning and people, the study is undertaken in the belief that ‘public planning’, defined herein as *the political tool which we collectively use to decide the future of our environment*, is of fundamental importance to addressing the problems of a world facing enormous social, political, cultural and environmental challenges. It seeks to deploy emerging forms of on-line platform, within which planning discourse of a kind already takes place, to help in the building of a more mutually-supportive relationship between the public and public planning.

When I was 14, I discovered that Bungalow Town (fig. 1), a ‘plotland’ development of expressive and imaginative dwellings ranging from bungalows derived from railway carriages to multi-storey timber castles, which had once existed in my home town, had been deliberately destroyed by the local council in the immediate aftermath of World War 2. In the face of much local opposition, and in a very early example of the utilisation of the new powers of Town and Country Planning Act 1947, the local authority compulsorily purchased the settlement and in the following years replanned it along conventional suburban lines.

I didn’t know then that the erasure of Bungalow Town was part of a paradigmatic moment in the history of town planning in the UK, but its story (Hardy and Ward, 1984:91-102) revealed that, in that very familiar context, there had existed in the recent past and in the same space, two radically competing models of development. The former was ad-hoc, emergent, joyful and imaginative; the latter statutory, paternalistic and concerned with order and propriety. It seemed to me that the post-war model, however well-intentioned, had made a mistake in disregarding the efforts of that ‘other’ model.

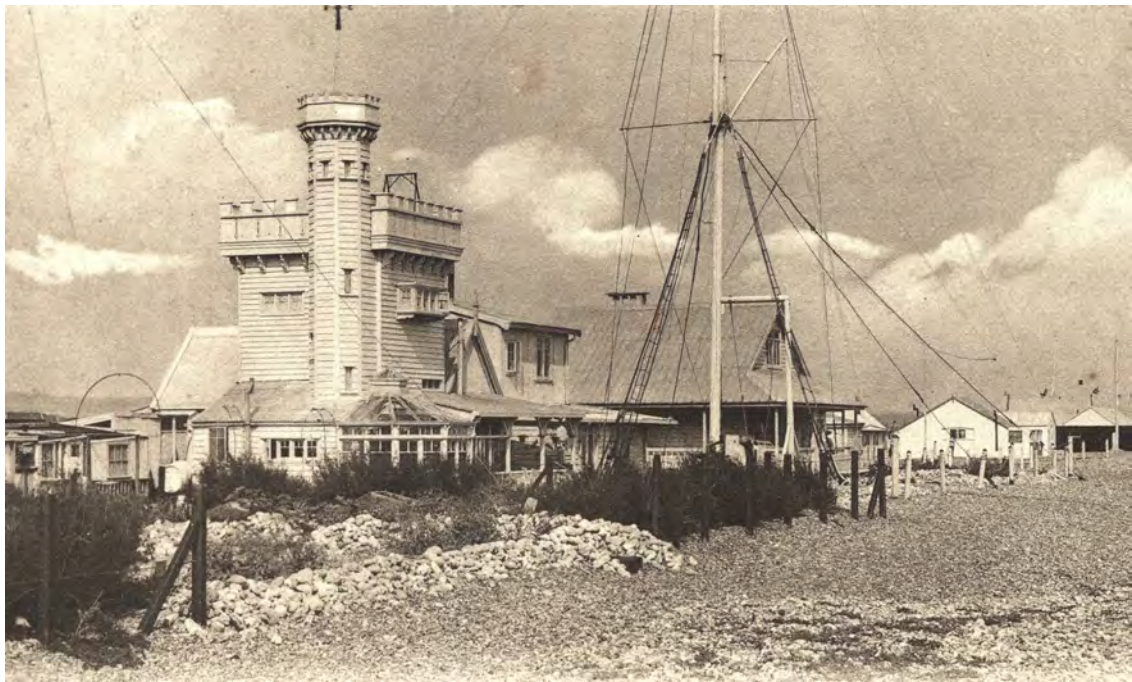


Figure 1. Bungalow Town circa. 1910. Researcher's collection.

These discoveries and intuitions, gathered out of the ruins of Bungalow Town, led to an overwhelming interest in the politics of development, in the role of the state in development processes, and the relationship between state and popular practices which is embodied in this study and also in my on-going teaching at the Royal College of Art and elsewhere.

As the story of Bungalow Town plays out in Hardy & Ward's history (2002:91-102), the slow fading of the settlement plays out in the pages of official reports and in the spaces of the court, the enquiry and the committee room. The formal and abstract quality of the spaces and the language used are as striking as the wider political and spatial story that they frame: the spaces and languages that frame public planning decision-making *are* the politics of that system, a notion that informed this study's focus on the mediation of planning discourse and a commitment to the idea that there might be a powerful role for design practice in building a better connection between public planning and the public.

Making Planning Popular proposes that popular discourse has something to offer in freeing English public planning from its current, profound ideological crisis, and

that a better system might be built in which state and popular practices form a collective bulwark against the dominance of neoliberalism (as defined by Harvey, 2005) and global capital.

It also proposes that the skills of the socially-engaged planner, architect and communications designer have a role to play in this liberation, and as a work of *research by design* sets out to explore the possibilities of that role through design, asking whether the design of new forms of communication, discourse and socially-distributed knowledge could establish an agency for popular discourse within the English public planning system that not only enables a better, more *mutual* relationship between ‘people’ and ‘planning’, but which offers a revitalization of public planning’s democratic potential. This work is underlined, crucially, by the conviction that merely ‘engaging’ people within extant planning processes and procedures in the prescribed and limited manner of current planning policy, or allowing for ‘participation’ within the terms of the present system and as defined since 2011 by the project of Localism, are not adequate relations between planning and its public(s) and do not represent the full potential of public planning as a democratic practice.

The research took place in an emergent (and perpetually shifting) context in which new forms of online platform – and new media more generally – have shifted how discourse and knowledge exchange work in wider society, in the UK as elsewhere. Online discourse was firmly established when the study began, but since that time an explosion of new forms of sharing, discourse, knowledge-exchange, community-building and collaboration has taken place which represents a paradigm shift in how knowledge and opinion travel in society. Whilst acknowledging the limits and issues of this shift, particularly in relation to the corporate spaces of new media such as Facebook or Twitter, the study has attempted to ‘keep up’ with these transformations – through design – and applying them to the extant system of public planning, which as yet has not responded to this shift. Design, in this study and reflecting the researcher’s own ongoing pedagogic and design practice, is understood to combine spatial design, policy design and communication design (therefore requiring the collaboration of graphic designers in the research method), plus a revisiting of the idea of ‘public practice’ which is currently emergent in architectural and planning practice. This revisiting, evident in the work of Public

Practice, HECTOR, Assemble, We Made That and the researcher's own practice DK-CM, to name just a few, represents a re-engagement with the public that attempts to avoid the generalisations, hegemonies and hierarchies of past forms of public practice in favour of something more open to challenge, dissent, adversity – ultimately to new forms of democracy – the roots of which can be traced, in part to the critical positions explored in Chapters 2 and 3. Design in this context, and as explored throughout this thesis, is understood as a practice of interlocution and connection, whether the output is a physical space, policy transformation or digital platform.

Can the planning system, or part of it, be reconceptualised as an 'open', 'agonistic' political space in which the role of the public is as vital as the role of the trained professional, 'agonistic' because following the theory developed by Mouffe et. al. (see Chapter 3, section 3.2) that the aim of democratic politics is to create, rather than to evade or suppress, adversaries and adversarial relations within political discourse.

Can the emerging paradigm of the 'collaborative' planner be fulfilled or expanded upon by exposure to the popular?

Can the paradigm shift represented by the ever-increasing significance of social media be captured to aid in these transformations?

The structure of this thesis has been designed in a way that represents the research process followed. In broad terms, Chapters 2 and 3 together form a literature review in which the research is contextualised. Chapter 4 then sets out a research methodology made up of two distinct but complementary research strands, that of qualitative discourse analysis of extant online planning discourse (Chapter 5) and research through design to establish the potential role and agency of design in building 'bridges' between that extant discourse and public planning (Chapter 6). The findings from these two strands are set out in Chapter 7 and Chapter 8 forms a conclusion, setting the research back into context and considering its limitations and consequences.

The first literature review chapter, Chapter 2, is concerned with the contemporary and recent contextualisation of planning in relation to participation and the

popular. It begins (2.1) with a survey of the promise of ‘participation’ in recent political rhetoric in relation to the wider story of what is happening to public planning in the present day, and suggests that this promise remains unfulfilled. The need for greater and more profound participation than currently offered is revealed (2.2) through reference to *Attitudes to Town and Country Planning* (DoE, 1995), the last time the public perception of the planning system was systematically studied in the UK, and further contextualised through a discussion (2.3) of various practitioners and theorists from the late twentieth century through to the present day, each of which makes a different but complementary claim for an enriched participatory practice in planning.

Chapter 3 shifts the review to consider broader political theories of participation and democracy, toward the idea of a radical democracy above, and considering the potential agency of the popular from a cultural theory standpoint (3.1) and by using the political theory of agonism (3.2). These theories are updated and applied by turning to readings of the emerging role of new media and online platforms in creating (or supporting) new forms of popular discourse and democratic space, seen through the counter-hegemonic and pro-agonist lens established in the preceding chapters.

Following this, Chapter 4 sets out a methodology for the research, initially through a discussion (4.1) of how the contextualisation of the preceding chapters is to be applied to the research itself. The rationale and design of the two research strands is then set out (4.2). Additionally, a direct precedent for the design research in the researcher’s own teaching and design practice is described as important methodological context for the work (4.3) and a survey of existing participatory planning tools is carried out (4.4) which further frames the aims and objectives of the design research; how it will be evaluated in relation to the its ‘competitors’ in the field of digital mediation.

The first research chapter, Chapter 5, critically analyses, in line with the method already set out (4.2), a sample of extant online planning discourse from selected extant online platforms. Here, qualitative discourse analysis is used to explore contemporary popular discourse related to building activity and built environment decision-making through the close analysis of planning-related discourse on

existing online forums. The discourse, derived from a number of forums, is analysed in order to explore the terms through which 'planning discourse' is actually undertaken using digital mediation and discourse by the public at large. The purpose is firstly to establish an insight into current perceptions of public planning amongst the public as discussed in the public sphere, and which to the researcher's knowledge has never before involved the direct interrogation of unselfconscious, unreflexively popular dialogue about public planning, and secondly to set out some parameters through which such popular online discourse might be of use to the building of a mutual relationship between the public and public planning.

The second research chapter, Chapter 6, describes the process of research through design which led to the *Building Rights* prototype to an 'alpha' level of design resolution. This platform is a test of the kind of space envisaged within the literature review and partially latent in the fora studied in Chapter 5: that of a *bridge* between statutory and popular planning practices.

Findings from both research strands are aggregated in Chapter 7, and these can be summarised as follows:

- There remains a public seeking a more open planning system, and one that has faith in the values of planning;
- Language is no longer a barrier, but a bridge;
- The paradigm shift in popular communications represented by new media is a means of creating a more open system and can also shift the paradigm of the 'open' public planner;
- Mutual relations between public planning and the popular already exist; design is crucial to making spaces where this can play out and become operative.

In the light of these findings, the thesis concludes (Chapter 8) that there is a crucial role for design in capitalising on existing transformations in popular planning discourse, and sets out some parameters derived from that extant discourse about how this might best be achieved. *Building Rights* in its current

iteration is understood not as the final resolution of this goal but as a prototype through which the design of such a tool has been substantially defined. Its own limitations, and the potential revealed in its testing, form a brief for further research and further design.

2 Public planning and participation today

2.1 'Participation' in the age of Localism: rhetoric, practice, mediation

This chapter explores participatory rhetoric and practice in the era of Localism ushered in by the 2010 Coalition government in the UK. It situates the 'promise' of participation within wider transformations to the public planning sector over the same timeframe. It questions whether Localism and contemporaneous forms of mediation have lived up to its 'promise'. This opens up the possibility of more radical and transformative forms of mediation, particularly ones that exploit the capabilities of online discourse.

*

Participation, defined as an 'active part' for the public 'throughout the plan-making process' (DoE, 1969:1, cited in Parry, 1992:29) formally entered English public planning following the 'Skeffington Report' or *People and Planning* (DoE, 1969, see also Parry, 1992:29 and Froud, 2017) and the subsequent Town and Country Planning Act 1968, which, following Skeffington's recommendations, made it a statutory requirement that participation be incorporated into the planning process. As can be traced in histories of English planning (Hall & Tewdwr-Jones, 2011; Cullingworth & Nadin, 2006), this incorporation of participation into the processes of public planning was a correction to the more centralised 'expert' planning system ushered in during the post-war period and was already a long-established component of the system before the advent of Localism.

David Cameron's coalition government took power in 2010 with the promise that 'the time had come to disperse power more widely in Britain' (Coalition Agreement, May 2010, cited in DCLG, 2012A:4), and ushered in an era of policies in which powerful phrases like 'decentralisation', 'the Big Society' and 'Localism' played a

key rhetorical and polemical role. Prior to that election, questions of planning were a pillar of the Conservative party's policies, closely framed by ideas of the dispersal of power to the 'community' and the local. The party's critique of public planning characterised it as a centralized, bureaucratic and autocratic system in which little power resided at the level of the local and of the community. *Open Source Planning*, a position paper party issued in the run-up to the election, had this to say about the question of participation in planning:

To establish a successful democracy, we need participation and social engagement. But our present planning system is almost wholly negative and adversarial. It creates bureaucratic barriers rather than enabling communities to formulate a positive vision of their future development.
(Conservative Party, 2010: 1)

Beyond this rhetoric, the position paper stated a number of policy intentions in relation to ideas of participation couched in a language of progressive 'openness': 'giving local people the power to engage', 'collaborative democracy' and so on (2010:3).

'Open Source Planning' referred explicitly (2010:1) to emerging trends in software design, highlighting both the political principle of openness and the economic advantages perceived in such a model.

Beyond seeking 'collaborative democratic methods' (2010:8), the green paper did not suggest any particular tools, methods or spaces for the increases in participation and 'openness' that it advocated, other than through the mechanisms of local government.

With the passing into law of the Localism Act (2011), the new government promised 'new rights and powers for communities and individuals' through a reformed public planning system, and 'reform to make the planning system more democratic and more effective' (DCLG, 2012A: 6). In planning and developmental terms, the new policy tools placed in the hands of communities included the 'Community right to bid' (designed to give communities and community groups the right to bid on nominated 'assets of community value' when such assets entered the open market), abolition of regional strategies (a tier of planning characterized by the then-government as undemocratic), neighbourhood planning (a new tier of

policy below the local plan and generated at the scale of the 'neighbourhood', but compliant with local and national policy), and the 'Community right to build', a system through which neighbourhoods and communities engaged in neighbourhood planning could bypass traditional planning application processes in order to more quickly and efficiently deliver development in their local environment (DCLG, 2012A: 11-15).

In the wake of the Localism Act and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (DCLG, 2012), the primary national-level policy document of this new era, the tensions at the heart of the Conservative Localism project became clearer. The 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' introduced by the NPPF led to assertions in the press and from public bodies including CPRE that ill-defined 'sustainable development' would be empowered to overwhelm any increases in local, neighbourhood or community 'power' (see for instance Derounian, 2011). The valuing of 'England's green and pleasant land', a position of great value to a huge swathe of Conservative voters, began to exist in direct tension with the then-government's liberal approach to development, for instance as played out in the *Daily Telegraph's* 'Hands Off Our Land' campaign (see, for example, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/earth/hands-off-our-land/>, Accessed 24.11.2017).

The project of Localism, in practice, has been beset with tensions and conflicts that leave it ineffective as a decisive policy shift, and through which centralization occurred alongside decentralization (Parker, 2015: 109-111). Decentralization became a useful way of shifting responsibility for cutting public services toward the local and away from the national, whilst changes to planning allowed detail-level increases in local voice without increasing the 'say' of a community in a substantial local development question (2015: 110).

In 2014, a survey commissioned by the Royal Town Planning Institute suggested that 79% of the public wanted 'more say' on planning and community development (Populous, 2014), suggesting that in the years following the advent of Localism popular impressions of public impact on the planning process remained deeply unsatisfactory, a stark contrast to the importance of a more democratic, decentralized system to government rhetoric.

The promise of Localism was offered in the midst of a period of profound crisis for public planning. Indeed, the idea of Localism sits within, and in some instances has been used to justify, a wider set of policy changes and initiatives that have seen local authority budgets cut, with planning departments disproportionately suffering. In 2015, the Royal Town Planning Institute and Arup (RTPI, 2015) found that significant reductions in local planning authority budgets and staffing since 2010 had led to a ‘decrease on average of 37% in planning policy staff and 27% in development staff’ (RTPI, 2015:3) and, in parallel, reductions in managerial and senior personnel and an increase in temporary staff, such that the actual overall loss in planning expertise within the public sector is worse than the bare figures suggest. For the RTPI, the ability of planning departments to deliver the ‘housing growth and development’ that are cornerstones of current UK government policy (2015:2) is fundamentally threatened by this.

The transformation is taking place within an atmosphere of public sector austerity which originates in the May 2010 Budget, such that the very viability of local authorities in the UK is under threat, with planning teams cut disproportionately (RTPI, 2015:2). In its 2017 State of Local Government Finance Survey (LGIU, 2017), the Local Government Intelligence Unit found that 42% of local authorities felt that the 2017 budget would lead to ‘cuts that are evident to the public’, 79% had ‘none or very little confidence in the sustainability of local government finance’ and 13% felt that ‘there was a danger they would no longer have enough funding to fulfil their statutory duties in the coming year.’ (ibid.), and supported by research by the Local Government Association (LGA, 2014, cited in RTPI, 2015).

The LGIU (2017) also found that 77% of councils were considering the commercialisation of council services as a way out of their financial predicaments, with planning departments one of those in which such commercialisation would be explored. This was prefigured in the early days of the Coalition by the council of the London Borough of Barnet, who launched a new approach to public services which, quickly branded ‘easyCouncil’, shifted the provision of services from a ‘blanket coverage’ (Mulholland, 2010) to a multi-tiered, multi-cost approach inspired by low-cost airlines (fig. 2). Less visible forms of this tiered system have emerged across local authorities in subsequent years.



Figure 2. UNISON strikes against the 'easyCouncil' model. Image via <http://www.barnettradesouncil.org.uk>, Accessed 29.12.2017.

The RTPI's call in 2015 was for 'greater reinvestment in public sector planning services alongside the continuation and further development of strong relationships between the public and private sector' (2015:2). Given that such reinvestment is spectacularly unlikely in the current political climate, it is understandable that public/private relationships, and the commercialisation of services discussed above, are becoming increasingly common, whether through charging for planning services for members of the public, through to increasingly intimate relationships between planning departments and private sector developers. But this dependency has been challenged, most particularly in urban contexts such as London where the politics of housing viability, which have come to the fore since viability was explicitly cited in the 2012 National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG, 2012) has come under scrutiny. To give a high profile example,

in 2015, Oliver Wainwright of *The Guardian* explored the viability assessment for a major residential scheme in the London Borough of Southwark that had been issued following a 'freedom of information' request by a local resident and three years' worth of tribunals and appeals (Wainwright, 2015) and found not only a system which enabled the developer to ignore the local authority's affordable housing policies, but also that the viability assessment itself, not disclosable to the public or the planning committee, was also invisible to the borough's planning team as they did not have the right software to open the document (fig. 3).



Figure 3. Redacted viability statement. Video still via <http://www.architecturefoundation.org.uk>, Accessed 29.11.2017.

Planning theorists have observed this situation for some time. In 2002, writing in Philip Allmendinger and Mark Tewdwr-Jones' *Planning Futures* on the experience of public sector planning practitioners in the early 2000s, Heather Campbell and Robert Marshall cited an interview with a senior public sector planner, commenting on a recent UDP enquiry:

The more widespread use of planning consultants had raised the quality of argument. But to make that work the authority needs to be resourced adequately. Trying to operate an inquiry on the resources we've had has

put us in an invidious position. All the work we have put in could go down the swanny because we haven't had the resource to counter the arguments of private consultants. (Campbell & Marshall, 2002: 100).

At the time, Campbell and Marshall summarised their interviews thus:

Uncertainty and disquietude concerning the current operational context of planning in Britain was a constant undercurrent in our discussions with practitioners. A picture emerged of a beleaguered and embattled profession which is misunderstood and maligned both by politicians, especially at central government level, and by the public. All members of the focus groups were struggling with their professional identities in an increasingly broken and shifting terrain of practice. Paradoxically, given intellectual developments, the one thing which seemed to provide a stable and legitimising frame of reference as they faced the frustrations and challenges of their everyday practical concerns was a professional idealism premised on the traditional claims of a unique body of knowledge and skills which equipped them to make expert judgements on technical matters. (Campbell & Marshall: 2002:108)

In the 15 years since then, this imbalance has clearly increased and with little prospect of reversal. And it is a situation that has not improved in the intervening years (RTPI, 2015; Hall & Tewdwr-Jones, 2011; Clifford & Tewdwr-Jones, 2013; Ellis & Henderson, 2016).

Having summarised this highly charged, emotive and challenging political context, the study turns now to the transformations in the *mediation of planning* that have taken place since the advent of political Localism in order to explore the extent to which they have fulfilled or failed to fulfil the 'promise' of Localism.

The Coalition government launched the National Planning Policy Framework (2011) focussing unusually not only on the quality of the policy but also of its brevity. As the DCLG put it in 2012:

The new 50 page document... replaces over 1,300 pages of inherited policy in 44 separate documents.

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/planning-reforms-will-deliver-local-growth-with-community-support--2>, Accessed 25.11.2017)

This brevity was quickly attacked by high profile planning lawyers, local authorities and the specialist media (CLGC, 2011), who argued that much important detail had been lost in the quest for ‘red tape’ headlines, and in response, in 2014, the government published its National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), a series of on-line guidance documents that replaced a number of circulars that had been marked as obsolete since the publishing of the NPPF. The NPPG added both explanation and complexity to the NPPF, diluting its apparent brevity whilst, to many users, simultaneously erasing many years of more-or-less effective guidance. The planning lawyer Martin Goodall echoed the feelings of many when he wrote:

The shiny new “*National Planning Practice Guidance*” is precisely the opposite of what the government purportedly intended, yet they have brought this about by the sheer folly of their blinkered determination to “reform” the planning system by removing the very ministerial guidance that has underpinned the operation of the planning system for the past 65 years. Far from “making it simpler, clearer and easier for people to use”, this change will have precisely the opposite effect. Those of us who are thoroughly familiar with the planning system are well aware of the way the system works, but pity the poor layman who has only the NPPG to go on!

(<http://planninglawblog.blogspot.co.uk/2014/03/useless-new-planning-guidance.html>, Accessed 25.11.2017)

In parallel to the NPPG, which existed within the government’s *gov.uk* website, there were changes to national government’s other key planning information resource, the *Planning Portal* (fig. 4). This site had existed since 2002 as a primary public-facing information resource for planning information, a digital means of applying for planning permission, the ‘official’ source of Building Regulations documentation and the only electronic route for lodging planning appeals. At the time, and still at the time of writing, the *Planning Portal* is likely to be the top few listings that result from a search for ‘planning’ within the United Kingdom.

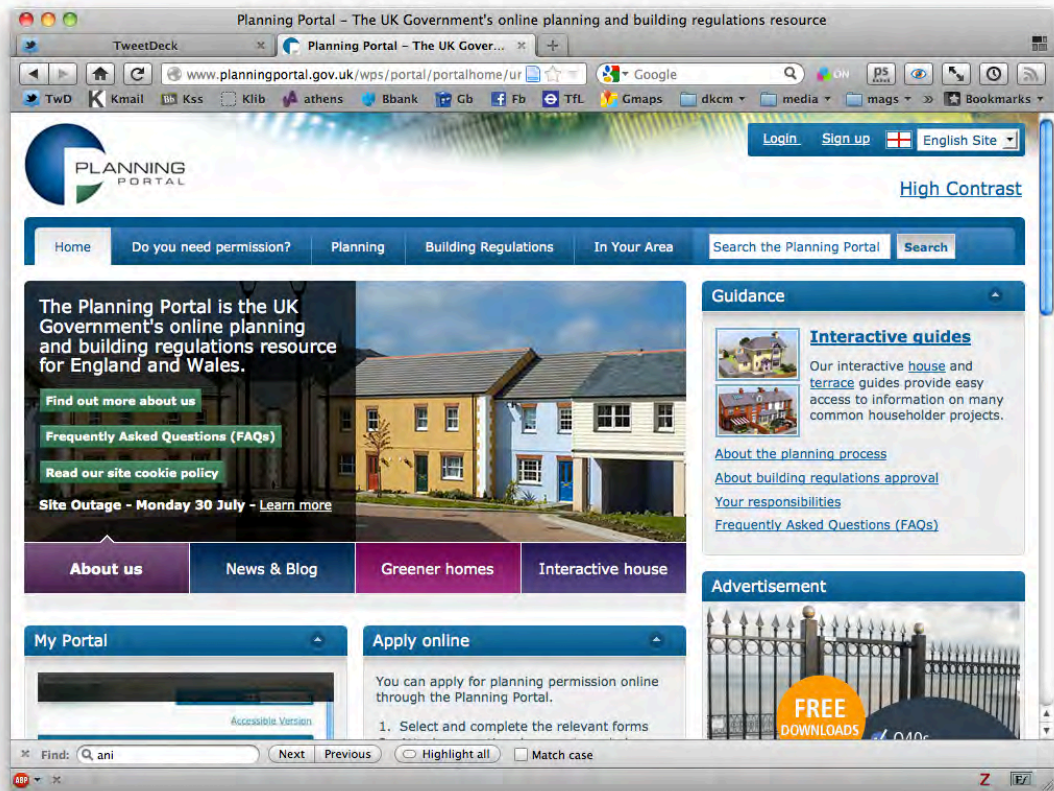


Figure 4. Screenshot of *www.planningportal.gov.uk* (Accessed 26.7.2012. An updated version of the site is now available at *www.planningportal.co.uk*)

In 2013, the DCLG initiated a proposed investment programme for the *Planning Portal* which led, in 2015, to its reformulation as a private entity, PortalPlanQuest Ltd., a joint venture between the DCLG and TerraQuest Ltd, a company owned by Mears Group, a large housing and social care provider. The published vision of the new private company is as follows:

to be a successful, energetic and ethical company that values its employees, respects its customers and provides a first class service to the development industry. (<https://www.planningportal.co.uk>, Accessed 25.11.2017.)

Established as a 'brand' and a 'successful business' (DCLG, 2013:3), the *Planning Portal* was effectively privatized by stealth, and whilst subsequent changes to the portal's structure and interface have been largely cosmetic (and concerned with

streamlining the online application process), it is troubling for anyone concerned with the democratic potential of planning for such a primary information source and mediation tool to become a privatized system, and one that places the ‘development industry’ at the heart of its mission statement, rather than the needs of society as a whole.

*

The early participatory promise of Localism has not been fulfilled. Whilst neighbourhood planning and other tools have opened up new avenues for local-level participation in planning (albeit ones which can add detail, but not directly challenge, existing levels of policy), wider structural and financial transformations to the working of local-level planning departments, ‘austerity’ and the paradoxes of the Localist project (and its abandonment during the recent years of Conservative government) have all meant that participation in public planning remains limited and demands for greater levels of participation remain strong (Populous, 2014).

Given its vaunted early interest in the politics of open source software, the project of Localism has also not yet delivered upon the promise of a planning system wherein communication and mediation are more open and democratic. Whilst the NPPF and NPPG are simpler and shorter than their predecessors, they have opened up significant territories of litigation and doubt within the world of professional planning and there is no evidence that they offer the public a more engaging, open or clear source of planning information. In parallel, government moves to centralize and privatize other key electronic forums of planning knowledge exchange can only have the opposite effect to that promised, whilst the publishing or ‘broadcast’ model, of static on-line publishing of content, fails to grasp the paradigmatic shift represented by new media.

2.2 Attitudes to Town and Country Planning

This chapter explores a single piece of research which, prior to the present study, was the most recent sustained attempt to understand the perception of public planning by the English public: *Attitudes to Town and Country Planning* (DoE, 1995).

This study was undertaken by Prism Research (Telford) and the University of the West of England (Bristol), commissioned by the Department of the Environment, and within its wide-ranging findings, the general public made up only one category within a larger investigation of perceptions of planning from a variety of viewpoints. It is the findings regarding this category that are explored here, the key lessons of which concern language, communication, and the political space in which planning discourse takes place. These are all themes which, the present study will go on to argue, are central to the creation of a more mutual, democratic relationship between planning and people.

In terms of language and terminology, DoE (1995) found that ‘simple planning terms were recognized by a relatively high proportion of the population’, with a drop-off of more technical terms, and that recognition of terms related to development control was more widespread than of those related to development plans and policy development (DoE, 1995:18), but that knowledge among the wider public was substantially lower than amongst developers and businesses (1995:83). The study also found demographic variation in levels of recognition, identifying ‘those between the ages of 35 and 64, men, people with higher levels of educational attainment and in high status employment, owner occupiers and people resident in different [south-eastern and north-eastern] parts of the country’ identified as having a higher average level of recognition than other groups, with ‘those under 25... those with lower levels of educational attainment and members of minority ethnic groups’ identified as having a lower average level of recognition (1995:18). The considerable demographic variance was identified by the report as a key issue in terms of ‘command[ing] support’ [1995:83] across the different social groups in society.

In comparison to knowledge of technical terms associated with the profession and practice of public planning, the study found that levels of 'intuitive knowledge about planning' were high, in a manner that was surprising in the context of term recognition, particularly in relation to development control. The study concludes therefore that the processes of development control, whilst not necessarily understood on a technical or procedural level with any precision, have been 'internalised' to some degree in the wider population such that it is now 'taken for granted and very little questioned' (1995:18). Knowledge of the development plan process, of policy research and creation, was far less widespread, on a technical or intuitive level, with again a demographic of educated, late middle-age, retired and ethnic majority having most engagement with such processes, most often on the basis of opposition to a development or to a policy. The study concluded in relation to this issue that the use of technical language was a 'barrier to knowledge and understanding' (1995:91) of the system.

In terms of values, public planning was generally found to be a 'valuable public service', though posters expressed 'a degree of suspicion' about planning's 'fairness and responsiveness'. An imbalance was also identified in the way that planning was perceived to serve different agents:

They are also of the opinion that too much attention is given to property interests and business, and too little to the needs of the general public and individual citizens. (1995:18)

In a section of the study concerned with people who had made householder planning applications, it was found that direct engagement with the planning system had not, generally, substantially increased 'general levels of knowledge and understanding about planning' (1995:30), and where such an increase occurred it took place only in the context of development control rather than in relation to wider planning processes. The knowledge was therefore restricted to the impact of policy and 'the plan' rather than the meaning behind those things. It can be concluded from this that the opportunity presented by a 'direct engagement' with public planning to educate and inform, a key chance to connect people to plan-making processes, at least in terms of the justification for a refusal or a permission, was not being exploited.

The study concludes with a discussion (1995:92-3) regarding 'the adversarial issue', or the perception that an adversarial tendency in the culture and process of planning reinforces a 'win or lose' ethos. This issue arose as a key aspect of users' perceptions of the planning user, and the study asserts is a key challenge to better public support of the planning system, recommending several measures to address this challenge:

- Easy access to planning officers 'perceived as competent'
- Improve 'manner of discussion and negotiation', avoiding 'an inability to listen, to discuss an application in the terms [or language] of an applicant, dogmatism and the adoption of a [non problem-solving] stance'
- Confront the pressures perceived to be put on officers by their relationship with elected members (this is a particular perception of repeat, professional users of development control processes)
- Access to more senior planning officers of planning committee members/chairs in the event of particularly important or contentious scenarios
- And above all, to foster:

Other practices that facilitate a willingness on the part of applicants to co-operate in the search for solutions to problems, generalized in terms of a planning authority culture that inspires the confidence to talk and to negotiate (1995:93)

In relation to the general public, the findings of *Attitudes* are ultimately concerned, by implication, with two key issues: the language used to discuss 'planning' matters, and the framing political space/context of this discussion.

2.3 Participation in theory: 'Localist' participation in context

Having explored the promise of 'participation' in post-2011 public planning (Chapter 2, sections 2.1-2.2), this section explores a wider field of critiques of public planning with a focus on its hegemonic character. They have been selected for what they say about the political structure and process of public planning: in each case a call for a refinement, expansion or consolidation of citizen power. Together they allow an exploration of the deeper potential of participation within public planning through the demands and arguments of planning theorists and practitioners of the period since the idea first emerged.

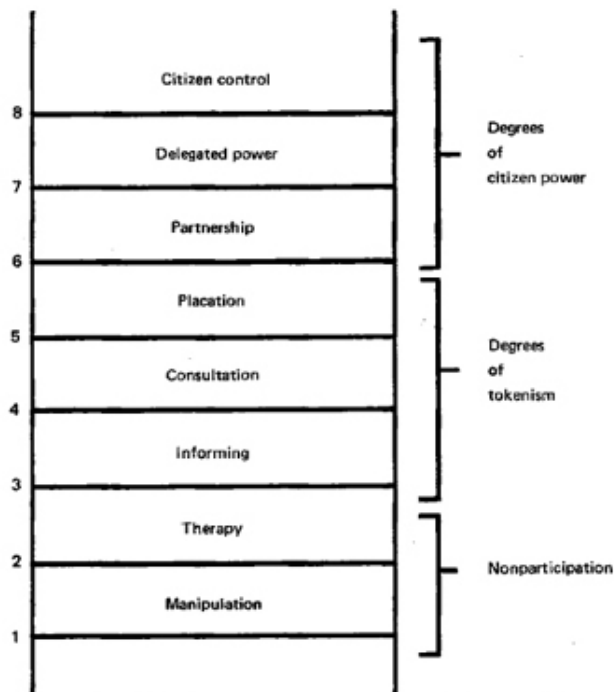


Figure 5. 'The Eight Rungs of Citizen Participation', illustration from Arnstein, 1969.

Participation is here defined not in the 'safe' terms of the *Skeffington Report* and related policies (DoE, 1969, Parry, 1992) but in the terms outlined by planner Sherry Arnstein in her 'ladder of participation' (Arnstein, 1969 and discussed in Ward, 2008:83-84, see also fig. 5 above).

Arnstein defines participation as a genuine transfer of power toward the citizen public, and accordingly her 'ladder' categorises degrees of participation from non-

participation masquerading as participation, through to tokenism and ‘citizen power’ – it is only at these higher levels of the ladder that efforts toward participation meet Arnstein’s definition of genuine power transfer.

Each of the critiques in this section represents a call for a climb of the ladder, and collectively they remain a challenge to the current status of participation within public planning.

Planning theorist Nigel Taylor has asserted (after Hobsbawm) that ‘the period from 1945 to the late 1960s was... a kind of golden age for British town planning... a broad ‘social democratic’ consensus reigned in politics under which both major political parties endorsed an enhanced role for the state in managing society, including town planning’ (1998:38). This was the achievement of town planning’s early pioneers, (Ashworth, 1954; Cherry, 1981), but also of far wider social, political and economic transformations of the post-war age. By the time the first of these critiques was written, this social-democratic golden age and its accompanying certainties of the period were at an end.

Asserting pluralism and dissent

American planner Paul Davidoff (1930-1984) was among the first planning theorists to assert the political nature of planning (Taylor, 1998:83). His early work, ‘A Choice Theory of Planning’ (1962) with Thomas Reiner, distinguished between ‘technical’ planning issues and ‘values’-based ones, asserting that the planner should confine their work to the former and recognize that their own political, professional or ethical values might be contentious or problematic within a planning process (Davidoff & Reiner, 1962: 22).

This assertion was a direct challenge to a planning practice predicated on an assumed expert consensus, as can be summarised in two quotes of the years preceding Davidoff’s writing:

I think it is necessary to lead the citizen- guide him. The citizen does not always know exactly what is best. (Lewis Silkin, Labour Minister for Town and Country Planning, cited in Taylor, 1998:43)

The dwellers in a slum area are almost a separate race of people, with different values, aspirations and ways of living... Most people who live in slums have no views on their environment at all. (Wilfred Burns, Chief Planning Officer of Newcastle-upon-Tyne City Council, cited in Ward, 1989:37)

In both these citations, made by notable practitioners of town planning in the post-war period, we find a series of assumptions that Davidoff and Reiner would have found problematic, but which could be confidently asserted within the post-war planning consensus and its rejection of non-professional opinions 'because professional judgements about what constituted a good living environment were assumed to be uncontentious' (Taylor, 1998: 43). For Davidoff and Reiner, 'what planners failed to appreciate was that a judgement about what constitutes a worthwhile living environment is a value judgement, not a pure 'technical fact'.' (1962:22) Their work drew attention to this flaw in the professionalism of planning and, initially, called for planners to step away from value judgements entirely.

In 1965, Davidoff published 'Advocacy and Pluralism in Planning', a text which takes his earlier uncovering of value judgements within the planning profession and used them, not to insist on a stepping away from values, but rather to take differences in values between different interest groups and deploy them in the service of a more 'plural' system.

Davidoff called for planners to acknowledge their values and to advocate for them within the professional sphere, thereby engaging 'thoroughly and openly in the contention surrounding political determination' (1965,424) and to become advocates for particular interest groups within a contested planning process. He advocated for the 'rationality' (1965: 425) of a system made up of a plurality of plans, each of which is developed by a particular interest group to serve their own interests, an approach that would later, in the UK context, become a founding principle of the Greater London Council Popular Planning Unit (Brownill, 1988; Brindley et. al., 1996; Wainwright, 2003).

By advocating dissensus over consensus in plan-making, Davidoff asserted that the process is a political one, and one in which a variety of voices should be heard, *because of* rather than *despite* their conflicting positions. For Davidoff, a relative

lack of awareness of social and economic methods of analysis was causing planners to propose naïve responses to situations. His model did not just mean that the planner had to learn to assert values and seek out interest groups who aligned with them to ‘advocate’, it also gave the planner a pedagogical role, as Davidoff recognized that different groups, particularly those which are marginalised or disadvantaged, would not have ready access to wider narratives, skills or evidence. The advocacy planner thereby becomes an interlocutor between different interest groups, and necessarily must gain skills in pedagogy, negotiation and in non-technical forms of communication. At the time of Davidoff’s writing, of course, this interlocution would primarily have taken place in the form of interpersonal dialogue – face to face and often one-to-one. The potential of digital forms of communication and discourse to aide in the planner/public dialogue could not have been foreseen.

Rejecting the professional

The conception of the planning profession as a part of society that works change things for the better was challenged by the work of Robert Goodman (1936-), most notably in *After the Planners* (1972). For Goodman, and John Palmer, author of the book's British introduction, 'at best we [planners] help ameliorate the condition provided by the status quo, at worst we engage in outright destruction' (1972:53). The call to arms is therefore clear:

If planning is not about the redistribution of the resources or the benefits of an unequal society, then it can only be an instrument of bureaucratic conservatism. (1972:11)

Goodman had worked as a Davidoff-influenced 'advocacy planner', but by the time of his writing of *After the Planners* was disenchanted with this approach, noting that it did not strike hard or deep enough into existing power structures (1972:63-64, 215).

Following Davidoff, Goodman sees language and communication as key tools for the public planner, and found the language of planning as then practiced a fundamental issue. Goodman cites David A. Wallace, former director of the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority, in support this assertion:

'I submit that we have made a botch of urban renewal to date. By and large people don't understand what we're after – or even what we're talking about. This is fortunate, for if they did, we'd all have to run for cover.' (1972:99)

Goodman highlights how language is used to convince particular publics of foregone conclusions following very different 'self-serving' aims, such as this example from Washington:

'The budding basketball star of tomorrow could be a kid who learned to dribble, pass and shoot because an Interstate Highway came through his neighbourhood. And this same youth, who wiled away hours of his life wondering what to do next, can now cavort on a basketball court laid out under a structurally modern viaduct.' (1972:121)

In this, Goodman sides with Marcuse, whose *Essay on Liberation* had recently been published. The 'counter-professional' (1972:9) must develop new forms of language, counter to the 'vocabulary of domination' of orthodox planners. Goodman's advocacy of this position for the counter-professional planner has resonances with Gramsci's notion (3.1) of the intellectual's pedagogical responsibility to, and connection to, the masses. The planning professional's use of language is asserted as fundamental to their emancipatory potential.

Asserting heterogeneity, exploring power

The work of Leonie Sandercock (1949-) and Bent Flyvbjerg (1952-) is united by their interest in uncovering the complexities of the planning/public relationship: for Sandercock, those of the communities beyond planning, and for Flyvbjerg, those within the system.

Sandercock asserts the heterogeneity of the communities engaged or affected by planning processes, and uses this quality to argue for a planning system which can plan 'for' this heterogeneous public rather than in the abstract form used by earlier generations of public planner and planning theorist. She recognizes that the positivist or determinist approach she reads in public planning is shared across the social sciences generally, and that this approach not only privileges particular sub-groups of society, but just as importantly certain *kinds of knowledge*, privileging technical knowledge over the 'experiential, intuitive, local' (Sandercock, 1998:5) and including the visual or non-verbal.

Sandercock therefore proposes a history of urban development from the perspective of those that had been excluded by public planning to date. She looks back at Davidoff's 'advocacy planning' model and its subsequent developments (*via* Friedmann et. al.), find it naïve in its conception of 'repressive' state planning 'versus' the 'transformative' people, and the binary side-choosing that she sees as inevitable within that model (2000:434-5, see Chapter 3, section 3.2).

Sandercock's narratives not only draw attention to injustices and suppressed voices within society, they also highlight injustices and conflicts *within* those suppressed communities. Both the state planning system *and* the heterogeneous communities acting in relation to it contain both repressive and transformative potentials (2000:435). She therefore envisages (2000:435) a modified form of practice which makes this tension productive: transcending the 'line in the sand' of advocacy planning in favour of 'crossing back and forth... blurring boundaries... deconstructing ("community", "the state") and reconstructing new possibilities.' (2000:435). Such a practice relates to a wider discourse of postmodernism within cultural and political practices (e.g. Dear, 2000; Harvey, 1990).

Bent Flyvbjerg's *Rationality and Power: Democracy in Practice* (1998) is a sustained case study of a planning and policy-making project in Aalborg, Denmark, described as a 'laboratory for understanding power' (Allmendinger & Tewdwr-Jones, 2002:60). Here, Flyvbjerg uncovers a series of relations in which 'rationality' is revealed to be malleable, and used to conceal processes which are actually about the exercising of power (2002:60).

Flyvbjerg's approach places him at odds with the 'communicative rationality' of Jurgen Habermas, that is the proposition that human rationality emerges out of successful communication (1998:226). For Flyvbjerg and Richardson, 'communicative rationality' is utopian in that it assumes a 'speech situation' (2002:46) in which power relations are equal and in which a consensus has led to an even field of validity. For Flyvbjerg and Richardson, this approach, which had already had a notable impact on planning theory and practice, 'communicative planning', is based on an inadequate understanding of the mechanisms of power (2002:46) and is therefore unable to achieve real political change.

In its place, Flyvbjerg turns to Foucault, whose overall project was largely concerned with interrogating just those mechanisms and characteristics of power:

If the goal of planning theorists is to create a planning which is closer to Habermas's ideal society – free from domination, more democratic, a strong civil society – then the first task is not to understand the utopia of communicative rationality, but to understand the realities of power.
(2002:49)

For Flyvbjerg and Richardson, Habermas provides a 'final state' of consensual rationality, but not 'how to get there' (2002:46). Habermas and Foucault agree that 'rationalisation and the misuse of power are among the most important problems of our time' but they disagree on how to understand, and act upon, this, (2002:54).

If 'communication is more typically characterised by non-rational rhetoric and maintenance of interests than by freedom from domination and consensus-seeking' (2002:48), as revealed in the Aalborg case study (1998), then it is the contextual

detail of those rhetorics that needs to be understood in order to gain agency and indeed power. Flyvbjerg and Richardson identify Foucault's overall political task as to

criticise the working of institutions which appear to be both neutral and independent; to criticise them in such a manner that the political violence which has always exercised itself obscurely through them will be unmasked, so that one can fight them. (Chomsky and Foucault, 1974: 171, cited in 2002:52)

Such a criticism was famously made by Foucault of the workings of the 'panopticon' (Foucault, 1975). Flyvbjerg and Richardson pay particular attention to the spatial dimensions of the panopticon and Foucault's exploration of it, adding that real, built versions of the panopticon were not only spaces of coercion but were also used to generate 'rich oppositional cultures' (Crush, 1994, cited in 2002:56). This, for Flyvbjerg and Richardson, points to the potential of a *spatial*, rather than simply communicative, planning theory (2002:56).

Flyvbjerg's work ultimately points to a fundamental weakness of rationality: that it is distorted, manipulated, and ultimately dominated by power (1998:227-234); a vital lesson for those seeking political change given that 'in most societies entrenched practices of class and privilege form part of the social and political context and limit the possibilities of democratic change.' (1998: 235) Understanding power, then, is the key to affecting change in a democratic environment, and Flyvbjerg therefore advocates 'forms of participation that are practical, committed, and ready for conflict' over ones that are 'discursive, detached, and consensus-dependent, that is, rational,' (1998:236) - more direct, power-facing strategies, often built on knowledge-gathering which '[lays] open the relationships between rationality and power' (1998:236) and which ultimately reveals the 'real' power relations ('what is actually done') in a given context and how they might be challenged, rather than the 'what should be done' of the rational/modernist tradition.

Asserting mutualism

Colin Ward's (1924-2010) critique of public planning was part of a wider social critique founded in anarchism, and is significant because of its advocacy of a wider culture of building and built environment practices – existing within the popular. Ward not only advocated this culture but also, on occasion, celebrated the moments when statutory models were somehow able to engage with them, and also engaged as a practitioner in such processes, for instance during his time as Education Officer for the Town and Country Planning Association (fig. 6).



Figure 6: Front cover by David Bent for the cover of an 1985 edition of the TCPA 'Bulletin of Environmental Education', edited by Colin Ward.

Ward's work refers back to a period when anarchist and 'collectivist' traditions existed within the same framework (2008:28, 1990:22) understanding them as tensions within a socialist project rather than as opposing positions. He was emphatic that, by the time of the early Welfare State, mainstream socialist politics was permeated with elitism and had become firmly 'collectivist', understanding society as a mass rather than as a collective of individuals. For Ward, substantial social and political traditions of working-class self-help and mutual aid were

ignored or suppressed by the politicians and progenitors of the early Welfare State era, to its detriment (Goodway, 2006: 324). In this, Ward's work connects to the subsequent decentralising impulse of Simon Parker and the New Local Government Network, which Parker traces back to William Morris via *municipalising* thinkers such as Beatrice and Sidney Webb (Parker, 2015: 11).

Ward's anarchism understands mutual practices as existing within extant social organisations; practices such as mutual aid and self-help that he sought to 'rescue' from their rejection by the larger socialist project of his time. Appropriately, this approach was rooted in both Marxist and anarchist socialist traditions. Ward acknowledged that, in looking to the present, he was indebted not only to the writings of Gustav Landauer (2006:319, 2008:30), but also to Russian socialist Alexander Herzen's rejection of grand doctrines (2006:321).

Ward's theoretical writings accordingly took on a fascination with examples and case studies, an impulse which all led to a number of highly-regarded works of social history. These case studies – the global 'One Night House' (Ward, 2002), plotland communities such as Bungalow Town (Hardy & Ward, 1984) the allotment – would often be accompanied by a parallel narrative of their relationship to official action. Though Ward would probably not have considered his work Foucauldian, in its quest for real practices, and his interest in exposing the power structures set against it, or occasionally, as in the case of Basildon New Town, enlightened enough to enable it (Ward, 1990:15-35), Ward's work offers an approach that can be set alongside Flyvbjerg's call for a 'real' engagement with power structures, and it also answers, to some extent, a call that echoes throughout this section for a pedagogical role for the counter-hegemonic intellectual.

Ward's work considers how political and community groups at various scales organise, and on what terms. Writing in the early 1970s, he observed an emerging array of groups established in response to various kinds of discrimination and inequality, among them 'black liberation, women's liberation, homosexual liberation, prisoners' liberation, childrens' liberation' (2008:166) and observed of these groups:

They don't speak the same language as the political parties... they organize in loosely associated groups which are voluntary, functional,

temporary and small. They depend, not on membership cards, votes, a special leadership and a herd of inactive followers but on small, functional groups which ebb and flow, group and re-group, according to the task in hand. They are networks, not pyramids. (2008:166)

Ward found great hope in these informal organisations. His description of loosely associated groups is descriptive not only of political movements like Occupy but also of any number and type of interest groups that organise on-line, from narrow-gauge railway enthusiasts and popular culture fandoms through to radical political groups. He saw the fragmentation and plurality that such groups represent in their social formulations not as forms of fragmentation but as forms of organisation: ‘fission rather than fusion, diversity rather than unity, a mass of societies rather than a mass society’ (2008:67).

If Ward was highly critical of post-war public planning, he also acknowledges its occasional emancipatory achievements. In ‘The Do It Yourself New Town’, (1990:15-35) he looked to the particular example of Basildon New Town, a clear product of post-war planning but, uniquely in Ward’s view, one that recognised popular desire & demand and sought to work with, rather than against them. Such an approach left Ward optimistic about the potential to grow alternative models *within* the current system, as seeds ‘beneath the snow’ (2008:23).

Ward devoted much of his research to assembling a catalogue of such seeds. This body of work transcends the easy dichotomies established by early planning advocates of order versus chaos, planned versus unplanned, people versus planner. Implicit in Ward’s research is that there is a total ‘ecology’ of humans making decisions about their built and unbuilt environment *all the time*. In moving beyond these oppositions, Ward reveals a wider field of human practices in relation to the built environment, often compromised or messy, incomplete or subject to conflict and suppression by statutory processes. Ward’s most profound critique of the planning system lies in this opening up a territory of practices excluded from the statutory system.

If Ward’s goal was for an anarchist society founded on mutual aid, his route toward this relies not on a moment of revolution but on a slowly-evolved mutual relationship between statutory systems and self-help. In Basildon, Ward had found

a complex example of such a model occurring in the midst of a new town development corporation. In countless other models, he found popular, mutual societal and building processes occurring within, despite of, and occasionally supported by the wider systems of the state. Ward saw such a mutual relationship between state and the popular as fundamental to the slow journey toward freedom from domination and authoritarianism (Goodway, 2006:316).

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The deeper potential of 'participation' in planning envisioned in this section by successive planning theorists reveals the poverty of the 'Localist' era's conception and 'promise' of participation in planning. This potential sets an agenda for the design of new forms of mediation that might begin to bridge the gap between public planning and its public.

3 Post-participation: Counter-hegemonic strategies in cultural and planning theory

In Chapter 2 post-2011 English public planning was found not to have fulfilled the democratic potential promised of it in initial rhetoric, nor the demands toward citizen engagement of successive eras of planning theory.

Building on this, Chapter 3 sets out two theoretical tools (both of which are rooted in a Gramscian understanding of *culture* as a political tool) which set out a theoretical space in which forms of mediation might enable a mutual relationship between planning and its public.

The first (3.1) suggests that popular culture has a potentially progressive political agency and is also a space where power and agency can be gained in relation to larger political or democratic systems. The second (3.2) suggests that *agonistic* space provides a more democratic space for political debate and decision-making than the spaces of today's political processes.

Section 3.3 then applies these tools to the notion that certain forms of on-line platform might be able to provide such a space and agency.

3.1 The political agency of popular culture and popular activity

This section explores the idea that popular culture is both a *potentially progressive political tool* and a *site of mediation* in which power and agency can be gained in relation to larger political or democratic systems like public planning. This idea, and those of the following section, is rooted in the Marxist theories of Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937), so the section begins with a brief discussion of these.

As part of his substantial updating of Marxist political theory, Gramsci developed the idea of *cultural hegemony* as a way of understanding the means through which power is gained by class groups and, ultimately, how power might be gained by the proletariat in the context in which he was writing, that of the Italian Fascist dictatorship (1922-1945). In Gramsci's thought, the hegemony of a given political class meant that 'that class had succeeded in persuading the other classes of society to accept its own moral, political and cultural values' (Joll, 1977: 8,99) thereby asserting leadership (1977:100). The role of the intellectual in this process, for Gramsci, is of vital importance, as the gaining and maintaining of hegemony is largely a question of education: 'Every relationship of "hegemony" is necessarily a pedagogic relationship' (Gramsci, 1971:350), and as such it is through a process of education – a necessarily gradual one - that cultural hegemony is achieved. In terms of gaining power for the currently dominated classes, in Gramsci's terms a 'popular national bloc', it is vital that the intellectuals undertaking the construction of a collective will through education do so in a way that is profoundly engaged with those dominated classes, what Joll described as the 'test of common sense' (1971:101).

In this way, he proposed that political leadership was not simply a question of economic power but also of cultural and moral dominance, and established a terrain where cultural production - high or low, art, literature, music - can be conceived of as having agency within a political system, and moreover having a mobility within class structures. Such thinking would lead, eventually, to Gramsci's strong influence over the fields of cultural and pedagogical theory, particularly after his *Prison Notebooks* were translated into English in 1971.

In the field of cultural theory, Gramsci's conception of cultural hegemony allowed a generation of cultural theorists (among them Tony Bennett, John Fiske, George Rudé, Stuart Hall and Raphael Samuel, see (Bennett Mercer, Woollacott, 1986: xii-xiii)) to explore the workings of popular culture and activity as, in Bennett's terms,

an area of negotiation between [an imposed mass culture that is coincident with dominant ideology] and [spontaneously oppositional cultures] ...within which... dominant, subordinate and oppositional cultural and ideological values and elements are 'mixed' in different permutations. (1986: xv-xvi)

Through their work, the importance popular culture in society was revealed to have been underplayed. Its depictions in political discourse up to this point were mainly been negative or abstract, portraying 'the people' as either passive receivers of culture or unruly rebels (Bennett, Mercer, Woollacott, 1986:xi-xii).

It was only in the 1970s and 80s, thanks to this generation of theorists, that popular culture's role in social and political processes, 'particularly those bearing on the production of consent to the prevailing social order', began to be given serious attention by sociologists and cultural theorists (Bennett, Mercer, Woollacott, 1986:xi-xii). Within this discourse at least, portrayals of 'the people' accordingly became more nuanced and precise, and the notion of popular culture as a subject of serious study became widespread, built upon foundations laid by of social historians like Raphael Samuel. Samuel's History Workshop (1966-) pioneered ground-up social history, including oral history, in the UK, with the stated aim of making the production of history a collaborative enterprise 'that could be used to support activism and social justice, and inform politics.' (www.historyworkshop.org.uk, Accessed 5 May 2017).

Bennett was able in this period to retrospectively trace a lineage of practices, in the work of Gramsci, Brecht and Bakhtin, which produced 'a new sense of "the popular" as the site of a critical and speculative intelligence', though acknowledging that these practices had hitherto not impacted upon 'cultural policy formulations' of socialist political parties in the UK (1986:14-15).

The emergence of popular culture as worthy of academic attention can be understood as a reaction to three related phenomena. Firstly, to the highly

effective use of popular narratives in the 1970s by the New Right; secondly, as an attempted corrective to the Left's failure to engage meaningfully with such narratives since the immediate post-war years; and thirdly, as a reaction to the growing impact, unpredictability and dynamism of popular cultural forms from the late 1950s onwards. These phenomena will be considered in turn.

The New Right gained a great deal of political ground through its use of popular rhetoric (Fiske, 1989:188) in a form characterised by its highly generic evocation of 'the people', in some instances weaponised against a group which might more obviously be considered *of* the people too. Stuart Hall, quoting Thatcher directly, offered a telling example in 1981:

"We have to limit the power of the trade unions because that is what the people want." (Hall, 1981:238-9)

Who are the people, Bennett asks? Are some of the people not trade unionists themselves? Is the government in this example really proposing to follow, blindly, the wishes of an assumed majority?

Theorists of the 1980s therefore identified the Left's disconnect from popular culture as a crucial factor in its losing not only a political but a *cultural* battle in the late twentieth century (Bennett 1986:6). The Left had not only abandoned a populist discourse but did not seem to realise it. The situation led Fiske, in the US, to propose that 'left-wing theorists need to explore the conditions under which the submerged 90 percent of the political iceberg can be made to rear up and disrupt the social surface' (Fiske 1989:162).

Alex Niven, writing in 2012, found that the 'tragic rupture' between Leftist politics and popular culture was still present, and had not been addressed by New Labour (Niven, 2012:67-8). Hilary Wainwright, in her studies of experiments in global participatory democracy found that, in Manchester regeneration processes during the New Labour era, voluntary groups and resident's forums were 'misleadingly assumed to be homogenous', an unsophisticated characterisation of what must have been combative and dissenting popular organisations in a highly politicised context (2003:81). If the Thatcher government made the people generic for its own ends, the New Labour project kept them so.

Alongside their calls for politicians and policymakers of the left to re-engage with popular culture in order to address what they perceived as the 'ghettoisation' of socialist ideas, theorists of popular culture examined the reasons underlying the Left's apparent disinterest in popular desire. Bennett (1986:9), found that Marxist conceptions of the popular are too often limited by two apparently contradictory impulses which he terms 'walking backwards into the future' and 'ideal futurism'. In the first instance, Marxist theory tends toward deploying 'historically superseded forms' as models for the future without modifying them for use in the present. In the second instance, theories are composed to address an idealised people of a 'projected socialist future'. In both cases, a form of Utopianism takes the place of an engagement with how things (and people) are in the present tense, and the people of today are found wanting by comparison to both the past and the future.

The last of the reasons behind cultural theory's increasing engagement with the popular and with popular culture in the 1970s and 80s was that the culture itself had become hard to ignore since the technological and social advances of the post-war 'golden age', a turning point in the history of which were the 1968 student riots in Paris and elsewhere. For Alex Niven, this period saw the popular take on an active role as a progressive, if not revolutionary force in political and societal change, largely independent of mainstream politics in the UK and elsewhere; 'the voiceless... finally finding a voice' (Niven, 2012:17). This voice, for example, had a measurable impact on the growth of the environmental movement, which was born not out of governmental policy or academic research in the traditional sense, but out of counter-cultural groups (2012:37). For Niven, this alternative 'golden age' of an influential popular culture was nothing more or less than a moment when popular desire transcended its usual subjugation by the rich and powerful. These movements had a real if indirect role in the adoption of ideas of 'participation' within planning law and policy (Chapter 2, section 2.1).

But what potential does the 'popular' have to contribute to political change, or to become a political space? By turning to the work of John Fiske (1939-), a cultural theorist concerned with the mechanics of popular culture and explicitly with addresses the Left's failure to engage with popular desire, the thesis will attempt a provisional answer to these questions.

Fiske's notion of society, which rejects grand narratives in favour of a more contradictory and fundamentally popular model, forms a useful basis on which to understand the popular and reconnect it to mainstream political processes. For Fiske, the history of Western society is characterised by 'constant conflicts in which all victories are partial, all defeats less than total' (Fiske, 1989:180, a conception which strongly echoes both Ward and Mouffe) For Fiske, this history is revealed by the (then) growing discipline of social and popular history, and he particularly cites the work of cultural historian (and Project Gutenberg founder) Robert Darnton, whose book *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History* (1984) focussed attention upon the resistant practices of printing apprentices in early eighteenth century Paris. Fiske asserts that

Our social structure, our oral culture, our cultural resources are indelibly inscribed with the contradictory traces of these oppressed, but not eliminated, social formations. (Fiske, 1989:180)

These formations form the basis of popular culture, and draw attention away from the utopian impulse for 'total revolution' and toward a model of power redistribution based upon constant renegotiation and adjustment. He therefore distinguishes 'popular culture' from 'mass culture' – in his terms the latter is what is produced by an industrialised, capitalist society and the former is how people *use* or *abuse* that product.

Accordingly, Fiske asserts that popular culture is not a 'stable sociological category' but instead embodies 'a shifting set of allegiances' (1989:25), which give it its resistant role in societal change. He also proposes that a function of the popular can be its capacity to *appropriate* from the powerful for political gain. Fiske defines this technique as *excorporation*: 'the process by which the subordinate make their own culture out of the resources and commodities provided by the dominant system' (Fiske, 1989:15).

If we take the earlier proposition that the popular is a territory of adjustment and renegotiation, in a society which is also characterised by endless renegotiation, then Fiske's notion of *excorporation* is the process through which elements of the dominant system enter the domain of the popular and emerge transformed. This suggests that any study of popular culture must look at, and differentiate, what is

received by people and then what is produced or used *out of* what is received. Like Stuart Hall, Fiske proposes that such a study should ‘always start with “the double movement of containment and resistance, which is always inevitably inside it.”’ (1981:228, cited in Fiske, 1989:28-9), wherein resistance is ‘tearing or bleaching of one’s jeans’ and containment is ‘the industry’s incorporation of this into its production system’ (1989:29).

Fiske asserts that this process allows for adjustments to the status quo, not merely a return to the balance of before. This micropolitical change must not be underestimated, concerned as it is with ‘the day-to-day negotiations of unequal power relations in such structures as the family, the immediate work environment, and the classroom (1989:56). He offers the example of how Madonna might be ‘used’ by a female fan in ways that empowers the fan. This empowering can impact in many powerful ways on the individual fan and upon her wider society, for instance through an impact on the relationships within her family or in her working life (1989:191). Popular culture cannot therefore be strictly radical and for Fiske it is best described as *progressive* (1989:21) or, Fiske’s critics might assert, *potentially* progressive. It ‘finds in the vigor (sic) and vitality of the people evidence both of the possibility of social change and of the motivation to drive it.’ (1989:21)

Fiske’s optimism with regard to the use of popular culture is partly built upon his definition of the wider society in which it takes place, but it is also because he is suspicious of the process by which radical change might happen. Building on the work of de Certeau (1984), Fiske asserts the importance of guerrilla tactics as weapons of the ‘weak’, in contrast to ‘open warfare’, which they will always lose. The story of the ‘use’ of Madonna is, for Fiske, one example among many of ‘individual women, in their everyday lives, constantly [making] guerrilla raids upon patriarchy’ (Fiske, 1989:20).

Critics of Fiske’s approach might assert that the products of popular culture are not *necessarily* empowering in the way that Fiske asserts, and that products of the dominant culture are increasingly designed to allow for a *degree* of expropriation within limits defined by the powerful. To this, Fiske argues that the nature of expropriation is inherently occasional and irregular. Popular culture might lie dormant or repressed for much of the time, but this does not limit its potential to

transcend this condition. 'Resistance fighters,' Fiske asserts, 'are law-abiding citizens much of the time'. His analysis of popular culture therefore takes *practices* as its location rather than specific texts or individuals (1989:45), and asserts that the ongoing process of subordination and insubordination is sustained from within the popular (1989:169).

Fiske asserts that popular culture should not be considered as synonymous with the working class, on the grounds that class is 'not the only axis of domination' (1989:46). As with Fiske's example of Madonna though, perhaps the techniques of popular culture are best understood as individual acts (i.e. micropolitical), though sometimes united against a common dominance. This distinguishes popular culture from folk culture, a form which Fiske finds impossible in an industrialised society anyway but which, when it was possible, had the potential for 'solidarity' which popular culture does not (1989:173). Popular culture can of course, be *sociable* and therefore collective, the Madonna fan of Fiske's example can benefit, or not, from engagement with others with similar uses for the 'original'.

Fiske is highly aware, therefore, of the limits of popular culture as a tool of political change, and adopts a pragmatic attitude to its *use* in relation to societal and political change. He nevertheless proposes a 'reconceptualization of popular forces as an untapped social resource that can fuel... the motor of social change' (1989:193), conjuring an image of a multitude of micropolitical actors, each individually but socially alchemising the products (or texts) of the dominant culture.

What if, in the place of a new song or text, we considered the 'products' of public planning – A4 lamp-post notification, policy, consultation, communication with a duty officer, permission or denial in the form of a letter, condition, and indeed built structure – as cultural products, forms of media/mediation?

Following Fiske et. al, and refusing to make political value judgements on the basis of the original cultural product, is it possible to imagine the popular usage and abuse of these cultural products having a micro-political progressive impact on the system itself? Does this already happen?

For sociologist Herbert Gans, the potential agency of popular activity in relation to hegemonic structures and apparatus is not simply a question of recognizing the existence of those phenomena within a larger system of cultural production, it is also a question of the limits of those apparatus. Considering the professionalism of the architect, Gans wrote in 1977:

Other professionals [to architects] also supply only a minor portion of the product or service over which they claim expertise... Medical aid is probably still administered more often by druggists and relatives than by doctors, just as most counseling is done by ministers, relatives, and friends rather than by trained social workers or psychiatrists. (Gans, 1977:26)

Gans situates architectural production *by architects* within the realm of high culture, therefore constrained by an antagonistic relationship to *low or popular* culture. He proposes that this relation, like in the medical profession, is substantially defined by the style and approach of the practitioner: 'Doctors often treat patients as collections of diseases rather than people, and , like sociologists and social workers, supply their services in a technical language that puts off their patients and clients.' (Gans, 1977:26).

Public planning can, in this light, be seen as the formal, professionalised 'part' of a larger system of production and discourse. The 'discovery' of this larger system offers a reconception of the processes of cultural production that has implications for understanding the agency of popular activity in creating and maintaining and shaping those processes. As with Gans' architectural example above, English public planning as it stands is typified by a somewhat antagonistic separation from popular discourse and activity. The next section will explore models whereby this antagonism is replaced by mutual, 'agonistic' relationships.

3.2 Agonism in democracy and in planning

Gramsci's conception of hegemony (3.1) established a terrain where cultural production - high or low, art, literature, music - can be conceived of as having agency within a political system. This work also provides the theoretical origins of the idea explored in this section – namely that *agonistic* space provides a more directly democratic space for political debate and decision-making than the spaces of today's political processes. This idea, most fully elaborated in the work of Chantal Mouffe (1943-) & Laclau (1935-2014), has been applied to public planning in general by, among others, Jean Hillier and Michael Gunder. This section sets out Mouffe & Laclau's broader political project before focusing in upon its application to public planning by Hillier & Gunder, with a focus on what issues and opportunities there might be for the creation of an agonistic space for planning discourse.

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The theoretical work of Mouffe & Laclau serves as an updating of Gramsci's thought to the early 21st century, in the context firstly of a dissatisfaction with welfare state models as they were playing out in the early 1980s (Martin, 2013:680), and secondly of the late/liquid modernity as defined by Zygmunt Bauman, a period characterised by ongoing privatization, the increasing importance of information to the functioning of society, and the growing redundancy of nation states in the face of globalised issues (Bauman, 2000).

In Mouffe and Laclau's work, the rigidity of such categorisations as 'class struggle', and their defining role in Marxist thought, are questioned (2013: 670), in part because such formulations were proving to be incapable of describing or theorizing the emerging political movements of the time, for example feminist activism. As Mouffe put it in a later interview:

Our aim was to understand the reasons for the incapacity of Marxism to grasp the nature of the new social movements and to put forward a project able to articulate a diversity of demands, which were not class-based. We argued that this incapacity was due to its class-essentialist ontology and to its economistic approach, which did not allow it to recognize that political subjects were discursively constructed. (Martin, 2013:673)

Hegemony and Socialist Strategy (1985) can accordingly be understood as a post-structuralist updating of Gramscian hegemony, broadening it to allow all manner of political formulations and forms of organisation to gain political agency. Hence the ‘radical democracy’ of the subtitle; the book is a call for a complex democratic space in which different political agencies can co-exist and form agonistic relationships towards political decision-making. In this light, the Left must end its search for a ‘consensus at the centre’ (2013:674) and to realise the partisan nature of all politics.

Aligned to Flyvbjerg’s Foucauldian rejection of the ideal ‘speech situation’ (Flyvbjerg & Richardson, 2002:46), Mouffe and Laclau see partisanship in all areas of politics, and regard the antagonisms between actors in these situations as a central truth of political activity, and a vital realization in the journey toward a powerful, and very particular form of political unity:

Unity between agents is then not the expression of a common underlying essence but the result of political construction and struggle. (Laclau & Mouffe, 2001:65)

In *The Democratic Paradox*, Mouffe set out an ‘agonistic model of democracy’ (Mouffe, 2000:98) in which the ideal of consensus is abandoned:

Coming to terms with the constitutive nature of power implies relinquishing the ideal of a democratic society as the realization (sic) of a perfect harmony or transparency. (2000:100)

Instead, Mouffe sees antagonism within political space as inherent, and proposes an ‘agonistic pluralism’ (2000:101) in which the aim of democratic politics is to create adversaries – ‘that is, somebody whose ideas we combat but whose right to defend those ideas we do not put into question... a legitimate enemy’ (2000:102) –

rather than the simple othering of a 'them'. Mouffe distinguishes between antagonism ('struggle between enemies') and agonism ('struggle between adversaries'), advocating the latter as it allows the mobilization of diverse passions/positions in the moving forward of a democratic project, rather than the simple victory or consensus of antagonism alone. For Mouffe, this principle is inherent to our political systems (2000:103) and therefore:

We have to accept that every consensus exists as a temporary result of a provisional hegemony, as a stabilization of power, and that it always entails some form of exclusion. The ideas that power could be dissolved through a rational debate and that legitimacy could be based on pure rationality are illusions which can endanger democratic institutions. (2000: 104)

Such a model means that the democratic model can never rest; if every brief consensus excludes or suppresses someone or some group, then the situation must be continually renegotiated or re-established, and the veils of rationality and morality are revealed to simply obscure the real political moment.

Mouffe asserts that cultural production is increasingly vital to current politics because of the increasingly powerful means by which semiotics are used within neoliberal hegemony to 'reproduce' itself. For this reason, 'the cultural terrain occupies a strategic place in today's politics.' (2013:686) In this context, Mouffe favours *critical* art and design practice over the transgressive, considering the former to have the greater potential, from an agonistic perspective, to foment dissensus (2013:688).

Overall, Mouffe's project, in collaboration with Laclau, is a call for a rediscovery of a popular intelligence capable of uniting the many and various political movements that have some kind of opposition to the dominant political forces of the day: 'pluralist democratic politics starts with the recognition that 'the people' is divided and that the democratic rule of the people can never be absolute' (2013:693), and the creation of spaces where agonism can take place is an essential part of this project.

Mouffe and Laclau's project has clear chimes with the critiques of Sandercock and Flyvbjerg (Chapter 2, section 2.3) and opens up a space in which the frustrations

with determinism addressed by figures such as Davidoff and Goodman might become more operative. If the need for consensus can be meaningfully transcended, then a planning practice which acknowledges different voices, and indeed different formulations and amounts of power, is more readily in sight.

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Within planning theory, the potential of agonism as developed by Laclau and Mouffe has been explored by Jean Hillier and Michael Gunder.

Jean Hillier's work attempts a reconciliation of the Habermasian communicative planning paradigm with Mouffe's assertion of agonism as a precondition of democracy. She shares with Flyvbjerg a dissatisfaction with the communicative spaces of Habermas, finding them 'utopian' (2002:121) and unable to acknowledge that 'dissent is as important in dialogical relationships as the idea of agreement.' (2002:121).

Hillier acknowledges the roles of both planning officers and public 'actors' in the contemporary planning system; she develops a picture of both as complex, problematic, sometimes exclusive groups, and moreover that, via her own empirical research (2000), public planning officers were frequently dismissive of public lobbying and 'dark arts' in relation to a planning issue but defended their own need to do so, an echo of the hegemonic attributes built in to public planning practice already discussed.

Planners are irritated and frustrated by citizens taking direct action. Some regarded it as 'unfair' and 'going round the back' of formal participatory processes, even 'cheating'. Yet, these planners clearly overlooked the traditional practice of officers writing or summarizing reports to suit preferred ends, or having a discreet 'word in the ear' of key elected members such as Committee Chairs and Ministers. (2002:119)

For Hillier, this contemporary situation enforces the need for procedures and processes within planning that exist 'outside, perhaps of formal political processes

in which marginalised groups have voice and power', 'beyond consensus.'
(2002:120) In attempting her reconciliation, she sees three key variables as key: (1) the values of actors involved, (2) their perception of other actors, and (3) their 'outcome preferences' (2002:125). For Hillier, a more profound (and mutual) understanding of the values of all actors in a planning situation enables a potential consensus to emerge in the case of values being discovered to be overlapping or commensurate, and also that, in situations where a lack of consensus need not be a barrier to 'bargaining' and similar processes of decision-making. Ultimately, she conceives of a situation where both 'models' exist in parallel and in relation to one another, contextual to the task, problem or question at hand, and one in which

political/planning decisions are embodied in an institutional setting which offers all actors a real possibility of participating in planning policy decision-making and which recognizes the ultimate non-consensual undecidability of decisions and hence makes it possible to disagree.'
(2002:130)

In such a context, Hillier argues, a momentary 'conflictual consensus' (Mouffe, cited in 2002:131) or 'agonistic respect' (Connolly, *ibid.*) may be achieved in which a decision, however momentary, can be arrived at. To do this, Hillier asserts, professional public planners will need to 'relax their need for control and certainty... live with inconsistencies, contradictions...' (Many officers might argue that, subject as they are to the pressures applied by liquid modernity, this is a world they already live in.) Hillier's 'model' does not, of course, guarantee that the people who currently most often 'lose' within public planning will suddenly 'win', rather '[the] ambition is to realise situations in which it is not usually the powerless and marginalised lose,' (2002:133), through a reconfiguration of a/the system such that the relations between actors are better and more mutually declared and understood. Her proposal is one where the 'overt and covert' (2002:133) nature of *existing* planning processes are acknowledged and given a theoretical underpinning, rather than taking place under the 'umbrella' of an apparently *rational* process.

Michael Gunder's work brings post-structuralist readings to bear on public planning and planning decision-making, among them Derrida, Žižek, Lefebvre and Lacan, the latter of whom emerges as the dominant figure in his work to date. In

'The Production of Desirous Space: Mere Fantasies of the Utopian City?' (2005)

Gunder uses both Lefebvre and Lacan to explore what he understands as a dichotomy in goals between the seeking of 'a common harmony of social vision' and the avoidance of 'exclusion of cultural and related difference in lived space' (2005:173).

In a post-structuralist context, Gunder finds Sandercock's ambition (Chapter 3, section 3.2) for a planning that can embrace heterogeneous multiculturalism as a 'utopian impossibility' (2005:176), particularly in the light of the application of Lacan's theory of the 'Real' (and Lefebvre's 'lived space') to planning theory. Lacan's 'Real' can be summarised as a 'void' (2005:179) which exists beyond language and symbolism and which means that 'we cannot clearly articulate and define our ideals or specific qualitative states, such as those signified by the label "aesthetics", and above all what constitutes "the good"' (2005:179). For Gunder, the social sciences have attempted to 'cover over' the Real with 'ideological fantasies' (2005:181), thereby denying the gaps and voids between different social constructs and worldviews, therefore 'our very social reality, including space itself and social interaction is constituted and composed of ideological fantasy constructs, misrecognitions and misunderstandings.' (Žižek, in 2005:181)

Gunder asserts that planning plays a large role in the creation of this social reality, by hegemonic means and often on the basis of an illusion of technical or quantitative expertise reinforced by technology. He therefore moves on to embrace Mouffe's conception of agonism as a means of structuring social reality that acknowledges, indeed foregrounds, the gaps and voids between different interest groups and accepts them within a complex political organisation. Agonism answers Gunder's call for a planning ethos 'predicated on a central awareness of the irreducible Real... [on] an understanding that any forced resolution always excludes a remainder, what cannot be articulated or perceived.' (2005:191)

Gunder acknowledges the level of difficulty in achieving such a 'radical agonistic planning process' (2005:193) given the currently prevailing 'consensual instrumental rationality' of today's planning system, which for Gunder would be taken back to first, founding principles by such a transformation. (2005:190)

Writing in 2005, Gunder asserted that the implications of these proposals had not yet fully been worked through by contemporary theorists. In response, Gunder published *Planning in Ten Words of Less: A Lacanian Entanglement with Spatial Planning*, in collaboration with Hillier. This work takes the principles previously developed by Hillier & Gunder and applies them to a close reading of various pieces of planning terminology, ultimately exposing, in detail, the same theoretical problem as that which Gunder exposes in the wider system, though with a renewed focus on the *language* of planning, as evidenced by what Gunder & Hillier (following Laclau) call ‘empty signifiers’, that is, terms which give ‘coherence to a grouping of conflicting meanings by signifying it or giving a general label of explicit connotation and agreement for this contested ground.’ (2009:3). In turn, Gunder and Hillier explore, and ultimately reveal as empty and illusory: ‘certainty’, ‘good’, ‘risk’, ‘smart growth’, ‘globalization’, ‘multiculturalism’, ‘sustainability’, ‘responsibility’ and finally ‘rationality’. In each case, the apparent ‘solution’ represented by these empty signifiers is allowed to ‘define... the problem’ (2009:194) rather than the other way around, a problem given Deleuze’s definition of a problem as something that, inherently, does not have a ‘single, simple solution.’ (2009:194) In conclusion, and following this step-by-step process, Gunder and Hillier ask:

Should strategic spatial planning practice be about challenging the appropriateness of pre-determined and often universally-defined goals?
and

Should strategic spatial planning also be about the learning of where we are, where we may wish to go and what we might wish to become as a particular set of communities? (2009:194)

The particular and the contextual, as well as the ‘realities’ of where we are, including what constitutes ‘we’ and who is excluded from it, are therefore of critical importance to developing a new, better form of planning, and to a renewed interest in language and the power relations it embodies or suppresses.

These positions and those that proceed them in Chapter 2, section 2.3 and Chapter 3 theorise a planning system which is more responsive to heterogeneity, dissent, sociability and micropolitical change, whilst also proposing a political space for

planning which has a mediatory, agonistic quality and which might sit *between* public planning and its public and which has the opportunity to create that same responsiveness. The next section uses the work of some current social media theorists to explore how the ideas set out so far might find application in the design of a digital platform that fulfils – at least in part – the promise of that space.

3.3 The agonistic potential of digital mediation

Social media blur the distinction between public and personal communication. They manifest a convergence between the broadcast model of messages sent to nobody in particular, and personal mediated communication, as in email, phone calls, letters, texting, and online chat. A distinctive characteristic of this social media convergence is that moments of personal communication can now be made visible to new kinds of audiences and publics. (Meikle, in Ratto & Boler, 2014:375)

This section uses the work of current social media theorists to explore how the theories set out so far might find application in the design of an online platform, and indeed might shape the character and design of that platform.

The section serves to fold the theoretical possibilities and questions of Chapters 2 and 3 into the research that follows in Chapters 4 to 6. It sets out a brief for a 'real', designed intervention in the mediation of public planning knowledge: a brief that is explored through discourse analysis of existing 'planning' discourse within online forums in Chapter 5 and through *design* in Chapter 6.

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Chantal Mouffe's theorising of an agonistic public space framed the preceding section and, through Hillier and Gunder, establishes the possibility of an agonistic model of planning discourse. Interviewed in 2006, Mouffe doubted the potential of new media to 'realise direct democracy' on the basis that the definition of democracy as defined by proponents of new media as a site of political transformation is too restrictive (Carpentier & Cammaerts, 2006:5), and for Mouffe too close to the expression of a vote, or rather the failure of political expression to go beyond the individual and the self-expressive (2006:6).

Furthermore, for Mouffe, the new media of the mid-2000s represented something of a withdrawal from the possibility of agonism (and the idea of known adversary) through what has more recently come to be known as the social media 'echo chamber' (2006:6). Importantly, Mouffe saw potential for new media to be 'supportive to the creation of an agonistic public space' which, as we have seen, she

considers necessary to the creation of democracy, but she did not see such a supportive role in new media as it then stood (2006:6).

Mouffe's position is challenged by advocates of 'DIY Citizenship', notably Ratto & Boler and their contributors (2014:13-14) for whom the risk of 'echo chamber' discourse and a retreat from agonism and spaces of dissent serves not as a rejection of the political potential of new and social media but as a challenge to it. Ratto & Boler use the work of Rancière (2014:15) to 'rescue' new media from this challenge on the grounds that the media form in questions plays a role in helping to build 'DIY Citizenship', an idea that combines new 'modalities of political participation' with 'critical making' (2014:3), a phrase which suggests that any act of making (particularly, in this context, occurring in the popular sphere or within popular culture) also carries with it critically-infused reflection, 'consideration and awareness of the mediated and direct experiences of interacting with the material world' (2014:2-3). For Ratto & Boler, the combination of active 'making' (loosely defined, and including the 'making' of communities as well as physical environments, objects, cultural products, art...) and new forms of media (whether corporate, e.g. Facebook, or emergent, such as discussion forums) opens up the potential of a 'support for agonism' that Mouffe proposed as a precondition for social media to have a role in the creation of democracy. So *critical making* is an essential presence within an online platform.

Joel Mckim, writing in Ratto & Boler's *DIY Citizenship* (2014), focuses particularly on the potential of new media to shift power and create new forms of participation (what he terms 'doing-it-together', 2014:291) within the fields of architecture, urbanism and planning, grounding these ideas (as does this thesis) in the context of ideas of participation present since the mid-late 1960s. In relation to planning and development in particular, Mckim asserts that

In urban development, as is the case in so many other domains, online forums are facilitating the public's ability to take involvement into their own hands. (2014:286)

Despite this, Mckim's analysis provides examples of both progressive/productive discourse facilitated by such platforms and also their opposite: the 'potential and perils' of online discourse (2017:287). Mckim characterizes the negative examples,

where (for example) false information and prejudiced viewpoints are used to shut down a previously well-received public project. For Mckim, it is a precondition of a progressive space that it facilitates not only rejection of ideas and proposals (the ‘objection’ of English public planning, opposition as democracy) but also the positive assertion of ideas and proposals, the ‘critical making’ asserted by Ratto and Boler. Such a space, for Mckim, must ensure that ‘Participation is not simply a matter of putting a stop to problematic projects, but also a method of envisioning and realizing new ones’ (2014:287). As an example of this, Mckim cites the Betaville ‘collaborative platform’ (fig. 7), a piece of software developed by Brooklyn Experimental Media Centre in 2010 which ‘games’ urban development such multiple players can collaborate and refine proposals in a manner that mimics open-source software development (2014:289).



Figure 7. Screenshot from ‘Betaville’, via <http://gamesforcities.com>, Accessed 29.12.2017.

Though Mckim advocates this example, he also notes that it is designed for use ‘at points in the design process when broad participation is necessary or desirable’ (ibid.), without questioning the value judgements and power relations in play in

the decision-making around those points. Betaville and tools like it, within Mckim's own formulation and certainly within Arnstein's 'ladder of participation' (Chapter 2, section 2.3), should be considered as *highly mediated* forms of online-facilitated participation. Mckim's formulation of 'doing-it-together' (an approach shared within many authors in the collection) attempts to transcend this form of mediation:

Early experiments in social media use are facilitating the formation of networks composed of design professionals and members of the public working in tandem. These emerging configurations suggest ways in which meaningful and sustained interactions with actual end users or residents might potentially occur throughout the various design stages. (2014:291).

The 'design stages' of a project invoked here in remain problematic of course – the design stages that a project initiated and practiced by professionals (be it a local plan, a building, masterplan, a piece of public realm) will inevitably go through - a procedural process involving financial commitment, multiple stakeholders and financiers, lengthy approvals and buy-in processes – is almost entirely alien to a lay audience. The implications of Mckim's analysis, therefore, are firstly that *collaboration* between lay and professional 'users' is the right model, but secondly that the *subject* of collaboration (the 'project' discussed above) may have to be defined not just by the professional but also by the wider community of public users. Or, rather, the space of dialogue cannot be project-specific or entrenched within the parameters of the professionals' processes. (2014:291). Mckim finally asserts the binary importance of achieving such a space, not just for the 'sake of the public' in the parlance of more traditional discussions about participation but for the sake of the designer, architect planner too, in the context of professional marginalisation and privatization:

As the role of the architect [and planner] becomes increasingly marginalized (sic) within finance-driven urban development, establishing inventive participatory strategies that combine expert and popular knowledge may be as essential for the designers as it is for the public... a "do-it-together" model emerges as a more productive paradigm than any strict DIY formulation. (2014:291)

On a structural level, then, the online platform developed herein is not charged with ‘opening up’ a space for participation in public planning, it is instead a place between public planning and its public that allows such togetherness (what we might call mutuality) to take place. Inherent to this, it appears, is that the platform cannot be structured rigidly around the protocols and processes of the professional and the planning system, nor can it be project-specific in a manner defined by the professional.

Swartz & Driscoll (Ratto & Boler, 2014:295-306) look specifically at the online discussion forum to explore its potential political agency, with specific reference to the life of an ‘off-topic’ political thread or ‘room’ within a forum (PriceScope) devoted to jewellery. Echoing Ratto & Boler, and Mckim’s notion of the ‘do-it-together’, they assert that, in such spaces, ‘citizenship may be enacted through affinity among strangers’ (2014:297) – in the case of this forum, the making of collaboratively-produced but self-defined identities and ethical & political positions.

Swartz & Driscoll understand much forum discourse (which they characterise as ‘uniform but unique, ubiquitous, and invisible... produced using a handful of very similar software packages – but each is deeply particular’ (2014:303), and importantly having a distributed, decentralised structure which contrasts to the monolithic structures of more social media sites like Facebook) as ‘post-political’ (2014:298), in that traditional political formulations have been replaced by ‘social-network markets’ and the ‘gift economy’ (ibid, citing Hartley, 1999). They assert however, that such a post-political space does not ‘displace engagement in state politics’ but instead creates the conditions through which a community might subsequently begin to engage in more traditional political behaviours (2014:298). In support of this, Swartz & Driscoll see that the collaborative generation of ideas and participations that they observe on PriceScope within ‘on-topic’ discussions about jewellery enable a mutuality when discussing political questions that might otherwise (and, certainly, on other types of social media) have quickly degenerated into antagonism.

The experience of sustained collaboration fostered a feeling of mutual respect that mitigated the hostility that might have otherwise arisen amid a tense political debate. (2016:299)

This social attribute, what Hartley (1999) terms ‘cultural neighborliness’, is an attribute particularly (or perhaps, specifically) in online forums where *critical making* and the potential of off-topic conversation are present, i.e. there is both a productive aspect and a community reason for being present in such a space above and beyond the political matter at hand.

Swartz & Driscoll see in the message board and online forum a potential for heterogeneity and discourse that transcends the more obviously ‘rising’ and massively popular corporate forms of social media such as Facebook and Twitter:

Unlike messaging “platforms” provided by companies like Facebook, Twitter or Disqus, message board software does not require the concentration of data or authority within a single institution in order to function... As sites of sociality and diversity, as well as privacy, autonomy, and self-determination, they are fertile ground for citizenship formations of many kinds. (2014:304)

In comparison, non-niche sites ‘are not designed for the development of collective intelligence and lack, for example, the ability to search an archive of past posts’ (2014:303). In spirit, model and in design they neither encourage nor enable systematic collective intelligence or discursive participation.

As with ‘non-niche’ networks like Facebook or Twitter, no message board site or online forum is literally a public space, but in Swartz & Dirscoll’s conception it emerges as a decentralized, distributed form that is durable in the face of heterogeneity and political participation, attributes that suggest it as the ideal format or type for the kind of space this study is interested in – a proposal that is tested in the sections that follow.

The final consideration to discuss here before summarizing the brief that will be applied in the sections that follow is that of *transnationalism versus localism*, a question that seems to be a key tension in contemporary studies of social media and ‘its’ politics. Here, the study refers to the work of Ratto & Boler and of Daniel Miller, a professor of anthropology and author of *Social Media in an English Village* (Miller, 2016). Ratto & Boler write of DIY Citizenship’s transitional, global qualities, rooted not only in diverse fields (politics, culture...) but also achieving ‘neighborliness’ across geographical boundaries but through association with

particular subjects, fandoms, or issues (2014:18). Whilst this internationalism is certainly a feature of the online forum or message board, with fandoms, issues and enthusiasms crossing traditional national boundaries, Miller (2016:187) asserts that social media can also be used to express, reinforce or reconstruct locally-specific cultural and social practices, at the scale of a community or indeed of a nation. In Miller's example, which took an English village as its field of study, mature usage of platforms like Facebook reveals national character traits (like keeping acquaintances at arms' length whilst appearing to be open and friendly to shared encounters) to be reinforced through the Facebook platform. In parallel, Facebook was also deployed in this context as a *nostalgic* practice, in effect recreating the sense of a tidy, complete and traditional community (such, one might argue, as is no longer represented in the English village).

Accordingly, Miller recommends the breaking down of theoretical barriers between online and offline existences in anthropological study, and asserts that social media in the English context, by becoming so ubiquitous, has begun to reconstruct national characteristics and social conventions by, for example, breaking down the barriers between private and public that have traditionally been so important to the English (2016:192). In this way social media is revealed to be closely intertwined with established cultural and social practices but also capable of transforming them.

This discovery sets a challenge for the online planning platform: from a design perspective, is it necessary to choose whether to head toward a transnational model or toward a particular scale of association, e.g. the domain where a particular planning policy is applicable? Whilst Facebook and Twitter function, literally, the same way in many different nations and cultural contexts, the usage and practices they 'contain' are revealed by Miller to produce or modify national or local practices. Conversely, message boards tend to emerge from a particular context but become transnational as they develop, often allowing membership of particular cultures despite geographical boundaries. It is the latter, the message board or online forum, which Swartz & Driscoll assert has the necessary durability for 'our' kind of discourse to flourish and gain agency, and a greater acceptance of, and durability in the face of, heterogeneity, though the potential of all social media

forms to (deliberately or not) reinforce or challenge existing cultural and social traits at a variety of scales should not be underestimated.

From this survey of recent theory concerning new media in relation to the political, some key issues can be derived which set a brief for the design research (Chapter 6):

- In order to theoretically impact upon democracy and create an agonistic space, new media must be able to transcend the individual and self-expression, 'the expression of a vote' (Mouffe, 2006:6).
- Productive/making practices must be present within the discourse (Ratto & Boler, 2014:2-3).
- The space must contain (or, perhaps, must promote and encourage) positive and productive impulses, rather than simply oppositional ones (Mckim, 2014:287).
- The space cannot be defined in terms established by the state or the professional, cannot be 'project-specific' and the procedures, processes and protocols of the project cannot frame the discourse, as these are alienating (and perhaps hegemonic) in relation to the lay audience (Mckim, 2014:291).
- The space must exist 'between' state and popular realms, and in a way that enables a mutual and equal relationship (if not an unproblematic, non-agonistic one) (Mckim, 2014).
- The space should allow for both on-topic and off-topic discussions – points and subjects in common in order to allow a more supportive environment to emerge, and thereby avoiding the casual hostilities of much online discourse (Swartz & Driscoll, 2014:298-299).
- The format of the message board has the necessary durability to allow for heterogeneity, and its distributed nature (contrary to Facebook et al) allows for a greater freedom and autonomy, though still falling short of being a real 'public space'

- Should respond, through design, to the capacity of social media to reflect, reinforce or reshape local & national behaviours, traits and characteristics. Within social media, the message board is best placed to enable a transnational conversation but, in the case of planning, must also find the structural means of achieving local relevance, i.e. the field for which the discussion is relevant does have spatial limits.

Alongside the broader theoretical questions that proceed them, these key points are deployed in the sections that follow as a nested series of questions (all ultimately concerned with the efficacy of online platforms in creating a mutual relationship between public planning and its public) which the researcher hopes to address firstly through close critical discourse analysis of planning-related discourse on extant online forums (Chapter 5) and secondly the design of an 'alpha' version of that platform (Chapter 6), as structured and set out in the methodology described in Chapter 4.

4 Research Methodology

4.1 Theories applied: a brief

This section forms a bridge between the *review* of Chapters 2-3 and the research which it informed. It summarises the lessons and principles derived from the literature review (Chapters 2-3) which set the brief for both the discourse analysis (Chapter 5) and the design research (Chapter 6) strands. The methodology that framed these strands is described in the sections that make up the rest of this chapter.

*

Chapter 2, section 2.3 discussed a broadly chronological series of critiques of public planning's hegemonic character. The questions these critiques continue to raise, and which are of direct relevance to the design research, are as follows:

- Following Goodman, how might the language of the popular, as characterized by own research into online discourse, begin to help transform the language of public planning such that communication between the two is enhanced? Can the examples in the real world of the forum of the 'open' planning professional (3.2) who has realised the importance of language to the 'emancipatory potential' of their role be further developed?
- Can the wider, heterogeneous community revealed by Sandercock be revealed not only by historians or theorists working in retrospect, but also by forms of communication, namely the discussion forum, which brings them into play with and against existing communication forms?
- Can these dialogues be used to reveal the workings of power within the planning system (Flyvbjerg) to a greater extent than is currently possible

through existing channels of communication and media forms, following Flyvbjerg's assertion that focus should be on what *is* done rather than what *should* be done (with the forum as the ideal home for what the pragmatic narrative of what *is*, rather than of considerations of what should *be*)

- Do the support communities and forms of solidarity evident on the forums studied make up one possible instance of the networked communities observed by Ward, and if so do they have the opportunity to gain agency and become radical or progressive?
- Is the discourse of planning on popular media potentially progressive, i.e. an example of Fiske's reading of the workings of popular culture in action? Taking that planning is cultural production as well as everything else that it is, does Fiske's formulation, including its idea of micropolitical change, help us understand power and agency within the planning system and how shifts in power and agency might take place over time?
- As a territory of the popular, but operating in close association with statutory processes, what is the potential of the discussion forum, aided by the design of new and better forms of the type, to aide in the creation of new, agonistic spaces (3.2) where dissent and the adversarial are recognised and present as positive forces within a democratic political process?

All this notwithstanding, the majority of these post-war critiques – from Davidoff to Goodman - have attacked these dichotomies whilst failing to transcend them to embrace wider practices residing within the popular. Three approaches were therefore identified which, it is proposed, escape this constraint and open up planning practice to just those wider practices, and it is these which form the theoretical premise that the chapters that follow will explore through analysis and design. They are as follows:

- Ward's researches into popular building activity and discourse describe a wider system of popular activity and discourse than is acknowledged by public planning, whilst advocating for a planning model which engages those activities in a mutual relationship (2.3);

- Post-Gramscian readings of popular culture and popular agency suggest that popular activity can have a progressive impact on statutory political forms such as planning (3.1)
- The agonism and dissensus politics of Chantal Mouffe et al provide a theoretical framework in support of such activities having agency within a revitalized democratic system (3.2).

The explorations of the political potential of social media in Chapter 3, section 3.3 have led to a series of propositions which are summarised at the close of the preceding section and outlined here:

Open language – uses language in an accessible, legible and even emancipatory way: focus is placed on forms of language that challenge or at least do not reinforce power relations.

Heterogeneity – allows or even encourages diverse users into the same space as the planning professional and existing regular users of the planning system; brings those users and user groups into ‘view’ as part of the system and has a structure & culture which present a welcoming, ‘safe’ space for diverse groups.

Power-exposing – should explore, expose and/or ‘whistleblow’ extant forms of power.

Community – should allow for and encourage existing and new forms of community and interest group within its framework, to the point where sympathies, solidarities and support networks can form; but moreover provides some means for these connections to produce/achieve things, either within the space of outside of it. (Ward) Furthermore should reflect the potential of new media to build political structures (indeed, democratic space) that transcends individual expression and toward communal, collaborative activity.

Mutuality – should present a space where the professional and the lay user, and the ‘powers’ they represent, exist in a mutual space for the benefit of all parties, and where usefulness and agency runs in both directions.

Critical Making - For the sake of building communities, sympathies etc., productive/making practices must be present.

Positive discourse – Opposition cannot be the only ‘point’ or content – the space must allow for, or indeed encourage or promote, positivity, propositions, strategies, ideas.

Not state-defined – engaged with and in public planning and not framed by state or even state project-defined parameters or protocol. Does not preclude state origination, close involvement or the presence of these parameters/protocols but that they should not dominate – as such presents a ‘third’ space between public and private as with many emerging new media forms.

Off-topic – should present a supportive environment that transcends locality and builds relationships in relation to topics, interests and sympathies, allowing for the on-topic and the off-topic to grow naturally and contribute to the growing of connections across the community.

Transnational & Local - should enable a transnational conversation but also find the structural means of achieving local relevance.

The following two key questions cannot be framed within the evaluative framework described above but must be asked of all the subjects of the study:

Do the spaces of live up to, or even transcend, Fiske’s idea of how popular cultural forms can be politically progressive, at a micropolitical level? Could they?

Do the spaces reflect the model proposed by Mouffe of an agonistic space in which dissent and adversarial discussions are acceptable and positive activities within that space?

The following section describes how the study’s two research methodologies were established to test these propositions.

4.2 Methodological Approach

This section sets out the method through which the theoretical precedents established in Chapters 2 and 3 and summarised in the form of a brief in Chapter 4, section 4.1 are to be tested through parallel research strands of discourse analysis design (Chapter 5) and design (Chapter 6). These two parallel and complementary methods are intended to work together to generate a set of cumulative findings regarding the contemporary potential of on-line popular discourse to positively impact on public planning through challenging public planning's hegemonic character and addressing the current split between public planning and its public (fig. 8). They were established in order to simultaneously respond *as a designer* to a perceived 'gap' in the democratic potential of public planning in the present whilst also to establish fundamental, baseline data concerning the current popular discourse about planning that occurs today: this in the belief (indebted to both Sandercock and Ward) that this discourse might have the potential, provided with more agency through design, to build mutual bridges with extant public planning practices.

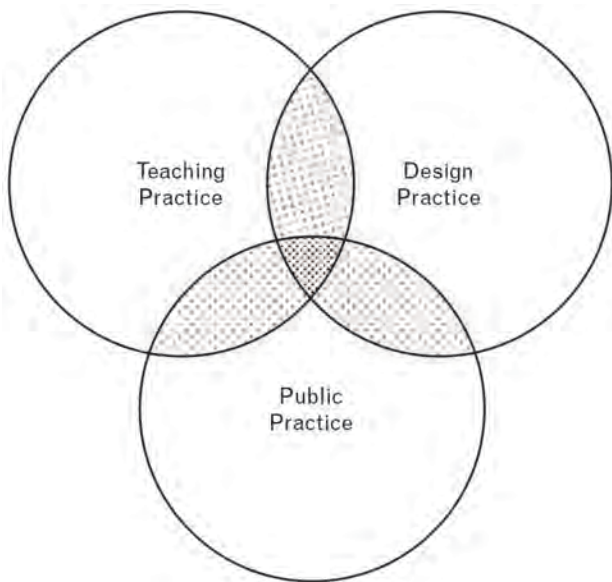
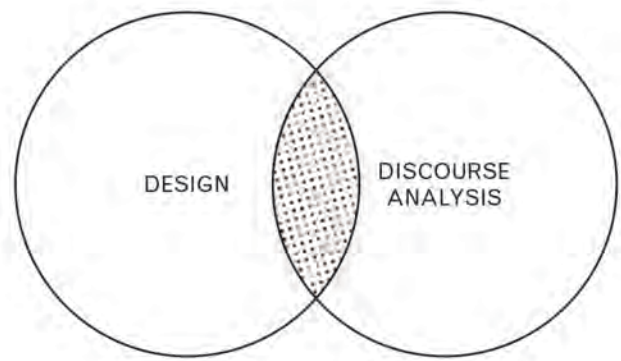


Figure 8a.
Disciplinary Position: Design is the bridge



Frayling (1993) Wodak & Meyer (2009)

Figure 8b.
Research Methods

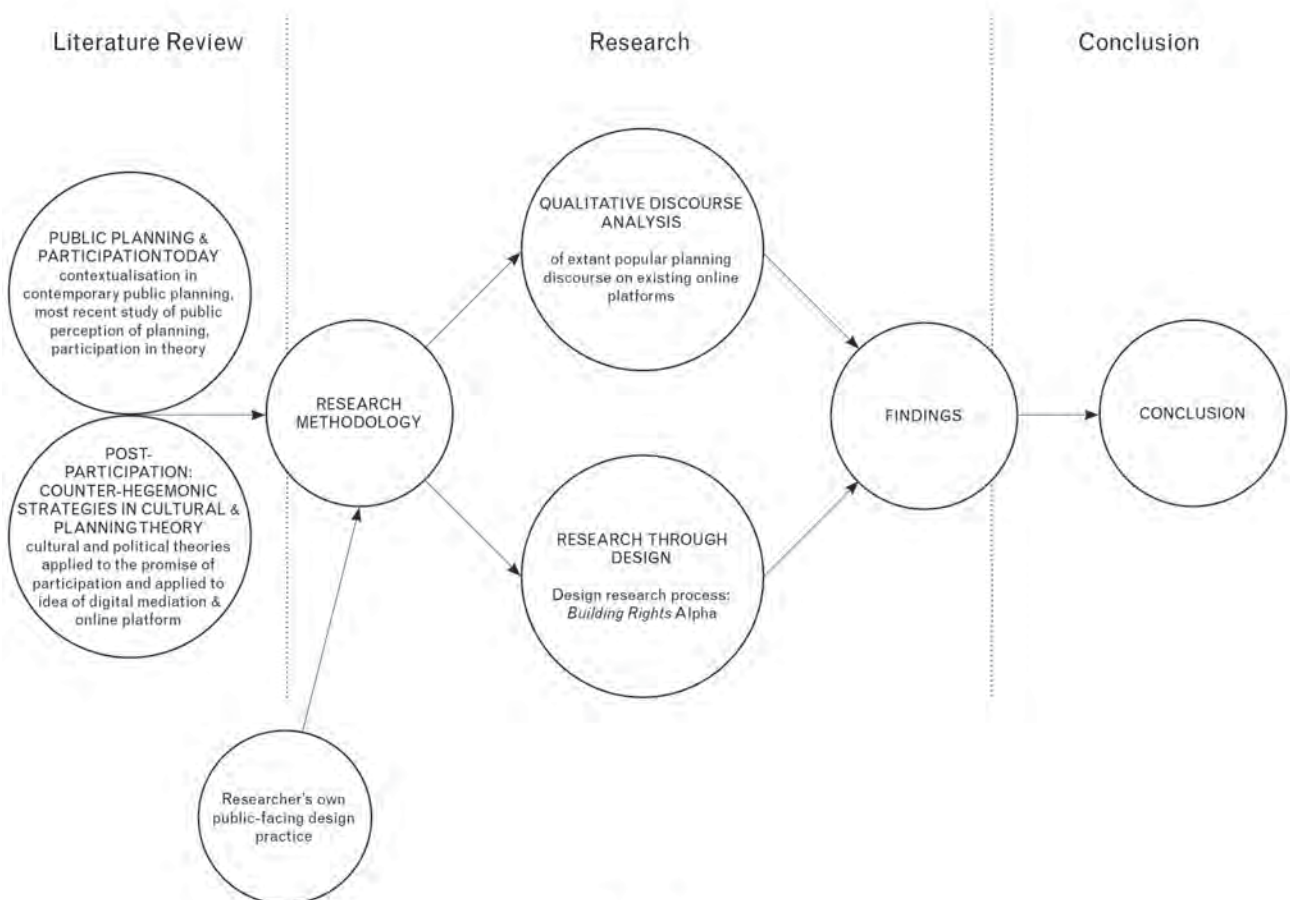


Figure 8c.
Methodological Diagram

The methodology described on the following pages was chosen, and designed, in order to allow a clear set of findings, of two complementary types (discourse analysis and design) to inform each other. The first requirement in order to address my overarching question was to study, directly, the actual discourse that already takes place among lay users about the planning system and the built environment. This discourse is one tiny corner of the discourse which has appeared since the rise of new media, but it represents the closest that this discourse has got to impinging upon public planning practice. As set out in more detail below, a process of critical discourse analysis, taking the primary evidence of extant online discourse as its subject, was therefore selected, reflecting the need to precisely understand the mechanics of the discourse itself, and to frame the characteristics of this discourse as content that might inform how a work of design might host, enable or transform it. Accordingly, and reflecting the researcher's background as a designer, a parallel process of research through design was established in order to test the capacity of design to intervene in the space between the existing discourse and public planning as currently practised, a 'twin' research methodology that, it was hoped, would provide the clearest possible understanding of the potential of a particular kind of design process (set out below and in 4.3) to add agency to the emergent but existing popular discourse that already existed in the popular domain but has not hitherto broken through to challenge existing public planning practice.

At the outset, the theoretical propositions and questions regarding a form of online mediation that might create the mutual relationship between public planning and the public (summarised in Chapter 4, section 4.1) were directly applied to a thorough review of extant forms of online mediation that exist or under development for the duration of this study. This review (Chapter 4, section 4.4), and the limitations it reveals of the existing field, is used in parallel with those same theoretical positions and questions to set the terms for what the design research, *Building Rights*, should aim to achieve, though acknowledging that within the space of this study the conclusions from such a period of design research – ahead of the platform entering and existing within the wider world of social media – can only ever be provisional, and count as a proposal about the potential of design agency within the creation of spaces of mediation. Accordingly, a parallel

analysis of *extant* planning discourse on existing platforms was undertaken in order to draw conclusions about how online discourse regarding planning issues currently ‘works’ and how this might be amplified, transformed or provided with increased agency through design: conclusions that could not be drawn with simply the design product present. In terms of process, and reflecting the researcher’s background and ongoing practice as a designer, the initial impulse was to use design to explore the potential progressive impacts of the new media shift on the processes of public planning, but it quickly became clear in early framing discussions of the research that a parallel study of the *already occurring* shift in discourse happening in online spaces away from professional planning discourse would provide a much stronger impetus and brief for the design research.

Accordingly, the two research strands developed in tandem, with one informing the other, informally at first and finally explicitly in the form set out in Chapter 7, wherein findings from both are pulled together.

The following paragraphs define these two methods.

Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis is used to explore contemporary popular discourse related to building activity and built environment decision-making, operating within the spirit and methodological framework of *critical discourse analysis* as set out by Wodak & Meyer (2009) and its assertion that online discourse such as that found on a ‘Mumsnet’ forum can be understood as a social practice and as a means of understanding the actions and ideas of the participants in that discourse. Wodak & Meyer’s definition, after Foucault, emphasises the primacy of *power* in discourse analysis, reading any multi-participant discourse as not only a series of power relations in itself but also descriptive of wider societal power relations, such as between a lay user and what they understand as ‘the planning system’.

The *critical discourse analysis* framework given by Wodak & Meyer does not prescribe a single evidence-gathering or sampling method, and so that used in this study has been invented to fulfil the particular purposes of this study. The content under analysis is derived from a number of social media forums, including

Mumsnet, and is analysed in order to explore how the English ‘public’, at large, relate to and understand the planning system, and indeed the terms through which ‘planning discourse’ is actually undertaken using social media. The purpose of this method is to establish a series of insights into current perceptions of public planning amongst the public as discussed in the public sphere, a question that has not been asked in research terms since 1995 (DoE, 1995), and which to the researcher’s knowledge has never focused on actual dialogue within the popular sphere. In this context the *text produced as discourse* on the forums studied is considered a primary text, a means of sampling the perceptions and experiences of the wider public directly. In choosing to analyse extant, freely available discourse on existing popular forums, the study is able to access dialogue about planning which is ‘primary’, unselfconscious and public, thereby avoiding the potential post-rationalisations, self-consciousness and other pressures which would have played a role had interviews or other research methods been used to achieve the same ends. Those involved in this discourse are not participating in a study, they are simply engaging in online discourse as a part of their daily lives, either as a one-off event or as part of a sustained on-line presence. This quality to the material is a vitally important one, as it provides both raw, unprocessed dialogue within the public sphere and escapes the professional confines of planning. Though collated using precise search terms as set out below, many of these discourses are not per se about planning, or at least are not perceived to be about planning by those involved in the discussion. Also crucially, the type of discourse ‘text’ studied in this part of the study has close parallels, potentially at least, with the kinds of text that might be produced on the online platform developed within the design research, thereby allowing research findings to bridge the two methods, i.e.:

- (1) this is how popular planning discourse currently works;
- (2) this is how design might connect this to public planning and otherwise enhance its potential, agency and visibility.

A key limitation of this method, as framed by Wodak & Meyer, is that it does not tell the researcher the meta-narratives, perceptions or motivations of the participants involved. A further, more expansive study (see Chapter 7) might explore these meta-narratives through interviews or similar methods, and might

yield yet richer findings about the workings and motivations of these communities, but the present study limits itself to the analysis of the textual discourse that these participants have left behind – the user-generated content of the platform.

A further limitation of this analysis is that it explores the public planning system solely from the perspective of the public ‘lay’ user (potentially with the occasional professional or ‘expert lay’ user) and does not explore the perceptions of the public planning professional. This explicit focus on lay perception and experience is a deliberate strategy, and aims to complement existing recent research into the experiences and aspirations of planners conducted by Clifford & Tewdwr-Jones (2013). This study is used within Chapters 5 and 8 to compare the public perceptions which are the subject of the discourse analysis with the findings of that latter study. Also, the paradigm shift in discourse represented by new media (3.3), which this study directly addresses, has not yet tangibly intersected with professional planning processes, and in undertaking a study of popular discourse (where the shift has demonstrably impacted upon our lives as citizens in a myriad of ways), the study aims to explore the potential impacts of the shift on the profession of planning by exploring the spaces where these impacts can be seen: outside the discipline (and crucially ignoring the spatial, bureaucratic and political borders and boundaries built into public planning as currently practiced in the UK) but within the wider ‘peopled practice’ of planning.

The content under analysis is derived from a number of social media forums and will be analysed in order to gain an insight into how the English ‘public’, at large, relate to and understand the planning system, and indeed the terms through which ‘planning discourse’ is actually undertaken using social media.

As a means of understanding how the English public discuss and relate to public planning, the ‘sample’ herein is a purposely limited one. The aim is not to approach a total portrait of this relationship, but to explore closely the *language* and *agency* embodied or implied within ‘planning conversations’ that are

- taking place outside of official channels (e.g. a local planning department) *and* outside commercial relationships (e.g. a paid session with a planning consultant);

- initiated or defined by lay people rather than professionals, although professionals (of various kinds) might form a part of conversations;
- existing on-line, utilizing existing social media and knowledge exchange spaces.

The questions asked of these documented on-line conversations, all of which sit under the wider ambition to establish an insight into current perceptions of public planning amongst the public, and how these take place as online discourse, can be summarized as:

- What language is used to discuss planning issues, and what forms of dialogue?
- How are questions or issues of planning framed in terms of success, failure, conflict or agency, and how do the ‘communities’ of the forum function in this framing?
- What picture(s) of public planning emerges from this discourse?

And lastly:

- Could the *design* of the spaces in which these conversations take place be so designed as to increase their agency and to allow a better connection with professional/official contexts?

The sampled discourse threads were each ‘read’ in relation to the above questions, and any phrases or fragments that seemed of value were selected and isolated. From this pile of fragments a series of thematic analytic paragraphs were composed in relation to the above questions and are presented in Chapter 6, section 6.2.

The people engaged in these social media conversations are united because they have a personal or social relationship with public planning, and because they are looking to unofficial or ‘popular’ realms to aid in this relationship, whether this relation is a direct question, a live issue or simply a discussion. In analysing these conversations, then, the aim is to characterize a population that is *somewhat engaged* in planning-related discourse and/or activity, even if only for a brief on-

line dialogue, but who, for varying reasons, are seeking debate, clarification, support or conflict within unofficial channels (often *as well as* through official channels). This selection also brings its own limitations, in terms of the risk of not including certain subsections of the population (for example, the elderly, who either do not have internet access or whose usage of such access is limited) though as we increasingly in the UK head toward internet ubiquity (88% of UK households have broadband access in 2017, 66% of UK citizens access the internet on their own mobile phone, www.ofcom.org.uk, Accessed 6.12.2017) this limitation is not considered problematic.

The sites analysed are ones with a significant, UK-based user group and which contains a substantial amount of discourse that is either explicitly or implicitly concerned with 'planning'. Significance is measured here in terms of thousands of daily users, membership and posting activity, using www.similarweb.com analytics (Accessed 23.05.2017). Twitter and Facebook, at time of writing the most ubiquitous of social media services in use in the UK, were considered for this study but rejected. For the former, corporate accounts dominate in all of the appropriate search terms, and for the latter, algorithmic sorting and prioritisation of data in relation to user preferences and 'friendships' made it impossible, with a desk study, to achieve a balanced set of conversations or threads.

The discussion forums selected are as follows:

Mumsnet (www.mumsnet.com, Accessed 23.05.2017). Primarily a parenting forum (and one that, counter to the name, welcomes male and non-parent users), Mumsnet claims 1.6 million unique monthly visitors (<https://www.marketingweek.com/2011/07/04/mumsnet-launches-blogging-network>, Accessed 23.05.2017) and, since its formation in 2000, has become, in media terms, politically influential, such that leading politicians have attended live webchats on the forum, and the site is increasingly a go-to for traditional media journalists seeking commentary on a current affairs story – with or without a parenting theme.

Reddit (www.reddit.com/r/unitedkingdom, Accessed 23.05.2017) defines itself as the 'front page of the internet', is the 26th most trafficked website globally, and claims 250 million global users, with 160,680 registered users associated with its

United Kingdom forum. Content can be on any topic within the forum's guidelines, and can be original content initiated by the user or a posting of a news article, social media item or other content.

Gransnet (www.gransnet.com, Accessed 23.05.2017) defines itself as 'the busiest social networking site for the over 50s' and is a spin-off, initiated in 2011, from the original Mumsnet site. It achieves 188,900 unique visitors a month. Membership is not exclusive to any particular demographic, though overtly targets grandmothers and, to a lesser degree, grandfathers.

Pistonheads (www.pistonheads.com/gassing, Accessed 23.05.2017) defines itself as the 'UK's biggest motoring forum', and the forum is complemented by car sales pages. It is the 6th most accessed motoring site in the UK (7m unique visitors per month), and conversations often depart from strictly motoring-based discussions to wider social and cultural questions. Membership is not exclusive to any particular demographic but the visuals of the site have a 'laddish' quality that could be considered to appeal to a primarily male, and young, readership.

In recognition of the gulf between 'intuitive' planning knowledge and recognition of the technical terms of planning (DoE, 1995; see Chapter 6, section 6.2), simple searches for 'town and country planning' or similar terms could not be used to limit the sample. Instead, the whole UK-based forum, in each case, was searched using a variety of search terms ([1] 'planning', [2] 'town planning', [3] 'planning permission', [4] 'extension', [5] 'building', [6] 'houses' ['housing' if 'houses did not yield enough usable results]) and with conversations selected on the basis of number of s/posts and general post activity. Up to eighteen conversations, or 'threads', were in this way identified for each forum under analysis, and this sample forms the set analysed in the section that follows. Clearly, some of these search terms are likely to yield irrelevant threads (e.g., 'wedding planning') whilst also being necessary to find threads which do not necessarily consider themselves planning dialogues. Reflecting the need to keep results to the present day (and the fact that some forums' archives date back nearly 20 years), the sample was restricted to 2012-2017, therefore all sampled threads were created during the 'Localist' era.

Research through Design

From the outset, the intention behind this study was not only to explore the extant discourse concerning public planning as set out on the preceding pages, but also to utilise design practice to further explore and speculate upon the field through a process of ‘research through design’ as set out by Frayling (1993). This research practice consists of the design of a platform, *Building Rights*, to an ‘alpha’ level of design resolution.

The principle of ‘research through design’ is that the act of design, as an explorative process, is one which yields research findings in and of itself. In order to escape the confines of simply providing a documentation of an inevitably internalised design process, the research has been set out to include as much dialogue as possible, both informally in the early development of the prototype platform (Chapter 6, section 6.2) and formally through a design charrette at the close of development of the prototype intended to capture users’ and participants’ usage of, and impressions of, that prototype intended for its further development outside of the confines of this research (Chapter 6, section 6.3). Charrette, in this context, is defined as a design workshop wherein the on-line life of the platform could be simulated and tested. As set out in Chapter 6, the charrette was made up of engaged lay users without a background in planning, supported by planning and architectural professionals. Methodologically, this reflects the framing of the study in Chapter 3, firstly that the forms of transformation under consideration are originate in the popular domain, and secondly that the shift in discourse represented by the rise of new media and new forms of online platform is something also taking place largely in the popular domain. This is not to say that the intention of the design output is not to have an impact on public planning – quite the reverse – but at this moment in the evolution of new media it is most directly useful to situate the research within and amongst the lay user and the popular domain. This situating also forms a direct bridge between the two strands of research – from the studying of extant popular discourse to the design of a particular space for a potential popular discourse.

The design of the platform involved technical, aesthetic and organisational design decisions which were the product, largely, of collective design effort as set out in

Chapter 6, section 6.2. This process followed methodological principles – combining the design of systems with the design of the communication of those systems, which was first tested by myself and others in the creation of a book, *SUB-PLAN: A Guide to Permitted Development* (Knight et. al, 2009), a process which is described in Chapter 4, section 4.3 and which was influential on the present study not just for its content but for its design process.

The brief for the design research was generated using the theoretical questions and positions set out in Chapter 4, section 4.1. These, derived from literature review, were used firstly to assess the ‘field’ of digital and online forms of planning knowledge exchange and mediation (Chapter 4, section 4.4).

The design research was firstly documented for this thesis in the form of a ‘diary’ of the development process, following which the evaluative and participatory charrette yielded more substantial and discursive evidence concerning *Building Rights* Alpha’s potential and limitations.

Following the contextualisation described in Chapters 2 and 3, and with the discourse analysis of Chapter 5 set out above, the purpose of the design research was ultimately to explore how the design of a platform – utilising a combination of spatial and communication design approaches – might enable the more mutual relationship between the popular and public planning than currently exists, taking the opportunity presented by the new media shift and the discourse that it has already generated and creating bridges between it and the extant public planning system, a need which is considered both timely (3.3) and urgent (Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 sections 3.1. and 3.2). Accordingly, the brief for the design research was that a ‘new’ space must relate to, but transcend, the existing spaces studied in Chapter 5 with an explicit agenda of intervening in planning as whole. Following Fiske et al (3.1), it was expected that such an intervention would be gradual, micropolitical, and potentially but not always progressive. From observations of current discourse made within Chapter 5, it was clear that most popular planning discourse existed closely in relation to development control (can I build what I want, can I prevent something else being built), as this, at present, stands as the most tangible and significant experience of planning for the majority of lay users (5.2). Accordingly, the design of *Building Rights* was tasked with finding ways of

challenging this limit of engagement, although acknowledging its current privileged status. Through processes of aggregation and index-ability, through using machine learning or similar processes to build connections with extant policy and guidance, and through inviting in the public planning profession into the same space, it was hoped that, from the starting point of ‘can I build what want’, popular planning discourse might ‘swim upstream’ and engage with planning in a wider variety of ways. If the mechanics of planning as experienced by lay users can be laid bare by their systematic cataloguing, debate and discourse, then there might be greater potential for the public at large to more fundamentally engage with, and challenge, the mechanics of the system. Once the impacts of planning policy in a particular area are better understood by the lay population, it was hoped, that same population might more readily take an active interest in the formulation of policy. This ambition was central to the design process undertaken – the resulting prototype was not expected to completely fulfil this ambition but its potential to do so was designed in to the research questions asked of it during design and during the final charrette (6.3), with answers to these questions forming the most important findings of the design research.

Findings revealed during both research strands were brought together and compiled in order to arrive at a series of key discoveries that are summarised within this study in Chapter 7, before a concluding Chapter 8 explores the limitations of the study and potential for further research upon its conclusion.

This section has presented the methodological approach of the research. Within this chapter, however, two further sections provide further context.

The first, 4.3, describes the process of *SUB-PLAN*, the book and design project that preceded and informed the present study.

A final methodological chapter, 4.4, located in advance of the presentation of the study’s primary research chapters, takes the form of a survey of the wider field of online platforms.

4.3 Informing a design research method: *SUB-PLAN*

The methodology of this study developed out of a previous project undertaken by the researcher: a teaching programme, design project and publication called *SUB-PLAN: A Guide to Permitted Development* (Knight, Williams et. al., 2009, see also Knight & Williams, 2012, and cover, fig. 9). This chapter describes the project and the implications it had for the methodology of the present study.

The narrative presented here of the development and afterlife of *SUB-PLAN* is included not only because it establishes the precedent in the researcher's own work for *Building Rights* but, more significantly, because it provided a strong case study for the potential role of design in transforming the relationship between planners and people that the present study pursues. The limitations of *SUB-PLAN* (as product and practice) also helped to frame the development of the design research of the present study.

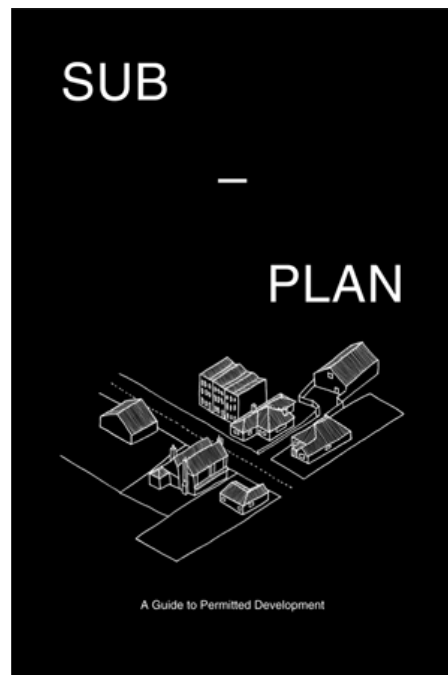


Figure 9. Cover of *SUB-PLAN: A Guide to Permitted Development* (2009).

SUB-PLAN was the product of a teaching programme led by the researcher, Finn Williams and Europa at the AA Summer School at the Architectural Association from 3rd to 31st July 2009. It took the form of an interrogation, with a view to publishing for a general audience, of then-recently revised Permitted Development (PD) rights, which had been brought about following the Killian Pretty Review (DCLG, 2008), which had found that 97% of all planning applications were for householder, minor or other small scale development, 80% of which were directly approved by planning officers, thereby suggesting that a liberalisation of PD rights could have real impacts on the efficiency of public planning.

SUB-PLAN took the new legislation that emerged from this recommendation – a complex and inaccessible text, and also loaded with flaws and ‘gaps’ as a result of its rapid development as the site for a project which would make the new legislation accessible for lay users, firstly through translation (fig. 10), then through example (fig. 11). The multiple negatives of the legislation became positives, and extensive design effort was deployed to find a variety of ways, documented in the book and in the extracts within this thesis, to communicate the possibilities of the legislation to a broad audience whilst also presenting an implicit critique of it.

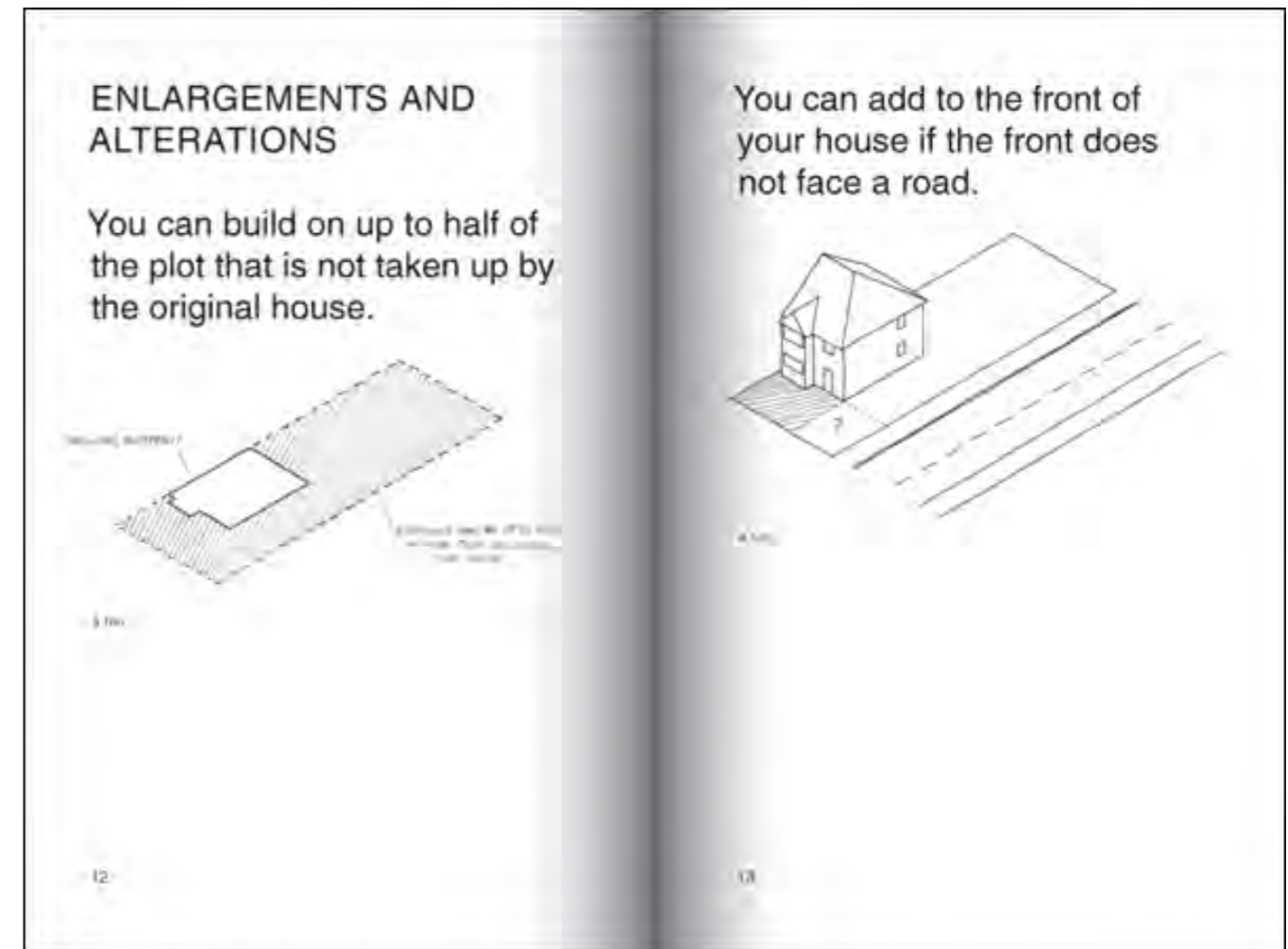
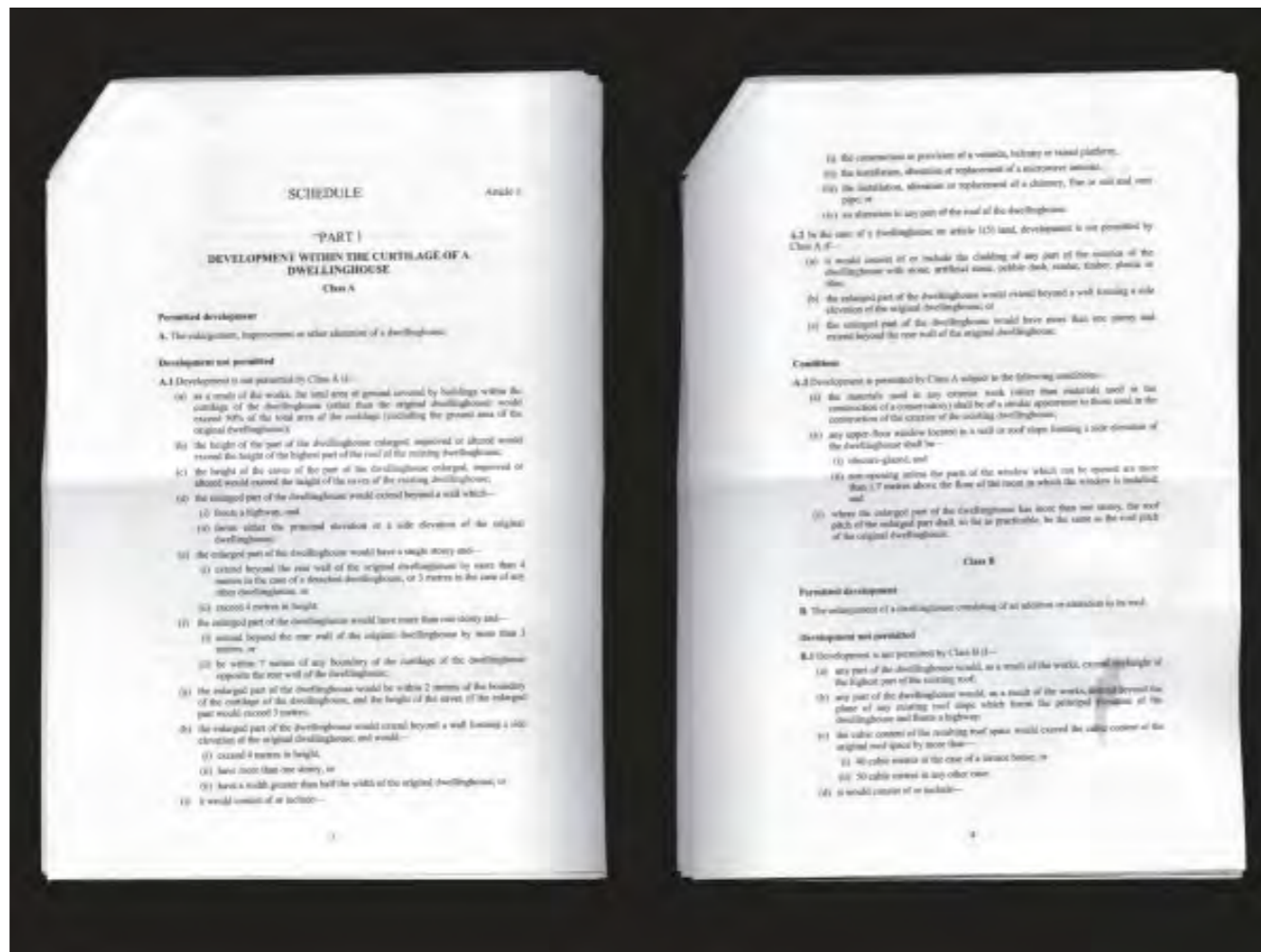


Figure 10. Sample of then-current PD legislation and that same information 'translated' into public-facing rules; two spreads from SUB-PLAN (2009).

Though a problematic issue for design professionals, planners and the public, the new PD legislation also appeared to the authors as a source of inspiration and opportunity, it had the potential to both liberate small-scale development and to open the flood gates to a developmental free-for-all. But most importantly it had opened up a gulf between law and public usage of that law.

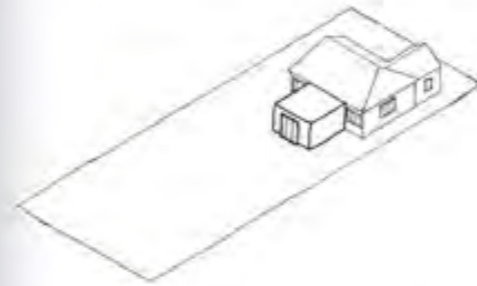
SUB-PLAN was created and published when the new PD legislation only applied to houses. The book pulled apart the legislative loopholes that characterised the new laws, and revealed huge potential in legal ambiguity, particularly as PD laws are based on generic assumptions about house and plot types which are rarely found in reality. When applied to case studies, using real residential sites and using architectural expertise to explore their full potential, radical domestic types emerged, for example in the case study of 'Mr and Mrs Curtilage' (2009: 41-44).

HOME CINEMA

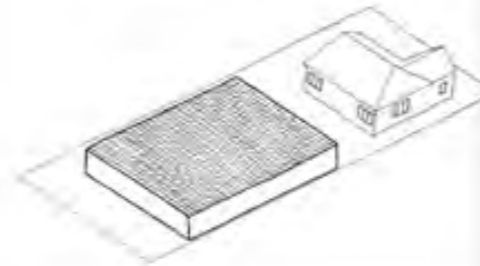
Mr and Mrs Curtilage have bought a home entertainment system that is too large for their living room. They are deciding between building an extension and an independent structure.



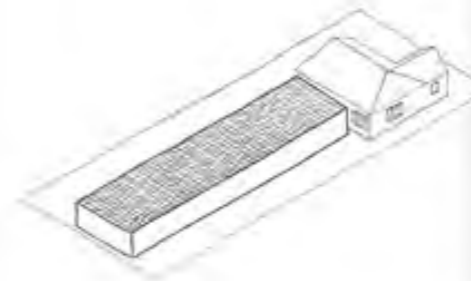
If Mr and Mrs Curtilage decide to build an extension to their existing house, they can build 4m back, 4m high, and up to half the width of their house.



But, if Mr and Mrs Curtilage build an independent structure, they can build on up to half of their open plot, and unlike extensions, independent structures can stretch all the way to the plot boundary.



How close could the structure be to the house and still be considered independent?



As long as the structure is 2m from the plot boundary, giving it a double pitched roof allows it to reach up to 4m. If the back wall is slightly pitched, does the structure have a double-pitched roof?



With an independent structure, their home cinema could be big enough for the whole neighbourhood.



A.J.W. A'HEED & S.H.G. EMM.

Figure 11. The 'Home Cinema' narrative; two spreads from SUB-PLAN (2009).

The main challenge we set to the students, other than the production of a publishable publication by the end of the Summer School, was to develop a piece of design which would form a usable, accessible case study ready for reception by a general audience. As plays out again in the design research within this thesis, the task was to deploy architectural and design intelligence in the cause of bridging policy/law and public usage of that law.

A key lesson from *SUB-PLAN* for this subsequent study was that the ‘expanded agency’ sought through the rubric of ‘Spatial Agency’ Awan et al. (2011) could be explored in parallel by two firmly-distinct disciplines, in that the project was taught by a collaboration between architects, planners and graphic designers, and students of architecture, working to a collective goal and with barely a moment’s thought to disciplinary distinctions. This experience played a large role in establishing that the spatial territory that *SUB-PLAN* had begun to explore, and the design methodology that underpinned that exploration, could transcend disciplinary boundaries.

Once it had been published and disseminated (fig. 12), *SUB-PLAN* quickly became out-of-date by changes to the legislation, and the project team that remained in London was forced to consider whether to begin a process of regular updates, or instead to find other ways of intervening, at a more systemic level and in a way that is future-proofed by design. It was this ambition that was the seed of *Building Rights* as a design project. The social and collaborative spirit of *SUB-PLAN*, and its interest in design skill applied to new forms of communication, remains in *Building Rights*, as indeed do many of its participants.



Figure 12. The co-authors of SUB-PLAN reading the finished book at the close of the Summer School, July 2009. Researcher's collection.

The intuitions that guided *SUB-PLAN*'s design and composition, as well as lessons learned from its development and delivery, supported the design research and discourse analysis that followed, in the following ways:

Firstly, extant, 'official' online and electronic forms of mediation and knowledge transfer are inadequate (Chapter 2, section 2.1) and, in some cases, effectively suppress or limit the possibilities of what a lay user can 'do' in planning terms through use of language and illustrations. This intuition was borne out by *SUB-PLAN*'s exposure of the 'real' opportunities contained within a specific then-current piece of planning law, as counter to the way those opportunities were presented in public-facing guidance published in the wake of that planning law reaching the statute book.

Secondly, language is a fundamental concern for any interlocution between professional public planners and the wider public (Chapter 2, section 2.3 & Chapter 3, section 3.1), with designers potentially well-placed to propose forms of

language and communication design appropriate to this ‘middle’ space between professional and lay user.

Thirdly, the printed form is too rapidly obsolete and inflexible as a format to function for any length of time as a means of interlocution. *SUB-PLAN* was quickly out of date and we were faced with the decision of either issuing regular updates to the book (online or printed) or seeking out other forms of interlocution with flexible, open-source or crowd-sourced qualities. This discovery provided the initial logic for an on-line platform.

Finally, and most significantly, *SUB-PLAN* strongly suggested that there is a role for design – spatial and communication – in bridging (Chapter 2, section 2.3) between professional public planners and the wider public. These discoveries were crucial to the formulation of the methodology already set out within this study (Chapter 4, section 4.2) which in turn set out the two parallel research trajectories of Chapters 5 and 6.

First though, and as a final methodological framing of the research, it was important to understand the wider field of online platforms concerned with mediating the planning system.

4.4 Participatory planning tools: a survey of the field

Having proposed the online platform as a means of achieving a form of mutuality between public planning and its public, particularly with regard to the role of design expertise in aiding in this ambition and to the limitations of more traditional, non-social published media in doing the same (both understood through the making of *SUB-PLAN*), what follows is a survey of existing online platforms developed in relation to global planning systems in order to better understand the context in which this study's intervention might sit. The 'field' includes only on-line tools, i.e. ones that rely upon the internet for their functionality, either as the 'home' of the discourse or functionality or as the primary means of distribution. Reflecting the ambition of the study to explore mediatory space between professional and lay users, tools aimed at both groups are included on the condition that they rely upon some form of connection between the two.

In the table that follows, a sample of 22 of the most relevant global examples is studied in relation to the principles that inform this study's design brief (Chapter 4, section 4.1) and which emerged out of the literature review (Chapters 2-3). These same principles will later (Chapters 5-8) be used to evaluate the design research and the workings of existing discourse on non-planning forums. The selection on the following pages is indebted to, but not limited to, research undertaken by the Future Cities Catapult 'Future of Planning' project, (FCC, 2016), which consists of a global study of innovations in planning with a focus on technology-led tools and platforms, intended to serve as a catalyst for further innovation.

#	Name	Author/Creator	Location	Description (source)	Open Language	Heterogeneity	Power-exposing	Community	Mutuality	Critical Making	Positive Discourse	Not state-defined	Off-topic	Transnational & local	SUMMARY
1	5D Smart World cityzenith.com	CityZenith	London & Chicago	5D Smart World is Cityzenith's 'Big Data Platform for the Built Environment', which offers 3D parametric models of cities with a wide range of real-time information—open, shared, and closed, as well as both static and dynamic—and provides personalised intelligence metrics most relevant to the users. Built environment professionals such as architects, engineers, and planners are able to navigate through the torrent of aggregated data, from the site context level to the individual floor level, using the platform's 3D geospatial user interface and high-performance gaming engine with advanced search and analytics functionalities. The BETA User Program will test the product with over 1,000 beta users, including urban planners. (FCC, 2016)	Primarily data driven, intended for professional use only, though using big data	N/A	Intended for professional use only	No community-generating function or foun	N/A	N/A	Is concerned with envisaging current future projects in relation to existing data and for use in BIM/CIM systems.	Is defined by the professional user and licensee	N/A	Is currently at various stages of development and delivery across the world, so stands some chance of offering connections across the world whilst offering city-specific sites. The connections made possible by this feature are not yet clear	Is only 'mediatory' in that it uses public-generated big data as part of its dataset. Its potential global scope is interesting from a transnational point of view but of limited interest as explicitly a paid service limited to professionals.
2	Betaville betaville.net	Carl Skelton, Brooklyn Experimental Media Center, Skye Book & Hochschule Bremen.	New York	Betaville is an open-source multiplayer environment for real cities, in which ideas for new works of public art, architecture, urban design, and development can be shared, discussed, tweaked, and brought to maturity in context, and with the kind of broad participation people take for granted in open source software development. The Betaville platform is designed to be deployable by individuals, small groups (say, a project class or a neighborhood association), all the way up to professional design firms and planning offices of major cities: any group that is serious about offering a proposal in the spirit of a programmer's RFC (request for comment). In this case, the proposal takes the form of a 3D model set in a "mirror world" of the local context, with a built-in discussion forum, and provision for multiple iterations... Anyone with access to a web browser can participate, and every contribution remains accessible. (http://betaville.net/)	Provides an interface that has its own 'language' but is not off-putting. The language used within the interface by users is dependent on the scale and type of users involved	In principle, the interface is designed to accommodate any user or user group, the key consideration here is who 'chooses' to use or deploy the interface and with whom. The interface is open access, its 'rooms' may not be	Has the potential to reveal power structures within a project or process is used in an open manner by professionals	Relies to an extent on existing communities as members of any given project, no explicit tools for community-building	Has the potential to sit between public planning and the public depending upon how it is deployed and who by, and the rules of this engagement	The interface allows for proposals to be made visible/tangible.	Is concerned with envisaging current future projects.	In principle, the interface is designed to accommodate any user or user group, the key consideration here is who 'chooses' to use or deploy the interface and with whom. The interface is open access, its 'rooms' may not be	N/A	In principle, could allow connections between projects at various scales globally; at present projects are silos so such networking is not possible	A 'positive' and visually engaging tool, and one that is able to be situated in a variety of different 'places' in relation to a project or place. Currently does allow for the formation of 'communities' or friendships other than those targeted at the project under discussion.
3	Change Explorer digitalcivics.io/			Change Explorer, initially designed for wearables, is a smartphone app that uses location data and notifies members of the public when they enter an area that is subject to redevelopment plans. Users are then presented with a number of options on how they would like to interact with the information, e.g. be sent to a platform where one can give extended comments. Digital Civics trialed the application with North Tyneside Council, working with planners and members of the public, and was very successful; it demonstrated that there was an appetite for alternative means of engagement, and younger people engaged much more fully than they would have with a traditional consultation. The trial involved providing testers Apple Watches during the trial period, and the university's ability to fund access to technology partly explains the app's success. Change Explorer presents great potential with the concept of 'push-notifying' users with planning matters as they go about the city; citizens do not need to download local plans or read planning notices on lamp posts to be informed and engage. (FCC, 2016)	The interface uses clear, accessible language wherever possible. Language problems likely to arise as lay users penetrate deeper into a plan or proposal that interests them, but the 'front end' is very clear	Technology used limits the application of the platform to active users of smartphones or wearables. Early tests showed positive use by young people, a group often not reached by traditional participatory models, the appeal of the technology might partially explain this.	In practice has the potential to reveal the extent and character of applications and processes occurring in a given place, and in this way make planning matters (or, at least, the approvals process) more ubiquitous within society	No community-generating function or foun	Does not challenge existing power structures other than by making planning processes more ubiquitous (if chosen by the user)	Encourages comment on applications by users but no other 'making' feature	Does not shift the means or nature of commenting, though by opening up the process to hard-to-reach demographics may result in a more diverse and demographically rich response to consultation	State-defined but open-ended	N/A	At present exists only within particular trial areas, most notably North Tyneside	Bringing locally targeted planning 'news' - applications and policy changes - into greater ubiquity would be powerful. The system currently lacks the ability to form communities around ideas, proposals or objections in more than the traditional forms.
4	Commonwealth Connect www.boston.gov/departments/innovation-and-technology/apps#commonwealth-connect		Boston, United States	Citizen Connect is an app for smartphones that enables easy citizen reporting of local issues or problems, which are then directly logged by the City council. The project is essentially a crowdsourcing platform that makes the residents of Boston part of the reporting mechanism of the city.	Very clear language though does not involve complex planning discussion	Available and accessible to all smartphone users in the working area of the app.	Primarily a reporting system with some highly mediated feedback, through surveys for example, the site does not have strong potential to challenge existing power structures.	No community-generating function or forum, works primarily on an individual basis	N/A	Encourages critical evaluation and observation of one's environment	Mostly about reporting issues rather than 'new' ideas, therefore reactive more than propositional.	Surveys and fields of reporting are all set by the state at the level of the city or US state	N/A	Limited potential to transcend local reporting	An extremely live and accessible platform for reporting issues of interest to citizens, such as graffiti or fly-tipping; though with limited potential for engagement in more complex issues related to changing the built environment.
5	City Planner cityplanneronline.com/site/	Agency9	Stockholm	CityPlanner is a completely web-based and plugin-free cloud service that allows users to visualise 2D, 3D, and GIS data in a 3D world. Users can upload 3D models, vector data, images, videos, documents, CAD, BIM, WMS, and more and share internally for project management purposes or publish publicly. At its core, CityPlanner is a powerful 3D rendering engine that supports massive 3D worlds as streaming data; this enables visualisation from the national level to the street level. It has been used by cities in Nordic countries to visualise local plans and infrastructure projects as well as to host consultations, for which participants are able to comment on specific details of the 3D models, whether they are of architectural designs, schemes of various scales, or entire local plans. (FCC, 2016)	An engaging visual environment highly influenced by Google Earth; licence-paying authorities or developers determine the non-visual information provided	An accessible and engaging interface.	The terms of a project or interface are very much set by the licence-paying authorities or developers.	Limited capacity to build communities or connections	N/A	Encourages critical evaluation and observation of one's environment, placing 'comments' in 3d space can be considered a creative act	The interface can be presented to encourage positive contributions however on a structural level does not promote positive over oppositional viewpoints	Very much set by the licence-paying authorities or developers.	N/A	Potential to 'join up' models although they are quite specific to the individual licensee in a particular context to potential for parity is limited (and does not likely serve the interests of the payer)	Highly visual and engaging 3D environment for observing and commenting upon developmental questions, however highly framed and determined by the licence-payer (the local authority or developer seeking the consultation)

#	Name	Author/Creator	Location	Description (source)	Open Language	Heterogeneity	Power-exposing	Community	Mutuality	Critical Making	Positive Discourse	Not state-defined	Off-topic	Transnational & local	SUMMARY
6	CitySwipe dtsmcityswipe.com	Downtown Santa Monica Inc.	Santa Monica, California	City Swipe is a new digital tool employed by Downtown Santa Monica, Inc., the non-profit that manages Santa Monica's downtown area, to learn citizens' preferences and concerns about the city's urban core. Data collected through the platform will inform the city planners' work to update the Downtown Community Plan (DCP), which will lay out the area's future for the next 20 years in terms of improved mobility, affordable housing, public open spaces, among others. (FCC, 2016)	Extremely accessible in language and visual terms (borrowing from Tinder, for example), however highly mediated content provided by the quasi-state authority	Accessible to all in theory, and simple to use.	Highly codified by the 'state' therefore reinforces power structures whilst gaining, in principle, much consultation value	No capacity to build communities or connections, response are highly individual	N/A	Encourages critical evaluation and observation of one's environment	Positive and negative responses are a key device of the platform, though both are gestural	Highly state-defined.	N/A	A widely applicable format but currently with no capacity to transcend the local (and has been designed for a particular context)	A highly accessible platform that borrows from well-used non-niche forms of social media; however highly codified and mediated by the local authority and with no potential for forming communities or discourse
7	CiviQ www.civiq.eu		Dublin, Ireland	CiviQ offer a suite of services that visualise the flow of all stakeholder's opinions, from submission, through consultation and deliberation. CiviQ's software allows the representation of the convergence/divergence of opinion and how this can be transformed during the course of a meeting or process which supports a more complete understanding of issues and therefore more effective consultations. (FCC, 2016)	Deliberately focuses on capturing streams of opinions, relations between opinions and lay languages and making these visible. Some dependance on licence-payer to frame issues in appropriate language	Has been developed to allow for the qualitative opinions of diverse groups to be visualised and related to each other, a visual format that allows for some dissent, heterogeneity and complexity in feedback	Is primarily a visualisation tool to allow a 'more democratic' and nuanced set of feedback to be delivered using otherwise traditional consultation methods and processes.	Little community-building capacity though aggregated visuals give nuanced pictures of community responses to a consultation.	A stronger and more nuanced picture of community feedback is achieved	N/A	Positive and negative responses are a key device of the platform, oppositions and propositions can be presented in a very of nuanced and complex ways	Resides within fairly traditional consultation processes though provides better quality feedback information than traditional methods	N/A	The visualisation tools are applicable widely.	Resides within fairly traditional consultation processes though provides better quality feedback information than traditional methods.
8	Colab Colab.re		Sao Paulo, Brazil	Colab is a citizen-to-government engagement platform offering a social network for citizens focused on issue reporting (e.g. potholes or rubbish), urban improvement suggestions for their area, and public service evaluations, as well as participation in the decision making process. On the government side, Colab.re provides workflow management, customer relationship management and consultation tools. (FCC, 2016)	Very clear language though does not involve complex planning discussion	Available and accessible to all smartphone users in the working area of the app.	Primarily a reporting system with some highly mediated feedback, through surveys for example, the site does not have strong potential to challenge existing power structures.	No community-generating function or forum, works primarily on an individual basis	N/A	Encourages critical evaluation and observation of one's environment	Mostly about reporting issues rather than 'new' ideas, therefore reactive more than propositional.	Surveys and fields of reporting are all set by the state at the level of the city or US state	N/A	Limited potential to transcend local reporting	An extremely live and accessible platform for reporting issues of interest to citizens, such as graffiti or fly-tipping; though with limited potential for engagement in more complex issues related to changing the built environment.
9	Commonplace www.commonplace.is		UK/USA	Commonplace is an online consultation platform that facilitates local participation from a wider audience. Commonplace can thus help create more compelling proposals with more feedback and the analysis presented through its live analytics dashboard. The platform helps developers drive a deeper level of engagement building greater trust and buy-in from local communities. (FCC, 2016)	Very clear language and clear visuals, highly inspired by Google Maps and similar interfaces. Strong, clear infographics result	Case studies claim that wider demographics are reached than traditional methods.	Limited scope to reveal power structures other than through revealing, potentially, when community feedback has not been followed or accounted for	Integration with other widely used social media could mean that the fairly non-community building format could grow into groups via Facebook, twitter etc.	A stronger and more nuanced picture of community feedback is achieved	Encourages critical evaluation and observation of one's environment	Encourages 'likes' and 'dislikes' in format but nothing structural to promote positive action or discourse	Highly framed by the licence-payer. Discounts are available to neighbourhood planning groups, this is currently the only concession to models not commissioned by local authorities or developers	N/A	The interface could be used more widely though the paid-for consultation 'areas' are currently highly siloed.	A well-structured consultation tool that is highly framed by the licence-payer. An efficient tool for streamlining and potentially opening up consultations to wider audiences.
10	Concrete Action www.concreteaction.net	Anon	UK	Concrete Action is a platform to provide support for architecture and planning professionals and communities fighting for housing in London. This space is for those working in building design, planning and construction to anonymously provide advance information on proposed developments, to disseminate planning and development knowledge to communities and activists, and to link professionals who are willing provide educational and design services for those negatively affected by property development. (concreteaction.net)	The site is a broadcasting and publishing space rather than a discussion one; content is carefully curated to explain and clarify the planning system with a view to its transformation	Attempts to provide diverse communit(ies) with information about change, particularly those most affected by housing estate regeneration in urban (mostly London) locations	Strong implications for revealing power within planning and developmental processes, including structures for 'leaking' information to the public domain	Likely to impact upon, and help to inform, community groups 'off-site' - maps record projects, proposals and activism	Attempts a corrective to what CA perceives as inequalities within the planning process that favours the developer. This 'corrective' has potential to inform citizens and build stronger oppositional networks	Makes evident the formation of groups and campaigns	Given its mission statement, content is primarily oppositional, with 'counter' proposals making up some of the strategies of documented campaigns	Created and managed by a largely anonymous group of designers and professionals	N/A	Very specific to London, UK issues but the model is applicable in a wide variety of other contexts	A highly principled, activist intervention in the planning politics of the UK, structured carefully to 'counter' the dominant planning narratives of this place and time. Borrows from wider cultural forms (e.g. Wikileaks) and has potential as a valuable community resource, joining up individuals with wider groups and campaigns

#	Name	Author/Creator	Location	Description (source)	Open Language	Heterogeneity	Power-exposing	Community	Mutuality	Critical Making	Positive Discourse	Not state-defined	Off-topic	Transnational & local	SUMMARY
11	Design Bristol designbristol.ning.com	Bristol City Council City Design Group	Bristol, UK	Design Bristol, [an] initiative of the City Design Group, is an online forum for anyone involved or interested in achieving quality place-making in Bristol. The aim of the platform is to build a network of people who are passionate about the quality of design in the city and support them in becoming advocates for the future design of the city by providing information and a space to connect. Users can post photos and participate in discussions. (FCC, 2016)	Structured as a forum, therefore content is produced by diverse members and therefore tends toward lay language, though some professional members inc. planners present too.	Members (471 in November 2017) appear demographically diverse	The forum structure has the potential to reveal and document processes and power relations in relation to plan-making and decision-making but little evidence that this has happened	Members can form community groups within the forum though few feel active a few years into the project, commenting is limited	The site is run by the city council but does not seem very populated by council officials - it does not feel that officials are very present and therefore a mutual relationship is difficult	Some forums are concerned with making and producing things - including photos and videos. Communities form around these activities.	The structure of the forum promotes positive discourse.	The forum is run by the city council but officials do not seem to engage substantially with it.	Wider discourse about events and activities in Bristol takes place, though not very much. Perhaps if the site were more integrated with wider issues affecting Bristol's population it would be busier.	Very Bristol-specific at present. The forum type is capable of building connections globally but no such tools are present on the site	A fairly effective use of the forum type to create a place for heterogenous discussion of planning and developmental issues, though it feels that the 'scale' is not big enough for a critical mass of discussion and professionals are not very present. Developments documented tend to be large-scale.
12	Heritage Eye / Know Your Place www.connectingbristol.org/heritage-eye-a-new-beristol-city-council-smartphone-app/	Bristol City Council City Design Group	Bristol, UK	Heritage Eye is a smartphone app—the City Council's first app, in fact—that allows members of the public to conduct their own Listed Building survey and assess whether the structure is suffering from neglect or abuse. Completed surveys are submitted to Know Your Place for confirmation by Conservation Officers at the City Council. Funded by English Heritage and developed by Calvium software developers, Heritage Eye enables members of the public to participate in managing and documenting the city's heritage as well as maintaining Bristol's buildings at risk register. (FCC, 2016)	Quite technical and complex multi-layered mapping, but with an intuitive app interface for reporting	Available for all.	N/A	N/A	Citizens can propose heritage assets to the council through a council-managed process, thereby allowing for otherwise hidden information and opinion to impact upon the city - potentially.	The proposing of heritage assets is a creative act	The proposing of heritage assets is a positive discourse	The site is created and managed by the council, and offers a highly mediated way for citizens to propose heritage assets or to provide information about them	N/A	Very Bristol-specific at present. The forum type is capable of building connections globally but no such tools are present on the site	A straightforward citizen crowdsourcing information app builds to a complex and fascinating digital map of the city. Content tends toward the passive and historical but ability to propose or report assets is positive & productive.
13	Infrastructure Mapping Application maps.london.gov.uk/jma/	Greater London Authority	London	The Infrastructure Mapping Application for London by the Greater London Authority aggregates all infrastructure related layers into a single platform: demographics (population, employment, skills), development (commercial, residential), context (Opportunity Areas, borough boundaries, Greenbelt, environment data, etc.), and infrastructure (transport, energy, water). It offers a number of filters that add depth and nuance to the data: scale (from Greater London down to borough level or user-drawn polygons), time (from 2015 to 2050), funding certainty (from 'speculative' and 'in business plan' to 'secured' and 'out to tender'). It offers real-time data with notifications, as well as charts, graphs, and analytics in addition to the interactive map. The overlay of datasets in the interactive map serves to save time spent researching disaggregated information and inform complex decision-making. (FCC, 2016)	Highly technical and aimed at a professional user, but open-access to guests and those with a log-in, allowing citizens of London to engage with the transformation of the city	Open to all but content is complex and aimed at professionals	If used openly by local authorities, has the potential to reveal urban transformations in a live and nuanced way	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	The site is created and managed by the GLA as an information resource.	N/A	A site-specific model that could apply elsewhere easily.	A positive local government statement, placing public information in the public domain, though still in technically complex terms. Much mapping and big data systems are paid-for only services so this intervention by the GLA is notable for providing free public access.
14	Making Policy Public makingpolicypublic.net	Centre for Urban Pedagogy / Various	New York	Making Policy Public is the Center for Urban Pedagogy's (CUP) series of foldout posters that use graphic design to explore and explain public policy. Making Policy Public is published four times a year. Each poster is the product of a collaboration of a designer, an advocate, and CUP. The website forms an aggregate where full quality downloads of each 'issue' are freely downloadable. (www.makingpolicypublic.net and further notes by author)	Strong, clear commitment to clear visual and written communication, using curated graphic designers and illustrators	Clear commitment to working with diverse communities and exploring issues or concerns of those communities.	Yes; interventions always take place in the context of a perceived unjust or communications failure and are targeted to intervene in that context	Have the potential to form offline communities around an issue through the design process and through the public life of the document	An intervention between public and policy.	N/A	Interventions always take place in the context of a perceived unjust or communications failure and are targeted to intervene in that context.	Develops independent of the state but connects to policy in direct, legible ways	N/A, non discursive	A site-specific model that could apply elsewhere easily.	Though indexed online, a fairly analogue platform but one of profound relevance to this study, in its commitment to excellence visual and verbal communication and focus on neglected areas of policy in the name of political justice.
15	MappingGM mappinggm.org.uk	Greater Manchester Combined Authority	Manchester, UK	The Greater Manchester Spatial Framework Development Sites Map collates sites identified by the 10 Greater Manchester districts for development (future housing land supply, industry and warehousing land supply, and of office land supply) and sites submitted by residents, businesses, land owners, and developers during the Winter 2015/16, Spring 2016, and Summer 2016 Call for Sites. Users are able to overlay road, water, and railway networks layers to better understand the suitability of the sites for development. Furthermore, on the same platform, users can submit additional sites that are not already included in the map by drawing their boundaries and providing requested information. The interactive map serves as a single, live platform for information on potential development sites in Greater Manchester.	A complex one-stop mapping system, with effort made to frame complex language accessibly.	Open to all but content is complex and aimed at professionals	If used openly by local authorities, has the potential to reveal urban transformations in a live and nuanced way	N/A	N/A	N/A	Has been used to seek community views on a recent local plan, though it is not known to the researcher whether the map format had an impact on the nature of responses.	The site is created and managed by the city council as an information resource.	N/A	A site-specific model that could apply elsewhere.	A good attempt to locate mapping information about a place in one clear format, though not as rich or accessible as Know Your Place (12).

#	Name	Author/Creator	Location	Description (source)	Open Language	Heterogeneity	Power-exposing	Community	Mutuality	Critical Making	Positive Discourse	Not state-defined	Off-topic	Transnational & local	SUMMARY
16	Open Architecture Network N/A project closed	Architecture for Humanity	Global	Open Architecture Network was a free online, open source community dedicated to improving global living conditions through innovative and sustainable design. Open Architecture Network was formed after one of its founders, Cameron Sinclair, won the 2006 TED Prize from the Technology Entertainment Design conference. The prize awards each recipient 'one wish to change the world'. The Beta Version launched at TED2007 on March 8, 2007. Shortly after the launch AMD announced the sponsoring of the 2007 Open Architecture Challenge, an open design competition to develop technology facilities in the developing world. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open_Architecture_Network , Accessed 3.12.2017)	Primarily professional (or activist) facing, but uses clear language in this context.	Primarily professional (or activist) facing.	Not observed.	Grouping of discussions and knowledge into 'projects' and 'themes' allowed communities and alliances to form around specific goals and ambitions. Strong evidence that these were mobilised and of real impact.	Many projects involved collaborative working (on platform and off) between various parties including the state, individuals and the private sector	The primary content of the site is made up of live projects and proposals and narratives of their conception and delivery.	The project-focussed organisation means that most content is positive in its intent, even when discussing setbacks or issues.	Some projects may be framed by state processes and protocols but the platform itself remains independent of such framing.	Some off-topic discussion in relation to carefully set-out themes.	The site aims at being a global community.	The project has closed since the bankruptcy of its parent organisation. While functioning, the site allowed substantial global information exchange and discourse in relation to projects: the community connected designers and activists with each other rather than connecting people to planning systems.
17	Open Planning App thecreativeexchange.org/projects/open-planning	The Creative Exchange	Lancaster, UK	Open Planning is a smartphone app developed as a project with The Creative Exchange, one of four Knowledge Exchange Hubs funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council and a collaboration between Lancaster University, Newcastle University, and the Royal College of Art, combining expertise in designing experiences, digital prototyping, and communication innovation. The app displays current planning applications on a map, and users are able to access relevant information, respond to the applications, leave comments and discuss with other residents, share on social media, as well as receive notifications for applications in their areas of interest. The app, built by Red Ninja Studios, has been tested using data from Liverpool City Council and volunteers from social enterprise Engage Liverpool. However, a challenge has been to secure planning information in a consistent format. Being able to receive planning data as APIs from local authorities would enable the app to display a live feed of information, but councils present planning data in different formats, which are held by third parties. (FCC, 2016)	A simple app that uses a fairly accessible interface to spatialise and map planning applications for a lay audience usage	Available for all.	Not observed.	Not observed.	Not observed.	Encourages critical evaluation and observation of one's environment	N/A	The multi-party development of the project puts it in a good position in relation to its diverse intended users and sitting 'between' people and planning.	N/A	A site-specific model that could apply elsewhere	A good design intervention in how planning applications are brought to the attention of citizens. Is focussed purely on this part of the process.
18	Smarticipate www.smarticipate.eu	Horizon 2020 Programme of the European Commission	London, Hamburg, Rome	Smarticipate aims to develop a platform, that will be trialled in London, Hamburg and Rome, enabling interested citizens to support the decision making process by presenting them with digestible data on proposed urban developments. Users will be able to alter proposals directly and crucially they will also observe the potential impacts of these changes. (FCC, 2016)	Prototype uses quite technical language: target is committed or fairly expert lay users	Target is committed or fairly expert lay users	Intention is to make big urban data open access, thereby 'levelling the playing field' in terms of data and intelligence. This intention is currently being tested.	Prototype allows any user to edit or manipulate proposals and provides feedback - how this might allow discourse or communities to form is not clear at present	Not observed.	Prototype allows any user to edit or manipulate proposals and provides feedback.	The encouragement of the public to manipulate models and proposals could be a good tool to build understanding of how proposals came into being and their reasoning, and encourage creativity in relation to the built environment.	The prototype is being developed by three urban local governments across Europe and this is likely to remain the model.	N/A	The research programme is intentionally trans-national; its findings have not yet been published.	A live project with a lot of promise, as a step on from other 3d city models in that manipulation of proposals is easier and more intuitive, with more potential for play and manipulation.
19	Smellymaps goodcitylife.org/smellymaps	GoodCityLife	Cambridge, UK	The SmellyMaps project by Goodcitylife.org, a global group of researchers and practitioners interested in the emotional and sensorial layers of cities, maps urban smells by collecting social media data, using geo-referenced picture tags from Flickr and Instagram and geo-referenced tweets from Twitter. Applying Big Data, SmellyMaps categorises every street according to its smell - the five odour profiles being emissions, nature, food, animals, and waste - and demonstrates an innovative method of assessing a city's assets and needs and utilising such data to inform planning policies and urban design interventions, such as air flow manipulation, provision of green space, and creation of pedestrian-friendly streets. (FCC, 2016)	Very 'lay' language as a deliberate challenge to prevailing descriptions of urban places.	Uses popular social media to generate its information, with public access to the results.	Adds nuance to descriptions of urban scenes, does not challenge broader transformations	N/A	N/A	Contributions are not conscious as such.	Adds nuance to descriptions of urban scenes, does not allow discourse.	Not state-defined but intended primarily for usage by professional planners	N/A	A site-specific model that could apply elsewhere	Use of social media to generate data is an effective tool.
20	Stickyworld /info.stickyworld.com/		UK	Stickyworld is a service that allows clients to publish multi-media participatory websites for engaging with citizens or stakeholders. Stickyworld seamlessly supports media such as photos, videos, maps, 360 panoramas, and pdfs, so that projects and schemes are communicated as visually as possible, enhancing understanding and encouraging more accurate and meaningful feedback. Participants can add comments on the project in general or on a detail, zooming into a specific area of a map or a photo and 'sticking' their comments where applicable; they can also choose to be alerted via email so that they are kept in the loop throughout the lifecycle of the project. Organisers are able to generate reports on engagement metrics, deliberate results, and inform the participants about the decisions and/or next steps. Stickyworld offers mobile as well as web interface, so that people can use it on-the-go. It essentially brings the familiar social-media-type experience to the world of consultation and engagement, so that demographics currently missed in the traditional consultation process (town hall meetings, responses collected via phone, post, or email, etc.) are captured and the process is managed more efficiently—minimising administrative	Stickyworld provides a forum for consultation and stakeholder engagement, with content provided by the customer of the forum. Feedback is likely to be diverse and applied to that 'official' content	Open to all and provides an easy 'one-stop-shop' for consultation processes, though not one that specifically allows for or targets diverse communities.	Limited scope to reveal power structures other than through revealing, potentially, when community feedback has not been followed or accounted for	Could have the potential to build communities of opposition or support around a particular idea, but such community building is not built in.	The space and its primary content are framed by the licensee.	Encourages critical evaluation and observation of one's environment	Positive and negative responses are a key device of the platform, oppositions and propositions can be presented in a very of nuanced and complex ways	The space and its primary content are framed by the licensee.	N/A	A site-specific model that could apply elsewhere	An efficient model for making more streamlined, nuanced and efficient consultation and engagement processes. Does not intervene further.

#	Name	Author/ Creator	Location	Description (source)	Open Language	Heterogeneity	Power- exposing	Community	Mutuality	Critical Making	Positive Discourse	Not state- defined	Off-topic	Transnational & local	SUMMARY
21	The Plymouth Plan www.theplymouthplan.co.uk		Plymouth, UK	A Local Plan that is not a pdf document, but a separate interactive website... Citizens can easily access the website and browse the Local Plan as it is relevant to them, as they are able to alter the document based on their status (resident, business, investor, etc.) and their interests (economy, arts and culture, living and housing, etc.). Created in partnership with a local gaming company, the website is visually attractive and interactive. Users are able to express their support for policies or share them on social media. Furthermore, there is a tab that plans to track the progress of the plan, as the Council is brainstorming ambitious ideas to use near-live datasets to monitor what is being delivered in accordance with the plan. The Plymouth Plan 2011-2031 goes above and beyond the standard offering by most local authorities, which is local plans uploaded onto the council websites in pdf format. (FCC, 2016)	Effort was made to make the Local Plan content more accessible than normal, partly through language and engaging visuals and partly through the use of an interactive website rather than a static PDF. The interactive content has reduced as the plan moved toward the Planning Inspectorate.	The Local Plan is more accessible than most. Intention was to generate more and better consultation on the local plan. It is unclear whether this goal was achieved and whether the demographic of respondents has shifted.	Limited scope to reveal power structures	Intention was to generate more and better consultation on the local plan. It is unclear whether this goal was achieved and whether the demographic of respondents has shifted.	Not observed.	Encourages critical evaluation and observation of one's environment	Not observed	The space and its content are framed by the state and by due process.	N/A	Hypertext version of a local plan has far greater potential for cross-planning authority working and for comparative work across borders to be undertaken.	An example of good practice in Local Plan communication and a step towards local plans that can be understood as API and therefore find equivalence across planning authority borders.
22	UrbanPlanAR urbanplanar.com	Heriot Watt University	UK	UrbanPlanAR seeks to revolutionise communication and engagement within urban planning and design by creating a mobile augmented/hybrid reality platform for architectural visualisation. It enables real-time in-field visualisation of a proposed development from any location using 3D data and augmented reality on mobile tablets. In other words, a user can stand in front of a development site that is yet to be demolished or developed, hold up his mobile tablet, and visualise the proposed development seamlessly integrated in augmented/hybrid reality. The solution will implement state-of-the-art urban location tracking and integrate technology to enable a smooth work ow with Building Information Modelling (BIM). Such information taken on-site will better aid contextual understanding and decision-making by planners, developers, and communities. (FCC, 2016)	Uses AR to 'place' complex 3d models into users' views using tablets or smartphones.	Launching 2017, the public access of the system is not yet established though is likely to be a paid-for service	N/A	N/A	N/A	Encourages critical evaluation and observation of one's environment	N/A	A private service for use by local authorities, designers, developers	N/A	A site-specific model that could apply elsewhere	The software applies AR technology to the visualisation of buildings and projects that do not yet exist. Currently in its infancy, the early visuals of this in practice are quite crude, though the ability of the user to define the perspective and view is, in participatory terms, an improvement on fixed views.

This survey of the ‘market’ of online platforms for increasing participation in planning suggests strongly that there is no platform that answers the theoretical grounding set out in Chapters 2-3. More crucially, the survey has yielded a number of strategies and design ideas that have potential relevance for the design research of Chapter 6:

- **Change Explorer’s** intention of making planning application knowledge ubiquitous
- **CitySwipe’s** ‘borrowing’ of popular social media formats such as the ‘side swipe’
- **CiviQ’s** nuanced, subtle and data-rich form of qualitative data-collection – explicitly set out to intervene in the democratic potential of planning.
- **Concrete Action’s** connection and mapping of causes, campaigns and issues, position outside of official channels and clear, non-partisan explanation of planning processes.
- **Design Bristol’s** deployment, though at too limited a scale, of the ‘forum’ type, though limited by its apparent lack of connectivity to actual public planning processes (a form of echo chamber).
- **Making Policy Public’s** commitment to working with disadvantaged communities and with contentious policy areas for social good.
- **Open Architecture Network’s** use of ‘projects’ and themes, which draws it close to the ideas of DIY Citizenship explored in Chapter 3, section 3.3.
- **Smarticipate** allows manipulation of proposals by all users, even if only to reveal the impossibility of change.

The vast majority of the platforms studied are concerned with the efficiency and ‘ease’ of the participation process, and with applying new media and new technologies to the planning system more or less as it stands. Such an approach is reasonable in the circumstances and perhaps any of these, used in a more widespread or systemic way, could have real impacts in terms of efficiency and value.

Several of the platforms explore the potential of big data to enhance our understanding of spaces, one of which makes explicit use of social media and other online spaces to generate its data. The majority of these keep the results of this big data behind a paywall, and in effect slide important knowledge and evidence about the nature of the built environment into the private sector away from the public planning department.

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This section has explored the field of online platforms currently under development or in use, and establishes a potentially unique territory for the intervention proposed in this study and explore through design research. It has learned from those existing platforms a range of potential design strategies and ideas but also a range of limitations within the ambition, scope and positioning of these platforms, all of which is eventually deployed within the design research described in Chapter 6. But before that, the parallel research strand of discourse analysis of extant online planning discourse is presented in Chapter 5.

5 Public planning and popular activity today: A study of popular on-line planning discourse

5.1 Introduction

This chapter explores contemporary popular on-line discourse related to building activity and built environment decision-making. Following the methodology set out in Chapter 4, the discourse under analysis is derived from four online platforms and is analysed in order to explore the means through which ‘planning discourse’ is actually undertaken using social media and online discourse platforms.

The structure of this chapter is divided into the questions ‘asked’ of the selected threads (which are collated in Appendix 2), set out according to the method set out in Chapter 4 and then further sub-divided into sub-themes, which are picked out as key findings for discussion in Chapter 7.

5.2 Popular on-line planning discourse: a study

What language is used to discuss planning issues, and what forms of dialogue?

Technical language

It might be worth you investigating something called 'permitted development'. It is legislation that allows small extensions or outbuildings to be built without the need to apply for permission. (Thread 2.4.2)

Of the threads focusing on direct issues or question posed by the thread starters ('OPs'), which made up 56% of the sample, 78% deployed various forms of planning technical language beyond those in common currency, for example 'consented scheme', 'core strategy', 'lawful development'. Of these, 78% used such terminology with some accuracy or demonstrated the understanding of those terms through the context in which they were used, 94% of which took place in the words of posters to the threads and 39% in the OPs. Question posers displayed a lack of use of technical terms compared to other posters, most of which were relying on their own past experiences of the planning system (as citizens mostly, but also in some cases probably as professionals, though usually undeclared). In general, discussions grew increasingly 'technical' in their language as they developed. In some cases, the nature of the terminology became a discussion point. In general, technical language was successfully used as a means of giving and receiving appropriate, precise advice; in clarifying the OP's situation and offering potential ways forward. In this sense and in this context, technical language is not as such a barrier to effective communication (contrary to DoE, 1995, Chapter 2, section 2.2) as it frequently has an enabling and clarifying role, but it can take time, in the space of a conversation, to become effective in this role, and the studied group does not allow for those excluded from the dialogue for any reason, and it remains likely that technical language continues to play a role in creating a space between public planning and its wider public.

Generally, technical language was used in the context of more colloquial dialogue, this suggesting that the situation and framing of the technical language is more significant than the use of that language.

Description

The house is 3 metres longer at the back. So although it was built originally like this it (sic) effect is equivalent to a two storey extension of 3 metres over ours... The proposed extension is a single storey tapering tiled roof with two skylight windows starting at a height of 3.8 metres and sloping to 2.3 metres. It is 4 metres long. The entire back of the extension opens to the air by folding glass doors. (Thread 1.1.2)

Threads were typically characterised by their posters' ready ability to use and understand construction-related technical terms, e.g. 'box dormers', 'foundations', 'overhanging', with posters frequently engaged in subtle and nuanced dialogue about particular spatial questions, for instance in defining (or arguing) the character of a street.

Substantial amounts of thread content were spent in describing, and interrogating the precise spatial character of the question or issue posed. In many cases, the OP went to some length to explain the particular situation, but gaining a precise picture often took a long series of question-and-answer discussions. In some threads, photographs and in some cases drawings were used, mainly by OPs and depicting either the actual scenario or comparative examples, though posters were typically reluctant to post anything that would reveal their precise location, for fear of such a posting affecting their situation away from the forum. Spatial descriptions were often sophisticated and detailed.

Colloquial and conversational language

'Aaaaand another objection... Neighbour four doors down saying it will affect their privacy in their garden, there will only be velux windows at the back. Seriously wtf are people thinking?' (Thread 1.1.1)

The language used, in the vast majority of cases, was colloquial and anecdotal, with even apparently 'professional' posters speaking in a conversational manner, mostly in familiar and friendly terms. In this spirit, many colloquial abbreviations were used, (for instance, 'WTF' – 'what the fuck?') to express dismay at a particular situation.

On-line conventions

FWIW, I'm the only SH tenant in a row of 4, my house and gardens are the best kept by far (with the exception of 1 neighbour who is on a par)

My NDN's front and back gardens are an eyesore, as are the windows - broken vertical blinds and never been cleaned (young, healthy, working family so I know they are capable of keeping things tidy if not pristine).

The only time I've sat outside my house on a sunny day (with a cup of tea) has been to keep an eye on my DD who was playing out with the other children, who's (sic) parents were also sat outside chatting.

(Thread 1.6.1)

Forums generally have developed their own abbreviations for common usage. Forums such as Mumsnet have developed their own abbreviation culture, ('DC' = 'darling child') and these are deployed to aid the discussion of planning issues, for example 'NDN' = 'next-door neighbour'. Such on-line conventions can be seen as a counterbalance to the technical language of the planner, a code residing in the popular domain of the forum and with its own signifiers of exclusivity and community, and one linked to emerging language paradigms such as the emoji and the 'textspeak' of SMS messaging and Snapchat.

Narrative

We got refused, I'm absolutely heartbroken. We can't afford to move and the poisonous man across the road has won. (Thread 1.1.1)

Many threads dealing with very specific planning-related queries or issues became - over the course of days, weeks, or months – complex narratives as issues, processes or projects unfolded. Posters and OPs frequently displayed strong loyalty, not only to the thread itself but also to the wider process playing out. Strong emotional investment in particular questions was displayed.

Discussion as learning

Thank you for the explanation, *cream and jam*. I fully approve of green belt laws. Funny how councils sometimes flout them for their own ends, but that's another issue. (Thread 3.3.3)

Thanks for the replies, everyone. I now understand a lot more about how it works. (Thread 4.1.3)

The ability to learn, on an anecdotal or conversational level, from peers and from the occasional professional, provides an experience of visible pedagogical value to many OPs; typical 'issue' conversations often begin with very little knowledge of the wider issue at stake (although with detailed experiential knowledge of the particular situation from an individual point of view) and a more precise and educated conversation emerges over time.

In this way, forums such as those studied provide an informal learning environment.

How are questions or issues of planning framed in terms of success, failure, conflict or agency, and how do the 'communities' of the forum function in this framing?

Getting away with it / others getting away with it

If you employ private building regs inspector and show them plans of what you have done not what was approved then is it possible to get away with it unless a neighbour etc makes a complaint? (Thread 1.1.3)

It is honestly not worth the potential angst, just to get one over on the planning authority. (Thread 1.1.3)

If we were to not pay tax, start a family-wide fight or rob several houses there would be a legal uproar, but the council will let travellers get away with it because it's their 'culture'. (Thread 2.1.3)

I believe that if you build it and get away with it for long enough you get retrospective consent. (Thread 2.3.3)

Depends if there's a fine to pay. Can't say I'm well informed but I can't imagine that they would just let him get away with it. (Thread 2.5.1)

Could there be a loophole where he says [that, rather than a private toll-road] it's a car park with one space and the entrance is here and the exit is however many miles away? (Thread 2.5.1)

Sounds like you didn't get a completion certificate from the building inspector? If that is the case it would seem like you are still building and therefore you might get away with your current permission and just demo and start again. (Thread 4.3.3)

An extremely common occurrence, both in threads concerned with direct personal queries and those concerned with wider social/developmental questions, is the idea of 'getting away with it', either on the part of the OP or some other individual or group. Depending on the context, 'getting away with it' is either implicitly celebrated as achieving something beyond the gaze of the professional/state, or decried for the same reason but focusing on the impacts on others. Managing to build something that is perceived to need permission without seeking such a permission is both celebrated and criticized. In such discussions the planning

authority is portrayed as something to be eluded or avoided through stealth, cunning or deceit. Negative assessments are often used in relation to legally 'exceptional' communities and ethnic groups such as Travellers, who are decried for achieving things in relation to planning that are not possible for the 'us' of the thread to achieve. In both versions, public planning is imagined as something large and unwieldy, avoided by dexterity. This echoes the 'guerrilla' tactics of popular culture as envisaged by John Fiske, (Chapter 3, section 3.1).

Development control/development management *are* planning

The majority of threads studies concerned 'live' issues or queries that were being experienced (or considered) by the OP and other posters. As such, it is the development management 'side' of the planning system that is most often discussed, indeed other aspects of planning (plan-making, most significantly) are barely discussed at all. When these things are mentioned, it is *never* as an activity, with development plans or policies discussed as 'found' documents or data. No posters discussed having an influence on planning questions outside the scale of the application (and no posters mentioned engagement in Neighbourhood Planning activities), although some threads dealt in general terms with large-scale questions that would certainly be of relevance at the scale of plan-making or infrastructure. It can't be certain whether there is generally a wider understanding of how such things as Local Plans come into being, and the knowledge is considered irrelevant to the conversations at hand, or there is little knowledge within online discourse of this aspect of public planning.

Policy as language game

Tomorrow is decision day for our build and our batshit crazy neighbour has managed to squeeze in one more objection, that makes 7 in total now. In all it comes to 45 pages as to why we shouldn't add another bedroom to our house. In his latest gem he's stated that we must not be allowed to damage or remove any of the shrubs in our front garden. He's absolutely fucking crazy! (Thread 1.1.1)

If you sound like you are throwing every possible barrel-scraping objection into the discussion then your 'better' objections will be drowned out and you will come across as a 'NIMBY' (Thread 1.1.2)

Your objection should focus on planning issues – overdevelopment, poor design, conservation area or out of keeping with the area etc rather than the effect in (sic) your view or the value of your house as neither of those are relevant to planning decisions.(Thread 1.2.2)

Reflecting (DoE, 1995)'s notion of an 'internalised' understanding of planning processes amongst the public, the threads point to a widespread understanding that, when it comes to the point of an objection, appeal or decision-making moment, it is only policy-derived points that can be officially considered. Discussions of points of policy, regardless of the situation, tend toward generic points (over and above the specifics of local policy, for example) with OPs directed toward national-level policy and advice far more frequently than to local-level planning policy (most frequently the Planning Portal but also Planning Aid, and never the NPPG site, www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance). When local level policy is referred to, it is more often to supplementary guidance such as housing design guides than to core policies.

Only one thread (2.1.3) dealt explicitly with a core strategy or local plan, and this was a thread dealing with the use of land by travellers:

Beyond the familiarity with the need for policy-based objections or advocacy, there is widespread understanding that policy-based objections can be used as a smokescreen to 'real' objections. Seen from both 'sides' of an argument, the relationship between an individual or community's real concerns, and how policy-based statements can be developed to reflect those concerns, is a subtext of many threads. When such a practice is being enacted by 'another' in the wider issue, it is generally condemned as 'mad', unreasonable or irrational, but when it is being enacted by thread protagonist, it is treated as a natural, normal occurrence. The posters in the studied threads are generally *au fait* with using policy-based arguments as tools to achieve their aims, regardless of whether those arguments are true, justifiable or valid. This in effect is a complex 'language game' on the part of the public, a widespread ability to work creatively with received policy to achieve

one's own ends, in the process destabilising the policy terms that are being manipulated.

Undeclared professional expertise

I've had planning expiry issues which were resolved by a good Planning Consultant, and some off forum advice from our resident expert. (Thread 4.3.3)

If you're not a planner I'll eat my hat. (Thread 1.1.1)

The undeclared presence of apparently professional planners is a frequent occurrence within the threads. It is often unclear from posts whether the apparently professional advice is coming from a lay-poster with experience of the issue at hand, or from a professional source – unclear because such information is rarely offered freely. Though it is hard to tell what percentage of such posters are simply experienced and which are professionals, the ubiquity of informed responses, using technical language that points to a broad professional knowledge of the system, suggests strongly that *some* professional planners who are members of these forums (none of which are primarily concerned with planning at all) are willing to offer their (somewhat or entirely anonymous) advice and expertise within the space of the forum as a natural part of their membership or posting activity on that forum.

Though tensions can arise from differences between professional points of view and what other posters are seeking to do, the character of posts that are likely to be from professional posters is typically generous, practical, frank and open-minded to the needs of the poster, as in the example above (4.3.3). None of the threads descends into an aggressive exchange between 'planner' and 'public'. Such dialogue points to a model of planning knowledge exchange which eludes the adversarial character identified in (DoE, 1995) and which is far more discursive and frank, answering, in part, the need for a more discursive and cooperative dialogue between lay and professionals in the field.

Relationships, metanarratives, sympathy and solidarity

We were the neighbours that objected. Twice. Their plans were ludicrous though. (Thread 1.1.1)

Though many of the conversations describe a ‘them and us’ relationship (OP vs. planners, OP vs. neighbours, OP vs. travellers), the ‘communities’ that grow around and within the thread are far more discursive and interpersonal in their character. Affiliations and points of agreement shift and adjust as narratives develop, and strong, emotive discussions emerge out of apparently everyday planning queries, such as those related to the minutiae of extending a home. The longest and most involved examples of this are ones where a strong emotive, personal metanarrative is present, for example a change in circumstances due to disability or childbirth. Such situations can draw out sympathy and understanding in the forum community and build strong support structures around a particular OP. This emotive engagement can often drown-out or silence dissenting voices. In the example above, which took place in a conversation initiated by an OP exasperated by the objections of their neighbours, one of the neighbours appeared in the thread to express their point of view, but received no engagement or replies, reflecting the strong, sympathetic community that had already grown around the OP.

The potential of personal narrative to build interest and sympathy is strong, and can lead to complex engaged support groups following issues or projects over a period of several weeks or months, sometimes also on a blog or other space beyond the confines of the forum. Such support groups, in their present form, provide the OP (and later readers of the forum with similar problems) with a useful support structure, sounding board and indeed sounding-off space separate from, but engaged with, the planning issue they are experiencing beyond the forum.

From the specific to the general

Your terrace looks not unlike mine, built in 1981. I kept the two reception rooms separate and sometimes regret it. However, the front room is quite close to the road and I prefer to sit and watch TV (or surf the net) in the back room which is quieter. (Thread 3.4.3)

In my experience the inspectorate are generally pretty good, they apply policy properly and make good objective decisions. Just because the appellant doesn't like the decision doesn't mean it's flawed. (Thread 4.1.3)

General threads tend to stay general in their content, with specific examples used by posters as part of a wider discussion. Issue-based threads, however, tend to move from a specific single issue to a more general (and more widely useful) discussion, with posters to the OP drawing on their own experiences or projects to offer advice and commentary. Many threads deal with boundary issues and party walls, for example, including proposed buildings on or overhanging boundaries, and threads on such topics frequently naturally expand into more general discussion about such issues.

It is impossible to gauge how many threads are 'useful' to users who 'find' the thread at a later date and simply use the information there present, directly or indirectly, in their own lives, without comment or intervention on the thread itself, but the fact that all the sites studied are indexable by search engines means that threads (particularly well-named ones) are highly accessible to users with no stake in the original conversation or indeed commitment to, or membership of, the forum in which that conversation takes place. There are obviously risks in re-using advice given within a particular context outside of that context, but in longer threads the presence of multiple, often conflicting examples can provide a usefully general overview of a problem that could be of use to an 'outsider' using that thread later.

Planning and the free market

I presume these new houses will be reasonably priced so the average Jo can afford them? £150k for a 3 bed would be reasonable. (Thread 4.2.1)

If you want your home to be surrounded by open land, the only way to do it is to buy that land yourself. (Thread 1.1.1)

Some [objections] are rather personal, with 2 of them saying that if we want more space we should move house. (Thread 1.3.3)

The relationship between 'planning' and the free market is a subtext across a large number of threads. 'Planning' is understood (in both a positive and a negative light) as having an impact on the workings of the free market, and the latter is often turned to as an alternative space in which to achieve personal planning-related wants. For example, a common response to people seeking to extend their houses is a call to 'move', with posters expressing disapproval that another poster has bought a somehow 'unfit for purpose' dwelling and is then seeking to modify or expand it, rather than simply moving to a 'fit' dwelling. In dialogues of 'us' versus 'the planning system', the free market, implicitly or explicitly, is often a third agent in the discussion, as a challenge to the authority of planning and as an alternative route to achieving a desired outcome.

Money and financial risk

Has anyone ever built something that planning had refused and how likely are they to actually come and check? Obviously if they do you risk having to take it down at potentially huge cost but in all honesty how often do the planning authority actually check after a build? (Thread 1.1.3)

We did tentatively ask the council about it and they basically have a blanket response which is "you need to submit a full planning application".

This we were told involves full site plan; plan of house; plan of area in question and full elevations of each to be drawn up; about £1k for survey and drawings plus the planning application and photos costing about

another £400.

That's probably about the same price that I can do the work for so it'll double the price and quite possibly to be told that it doesn't need full planning anyway. Local council seem to be quite lazy, I guess it's only other peoples (sic) money they're wasting so no biggie for them!

So, my question is..... would you say "feck it" and just do it without even asking? (Thread 4.3.2)

Affordability, and financial risks associated with development, are a very common discussion point in issue-based threads, and often a key decision-making factor for individuals, whether, for example, they are considering the right process for extending their home or the costs associated with appealing a decision they do not agree with.

It is common for financial considerations to outweigh considerations that would be considered primary by professionals considering the problem. Whilst planning departments and on-line services such as the Planning Portal are clear about direct costs associated with particular services (e.g. pre-application advice for the former, or the cost of acquiring digital mapping), there is little to no discussion in such 'official' forums of wider cost implications associated with undertaking a planning-related activity. Many OPs and posters reported advice received from planning officers that explored, in detail, the spatial implications of, for example, choosing to use a 'Permitted Development' route rather than applying for planning permission, but OPs and posters did not generally seem well equipped to make decisions on a financial basis following this advice, with cost implications becoming an ongoing doubt and a concern.

Costs associated with planning (advice, certificates, fees) are often characterised within threads as an 'option' or debatable necessity, with the implicit sense that money is better spent *building* than *gaining permission to build*, though such positions are usually countered by disapproval from other posters. The disparity between popular and official discussion about planning in terms of personal finance and financial risk is wide, and franker discussion of the financial impacts and risks of different routes and processes might improve public perceptions of the ease of navigating the planning system.

What picture(s) of public planning emerges from this discourse?

Across the full range of threads in the sample, 83.1% of threads presented a predominantly neutral or contested view of 'the planning system', with either no value judgements offered or, in the case of some being offered, being balanced by contrary positions, though most of these instances presented no value judgements at all. In these instances, either the planning system is discussed in terms that do not consider it something to be questioned or critiqued, or not discussed at all. In the substantial majority of cases, even when posters are describing a stressful or challenging planning-related scenario, the system itself is taken as a 'given'.

15.5% of threads presented a predominantly negative view of the planning system and 1.4% a predominantly positive one. Among the negative threads, the primary criticism presented within discussions (8.5%) was in relation to perceived poor communications or inconsistency. The following post is an exemplar of this perception, though of course it also draws attention to the fact that poor communication may also reside in the individual's exchanges with their local planners:

We wanted a loft conversion, called the town planning department to be told it could be done under permitted development and no planning permission was required, so we started work. Two weeks off finishing, the council wrote to us after someone complained stating that we do need planning permission as we are in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. We have stopped work but have spent about £15k so far... the bottom has fallen out of my world, the DS's are sharing a room, we have a half-finished loft and may have to put it back to how it was, which we can't afford... If the council had originally said we needed planning permission, we would have requested it before we started any work, but they said we didn't need it. Now we do. (Thread 1.2.1)

At the scale of the individual in society the most 'present' issue with the planning system as it currently stands lies in terms of communication, knowledge and discourse, and in perceived failures in relation to these. This relates strongly to the

earlier findings of (DoE, 1995). This study's finding that councillor pressure on officers was a damaging influence is also borne out by one poster:

And there's no accounting for Planning Committees, who are capable of making some very random and ill-informed decisions, in my experience (though the appeals system is supposed to overcome the worst of these). In my experience, it's the elected Members on the Planning Committees who are often the most obstructive and least balanced in terms of considering new development – Planning Officers are usually reasonably unbiased, but these days are little more than box-ticking functionaries. (Thread 4.1.1)

Among positive threads, the planning system's *objectivity* and rule-following were held up as virtues by many posters, often in response to other posters for whom planning was not providing the results or advice they desired.

The planning system is in place to make objective decisions (admittedly, this doesn't always happen) particularly when there are diverse opinions. (Thread 1.3.3)

Planners stick to the rules. They don't have time to say 'I'll bend the rules here a bit for this person' or 'I'll make a new rule for that one.' Maybe they also have to be seen to be doing their job so a refusal followed by a bit of discussion and change to plans for that they have. This is just my experience. Some people my DB believe that planners have a vendetta against them. Why would they give themselves that hassle? (Thread 1.3.1)

This objectivity and need to make 'tough' decisions was understood by many posters as representing a substantial professional challenge:

One thing the TV program (sic) [*The Planners*] shows is that there are 2 sides to every story and the Council is stuck in the middle – at the end of the day they are there to make a tough decision and if the show is anything to go by (clearly on disputed applications) there will always be a winner or a loser. What is interesting is how much of it comes down to opinion about something – such as whether it is good or not or whether its bad for the area. (Thread 4.1.1)

It was also understood in several threads that the local authority planner is not only in a challenging situation politically but also in terms of increasing pressure due to local authority funding cuts and an increasingly time-pressured and skills-shortage beset profession (Chapter 2, section 2.1):

[Planners] simply can't keep up with the caseloads though there also seems to be huge number[s] of planners employed part-time which is even more ridiculous. Generally I'm finding any Capita run planning department to be a total shambles. Perhaps 1, maybe 2, of the local authorities I deal with are providing what I would deem a good level of service, Other (sic) are as bad as clients requiring legal action for non-communication/non-determination. (Thread 2.2.2)

Where the objectivity of the planner is doubtful, posters are quick to question the public planner:

My wife went to see the planners in a drop in (sic) session, and asked why they wanted to build over the land, she said it was "a beautiful area", to which he responded "we'll have to agree to differ, I'm afraid, I find it anything but beautiful". Should the town planner express such views in a public meeting, or are they supposed to be unbiased? (Thread 4.2.3)

Perhaps the general lack of negative comments about the planning system, despite the many difficulties, conflicts and frustrations experienced by posters reflects a widespread general belief that planning/planners are working, in constrained circumstances, for the greater good, the 'valuable public service' identified in (DoE, 1995).

This understanding chimes closely with the self-image of public sector planners as surveyed for Ben Clifford and Mark Tewdwr-Jones' *The Collaborating Planner* (2013). Here, 98.3% of public sector planners rated 'a sense of making a difference to people and places' as either 'Very Important' or 'Important', making it the most popular of the statements regarding motivation that they were supplied with. Further, the idea of 'public service' underlined this 'sense' for a large number of respondents (Clifford and Tewdwr-Jones, 2013:205, 206, 209). For some public planners in Clifford and Tewdwr-Jones' study, working in the 'private sector' is an equally professional and 'honourable' discipline, albeit one with other goals,

whereas for others the private sector represents a compromise to the ideals of planning and to the 'greater good':

"As the planner, unless you're in the public service, at the end of the day, the dollar always wins." (Interview in 2013:214)

Such a split chimes with the popular perspectives shown in the threads of this study. In general, it is recognized that 'planning consultants' will serve their client whereas 'planners' will be working for 'public service' and the 'greater good'.

The threads studied present a picture of public planning in which its values and ideology are widely understood and supported. Moreover, the challenges that public planning faces, from ideological challenges, funding cuts, neoliberalism (as defined by Harvey, 2005), even local-level political manoeuvring, are also widely understood, and the 'challenge' of being a planner is treated sympathetically. Though the rules of the 'planning game' are perceived at times to be biased, weighted, or unfair, thread posters also demonstrate a wide variety of game-playing tactics of their own: a willingness to play the system, to use language creatively to achieve a desired outcome, to support the 'underdog' or 'entrepreneur' who has somehow slipped through a 'proper' system and achieved something 'good' anyway, to use the space of the forum to create emotional support and learning networks and to build community networks around ideas or problems.

The relationship between people and planning revealed by the forums is a complex, often unwieldy and frustrating one, characterised by misunderstandings, wasted time, financial anxiety, neighbourhood disputes, inconsistency of advice, processes that feel 'unfair' or unsympathetic, inaccessible professionals and an overwhelming focus on the control/management aspects of public planning to the exclusion of everything else, thereby denying the rationalisations, research and debate that has fed into the policy 'in play' and seeing only a 'gatekeeper' to development. But despite all this, importantly, the relationship *exists*, and across the threads a sense is gained of people – totally inexperienced, somewhat experienced, very experienced, 'new' professionals and old hands – engaging with planning as a pliable, ownable, plastic process, something to be 'played'.

Could the design of the spaces in which these conversations take place be so designed as to increase their agency and to allow a better connection with professional/official contexts?

None of the forums studied in this section are *about* planning or indeed more loosely *about* the built environment. They are on-line spaces of exchange, dialogue, discussion and community in which conversations which touch directly or indirectly upon planning matters make up a tiny percentage of the wider exchange and are incidental to the purpose of each forum.

In the case of Reddit, the subjects of debate are as wide as the community deems fit, as the site makes no editorial statement about content, allowing the dynamics of internet-based information transfer, as defined by its millions of regular users, to frame what is discussed and what is important. Mumsnet, Gransnet and Pistonheads all have their own particular theme (parenthood, grandparenthood, motoring) around which their communities gather, though on each of these forums the central, loosely defined theme acts as an anchor to a dazzling variety of other subjects and concerns. Planning takes its place among these subjects within the sphere of general discussion ('gassing' in Pistonheads-speak) or in defined areas of discussion such as 'Property', 'House and Home', 'Legal and Money'.

These forums, in their current form, are 'useful' to people engaged in planning-related issues in a variety of ways. The space of exchange they provide is both a particular space that achieves particular things (e.g. the way that projects or issues cluster together under the umbrella of an initial exemplar project or query, such as a side extension under Permitted Development, or the way that similar experiences at the scale of a country can co-exist in a single space and build both knowledge and solidarity around an issue) but it is also reflective of wider public attitudes to planning. As the methodology states, this picture is a partial one, but as this study has explored, it is a picture which suggests that the public attitude to planning is less adversarial, and more complex and multifaceted than is typically presented. Indeed, the scenarios played out in many of the threads studied point to a more complicit, agonistic and playful relationship between people and planning than is taken for granted. The evidence is that there is a latent potential in the way

planning issues are discussed and acted upon within the forums that, might have a transformative impact on the way that public planning is practiced, in the UK and elsewhere.

What would it take for the qualities of exchange found on the forums to have such an impact? What would need to change about the forums, or what new forum type would need to emerge, for such an impact to be possible? What design questions or principles can be pulled out of the threads studied? The following themes summarise lessons learned within the research set out in this section:

Define terms and allow for critique

Time spent getting to the heart of an issue or question is often focused on agreeing or defining terms, and indeed there is a lot of potential for terms, when defined, to be defined inaccurately or in a way that interprets them in a particular way and from a particular point of view. Taking into account the fact that use of technical terminology is generally useful in defining an issue, question or discussion, an evolving *glossary* within the forum, which automatically hotlinks technical terms used to a generally-agreed definition of the term would be extremely useful. Such a glossary would need to be user-editable, so in a wiki format or similar, and would need to be variably time- and space- specific. As an example, some terms may be particular to a particular local authority area, a particular special kind of land designation (e.g. Conservation Areas or Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty) and so on, so terms could and should be linked to geographical areas and/or to emerging forms of mapping technology, for instance the London Infrastructure Map (maps.london.gov.uk/ima/, Accessed 31.05.2017) or Howard (howard.urbanintelligence.co.uk Accessed 31.05.2017), a tool by Urban Intelligence which aims to standardize and spatialise planning policy from national to local levels. Time-specificity would also be important as the meaning and scope of terms can shift as law and policy change.

Use of terms, whilst becoming more defined, should also be subject to user critique and discussion. Each term could include a meta-dialogue about its meaning, significant challenges to which could trigger a formal update of the term's meaning. There is always a risk that technical language that it can remain a force for exclusion.

Standardise & visualize description

Forum posters displayed some sophistication in describing particular spatial situations, although a lot of time was spent in pulling out the exact details of a situation that would enable a meaningful or accurate response. Whilst it would be wrong for a new service to disregard the value in these complex descriptions, it would be beneficial for some standardizing tools to be deployed to enable much more efficient analysis of the problem at hand. A series of quick 'tick boxes', for example, might quickly define the policy applicable in a given circumstance (such as the site being located in Green Belt), whilst a series of project-dependent quantitative values (e.g. size of plot) would also speed up the discussion process toward meaningful and accurate responses.

Use narrative and human interest

Popular engagement with planning at the level of a forum appears to depend on sympathy with the OP or other posters, and is certainly dependent on there being enough *interest* in the content of a post to engage with it, whether once or repeatedly. This connects to findings by HM Cabinet Office's 'Good Law' initiative (Bertlin, 2014) which hypothesized that narrative structures for legislation, as opposed to series of single, short 'staccato' sentences, are more readily engaging and understandable by audiences of those laws.

The narrative and personal stories inherent to most posts are central to this interest, as they play a key role in generating sympathy, intrigue, debate, outrage, and so on. The 'liveliness' of any forum is dependent on all of these things and any planning-focussed forum should take care not to suppress or ignore the potential of narrative and human interest in the name of a more systematised, automated or quantitative model, if the popular is to maintain or enhance its agency in relation to the planning system. Could it be that the narrative forms of the forum could unlock new ways of presenting planning law and policy?

Make learning systemic

The threads studied often constituted spaces of informal learning. There is potential for such learning to become more systemic and to further address the perceptions identified in (DoE, 1995) that engagement with planning processes did not generally lead to greater understanding of those processes. Forum threads already seem to address this, with 'learning' and 'finding out' being very common themes across threads, not to mention the learning possibilities at a wider scale due to index-ability, which means that users from outside the forum can be brought straight to the debate via search engines. The use of an evolving glossary (see 'Define terms and allow for critique', above) would also be of use in this regard.

Reveal plan-making

As already discussed, the plan-making *side* of the 'development plan/development control' model of public planning is largely ignored by forum posters. When development plans and related policies are discussed they are not treated as authored, evolving and interpretable documents, but characterized as if they are unchanging and 'unbendable', and planners in the development control 'side' are simply using them neutrally to attempt an objective decision. It is likely that little understanding exists within the wider public of how law and policy are created and on what basis, despite the formal consultation processes that are currently built-in to the public planning system.

Assuming that such a system will continue into the future, it would be beneficial to reveal and connect to policy and to the evidence bases underlying it. In a more automated and tech-driven planning environment, such as that currently advocated in the UK by the government-funded Future Cities Catapult 'Future of Planning' project (FCC, 2016), this policy is likely to be more standardized and more 'open', though current projects to undertake this task do so on a commercial basis. As a challenge to the popular sense of the neutral or apparently-objective planner, it would be highly beneficial to reveal, for study and critique, not only the policy that informs decision-making but also the evidence and rationalization underlying that policy.

Allow expertise to be defined

Reflecting the complexity and size of their user groups, the studied forums each had their 'resident experts'. Many of these experts 'declared' their expertise informally within threads as a way of 'backing up' their advice or commentary, whilst many others did not, coming across as unusually well-informed lay users. It may be that individuals remaining undeclared maintained this status in order to avoid any comeback or responsibility for advice given, or to reveal any bias or personal connections.

Whilst this anonymity appears to be of importance to many users, all of which are on the forums not primarily as experts or professionals, for those who are willing to declare their expertise or professional experience, these attributes could be more formalized. Firstly, the potential to declare an expertise within a member profile would be useful, in ways that are searchable to other users. Secondly, peer review of (thumbs up, thumbs down) of responses, provided by users and perhaps weighted to the opinion of the OP, would help to build evolving, peer-reviewed expertise assessments based upon a user's discussion activity. In this way, a forum could not only form a space for existing, self-proclaimed experts to offer expertise or advice, but also one where individual expertise and *quality* of response can be developed over time in a peer-reviewed way. It may be that, in this way and in principle, a serial lay house-extender could become a greater 'authority' on issues associated with Permitted Development (for example) than any present local authority officer, policymaker, or private planning consultant.

Allow the specific to become general (scales of space and time)

As has been discussed, threads that begin with a specific issue to the OP, they often 'snowball' to incorporate a cluster of related projects, both 'new' ones seeking similar advice or sharing opportunities, and 'past' projects which can be learned from in multiple ways. Taking into account time and locational specificity, there is potential here for person-specific conversations to become *systemic* in the form of case studies or as 'pinned' threads around which anyone with situations deemed similar can gather. This can be a question of aggregating and peer review, tagging, and it might also be a question of data fields at the beginning of the post allowing

posts to be automatically (or via a moderator) sorted into particular sub-groups, e.g. 'rear extensions (PD)', 'registering an Asset of Community Value')

Reveal money & financial risk

Reflecting the gulf between forum threads, where financial considerations (particularly financial risk) are often *a* or *the* primary concern of an OP or other posters, and more formal spaces of planning dialogue, where financial considerations are less foregrounded, it would be beneficial if, where appropriate, case studies could be developed showing quantifiable risks associated with different routes through a particular process.

Create critical bridges to 'official' planning spaces/agents

Much forum conversation is concerned with discussing parallel discussions that are taking place between posters and professional 'agents', from planning officers to consultants and architects, and seeking second/third/multiple opinions on these other discussions. Dissatisfaction with advice received from local authority planners, or perceptions of inconsistency and discontinuity of advice, was the most common complaint in discussions.

Allow peer review and crowd review

In three of the four forums studied, threads 'float' in terms of visibility in relation to the amount of posting activity they generate. Whilst this is one measure of 'thread success', it is fairly clumsy when it comes to evaluating the quality of a thread's contents, as a whole or in constituent parts/posts. Reddit, however, like Yahoo! Answers (uk.answers.yahoo.com, Accessed 31.05.2017) and StackExchange (stackexchange.com/, Accessed 31.05.2017) uses upvoting and downvoting (of threads and of individual posts) to organise information and allow not only threads perceived to be of good quality to 'float' within searches or lists, but also posts within threads to do the same.

Summary

There are many ways by which the existing discourse that occurs on forums such as those studied could be enhanced by design such that they gain real agency within planning.

This section, through discourse analysis of a wide variety of online discourse concerning planning, has revealed a complex picture of existing planning discourses, and a far more nuanced, complex and playful relationship between the public and public planning than might be expected. It strongly suggests that, within the sphere of popular online discourse at least, there is a ready field of potential protagonists in a public planning system more open to such discourse and, moreover, that existing online platforms of the kind studied here are already hosting, making visible and enabling a supportive, critical and diverse community of such protagonists and, following the 'logic' of the online forum, in a way that is accessible by others, including professionals, and therefore capable of becoming systemic.

In Chapter 6, the parallel strand of research by design is described, before the findings from the two research strands are summarized and brought together in Chapter 7.

6 *Building Rights*: A design research process

6.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the design research process of the making of *Building Rights* Alpha.

The initial design process, which spanned from 2012 to 2016, is documented in section 6.2. At the close of this process, when it was finally realised that the prototype platform could not in itself provide enough evidence to satisfactorily conclude the study, two parallel methods were embarked upon, as detailed in Chapter 4, section 4.2. The first was to use a ‘charrette’ workshop, and a number of invited non-planner participants, to ‘speed up’ the process of populating the platform and simulate its public use over a period of time, findings from which are set out in section 5.3.

In the context of this study, and as a piece of design, the primary ambition of the design research was to explore the extent to which the *design* of new forms of communication, discourse and socially-distributed knowledge could establish a mutual relationship between public planning and the public, in the context of an unprecedented transformation in the relationship between the public and the media as represented by social and new media.

6.2 *Building Rights* Alpha: process

The design research process began with a series of case studies, in the tradition established by Ward (2.3) of other forms of building practice and built environment decision-making, which were exhibited at *Grist*, the RCA ‘work in progress’ exhibition in February 2012 (fig. 13), and documented in a post by Geoff Manaugh on BLDGBLOG (www.bldgblog.com/2012/02/making-planning-popular/, Accessed 31.05.2017).



Figure 13. ‘Making Planning Popular’ at the RCA WIP show, February 2012.

Early intentions for *Building Rights* at this stage were that it should be a comprehensive database of planning knowledge, and one in which present day solutions, policies and approaches would be related to the ‘lost’ approaches uncovered in these early researches. The first design responses to this ambition immediately seemed too fixed and cumbersome to ‘host’ the kind of heterogeneous and complex communities (2.3) that the site needed to be able to contain. In these

early designs, attempts were made to connect current planning processes and policies up with longer-term processes that other societies (in time and location) had used to ‘decide the future of the built environment’, and the *Grist* show reflected this interest. Over time, however, and as a combination of literature review (Chapter 2-3) and the design research, it became clear that the ‘other’ to connect public planning to was not another time or place but the more ‘present’ and (as had become clear in the research described in Chapter 5) very active community of today’s public, as represented in extant online platforms.



Figure 14. Early mock-up by the researcher, July 2012

The need for the site to have a strong, engaging identity, and a desire to learn as much as possible from the learning that accompanied *SUB-PLAN* (and to reproduce its collaborative design model, see Chapter 4, section 4.3), meant that Europa, the graphic design company of Robert Sollis and Mia Frostner, were asked to contribute to the project, in tandem with designer and web specialist Afonso Martins.

Through dialogue with Europa and Afonso, it quickly became clear that the somewhat static approach of the early mockups (fig. 14) would not achieve the required systemic, evolving model that the project required, nor would it enable a live testing of the kinds of discourse represented in existing forums.

The design research process therefore became the creation of an alpha-level (that is, a working prototype fit for internal testing, ahead of wider beta testing by the public) discussion forum, not a fully-resolved design that would answer all the demands of my wider research but one that would allow participants in the testing of the site to explore its possibilities & limitations and propose design changes.

The intention became to develop and test the Alpha version of *Building Rights* in readiness for various stages of public dissemination, with a design charrette (6.3) to be held toward the end of the research to pull together all learning to date, summarise what had been achieved and set the brief for further development of the project beyond the confines of this study. (6.4, 7 -8).

Through discussion with Europa and Afonso, the model offered by sites like StackExchange, based upon peer review of questions and answers, with posts framed by question, appeared to be the most appropriate starting point. From spending time on forums like StackExchange (which is a niche site targeted at programmers, www.stackexchange.com/, Accessed 6.12.2017) they appeared to combine the discursive potential of the 'open thread' forum with the more structured logic of the 'question and answer' format. The intuition here was that this latter format might enable aggregating, theming, grouping and localizing of 'questions' thanks to the common format, and would also provide a natural closure for discussion topics as and when (if ever!) a definitive 'answer' to any discourse was provided.

Different ways of building such a site were evaluated, and it was subsequently proposed that, rather than starting from scratch, using existing engines and modifying them would be the best approach (following the 'uniform but unique' model celebrated by Swartz & Driscoll, Ratto & Boler, 2014:303, see also Chapter 3, section 3.3) A review of these engines was therefore undertaken, following which the design team selected OSQA (Open Source Question and Answer, fig. 15), an open-source and free to use system developed by DZone software as a free version

of their more complex, enterprise-facing Answerhub software. OSQA offered a customizable system that seemed able to cope with the likely challenges of the 'Alpha' project – and one that could grow in scale and complexity beyond the Alpha stage through 'converting' to the paid Answerhub.

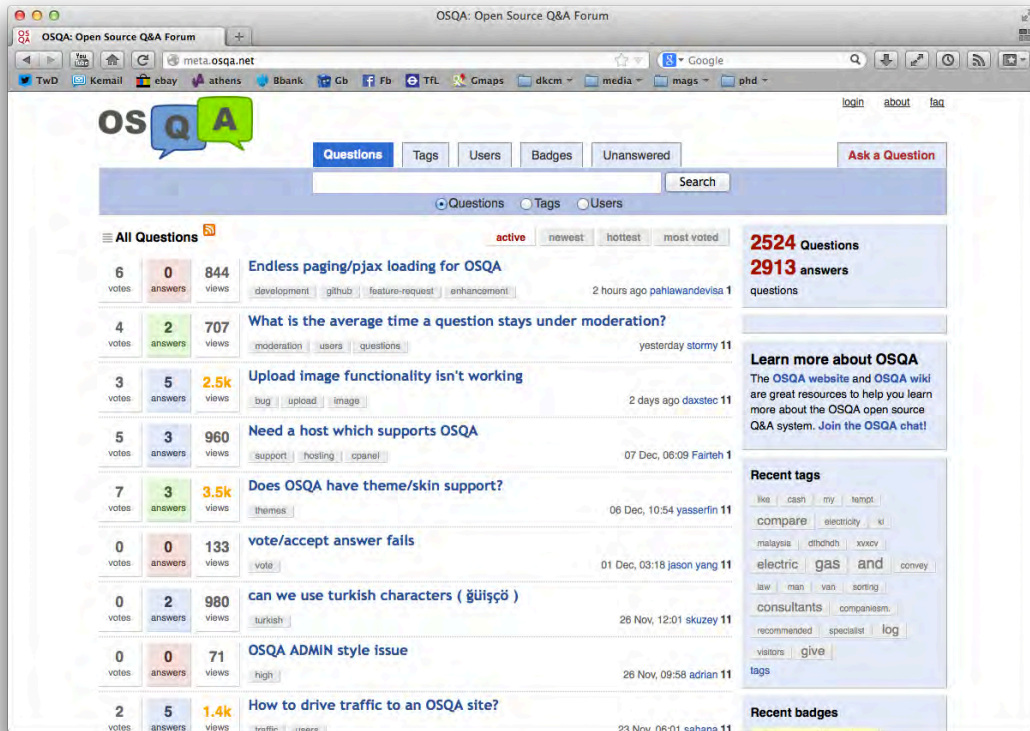


Figure 15. OSQA in its 'original' form, without any recoding or redesign applied.

The following chart (fig. 16) defines the ambitions for the structure and organisation of *Building Rights* Alpha with direct reference to the functionality of OSQA, and was the map followed by the design team in developing the alpha version of the project.

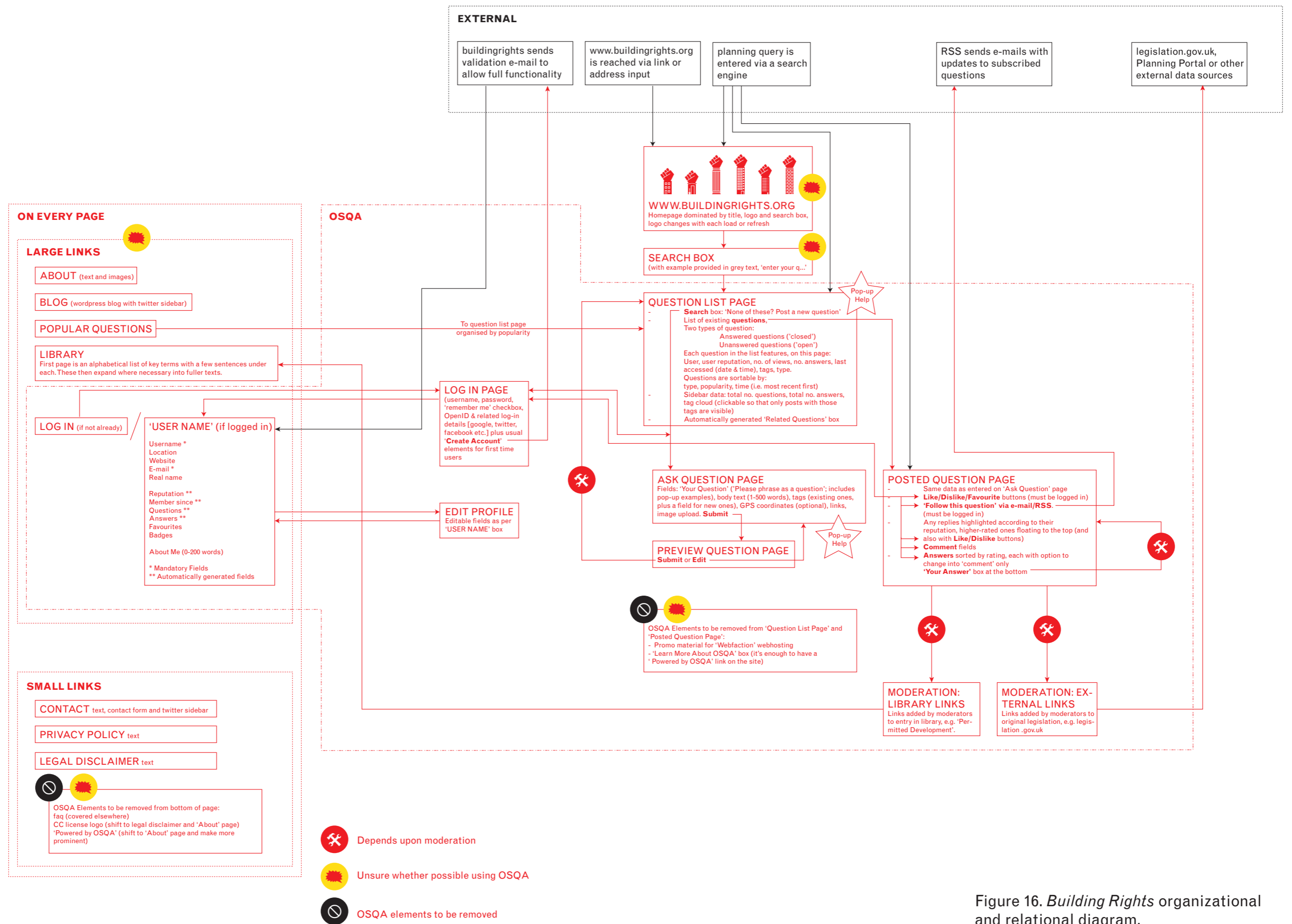


Figure 16. Building Rights organizational and relational diagram.

By late 2012 a series of mockups had been developed by Europa and myself and were used in a series of over 25 public or academic lectures from 2012 to 2016, each of which presented a public opportunity to test the site's principles with an audience. A number of key questions emerged from this extensive series of public appearances, which are summarised below and taken up in the following section:

'What are the legal ramifications of the site, and the responsibility for bad advice? What happens if bad things happen as a result of bad advice on the site?'

'Could it become more local in its scope and have regional or local groups in order to achieve more local relevance?'

'The text-based presentation is clear and legible but visual information is limited to uploading drawings or photographs. Could a more visual approach [such as a sketchup-like applet] add to the functionality?'

'What do planners think of this? Does it take away planners' agency/jobs?'



Figure 17. Launch Event, Victoria & Albert Museum, June 2014. Image courtesy Victoria & Albert Museum, used with permission.

By April 2014, a working 'Alpha' prototype existed and a launch event (fig. 17) had been held at the V&A Museum in London. This event was held as part of the Victoria & Albert Museum's 'It's All Yours' Friday Late event, at which a short talk introducing the project to over a hundred guests was given, and then attendees were invited to take part in a 'planning pub quiz', produced in collaboration with Europa, a deliberately light-hearted fun means of reinforcing the idea of planning as a discursive, public and cultural practice – the 'game' that discourse analysis would suggest it often resembles within popular discourse.

The OSQA software had proven very capable of customisation, and the 'default' identity and graphical layout of the interface had been transformed into the one developed by Europa in the earlier mockups (figs. 18 & 19). The layout proposed aims at total clarity and simplicity, with clear fonts and structuring. Reflecting the political aims of the project, a 'fist' logo had been developed by Europa, but this logo, and the accent colours of the page that matched it, were designed to appear as a different colour with each log-in, emphasising that the 'politics' of the project were emphatically not affiliated with a particular political party and gently emphasising the idea of the site as something outside of such concerns.

Borrowing from StackExchange, but with a much more stripped back design, the Alpha site begins with a large search box that allows searches across the full history of question threads, and then lists all questions by 'popularity', an algorithmic combination of activity and peer-reviewed ratings, by which threads and posts can be upvoted or downvoted by users. The site also uses a membership system whereby anyone can access all sites, including search engine indexes (allowing entry to the site via a question, rather than the site page, another lesson pulled from StackExchange and other sites like Mumsnet), but asking a question requires membership of the forum and up/downvoting requires a set number of 'reputation points' accrued through participating in the forum and responding to others, except in the case of OPs wishing to up or downvote responses to their original question. In this way, the site is accessible and indexable to all, but rewards involvement and only allows users with a certain 'reputation' or above to fully impact on the working of the site. As well as the simple submission of

questions and answers, the system also allows for, in a hierarchical format, commentary on each main post to happen, therefore metadialogues can take place as branches from the main discussion, multiple times within a question. This represents an early 'test' (using a format borrowed from StackExchange and built-in to OSQA) of using meta-narratives to frame and peer review content.

The site was ready for the final design charrette by December 2016. This charrette, documented and analysed in the following section, became the final 'purpose' of *Building Rights* Alpha: as a space online where the design team and invited participants could stage a series of discourses which would yield findings about the site as it is and as it could be.



Figures 18-19. Screenshot (2014) of Building Rights Alpha in its first working iteration, by Europa and David Knight.

6.3 *Building Rights* design charrette

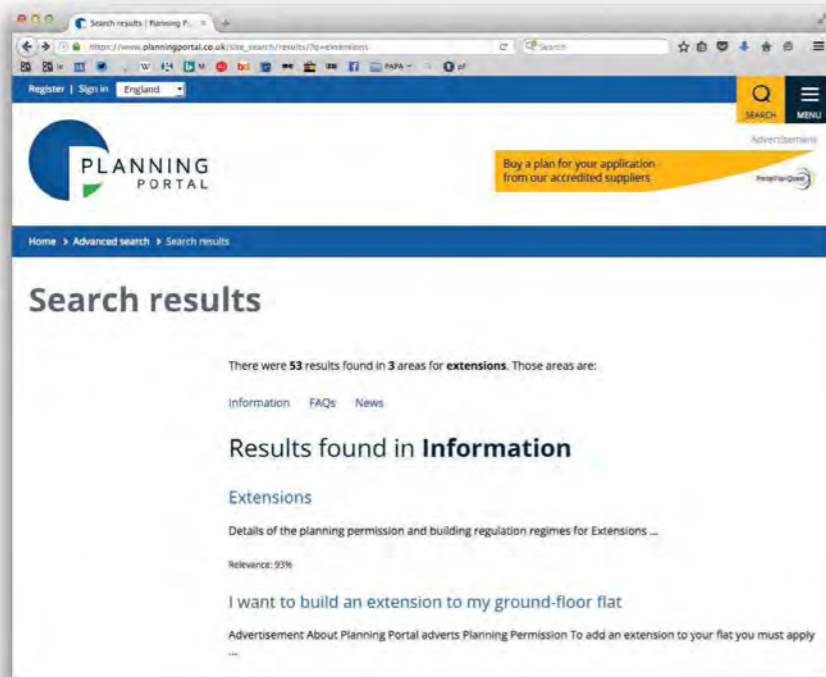
The *Building Rights* design charrette (fig. 20) took place over a day on 17 December 2016 at the space rented by the Evening Class group in Aberfeldy Street, London. Evening Class (www.evening-class.org/about , Accessed 31.05.2017) is made up of a group of young professionals who all come from a graphics and communications design background, and none of them have any direct or professional experience of spatial design, architecture or planning. They therefore formed the perfect ‘closed-door’ testing group for the site as they are highly design-aware but not versed at all in planning.

The charrette was hosted by the researcher and attended by project collaborators Europa (Robert Sollis and Mia Frostner), Afonso Martins, Evening Class members Alexandra, Dina, Nicola, Oliver & Olya, Holly Lang (a graduate of ADS2, ‘my’ teaching unit at the RCA School of Architecture, and now part of the planning team at the Greater London Authority) and Catarina de Almeida Brito, an architectural assistant at DK-CM and another graduate of ADS2, serving as facilitator and photographer. We therefore had a room of 11 people, three of which (the researcher, Holly and Catarina) had a measure of professional knowledge, derived from their practices as architects, architectural trainees and planners. A further two professionals, Michelle Warbis (GLA) and Robert McNicol (London Borough of Southwark) were unable to attend at the last minute, so there was less professional expertise in the room than had been hoped for.

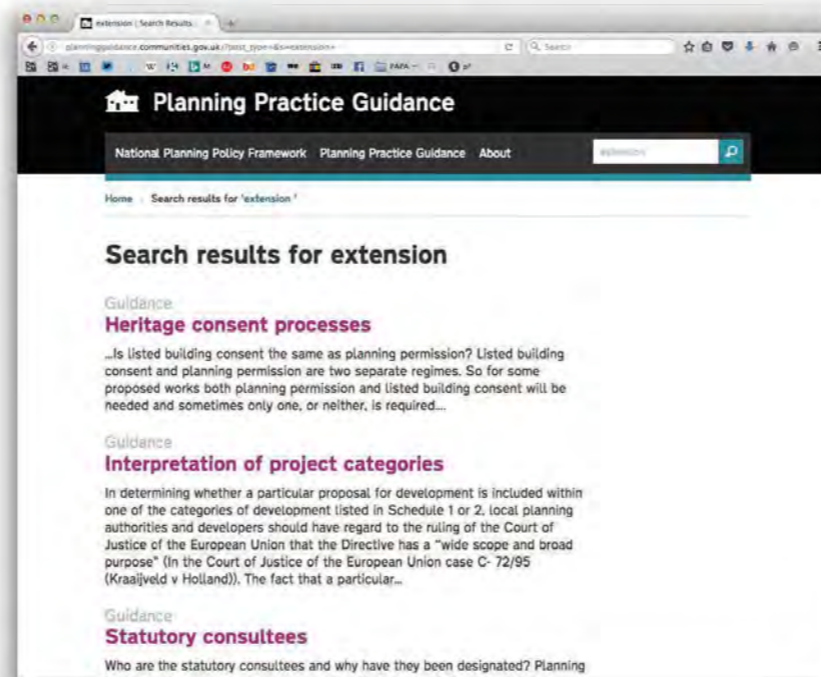


Figure 20. *Building Rights design charrette, December 2016. Photograph by Catarina de Almeida Brito at DK-CM.*

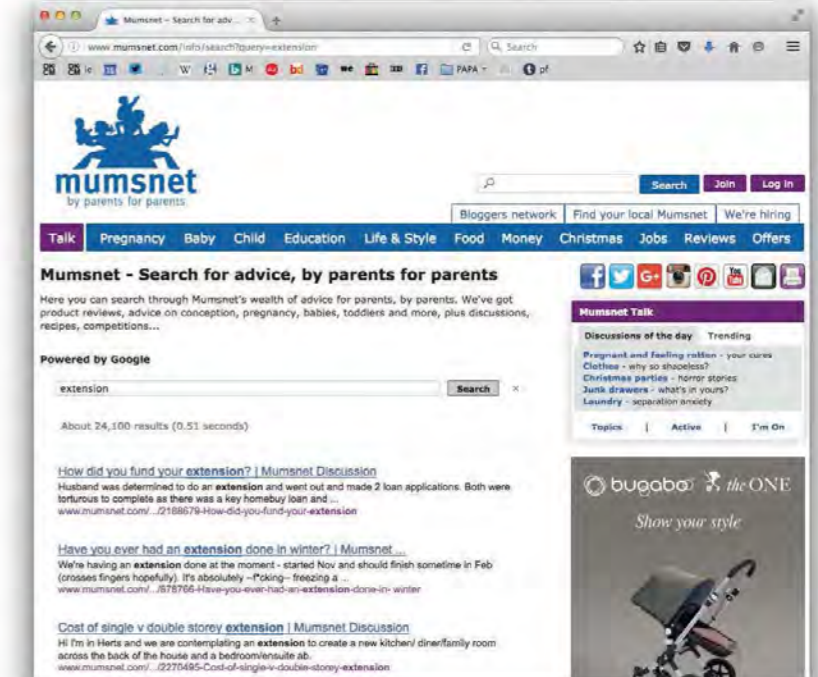
The idea of the charrette, explained in a short introductory lecture, was for the whole room, using laptops and smartphones, to intensively ‘use’ the site for two half-hour sessions, each of which would be followed by a discursive ‘review and re-design’ session in which any design or organisational queries, problems or ideas could be shared with the group and posted on a large wall in the space. In the introductory comments, the accessibility of existing ‘official’ online forums such as the Planning Portal and the National Planning Practice Guidance site to Mumsnet, one of the four forums studied in Chapter 5. This presentation demonstrated to the participants, on an anecdotal level, how Mumsnet, emphatically *not* a planning knowledge resource, provided tangible, accessible and relevant information to the search terms provided to it than the ‘official’ sources (fig. 21). The point here was not that Mumsnet is a better planning resource than the official national sources, but that various aspects of its design and organisation, and indeed of its particular type of community, brought lessons in terms of how knowledge exchange about planning might take place within *Building Rights* or indeed other similar systems.



planningportal.co.uk



planningguidance.communities.gov.uk



mumsnet.com

Figure 21. 'Asking Mumsnet how to build an extension, compared to Planning Portal and gov. uk'. Accessed 03.12.2016, images sourced from researcher's presentation during the charrette.

Coloured paper was provided to participants to record their thoughts whilst using the site, and they were encouraged to post these sheets on the wall as they were created, with every user free to move their and other's sheets in order to cluster them together into themes or sympathetic relationships. Further clustering and moving took place collectively at the end of each half hour session. To provoke this, a number of questions were presented to the group. These were as follows:

- How is the website working? (best things, worst things)
- What would make communication easier?
- What could be quicker or easier?
- How will the next person with a similar question benefit from this conversation?
- What are the legal implications or potential pitfalls of this conversation?
- How could design improve the discussion?
- What is missing?

The two sessions were themed in order to provoke different ways of using the site. The first, 'home improvements', asked participants to:

- Think of your current home.
- Think, in real terms, of how you would like to improve, alter or extend it.
- What procedure do you need to follow to fulfil your idea? What permission do you need? Who or what could get in your way, cause a delay, alter your plans?
- What might you not have thought of? E.g. protected trees, a gas main, your neighbours, local heritage...

This session reflected the vast majority of issues and queries studied in Chapter 5, section 5.3, but it was also important to test the site's capacity to deal with more community-minded projects and queries, so the second session, 'community service' was themed along those lines:

- Think of your local community.
- Think, in real terms, of its current issues & opportunities (e.g. my local pub is threatened, independent shops are closing, I wish there was a playground)

How can you and/or your community tackle your issue or opportunity?
What are the hurdles, processes? What might get in your way or offer you additional support? Who do you need to talk to? What are the pitfalls?

What might you not have thought of? E.g. protected trees, a gas main, your neighbours, local heritage...

The two half-hour sessions played out as planned, with participants encouraged not to talk during the period but to channel all of their ideas queries or frustrations either into the site, or into the accompanying sheets of paper. Reflecting the intensity of the session, they were asked not simply to ask their question and await replies, but to use spare time within the allotted time period to explore other threads, commenting and peer-reviewing as they saw fit. Those of us with planning expertise were also asked to both ask and answer.

Within the two sessions, 31 questions were asked (or posts initiated) and 26 answers or responses posted, with a large number of meta-comments also posted and 75 'paper' comments posted on the wall. A sample of the threads generated is included in Appendix 1.

At the close of the event, conversations about the site continued, focused on points raised on the wall and involving some final moving and clustering of ideas around points of commonality (fig. 22).

A large number of technical, accessibility and visual issues and opportunities were identified, and these are also included in Appendix 1, with a number of more conceptual queries emerging as follows:

- It should be possible to form local groups within the site, still existing in the overall site but also within smaller groups/communities. Could the virtual communities of the forum link to physical communities in the real world? [In this way, spaces for activist groups, neighbourhood planning groups, campaigns etc. could exist]
- Where appropriate, questions or threads should link to planning policy, particular consultations etc., in order to form connections with external

attempts to engage communities (e.g. the production of a local plan). Planning authorities should be able to be present/visible/connected.

- Types of development should be somehow clustered together, transformed into case studies or similar. ‘House extensions’, ‘Neighbourhood Watch’, etc.
- Frustration was expressed that many of the replies/answers to questions were, in effect, ‘talk to the council’, with users expressing frustration that there aren’t other resources ahead of this (and also, in many cases, not having enough information about whom to contact and how). It was discussed that this is perhaps a weakness of a site without much history or back-content, in that the inevitable most responsible answer is to engage with the local authority in a given instance, in that past precedence does not yet exist.

The charrette was overambitious in terms of how much we could collectively ‘populate’ the forum in the space of such a short time, and accordingly the amount of content generated was disappointing. However, the exercise was very fruitful in generating a substantial number of very relevant points about the further development of the project, as summarised above, and much more than I had anticipated. These points became a series of findings that, in combination with discourse analysis of existing non-niche forums, close the study in Chapter 7. Overall, the participants were highly engaged in, and positive about, the ambition of the project and taking part was considered enjoyable. Although a primitive online space, *Building Rights Alpha* in the somewhat artificial context of the charrette had provoked a short but sustained burst of community dialogue concerning planning and, more importantly in the context of the wider study, had generated a series of lines of enquiry about how such a platform might refine itself to fulfil the ambitions set for it in the literature review (Chapters 2-3).

In the following section I summarise the findings of the design research and imagine, on that basis, the next iteration of its design.

6.4 *Building Rights* Alpha: review and design research summary

This review of the design research process draws not only on the design process itself but also on the theoretical contextualization of the project outlined in Chapters 2-4 and on lessons learned from the parallel study of existing on-line discussions in Chapter 5. This review is grouped under a series of headings derived from public exposure of *Building Rights* Alpha from 2012 to 2016, our own internal design development conversations, and issues arising out of the final design charrette, as summarized in the preceding chapter.

Legal Responsibility and ‘Bad Advice’

This is a practical point but one that came up repeatedly during public demonstrations and lectures about the project (Chapter 6, section 6.2), with audiences keen to know not only how the legal rights of the originator of advice, commentary or experience might be protected, but how the site as a whole might protect itself.

Following a survey of comparable sites, most notably those studied in Chapter 5, the most commonplace approach is to adopt an ‘at your own risk’ stance that places all responsibility for content in the hands of the user that generated that content, leaving copyright or ownership over the material in the hands of the user but asserting an ongoing, or in-perpetuity, right to use this material by the owner of the site. In this way the management of the site has perpetual usage and overall charge of the content generated and stored on the site, whilst not claiming responsibility or ownership for the advice offered. Mumsnet asserts copyright over the site and its general content, but places copyright to ‘User Content’ with the user (<https://www.mumsnet.com/info/terms-of-use>, Accessed 31.05.2017).

StackExchange adopts the same approach to what it calls ‘Subscriber Content’, but utilises the ‘Creative Commons Attribution Share Alike’ license in relation to the StackExchange company’s rights to use content posted on its services.

The value and ambition of Mumsnet, to take one extreme example, has not been reduced by concerns of the impact of poor advice on new parents and their children. If the right legally-observed terms of use were in place, there is no reason why *Building Rights* or a similar service could not adopt the same strategy successfully, in a way that enables both individual users, commercial companies and public sector organisations to post as ‘freely’ or not as they choose, whilst acknowledging that the latter two organisations are likely to require their own protocols and strategies for public communication on-line, responsibility for which would also need to exist outside the forum.

Local Relevance

The majority of planning-related discourse is necessarily tied to a particular space and time, whether a particular spatial situation or a particular legal and policy context. One of the critical failings of PD legislation (Chapter 4, section 4.3) was that in describing general situations, the legal text of the legislation opened up huge spatial possibilities or problematics in relation to the specific, particular situations where ‘generalised’ definitions had nothing to say, e.g. when a house doesn’t ‘face’ the road with its main elevation. In the English public planning context, specifics of site and policy context remain of primary importance.

For advice and discourse regarding planning issues to take on direct agency, in principle it should wherever possible be tied to its location. In practice though, many posters in the studied threads consciously obscured their location in order to not jeopardise their ‘projects’ or to accidentally expose themselves. In response to this, it seems clear that *Building Rights* must encourage as much site specificity as possible within its information processing (allowing users, for example, to specify the relevant planning authority, or the types of land designation that are applicable) without enforcing such things.

The possibility of allowing a potentially national-level independent resource like *Building Rights* to place projects in space and time, and to organise their relevance to each other by land designation or local authority (to take two examples only), is currently limited, and subject to concerns about a non-governmental service

gaining a mass of data about the populace in an unregulated context that could lead to abuse of that data, although there are many new technologies emerging which are explicitly targeted, from a technological point of view, at both mapping out, and 'levelling out' planning policy across statutory authorities, though the usefulness of such services in this context may be reduced by their commercial (i.e. chargeable) nature, and calls for greater regulation or legal scrutiny over services such as Facebook and Instagram are on the increase, suggesting a growing maturity in relation to social media as a 'public' form of data. Real, systemic local (inter-)relevance, in policy terms, can only really be achieved by connecting discourse up to smart data mapping, though the cultural qualities of localness must also be considered – can a platform such as *Building Rights* challenge, shape or reinforce local approaches and characteristics as suggested by Miller (2016) whilst retaining the important 'blindness' to political boundaries that the forum format offers?

The other aspect of locality, asserted within the design charrette, was the possibility of local interests, moments of consultation or engagement growing up as communities within the framework of the site. It may be, for example, that a local authority seeks to use the site to expand the consultation that takes place around an emerging Local Plan. Or it may be that a local group, opposed say to the loss of a local community amenity, might gather and seek further support and advice through the community. In the former example, existing 'official' definitions of locality are primary, as they would be when considering the relevance of different levels of policy or in different extant statutory authorities. In the former example, those 'official' definitions of locality may not be primary, or indeed might be challenged by the group in question. It seems clear that locality, in a space such as *Building Rights*, must be something that can be determined using existing, officially-designated place definitions, but must also be definable in new terms, that associate with popular perceptions of place rather than with the lines of the map, and which challenge the current 'irrelevance' of territories just outside the boundaries of a given statutory area.

Typological Clustering and the snowball effect

If agency for aggregating discourse appears to increase with spatial specificity, then it seems that typological specificity is also of use. The tagging, visually or via text, or questions, problems and projects, is an easy way of clustering types of issue, of relating 'new' issues to ones that already exist within the database ('Users also asked', 'Similar projects'). For this to work, and allow easy navigation, it is important for the system itself to know relationships between projects (something only possible via tagging, which should be editable by the poster but also by moderators and perhaps by the system itself as technology allows), but also to make this clustering visible. At present, the interface simply places 'most popular' questions up top, and makes searching of the site a primary navigation tool – a limitation unless the system has a particularly sophisticated search algorithm which can account for misuse of terms, or indeed no or little understanding of terms on behalf of the user. But what if it were possible to organise the whole database typologically, in the format of a file structure for instance? In this way, a 'clicking through' of content might enable users to gain access to relevant information in a way that further undermines the need to 'know the right word' before advancing to meaningful discourse.

Typologically clustering, in this way, provides a strong chance for the agency of popular discourse, as already carried out on-line in non-specialist forums and as played out in *Building Rights* Alpha, to become more systemic, for knowledge to 'snowball' through the simple intervention of clustering relatable knowledge and case studies together. If each 'new question' on existing forums were to pick up from where a relevant past question left off, or reframe it with new knowledge or opinions (challenging the status quo of 'I'm sure this question has already been asked, but' or 'I recall a thread about this, but I can't find it', both of which appeared in threads studied in Chapter 6), the quality of accessible discourse and information would be significantly increased. Particular realms of expertise, gathered around particularly common questions, challenges or opportunities faced by individuals and communities could come into being.

Visualising Building Practices

Within the design charrette, the possibility of using better visualization tools was a key topic of conversation. Within the studied forums (Chapter 6), people frequently resorted to such means in order to:

- Enhance the poster's description of a particular situation
- Enhance the posters' description of their intentions
- Provide visual examples or case studies of relevant other projects
- Demonstrate the results (usually successful in the eyes of the poster) of a project at its cessation.

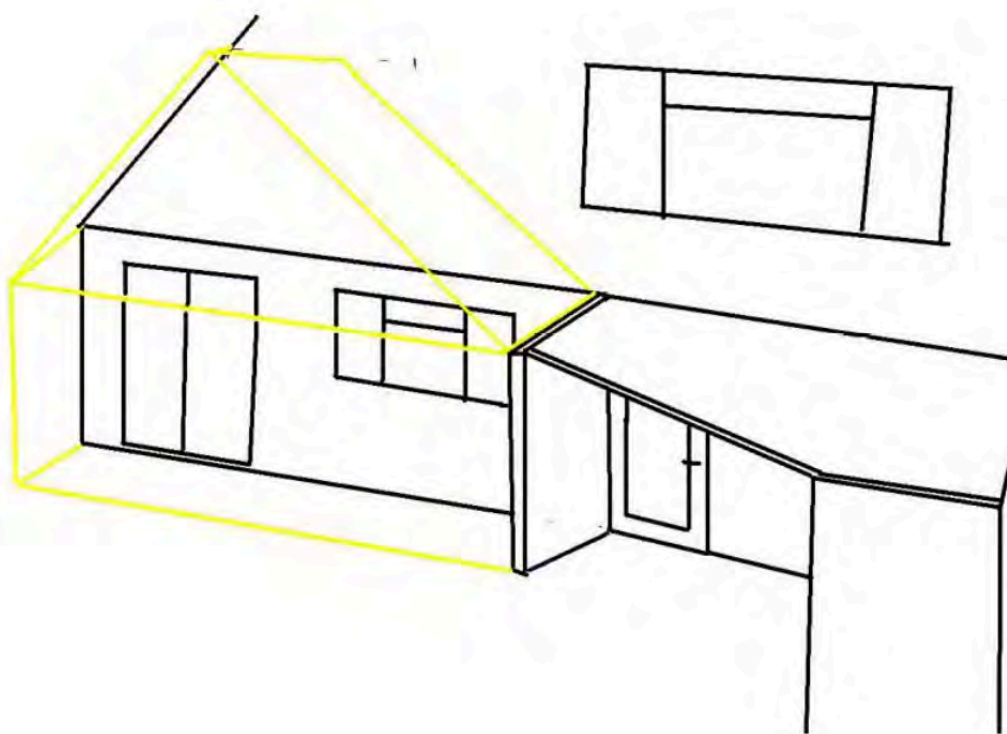


Figure 23. 'Self-authored' image of extension under discussion, likely produced in Microsoft Word of similar widely available software. Sourced from threads studied (see Appendix 2).

Such visualisations took the form of photographs taken by the poster, photographs or imagery found on-line as examples, and drawings, including those produced by consultants paid by the poster or 'on the other side' or drawings created by the poster (figs. 23 & 24).

The role of provided images, whether photographs, sketches or scaled drawings, was usually very useful in building understanding of the topic being discussed or problem being faced. The forums under study used simple image upload or image referencing HTML in order to allow posting of images, but the usefulness of these images, in addition to demands for more visual means of communication from charrette participants, suggests that a particular tool for visual communication should be developed. This tool should allow scalable information to be posted as well as material like photographs, and for any user involved in the discussion to 'draw' on this material, perhaps associating colours with users in the manner of collaborative editing of documents in Office software like Google Docs. Such a tool would allow an on-line equivalent of the (1) 'sketching over drawings' which is a mainstay of pre-application dialogue and (2) the 'gesturing with a pointer' which nowadays frequently accompanies application descriptions at planning committees and enquiries. Crucially, reflecting the wider ambitions of the project, the space of the drawing should be allowed to be a place of conflict and adversarial positions, a layering of drawings that preserves visual clarity. Could particular layers of drawing (as owned by different users) be subject to peer review in the manner of text responses?



skip_1



DrC



JackReacher



JustinP1



jamesc_1729

Figure 24. Selection of images from threads studied. Included here are posters' own photos, screengrabs of maps & plans, and third party images.

Here it is useful to refer back to the theoretical demands placed on the proposed online platform by this study's exploration of the political potential of social media in Chapter 3, section 3.3:

- *In order to theoretically impact upon democracy and create an agonistic space, new media must be able to transcend the individual and self-expression, 'the expression of a vote'*
-*Building Rights Alpha*, deploying the Q&A format as a modification of the 'forum' model, allows the same discursive dialogue and practice to emerge as happens on traditional forums such as Mumsnet et. al.. Community-building tools must be present in subsequent versions which enhance this offer.
- *Productive/making practices must be present within the discourse*
-The kinds of queries and ongoing projects/challenges studied in many of the threads in Chapter 6, and to a lesser degree those rehearsed in the design charrette, are inarguably creative projects in the same manner as the jewellery projects of Swartz & Driscoll (2014, Chapter 3, section 3.3). They build up very similar communities of support, critique and solidarity to those present in the space of the forums explored in that study. It seems clear that visual/spatial tools would be invaluable to enhancing this process.
- *The space must contain (or, perhaps, must promote and encourage) positive and productive impulses, rather than simply oppositional ones*
-Again, this is only 'answered' by *Building Rights Alpha* in as much as it borrows so much of its structure from extant online forums. As can be seen in Chapter 6, the oppositional nature of much traditional public/planning discourse is simply not present and/or no longer the dominant form of discourse in the new world of online discourse.
- *The space cannot be defined in terms established by the state or the professional, cannot be 'project-specific' and the procedures, processes and protocols of the project cannot frame the discourse, as these are alienating (and perhaps hegemonic) in relation to the lay audience*
-*Building Rights Alpha* began life as a 'free' service (to its designers as well as its users) notwithstanding a monthly hosting subscription. Again

following the lead of other successful online platforms, there is no reason why this non-state, non-profit model cannot grow with its users. A key question here is in finance, and how the potentially huge demands on server space might be paid for.

- *The space must exist ‘between’ state and popular realms, and in a way that enables a mutual and equal relationship (if not an unproblematic, non-agonistic one)*
-*Building Rights Alpha* uses its own ‘ranking’ system, quite apart from professional status, rankings and relationships. It also allows users to declare, or not declare, their ‘real world’ associations and skills. It thus, in a manner that could be refined, provides a space that allows discourse to happen between apparent equals.
- *The space should allow for both on-topic and off-topic discussions – points and subjects in common in order to allow a more supportive environment to emerge, and thereby avoiding the casual hostilities of much online discourse*
-Here *Building Rights* presents a problem, as it is perhaps unlikely to foster a ‘parallel’ community of discourse in connection to, but thematically disassociated from, the main topic of discourse that would bring people to the site.
- *The format of the message board has the necessary durability to allow for heterogeneity, and its distributed nature (contrary to Facebook et al) allows for a greater freedom and autonomy, though still falling short of being a real ‘public space’.*
-The testing of *Building Rights Alpha* strongly suggests that, modified to allow for the ‘Q&A’ format, the message board has the right discursive functionality for positively addressing the question of this study and providing a space for popular discourse to thrive.
- *Should respond, through design, to the capacity of social media to reflect, reinforce or reshape local & national behaviours, traits and characteristics. Within social media, the message board is best placed to enable a transnational conversation but, in the case of planning, must also find the structural means of achieving local relevance, i.e. the field for which the*

discussion is relevant does have spatial limits.

-See above for a discussion of local relevance and the challenging, shaping or reinforcing of local characteristics.

*

This section has described a series of related processes which created, tested and then analysed a prototypical space for exploring the potential of an online platform in relation to the mutualisation of public planning and the public. The key finding from this perhaps is that there is a definite role for design skill – spatial and communications – in refining a space for the particular mutual relationship envisaged within this research to exist in. The description of a planning or spatial problem, the application of generic Q&A formats to a very particular local and disciplinary realm, the aesthetics of such a space, these all present very clear and challenging design problems which, it seems, require communications design skill and spatial expertise to imagine and solve. *Building Rights Alpha* confirms the agency of design in this field.

7 Summary of Findings: Design and Discourse

This chapter pulls together the findings from the two strands of research into one place and to explore their relationship to each other, and ends with a discussion of the limitations of the study. It also returns the study to the findings of (DoE, 1995, & Chapter 2, section 2.2), the most recent formal research that explores the popular perception of planning and which provided a key benchmark for the present study. Key points from (DoE, 1995) are returning to because, following this research, they have retained or strengthened their relevance to how the relationship between public planning and the public might be bridged.

Here, whilst perceiving ‘competent’ planning officers to be readily accessible, public respondents in DoE (1995) were dissatisfied with the ‘manner of discussion and negotiation’ in those conversations and in others they witnessed as part of planning procedures, mainly development control. The terms of discussion were often seen to be alienating, dogmatic and failing to represent a problem-solving position. The public were aware of, and suspicious of, the closed-doors pressure put on planning officers by elected members, and sympathetic to the pressure this put on public planners. There was a desire to open up the discourses around planning processes and decision-making and to remove (or at least reveal) hierarchies, to foster ‘other practices’ (1995:93) that allow and encourage co-operation, openness of dialogue, and negotiation.

The content of the on-line discourse analysed within the present study suggests a public that continues to be ready for this new, more open relationship, and to be enacting it within the social circles of online forums, often including professional protagonists. In their current form, on-line forum discussions serve as an environment in which a parallel planning discourse, which planning professionals participate in but do not define or administrate, can thrive, and the research suggests that this is most-often a highly positive and supportive environment for its users.

If the discourse and knowledge exchange of public planning is to open up in the manner called for back in 1995 (and still, this study suggests, of fundamental

importance to the survival of a relevant, democratic, public planning system) then these existing forums present some key lessons for how it might do so:

Language

The first lesson is one of language, identified by Goodman et.al. (Chapter 2, section 2.2) as a key failing in the connection between planning and its public(s) and by Hillier and Gunder (Chapter 3, section 3.2) as a tool for challenging the neoliberalisation of the current system. For Goodman, the professionals' use of a highly codified and, in public terms, obscure technical language represented a barrier to dialogue. This may continue be true at the scale of wider society, but to the engaged participants in on-line forums the use of technical terms, to a fairly high level of sophistication, is widespread and common. This suggests that technical language itself may not be the problem, which is good news as to the professional planner this language is of critical importance not only, as is argued within this study, to reinforce ideological or hegemonic relations, but also to ensure the defensibility and legal standing of their processes. Instead of sweeping away technical language, the online discourse studied suggests that more can be achieved through the following means:

- Greater definition of technical terms upfront and with public(s) contributing to that definition, such that their meaning can be established (and, ideally, challenged) by all participants
- Situating technical language in more colloquial or informal 'lay' idiom, what could be called a conversation, rather than framing it in legalistic phrasing (something that occurs naturally through the 'particular' space of the online forum
- Use of narrative, or the emotional engagement of the 'ongoing' project or story, to engage people in planning discourse

The language of online discourse, which is close to the front line of emerging linguistic paradigms and has its own highly codified terms and abbreviations, presents an 'alternative', counter-discourse to the equally codified language of the

professional planner. In this sense, technical language might serve as a bridge between the professional and the lay, a common pool of meaning that is owned by 'both' parties. As discovered during the development of *Building Rights*, key terms can become useful tools for grouping and clustering themes, issues and ideas, and a key role for a service platform in this context may be its capacity to aid in the making these linkages.

Allowing common themes, issues and ideas, to connect together – either through the particularity of the theme or geographically – was a strong call made by participants in the *Building Rights* charrette as a way of achieving solidarity, wider relevance and agency; even at this early stage in development it appeared clear to participants that a 'snowball' effect was important in future versions of the platform, allowing specific issues to become general and achieve more widespread relevance. Platforms such as *Building Rights*, going beyond the non-planning spaces of existing forums, seem ideally placed to allow this clustering of knowledge to become a vital resource to the wider public, and to allow more people to start from a position of experience and agency in their own engagements with planning.

Agency

The online discourse revealed the public to be engaged in a complex, 'gamed' relationship with the planning system; using policy wilfully, operating opportunistically in relation to existing power structures and rule systems, and aware of the way that professionals – corporate applicants, local authorities, consultants – work in similar ways to serve their own ends and goals. The wider public is typically not working from a system of financial or hegemonic power in this context though, and as such 'gaming' the system, what Fiske might understand as the 'art of the weak', becomes a vital tool in their hands. The operations undertaken in this way, and the discourse that accompanies them, can be understood to be as much a part of planning as the formal discussions of the planning committee or the local plan consultation. Recognising that the wider heterogeneous public use and abuse of the extant public planning system is *as much a planning practice as the public system* is a key stepping stone toward an improved system, and has the potential to break down the pseudo-rationality of

much current planning discourse. If a platform can be developed which fosters and creates agency for these wider practices, in the manner which *Building Rights* has the potential to do, then the antagonistic nature of much discourse, often characterized by different groups speaking in entirely different terms, has the potential to be transcended in favour of an agonistic space in which all voices have agency. Such a process, standing outside the statutory system, could play a role in facilitating the transformation of the public planner to the 'open' model called for by Hillier et. al (Chapter 3, section 3.2), by revealing and giving a long-term presence to the voices and discourse that openness needs to be directed toward. The charrette indicated that the current ability of online forums to engender a space of support and solidarity, to complement the literal solving of problems or addressing of issues, can be a strong support to this approach, allowing the formation of local or theme-based cultures of mutuality and support that transcend policy, political boundary and professional barriers.

The design of an agonistic space for planning discourse

Building Rights Alpha was a first attempt at creating a space, closely related to the forums studied, but which might contain particular design elements that have the potential to build the agency of popular planning discourse with a view to positively influencing extant public planning practices. This study has revealed a few of those design elements, some of which are present already but all of which would be fundamental to its subsequent development. These can be summarised as:

- Define the terms of debate. Technical language is only a barrier if used as a tool of exclusion, and can serve as a bridge between professionals and lay people;
- Colloquial language and forum codification are useful, not only for pragmatic reasons of ease of use but also because they engender a specialist environment and a community of familiarity. If a discourse culture can be built, on-line, around existing building and planning practices then it will contribute to the visibility and agency of those practices;

- Use moderation and new media technologies to cluster discourse around themes or localities, as a further tool in building associations, solidarity, and allowing specific, ‘small’ problems to achieve wider relevance, toward a substantial, indexable knowledge base that allows more people to not ‘start from scratch’. This snowballing appears to have a strong chance of making popular planning discourse more tangible, visible and systemic, a more visible and collective form of dissent sitting alongside, and challenging, the extant system.
- Reveal plan-making. Public knowledge of the creation of planning policy, and the reasoning or evidence behind planning decision-making, is inadequate. Calls for greater access to senior figures and councillors are an aspect of this inadequacy. How to enable greater knowledge of plan-making is not something that *BR Alpha* was able to tackle, but it is likely to involve working in tandem with other initiatives concerned with revealing (and standardizing, not in itself unproblematic) planning policy.
- Understand that, for individuals and the wider public, money and financial risk are key concerns in many engagements with planning, and should not be suppressed in planning discourse in favour of pseudo-rational discussions, particularly given the current political climate of austerity and increasing private-sector influence over public planning departments. The economics of planning is of vital importance whether in the form of fiscal policy, developer contributions or a family’s annual budget.
- Allow peer review and make it easy. Participants in the charrette strongly supported the use of peer review to organise, evaluate and reflect upon the discourses in which they were involved. That said, the current form of these tools within *Building Rights Alpha* is inadequate, and the rules of their application are too obscure. In forum terms, the ‘uber’ user who rises to a position of responsibility, notoriety or influence within a forum (not unlike a ‘power seller’ in eBay, Uber Star Ratings or any number of social reputation systems) is a powerful force in a community, and of tremendous use to that community as can be seen in the presence of such users, over sustained time periods, in many of the threads studied.

- Through privacy settings provide a space of safety for sharing lessons, narratives and queries, in which processes of ‘getting away with it’ or expropriation are not threatened by their scrutiny by ‘official’ or professional users. In this way, most fundamentally, a platform such as *Building Rights* should not be a state service (as initially questioned in Chapter 3, section 3.3) but should sit outside the state, in proximity to it.
- Acknowledge the ‘gaming’ nature of planning as practiced by all parties, not just the public. Such a nature is inherent to an agonistic, renegotiated political space and should be acknowledged as a legitimate space of planning discourse and knowledge exchange, and a counter to the apparent rationality of most current, hegemonic planning discourse.

Planning and People: A mutual relationship

The forums studied revealed that, in sometimes surprising circumstances, there exists an expert group within diverse knowledge communities that is ready to apply their expertise in informal and unremunerated ways to help other forum users, both directly and indirectly. Indeed, almost every thread that led to a long, complex chain of conversation relied in part on expert voices (both lay and professional) to keep up momentum.

The forums also revealed a lay community that ultimately is sympathetic to the existence and ambitions of public planning and which seeks, primarily, improvements to that system’s ability to communicate above all other considerations. In short, a mutual, supportive and subtle dialogue between people and planners *already* exists, just not in the spaces where we would traditionally look for it.

In a context where public planning’s agency to trial new forms of communication appears limited, the workload of the typical local authority planner is under pressure like never before, and much innovation in the world of planning is centred upon creating more systematic, automated and efficient forms of data analysis and decision-making in the context of increasing automisation of the industry (Frey & Osborne, 2013), it feels appropriate that it should be popular forms of discourse

that lead the way in improving lines of communication between public planning and its public(s). In embryonic form, *Building Rights*, building on the evidence base gathered from existing forums, suggests a tool that can be part of this reconnection. Beginning with popular discourse and incorporating expert voices along the way, the model posited by *Building Rights* is not a process of gradually, incrementally 'educating' the public in how planning is done within the extant institutional and statutory framework, it is instead an exercise in bridge-building, a snowball-like model whereby a knowledge of planning and building practices emerges which is distinct from, potentially counter to, but engaged with, extant statutory models. This demands a public engagement with planning which extant discourse on unrelated forums would strongly indicate is already in existence, most significantly at the scale of the direct, local, personal planning problem but certainly not limited to this. It will also demand a change in the culture of planning, but not one that is unprecedented or un-latent in the culture as it stands (Campbell & Marshall: 2002:108).

Not to mention the survival, in various forms, of the 'greater good' represented by public service as identified by Clifford & Tewdwr-Jones (2013). If this greater good were reconceptualised as a system in which both public planning and its publics are involved as active participants, very much following the reconceptualization of the professional and the popular posited by Fiske and Gans (Chapter 2, section 2.2), in which new forms of culture are formed out of the culture provided by the dominant, then a new space might be created, not of consensus and agreement, but of democratic dissent and adversarial, agonistic relationships understood as a positive process of decision-making and the production of political meaning.

Public planning's democratic potential is, it would seem, of vital importance to both practicing public sector planners and to the public(s) they serve. This democratic potential is currently limited, not only by the array of forces currently weighing against the possibility of planning as a democratic practice but also by the powerful dichotomies, hegemonic structuring and binary assumptions that deny the reciprocal relationship between a people of a society and the decision-making frameworks that frame the future of that society. If planning is to emerge as a discursive, democratic practice, and one capable of living up to the 'promise' of participation, and the demand for direct-democracy implicit in much social media

discourse, then a reconceptualization of its relationship to wider society seems necessary, and there should be a strong role for carefully designed communication tools in the playing out of the reconceptualization, building on the firm foundations apparent within the building discourse and building practices that already exist within the popular.

Can the planning system, or part of it, be reconceptualised as an 'open', agonistic political space in which the role of the public is as vital as the role of the trained professional? As both an academic subject and as a profession, public planning has its own rules, customs, practices and communities. It is fruitless to attempt a reconstruction of these from scratch to align to emerging new media paradigms; far better, this study suggests, to allow the *mutual* advocacy of planning expressed by both public planners and the public at large to build connections between the two groups. The theory and practice of social and new media would suggest it has a paradigmatic capacity to assist with those connections.

Can the emerging paradigm of the 'collaborative' planner be fulfilled or expanded upon by exposure to the popular? The public planner on an online forum such as a developed *Building Rights* becomes a more complex and collaborative professional than the current norms of the profession allow for. Not simply the interlocutor or advocate of a group, company, community or local authority but instead a person of knowledge, skills and principles who deploys those things in a variety of ways in a variety of contexts. Their knowledge would be of use in a greater variety of situations and their role in democratic society would be more visible, seen collectively. Whilst the practice of the planner has not been the subject of this study, the picture of the 'public' that emerged from Chapter 5 suggests that the antagonisms presented in the media (Clifford, 2006) are artificial ones and that there is a latent mutuality in our society between the public planner and the public that might finally be exploited through new media.

Can the paradigm shift represented by the ever-increasing significance of social media be captured to aid in these transformations? To an extent, the discourse that is already happening on-line is playing a role here. A parallel discourse of planning – not always well-informed, not always satisfactory, always playful, adversarial, discursive and complex – is already happening. The discourse of new media and

the online platform does not follow the codified practices of public planning as currently practiced in this country. The unlocking of discourse that they represent *will* be brought to bear on the practice of planning as traditional forms of engagement, and the mechanics of Localism will appear ever more slight and unsatisfactory in comparison to the and visibility substance (progressive or not, 'good' or not) of popular discourse. This study suggests that this exposure and 'bringing to bear' need not be antagonistic in character but has every chance, aided by design, of becoming agonistic: complex, discursive, heterogeneous, impactful, informed.

Limits of the Research, New Questions

Building Rights is an incomplete project. Even if it were at a stage in its design where it could be described as finished, it would take a long period of intense public usage before anything approaching a final conclusion about its worth could be established. The researcher intends to take *Building Rights* on this journey upon the completion of this research.

The fact of *Building Rights*' incompleteness was for a time the clearest limitation of the study, and led in the end to a very particular interdisciplinary methodology in response. The development and testing of the platform does not 'prove' that *Building Rights* is the tool to help improve the relationship between people and planning. What it has generated, instead, is a series of insights which suggest that a tool *like* it is precisely the kind of intervention that could make a profound impression not only on the relationship between people and planning, but on planning itself as a practice, as suggested in the preceding section.

The more profound of the questions asked by this research are about the precise mechanics of how popular planning discourse might gain agency and traction within the current public planning system. It appears that the same algorithmic potential that promotes bridal wear to engaged women and Viagra to aging men might also be the key to forming connections across the landscape of popular planning discourse: the trick will be in allowing issues and narratives to 'snowball' and connect across society and into policy. This is how change will become

systemic. Ten thousand people gathered in a thousand community centres in an effort to save a cherished local amenity – imagine if their expertise, failures and achievements could be shared? A deeper study of the learning processes that happen in the analogue world would be useful here – what might on-line spaces learn from the village hall and the public house.

This study's analysis of extant forums limits its scope to the content left behind on online platforms by their users. As suggested within Chapter 4, this does not allow us to explore the motivations, characters and sociological formations that lie behind and around the threads studied. A subsequent study might explore these meta-narratives through interviews or similar methods, and might yield yet richer findings about the workings and motivations of these communities.

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The study herein into the language and culture of on-line forums when discussing planning was initially conceived of as one way among many of understanding the popular response to public planning. But it also stands as evidence of the *existing* mutual relationship between people and planning. People *are* happy to engage with planning, on their terms: collectively, and in creative, even devious ways. And there is widespread respect for the ambition and challenge that public planning, in principle, represents. The opposition of 'planning vs. people' is revealed to be a false one, and its place a much more nuanced and complex relationship is revealed. The questions that emerge from this have a broader relevance than what they can teach an online platform, and point to reconceptualization of planning that might aide its durability in the face of the current neoliberal onslaught. How might other 'spaces' of planning, from the committee chamber to the public forum and the meeting with a duty officer be reframed by this understanding, or superseded by other forms? And, further to the idea of forms, if planning as currently practiced can be understood to 'result' (at least partially) in a particular type of place and architecture, what new forms of place and architecture might emerge were the gulf to be bridged?

The public planner's response to popular discourse, contextualized within the wider rise of populism as a political force, should also be explored, building on the earlier work of Clifford & Tewdwr-Jones (2013) and others, partly but not only as a means of establishing the degree of willingness to be as 'open' as society demands and as the theories of Gunder, Hillier and Mouffe strongly advocate. The belief in the public planner that has informed this study is derived in part from studies like (2013) but also from a deeper personal belief in the potential of the public planner to take on new forms of agency and openness – a belief that should be tested further, possibly internationally, in the form of a sociological exploration of the planner's conceptualization of, and experience of, the wider society in which they operate.

8 Conclusion

There appears to be a consensus that planning must command public legitimacy and that this must mean direct democratic accountability. (TCPA, 2017)

The findings of *Making Planning Popular* strongly suggest that there is a crucial role for design in capitalising on existing transformations in popular planning discourse. The research has set out a range of parameters derived from extant popular discourse about how this might best be achieved. *Building Rights* in its current iteration is understood not as the final resolution of this goal but as a prototype through which the design of such a tool has been substantially defined. Its own limitations, and the potential revealed in its testing, form a brief for further research and further design.

This study is the first such work to explore popular online discourse concerning public planning, the first to explore popular perceptions of public planning within social media and online discourse, and the first to test the role of the designer in expanding the significance of that discourse in the transformation of the built environment. It takes place at an exciting, challenging moment when new forms of discourse and knowledge exchange are already reshaping political institutions and have the potential to go further. In the context of planning as in the wider political sphere, the agency of the popular is as worrying as it is exhilarating, and since the outset of this study a range of political transformations have occurred which have seen rejections of existing forms of political power, whether in the emancipatory form of the Occupy movement or direct democracy or in the – far more widespread – rise of populism as manifest in the success of figures such as Le Pen, Trump and Farage. These transformations are happening around the world. Though this study's contextualization of the 'popular' as a political force can't keep pace with these current events, they have emphasized the need to find progressive, emancipatory forms of popular activity, and the ways by which that activity might

gain agency in the current world. This is not a populist lip service to the worst excesses of public opinion, which more closely resembles the participatory rhetoric of the current era, instead it is a genuine opening up of the discipline and its processes to wider society – its actions and its discourse – and the assertion of the relevance and agency of that wider world. Thanks to the discourses studied, which are purposely cross-society, this study strongly suggests the progressive potential of the popular to impact upon public planning. This brings risks as well as opportunities; global issues such as fake news and the challenges of anonymity and data protection have become mainstream after the majority of this study was conducted, and these issues must necessarily impact upon the design and character of spaces and platforms that might learn from or build upon *Building Rights*. The need for influence and reputation to be connected to tangible identities whilst protecting the practices and autonomy of individuals and groups is a more apparent one than it was during the design of *Building Rights* Alpha, however much these things were considered during that process. Indeed, the work of Fiske et al (3.1) is a reminder, from before the paradigm shift of new media, that the culture of the popular can only ever be potentially progressive, it is not an obvious good in itself, a reminder that the design of the spaces and protocols in which such things reside and gain agency is of vital importance. The discovery in Chapter 5 that there is widespread sympathy for public planning among the public – transcending the problems of the day – is a key one here as it suggests that the trajectory for a better engagement between public planning and popular discourse has the potential to be progressive – a multidirectional process of knowledge exchange and understanding-building between state and popular - at a moment when such a thing is of vital importance to planning (1.1) albeit one that the profession has not yet connected with. In terms of influence and contribution to knowledge, it is hoped that the research will contribute this ultimately political understanding to the emerging field of digital service design in planning: we must build tools that connect people and public planning, not simply streamline existing systems using new technologies. The latent ‘open’ planner described in, for instance, the work of Clifford & Tewdwr-Jones (2013) and evident in the work of (for instance) Damon Rich, Finn Williams & Pooja Agrawal and many others, strongly suggests that the importance of public service remains strong in the minds of a very large number of public sector planners, and that there is a professional

desire for a revitalised public planning discipline to re-engage with its publics and emerge transformed. It suggests that there is a strong will toward this among the planning profession, even if such a will is not currently evident in the structures of the planning system itself.

The study of existing forums, originally intended as supporting research for the design process, took on greater importance once the design research process was underway. Its findings ultimately suggest that a diverse public community around planning *already exists*, in the interstices between dialogues across a range of popular forums. This community involves a mix of lay and professional users, and is a mutual, supportive, critical and engaged environment in which planning issues are discussed and negotiated, and where the people involved in those issues are supported, critiqued, advised. These are communities with very strong codes, rules and social structures, and as extant spaces they provide a clear template for tools aimed directly at public planning, chief among them the presence of diverse users, moderators and, crucially, a feeling of community in which sympathies can be shared over the medium and long-term, personalities remembered. For many years the researcher has anecdotally described *Building Rights* as ‘mumsnet for planning’, but in the terms outlined above such a thing already exists. The task for future incarnations of *Building Rights*, or similar platforms, will be to make a place where that wider community can exist within direct proximity to planning. Of course, neither Mumsnet nor its cousins in this study set out to be a place for increasing participation in planning nor where planning-related discourse might play out, but, as part of the de-siloing that we witness all around us, they have become just those sorts of space. It could be seen as a limitation that, as a space that is specifically interested in questions of planning, *Building Rights* might not become the kind of popular space studied within this research. But this does a disservice to the potential of public planning: few lay people are interested in planning per se, but huge numbers of us care about the future of our built and un-built environments: with passion and knowledge, and in many cases in ways that occupy a great deal of non-work time and energy. In reframing planning questions as the larger, collective effort that our built environment demands, we stand a chance of transforming this care and effort into something systemic. It may be that a further development of *Building Rights* is able to provide such a reframing, but

even if that does not occur, the profession of public planning should, this study concludes, open itself up to the wider world of discourse and agency represented (but not limited) by the online discourse studied herein. In today's neoliberal austerity, such an opening-up might be public planning's greatest chance of continued relevance and agency.

Not only does the online forum represent a *potentially progressive* space for planning discourse, but it also represents a language and a manner of discourse that the profession could benefit from in radical ways. The language and idiom of forums is a bridge between professional and lay user that builds trust, honesty, frankness. It is far from an unproblematic space but a problematic space, along agonist people by adversaries rather than enemies, is precisely what is required. New media has the potential to finally live up to the demands of Goodman (Chapter 2, section 2.2) and many subsequent voices for the language of planning to be radically transformed *from the outside* in order to increase its democratic potential. This outside space, thanks to the paradigmatic shift in our communication models represented by social and new media, has never been more visible or more tangible (3.3).

Such a space, something archived and enduring, stands the chance of becoming what we might recognise as a heterogeneous, federated community but one with agency in the present, rather than awaiting the subsequent attentions of the historian. It also has the potential to reveal, through aggregation and the weight of a period of communication, the working of power within the planning system (2.3), and to reveal precise targets for intervention. In both senses, aggregated discourse along the lines described here might form an increasingly tangible, unavoidable form of the 'real' – what *is*, rather than what *should be*. The forum is the natural home of the real and of the specific, the natural enemy of the rhetorical 'shoulds' of hegemonic planning practice.

It will require the participation of the planning professional, but the online forum, combined with a particular (and present) form of politically-engaged design practice, stands a real chance of providing an agonistic space in which dissent and adversarial relations play out.

This study has left the researcher keen to explore this question in greater depth and in other contexts: globally, for instance, or in other venues. Should we be undertaking a sociological study of the planning committee chamber? Or of the duty planner's phone line? Can we find, in other political arenas, more developed and tangible examples of the impact on social media on established political and decision-making structures, and bring them to bear on the democratic potential of public planning?

As this research drew to a close, the Town and Country Planning Association announced the Raynsford Review of Planning, with the stated aim of exploring:

'how the Government can reform the English planning system to make it fairer, better resourced and capable of producing quality outcomes, while still encouraging the production of new homes.'

(<https://www.tcpa.org.uk/raynsford-review>, Accessed 4.9.2017).

The position and provocation papers that helped launch the review acknowledged the gulf between planning and its public as a key issue in the capacity of planning to produce 'quality outcomes' (TCPA, 2017). The use of vocabulary such as 'direct democracy' in these papers supports the assertion of this research that, whilst the rhetoric of engagement and participation has been a presence in planning theory for as long as anyone can remember, it might very soon be time for planning and its public to come face to face.

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Appendix 1
Sample of *Building Rights*
Alpha threads & key technical
issues raised

Contents of Appendix 1

ID	Thread	Page No.
1	https://beta.buildingrights.org/questions/64/comment-on-tower-hamlets-local-plan	APP1_1
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3	https://beta.buildingrights.org/questions/59/i-want-to-build-a-decent-community-noticeboard-on-my-estate-in-camden-can-someone-offer-advice	APP1_5
4	https://beta.buildingrights.org/questions/27/i-want-to-build-a-tree-house	APP1_7
5	https://beta.buildingrights.org/questions/57/local-residential-development-complaints	APP1_8
6	https://beta.buildingrights.org/questions	APP1_10
	Summary of issues raised during Building Rights Alpha Charrette	APP1_!4



BUILDING RIGHTS (/)

or

[Ask a Question \(/questions/ask/\)](#)

[comment on Tower Hamlets local plan \(/questions/64/comment-on-tower-hamlets-local-plan\)](#)

<http://towerhamlets-consult.objective.co.uk/portal/planning/newlp/nlpr18/reg18>
(<http://towerhamlets-consult.objective.co.uk/portal/planning/newlp/nlpr18/reg18>)

[consultation \(/tags/consultation/\)](#) [local \(/tags/local/\)](#) [plan \(/tags/plan/\)](#)

[Edit \(/Questions/64/edit/\)](#) [close \(/Questions/64/close/\)](#) [delete \(/Delete/64/\)](#) more ▼

(/vote /64/up/) -1

asked 17 Dec '16, 13:00



[Hollang \(/users/25/hollang\)](#)
107●2

(/vote /64/down/) (/mark_favorite/64/)

Add A Comment

Thank you [@Hollang \(/users/25/hollang\)](#) for this! If you hadn't posted I wouldn't have know where & how to comment.

[Link \(/Answer_link/86/\)](#) [award Points \(/Award_points/user/23/answer/86/\)](#) [edit \(/Answers/86/edit/\)](#) [delete \(/Delete/86/\)](#) more ▼

answered 17 Dec '16, 13:16

(/vote /86/up/) 0



[Catarina \(/users/23/catarina\)](#)
161●3

(/vote /86/down/) (/accept_answer/86/)

Yeah but to the whole forum? We need a local area section for this sort of thing, no?

1

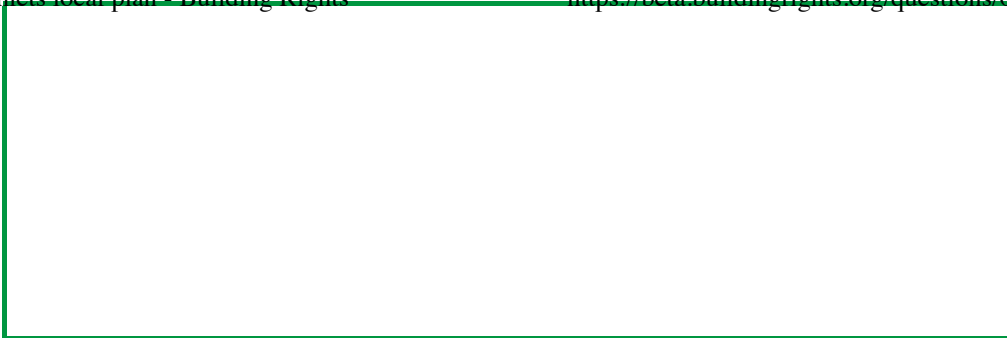
[Upvote \(/Like_comment/93/\)](#) [Edit Comment \(/Node_markdown/93/\)](#) [Delete \(/Delete_comment/93/\)](#)

[David Knight \(/users/22/david-knight\)](#)
17 Dec '16, 13:25

Add A Comment

Your answer

(http



Post Your Answer

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By RSS:

</questions/64/comment-on-tower-hamlets-local-plan?type=rss>)

</questions/64/comment-on-tower-hamlets-local-plan?type=rss&answers=1> Comments



We recommend **WebFaction** (<http://www.webfaction.com?affiliate=osqa>) for OSQA hosting. For under \$10/month their reliable servers get the job done. See our [step-by-step setup guide](http://wiki.osqa.net/display/docs/Installing+OSQA+on+WebFaction) (<http://wiki.osqa.net/display/docs/Installing+OSQA+on+WebFaction>).

Tags:

[local \(/tags/local/\)](#) ×2
[consultation \(/tags/consultation/\)](#) ×1
[plan \(/tags/plan/\)](#) ×1

Asked: **17 Dec '16, 13:00**

Seen: **239 times**

Last updated: **17 Dec '16, 13:25**

The **OSQA website** (<http://www.osqa.net/>) and **OSQA wiki** (<http://wiki.osqa.net/>) are great resources to help you learn more about the OSQA open source Q&A system. **Join the OSQA chat!** (<http://meta.osqa.net/question/79/is-there-an-online-chat-room-or-irc-channel-for-osqa#302>)

Related questions

[Help the local market \(/questions/79/help-the-local-market\)](/questions/79/help-the-local-market)



BUILDING RIGHTS (/)

or

[Ask a Question \(/questions/ask/\)](#)

[Help the local market \(/questions/79/help-the-local-market\)](#)

We have a lovely local market close to where I live in Tower Hamlets. The problem is there are only one or two stalls open. Is there a way to help support this market and get more stall holders involved?

[support \(/tags/support/\)](#) [local \(/tags/local/\)](#) [market \(/tags/market/\)](#)

[Edit \(/Questions/79/edit/\)](#) [close \(/Questions/79/close/\)](#) [delete \(/Delete/79/\)](#) more ▼

asked **17 Dec '16, 13:11**

[\(/vote /79/up/\)](#)
1



[mamamia \(/users/30/mamamia\)](#)

130●2

[\(/vote /79/down/\)](#)
[\(/mark favorite/79/\)](#)



Add A Comment

Maybe you could get together and create a graphic identity for them, along with a facebook page and some kind of social media presence. That could be a cheap (only expenditure is your time!) way to help.

[Link \(/Answer_link/82/\)](#) [award Points \(/Award_points/user/23/answer/82/\)](#) [edit \(/Answers/82/edit/\)](#) [delete \(/Delete/82/\)](#) more ▼

answered **17 Dec '16, 13:12**

[\(/vote /82/up/\)](#)
1



[Catarina \(/users/23/catarina\)](#)

161●3

[\(/vote /82/down/\)](#)
[\(/accept answer/82/\)](#)



Shouldn't the council fund the time spent working on a graphic identity? It's in there interest to have a thriving market too is it not? **2**

Would it be a good idea to take a short proposal to a council suggesting how you could best help the market before you spend all of your free time on this?

[Upvote \(/Like_comment/91/\)](#) [Edit Comment \(/Node_markdown/91/\)](#) [Delete \(/Delete_comment/91/\)](#)

[OliverLong_ \(/users/31/oliverlong_\)](#)

17 Dec '16, 13:24

Add A Comment

Is the market run by the council? If so it might be time to put pressure on them!

[Link \(/Answer_link/81/\)](#) [edit \(/Answers/81/edit/\)](#) [delete \(/Delete/81/\)](#) more ▼



(/vote/81/up/)

0



David Knight (/users/22/david-knight) 173●6



(/vote/81/down/)
(/accept_answer/81/)

How do I do this?

Upvote (/Like_comment/85/)

Edit Comment (/Node_markdown/85/)

Delete (/Delete_comment/85/)

[mamamia \(/users/30/mamamia\)](#)

17 Dec '16, 13:15

Add A Comment

Your answer

(http

Post Your Answer

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[\(/questions/79/help-the-local-market?type=rss\)](#)

[\(/questions/79/help-the-local-market?type=rss&comments=yes\)](#) Comments

 <http://www.webfaction.com?affiliate=osqa>

We recommend **WebFaction** (<http://www.webfaction.com?affiliate=osqa>) for OSQA hosting. For under \$10/month their reliable servers get the job done. See our **step-by-step setup guide** (<http://wiki.osqa.net/display/docs/Installing+OSQA+on+WebFaction>).

Tags:

[local \(/tags/local/\)](#) ×2
[market \(/tags/market/\)](#) ×1
[support \(/tags/support/\)](#) ×1



BUILDING RIGHTS (/)

or

[Ask a Question \(/questions/ask/\)](#)

I want to build a decent community noticeboard on my estate in Camden, can someone offer advice? (/questions/59/i-want-to-build-a-decent-community-noticeboard-on-my-estate-in-camden-can-someone-offer-advice)

I want to build a decent community noticeboard on my estate in Camden, can someone offer advice?

I am curious to see if this would help improve the social dynamic of the estate I live in. It is ex-council, some of it is private some of it is still social housing. There is an old unused board that must've been introduced by Camden council at some point but it is in a band spot and is dingy. Would the council fund this? Who should I contact at my local council to find out more information?

While i'm here, does anyone know of any good examples of successful public noticeboards?

[communism \(/tags/communism/\)](#) [notice \(/tags/notice/\)](#) [ex-council \(/tags/ex-council/\)](#) [public \(/tags/public/\)](#) [permission \(/tags/permission/\)](#)

[Edit \(/Questions/59/edit/\)](#) [close \(/Questions/59/close/\)](#) [delete \(/Delete/59/\)](#) more ▼

[\(/vote/59/up/\)](#)
1

asked **17 Dec '16, 12:56**



[OliverLong \(/users/31/oliverlong\)](#)
116●2

[\(/vote/59/down/\)](#)
[\(/mark_favorite/59/\)](#)

[Add A Comment](#)

There are some really good ones on Hampstead High Street. Timber boxes with glazed fronts and they're absolutely jammed with notices.

Not a technical answer but if you're going to do this I reckon you should try and form a community group to collectively be responsible for it. If its just you then it would be a real burden to manage and might not reach out to people so well.

Noticeboards that are *big* might need planning permission, weirdly, or rather advertising consent which is a type of planning permission. If its an estate, there's likely to be a tenant organisation or someone in the council responsible for estates that you should take to.

Collectivise!

[Link \(/Answer_link/70/\)](#) [edit \(/Answers/70/edit/\)](#) [delete \(/Delete/70/\)](#) more ▼

answered **17 Dec '16, 13:03**

[\(/vote/70/up/\)](#)
0



[David Knight \(/users/22/david-knight\)](#)

APP1_7

Thanks David, Really great advice!

1

[Upvote \(/Like_comment/75/\)](#)

[Edit Comment \(/Node_markdown/75/\)](#)

[Delete \(/Delete_comment/75/\)](#)

[OliverLong \(/users/31/oliverlong_\)](#)

17 Dec '16, 13:07

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Your answer

(http

Post Your Answer

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[want-](#)

[to-](#)

[build-](#)

[a-decent-](#)

[community-](#)

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[on-](#)

[my-](#)

[estate-](#)

[in-](#)

[camden-](#)

[can-](#)

[someone-](#)

[offer-](#)

[advices=rs\)](#)



BUILDING RIGHTS (/)

or

[Ask a Question \(/questions/ask/\)](/questions/ask/)

I want to build a tree house (/questions/27/i-want-to-build-a-tree-house)


Do I need planning permission to build a tree house as a guest bedroom?

[house \(/tags/house/\)](#) [construction \(/tags/construction/\)](#) [tree \(/tags/tree/\)](#) [garden \(/tags/garden/\)](#)

[Edit \(/Questions/27/edit/\)](#) [close \(/Questions/27/close/\)](#) [delete \(/Delete/27/\)](#) [more ▼](#)

asked **17 Dec '16, 11:49**

[\(/vote /27/up/\)](#)
0

 [Catarina \(/users/23/catarina\)](/users/23/catarina)
161●3

[\(/vote /27/down/\)](#)
[\(/mark favorite/27/\)](#)

[Add A Comment](#)

I'm assuming the tree is in your back garden!

Its possible to build a new building in your garden (up a tree or not) without needing planning permission, by conforming to 'permitted development' - the type of project is called an "independent structure".

Your local council might have a design guidance booklet for small residential projects which could help you.


I reckon the biggest challenge will be making sure the project doesn't unreasonably overlook your neighbours.

The other thing is that the new building can't be a separate home, it has to be 'ancillary' to the main house.

[Link \(/Answer_link/53/\)](#) [edit \(/Answers/53/edit/\)](#) [delete \(/Delete/53/\)](#) [more ▼](#)

answered **17 Dec '16, 12:16**

[\(/vote /53/up/\)](#)
0

 [David Knight \(/users/22/david-knight\)](/users/22/david-knight)
173●6

[\(/vote /53/down/\)](#)
[\(/accept answer/53/\)](#)

[Add A Comment](#)

Your answer

[\(http](#)



BUILDING RIGHTS (/)

or

[Ask a Question \(/questions/ask/\)](#)

Local residential development complaints (/questions/57/local-residential-development-complaints)


I wasn't notified of how hideous a local housing development was being built until the scaffolding with visuals of it came up — can I still complain? Can I stop it?

[complaints \(/tags/complaints/\)](#) [residential \(/tags/residential/\)](#)

[Edit \(/Questions/57/edit/\)](#) [close \(/Questions/57/close/\)](#) [delete \(/Delete/57/\)](#) more ▼

asked **17 Dec '16, 12:53**

[\(/vote /57/up/\)](#)
3

 [Catarina \(/users/23/catarina\)](#)
161●3

[\(/vote /57/down/\)](#)
[\(/mark_favorite/57/\)](#)

[Add A Comment](#)


If they're already building it then its safe to assume that they have planning permission. The only way to intervene in the situation is if they're building something which is clearly different from what they have permission for - you can find their planning application on your local council's website and usually view all the documents. If you look at all the 'Conditions' the council put on their approval that may give you some tools - if they're building something thats not what they have approval for, the council can intervene.

But if its what they have permission for, you're fucked...

[Link \(/Answer_link/61/\)](#) [edit \(/Answers/61/edit/\)](#) [delete \(/Delete/61/\)](#) more ▼

answered **17 Dec '16, 12:58**

[\(/vote /61/up/\)](#)
0

 [David Knight \(/users/22/david-knight\)](#)
173●6

[\(/vote /61/down/\)](#)
[\(/accept_answer/61/\)](#)

[Add A Comment](#)

Kill the developer, that will slow the process down...

[Link \(/Answer_link/62/\)](#) [award Points \(/Award_points/user/31/answer/62/\)](#) [edit \(/Answers/62/edit/\)](#) [delete \(/Delete/62/\)](#) more ▼

answered **17 Dec '16, 12:59**

APP1_10

[\(/vote /62/up/\)](#)



(/vote
/62/down/)
(/accept answer/62/)

Nasty. Downvoted.

Upvote (/Like_comment/65/) **Edit Comment (/Node_markdown/65/)** **Delete (/Delete_comment/65/)**

[David Knight \(/users/22/david-knight\)](#)
17 Dec '16, 13:00

Sorry David! Please give me my points back!

Honestly though, how can locals become aware of (and challenge) these developments before they are started? Is there a public forum with this information available or is this what BR is intending to be?

Upvote (/Like_comment/73/) **Edit Comment (/Node_markdown/73/)** **Delete (/Delete_comment/73/)**

[OliverLong \(/users/31/oliverlong_\)](#)
17 Dec '16, 13:05

Anything that needs planning permission can be commented upon, and the local council is obliged to put up notices as part of the planning process, with documents about the application available online or at the council offices. That is currently the big 'public' moment to comment on application (positively or negatively) but your comments have to be policy-based, e.g. you can't say you don't like it, you have to say its wrong to put commercial premises in a residential area for example. Trouble is, people don't necessarily know anything about how to comment like this, which is tragic.

Upvote (/Like_comment/80/) **Edit Comment (/Node_markdown/80/)** **Delete (/Delete_comment/80/)**

[David Knight \(/users/22/david-knight\)](#)
17 Dec '16, 13:11

Add A Comment

Your answer

([http](#)

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[\(/questions
/57/local-
residential-
development-
complaints?type=rss\)](#)



BUILDING RIGHTS (/)

or

[Ask a Question \(/questions/ask/\)](#)

Wayfinding (/questions/68/wayfinding)

I live in an ex-council estate with a lot of building looking the same and sharing the same street name, therefore it's difficult for people to find the building they are looking for. How can we add some wayfinding or maps to the area?

[map \(/tags/map/\)](#) [wayfinding \(/tags/wayfinding/\)](#)

[Edit \(/Questions/68/edit/\)](#) [close \(/Questions/68/close/\)](#) [delete \(/Delete/68/\)](#) [more ▼](#)

asked **17 Dec '16, 13:01**

[\(/vote /68/up/\)](#)
0



[mamamia \(/users/30/mamamia\)](#)
130●2

[\(/vote /68/down/\)](#)
[\(/mark favorite/68/\)](#)

[Add A Comment](#)

[@OliverLong \(/users/31/oliverlong \)](#) asked a similar question about community noticeboards. In principle there's nothing to stop you but obviously whoever owns the wall may object (whether its the council or an individual or whatever) so its best to engage with them. Signs count as advertising hoarding if they go over a certain size, maybe maybe check your local council's advertising consent hoarding. If you kept it small (and on the right walls) you could probably do a whole wayfinding thing without needing permission.

[Link \(/Answer_link/95/\)](#) [edit \(/Answers/95/edit/\)](#) [delete \(/Delete/95/\)](#) [more ▼](#)

answered **17 Dec '16, 13:31**

[\(/vote /95/up/\)](#)
0



[David Knight \(/users/22/david-knight\)](#)
173●6

[\(/vote /95/down/\)](#)
[\(/accept answer/95/\)](#)

Thanks for your answer.

I don't want to do it myself – I would like the council to do it and pay for it. Don't people have the right to know where they are going?

[Upvote \(/Like_comment/96/\)](#) [Edit Comment \(/Node_markdown/96/\)](#) [Delete \(/Delete_comment/96/\)](#)

[mamamia \(/users/30/mamamia\)](#)
17 Dec '16, 13:35

I don't think they have the *right* literally, at least not in the UK. But the council should be interested in helping its citizens/users getting around. Does the council still manage the estate? If so they will have a contact you can talk to about improvements.

In the meantime, I'd join any group campaigning for the right to good wayfinding [@mamamia \(/users/30/mamamia\)](#)!

APP1_12

David Knight (/users/22/david-knight)

17 Dec '16, 13:44

Add A Comment

Your answer

(http

Post Your Answer

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[\(/questions](#)

[/68/wayfinding?type=rss\)](#)

[\(/questions](#)

[/68/wayfinding?type=rss&](#)

[comments=1\)](#) Comments



<http://www.webfaction.com?affiliate=osqa>

We recommend **WebFaction** (<http://www.webfaction.com?affiliate=osqa>) for OSQA hosting. For under \$10/month their reliable servers get the job done. See our **step-by-step setup guide** (<http://wiki.osqa.net/display/docs/Installing+OSQA+on+WebFaction>).

Tags:

[map \(/tags/map/\)](#) ×1

[wayfinding \(/tags/wayfinding/\)](#) ×1

Asked: **17 Dec '16, 13:01**

Seen: **210 times**

Last updated: **17 Dec '16, 13:44**

The **OSQA website** (<http://www.osqa.net/>) and **OSQA wiki** (<http://wiki.osqa.net/>) are great resources to help you learn more about the OSQA open source Q&A system. **Join the OSQA chat!** (<http://meta.osqa.net/question/79/is-there-an-online-chat-room-or-irc-channel-for-osqa#302>)

Related questions

Summary of issues raised during *Building Rights* Alpha Charrette

Policing & moderation

- Not enough clarity about what to do if a question is suspected to be spam/trolling/not genuine
- If I as a moderator delete an accidental repeat post, is the original poster informed? What happens to the post?
- I reported a comment as inappropriate – what happens now? Is my assertion checked by a moderator or does a discussion ensue?
- Should there be a charter? Or a more explicit statement about the purpose of the site and what is expected of members?
- Who ultimately decides the best answer? If it's the moderator or the question-asker, this should be made clear. Maybe there are different kinds of best answer for different people/contexts?

Layout and graphics

- 'No questions like this have been found' appears too big
- Profile picture is currently a 'gravatar' (en.gravatar.com/, Accessed 17.12.2016). Gravatars are good but only certain kinds of tech-savvy user would have or want one of these at present. Choice of avatar should be more open, e.g. Twitter, Instagram, Facebook.
- Calendar layout is confusing
- My questions should be highlighted to enable me to see and return to them easily
- Can the 'Ask a Question' button be relocated to below the Captcha images?
- It should be possible to 'sort' questions in different ways (most recent, most relevant, most popular)

- Comment threads/answer threads are confusing. Should they be strictly chronological? Or should this be something that can be chosen, as happens on *The Guardian* website?
- Could popular topics/tags sit within a dropdown menu?
- Currently the most recent user's name is posted below the question in list view, this should be the OP's name instead.
- Tag lists block the 'Ask a Question' button
- Hashtags that consist of multiple words do not work yet
- Clarity: the site prompts me to answer my own question, which would be a rare occurrence. Or this needs to be reworded.
- Boundaries between posts not very clear and not helped by meta-comments, layout should create clearer boundaries
- Current rating arrows are too subtle and too easily 'undone' by mistake. Arrows maybe do not convey the meaning of upvoting, they look like they might 'move' the post rather than review it. Thumbs up and down are commonplace visual shorthand for this.
- Can the captcha be prettier? Integration of applets/other code into the design.

Users & Membership

- Validation emails don't seem to be happening (a hole in spam protection)
- Reputation points/karma are not readily understandable and have their own jargon. This should be more upfront (in charter? FAQ?) Better understanding needed, and better rewards when points are accrued. (Great users should be clearly/visually celebrated as such)
- Could the 'fist' logo grow with reputation?
- Maximum age for users is 95 – ageism!
- Verified accounts should be celebrated, moderators more clearly visible as such. Generally more tangible sense of different levels of membership.

- Are there other ways of understanding a reputation? Endorsements from within or without the forum, i.e. someone can nominate another user as a particular expert, declare themselves to be one (with proof?) or forms of external endorsement/reputation (e.g. membership of a professional body) could be made visible.

Connections, Tagging, Community

- Include a 'People also asked' feature alongside questions, in order to make connections
- Categorise questions by *building type*?
- Could tags be visual (as well as textual)
- Could tags be something that the user has to add, or is helped to add via the layout?
- Could sub-communities reflect different demographics (a sub-community for old people, for young people, etc.)
- Is there space for a private messaging system? Or other ways of communicating directly and privately? Would be useful in order to build communities
- Can we hashtag or tag people in order to communicate (We can, but it is not clear)
- Can threads be 'pinned' or aggregated into something more formal if they are deemed (by moderators or by the community) to be of particular or more widespread relevance?

Communication

- When answering a question it can be hard to visualise the situation. Voluntary geotagging? Search by map? A sketch pad or

engaging way of drawing? A form of 'wiki' drawing which allows multiple users to sketch 'together' or in parallel, with versioning?

- Lots of 'answers' are actually requests for more information or clarification. Could this be clearer, i.e. one can set a response type (Answer/Clarification Sought) etc.?
- Could we learn from Facebook, Twitter etc in terms of notifications? Could the site keep its users informed using such systems as the MacOS notification centre? Audible notifications, within or outside the site itself?

Appendix 2

Index of threads studied in
Chapter 6

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Mumsnet

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Talk

Topics » Property/DIY

Has anyone had their neighbour object to a planning application? (154 Posts)

HeadFairy Fri 06-Feb-15 20:47:02

How did you stop yourself from killing them 😊

Very frustrated, neighbours who previously said they would be fine with proposed building work have lodged an objection claiming their light will be adversely affected in their kitchen.

They are now totally avoiding us, our front doors face each other and three times today they've scuttled away when normally they'd stop to chat.

Not sure what I can do but sit and wait for the planning dept to make their mind up, but just wanted to vent.

Has anyone else had objections against their planning application and still gone on to win?

echt Fri 06-Feb-15 21:02:59

No, but we objected to our NDNs. I can't imagine they were pleased, but they are courteous folk and we are still on excellent terms. Later they were glad we knocked them back as the renovations would have cost twice the sum, once they discovered the termite damage.

Your NDNs are undoubtedly embarrassed. So I'd do the cheery wave and hello.

NunoBettencourt Fri 06-Feb-15 21:03:42

Yep. Had a fair few objections but planning came through a couple of months ago. Nearly ended up with it going to committee but the architect managed to get it to just be chairman sign off thankfully. Had to make a few adjustments before that point as well.

One neighbour still not happy but being all two faced about it and don't know about the others. Funnily enough the people it will affect most have been fine about it from the start!

I know I'll have to keep them all informed in a nice way to try and make the process not too awful for everyone, we are going to be neighbours after all (ours is a self build), but it'll be hard knowing the amount of crap being spoken behind our backs.

Maybe your neighbours are worried there will be a confrontation as they initially said no problem? Will it actually block their light? I'd say try and keep talking to them, maybe try and reassure them? I found people didn't always translate the plans into real life very well.

lastnightiwenttomanderley Fri 06-Feb-15 21:10:33

In all seriousness, think about it from their point of view. Your changes are unlikely to improve things for them (though they might not make it worse) so what have they got to lose by objecting?

I'd be annoyed too, but afraid its the way of the world.

Floggingmolly Fri 06-Feb-15 21:12:56

It may in fact make no difference as to whether permission is granted or not. You apparently have no right to light in law. As we found to our cost...

AndSheRose Fri 06-Feb-15 21:20:25

Did you discuss your plans with them beforehand? Even if your proposals are rejected because of it you can appeal and win. Also, find out what you can do under permitted development - which might be similar and you need no 'permission' from anyone.

PigeonPie Fri 06-Feb-15 21:22:29

These are the major planning issues which can be considered by the officers / committee:

loss of privacy/impact on residential amenity;
overshadowing/overbearing impact;
highway safety, traffic and parking issues;
noise;

flooding,
design and materials;
appearance of the development;
capacity of infrastructure - schools/public transport etc;

So Flogging I'm concerned that your loss of light didn't have an impact, unless the planning officer decided it wasn't going to be great.

It's always awkward when neighbours fall out over planning, but I can see why it happens. Often it's because 'all change is necessarily bad' and if the project is finally built it doesn't turn out to be that much of a problem.

I hope you are able to sort it out OP.

HeadFairy Fri 06-Feb-15 21:24:35

I do hope it won't sour our relationship because we love our road for its friendliness. They are new to the road, and are both civil servants so I do hope it's just a case of them being uber thorough.

I had a long chat with our architect today, of course there will be some effects, you don't change a building sufficiently to require planning permission without it slightly changing the surroundings, that's why we have the planning process, but I'm so convinced it's not going to affect them seriously. Today they had brilliant sunshine in their kitchen window at midday (we're raising the height of our roof by 1.4m so they're concerned they'll lose light in their kitchen) so even in winter the sun has rounded the house by midday - we all face South East so we have tons of light at the backs of the houses, where the kitchens are, so they really won't be badly affected, which is why I can't understand their objections.

I'm just so gutted now they're being all awkward with us. 😞

HeadFairy Fri 06-Feb-15 21:27:09

Thanks Pigeon....

Hopefully the design is sufficiently complimentary to the rest of the houses, we won't qualify under the permitted development rules sadly as we're raising the roof height.

The wait is going to be awful, if we don't get planning we'll have to move which will break my heart.

LondonGirl83 Fri 06-Feb-15 21:33:11

You absolutely do have a right to light in law but insignificant changes to light are not grounds to turn down a planning application.

We actually had a neighbour object because they didn't understand how a slopped roof impacts shade. Their objection was ignored by the planners as it was baseless (the planners have rule of thumb tests they use to assess potential harm for neighbours' light).

Our neighbours told us they would object to one specific part of the application. We assured them the work would not harm their light but didn't try to convince them not to lodge the objection as we knew we were in the right.

Just stay friendly about the entire thing. You are about to cause them a tremendous amount of disruption.

HeadFairy Fri 06-Feb-15 21:37:57

LondonGirl... I will grit my teeth and smile at them 😊

elastamum Fri 06-Feb-15 21:43:00

One of my neighbours wrote an 8 page letter of objection to the planners about a stable block that I am building in my field. It is about 1/4 mile from their house and they cant even see it! He got ignored and they passed it, although we are expecting more trouble as every time anyone does any work on our house he comes out and take photos 😡

PaddingtonBlair Fri 06-Feb-15 22:02:02

Our ex NDN objected to the council after regular long chats with us about what we were planning where he was happy about it all and nice and pie. Gutting at the time but then two things happened:

- 1) We won (with some changes, but all acceptable to us) and
- 2) The council put his letter online....he had only given himself headed paper and the title of landed gentry in the hope it would help his cause. He was definitely not a Lord! Just made himself look like a knob! ~~may have screenshot his letter on social media~~

sockssandalsandafork Fri 06-Feb-15 22:15:01

we are going through something similar 😊 we are converting a detached garage at the back of the house into a granny flat and adding a pitched roof, the neighbour whos garden backs on to ours at the other side of where the garage is has lodged an 'objection' as he doesnt want fo see a gable end and it will block his view of the house behind us! bonkers if it affects our plans I will be so upset.

Yes our neighbour who like yours initially said fine, then objected for the same main reason, lack of light in their kitchen. Our architect found the website 'find my shadow' where you can plot how the work will affect neighbouring properties. It showed our extension would have little impact on the neighbours so we submitted the findings with our application, which we believe helped us win planning.

We are now coming to the end of our build and TBH it's been hell. The neighbours have moaned and complained about everything. Our builders who have been brilliant tiptoe around them and we have virtually daily meetings with the builders about 'next door' We have done all we can to accommodate them and they have done everything they can to make things as difficult as possible for us. I estimate they've probably cost us an extra £2000 on our build.

Despite all that, we haven't actually 'fallen out' I still take in parcels for them etc. The lady of the house will sometimes smile and say hello, her new husband doesn't though, he blanks us and slams his car door in disapproval, which is a bit awkward.

Anyway op, I've blabbed on far too much. Good luck with yours and have a look at that website it might help your application.

HeadFairy Sat 07-Feb-15 08:18:21

Ooooooh thank you for that ohno, that website looks really useful. I will pass it on to my architect and we can try and plot our house on there and see how it looks. The funny thing is we're only raising the roof height to the same height as the two houses either side, so we're not going to tower over anyone!

Eastwickwitch Sat 07-Feb-15 09:12:54

My neighbour objected to the loss of view (of our garden) from her bathroom window. It actually went to committee ~~BF of chairman of PC~~. There was much discussion which ended when a blunt old chap pointed out we could paint a big tree in our garden that would totally block her view.

Another time another neighbour's architect made an appointment to discuss their proposed swimming pond. We were actually rather impressed that he'd taken the time to reassure us that we weren't at risk of flooding etc but slightly confused as to why he was so keen for our approval. Turns out my NDN, the same as above, had objected & he'd got us muddled up.

We've since moved away but left on friendly terms with all.

LondonGirl83 Sat 07-Feb-15 09:52:35

If you are attached to you NDN in anyway, you might need a partywall agreement for your work (I don't know how extensive your plans are). Its worth being civil as they can make that process very slow and very expensive for you if they choose to.

Luckily neither of our neighbours did that. One waived it, the other was happy the use a shared partywall surveyor so all in all it wasn't too bad.

specialsubject Sat 07-Feb-15 11:41:16

I'm objecting to a nearby application - I 'can't even see it' but it will have other effects (no details due to outing).

but if I see the applicant (I don't know him) I would be civil and I would expect him to be so too. The planning committee will decide ~~although concreting over everything is the default position~~

In your neighbour's position, I would say 'you understand our concerns but we have to live next door so let's keep it civil'. Maybe a try a note to that effect?

lastnightiwenttomanderley Sat 07-Feb-15 12:22:04

Ah yes....the good old Right to.Light which a) has some pretty strict criteria to.acquire in the first place and B) is **not** the same as a right to a view!

Woahbodyforrrrm Sat 07-Feb-15 15:44:22

Our neighbours objected to our plans even though they had previously said they'd like to do the same extension at the same time therefore saving us both money. When the time came for us to go ahead with getting plans made, we approached them and they said though they'd love to do it, they didn't have the money. Anyway imagine our surprise when they objected to our plans. They never mentioned a word about it to us, though we see them everyday.

So I went on our local town page ".....mums" the go to page for all local activities, recommendations, advice etc. Both of them are very active on this page. Knowing this I posted about how we were having issues getting permission to do our extension and if we couldn't get the plans, we were considering letting our house to a housing association. I basically asked for advice from other locals on doing this. Lo and behold, our plans went through swiftly after this.

Sometimes with neighbours it's just a case of sour grapes so it's best of rising above it ~~though I couldn't resist winding the snobby pair up.~~

HeadFairy Sat 07-Feb-15 21:24:58

Londongirl, our houses aren't attached, so no party wall agreement needed thankfully!

Woah.... Nice one! I did think in one of my weaker moments if we're forced to sell because we can't get the planning permission then I'll have to find a trumpet player, or a drummer to sell the house to

but at least they're trying to be nice. Relations are definitely much more strained than before though. 😊

SASASI Sat 07-Feb-15 21:37:58

Yup, we are waiting on planning permission after NDN sent an objection letter with lots of bits blacked out because it was too vulgar to be uploaded on the planning portal lol.

Architect made sure our plans met all planning legislation. They have had their objectors meeting & it's got really dirty with them citing health issues now as their reason because their earlier objections have all been answered and stand for Jack Shit. However health reasons within an urban context also mean Jack Shit. It's going to MLA when we will apparently get full permission.

We don't live in the property, it's an absolute wreck but we've had workers do bits n pieces & the neighbours have glared at them so I've kept a record of all these instances as they are going to be a fucking nightmare.

As another poster said, the neighbours who will be slightly over looked (we are on a hilly bit of the road) havnt objected.

They are costing us time & money & with a baby it's far from ideal but it will be worth it when finished. We will just take absolutely nothing to do with them & if I ever catch them in nosying when build happening I will rate great delight in telling her to get off my land ~~before I kick their arse~~

shanghaismog Sun 08-Feb-15 10:01:18

Hollow laugh....nothing like a bit of building work to bring out the best in people.... You do have to wonder what drives some people! I do also love that all correspondence with regards to objections is fully visible to all on the planning portal.

ohnoyou Sun 08-Feb-15 10:23:47

It's not fair our council doesn't show the objections on their website, I would love to have a read. Being as we were the only house out of the 10 extensions on our road this year that had to have not 1 but 2 bat surveys, I'm sure their letter was lengthy!

PigeonPie Sun 08-Feb-15 14:43:13

ohno - surely all correspondence relating to a planning application should be up on your planning portal? Otherwise you are perfectly within your rights to request it under the freedom of information act. Well worth asking your planning authority why it isn't there in the first instance.

ohnoyou Sun 08-Feb-15 15:24:24

It's not on there pigeon, I've looked again this morning. We did ask to see the objection but we didn't get the whole of the correspondence, just a cut and paste 3 bullet points in an email, overshadowing, overbearing, loss of view I believe?

I think once signed off we may request all correspondence, although I have a feeling it will be 'lost in the system' I do wonder if we'd have any redress if the council enforced 2 bat surveys on us purely because of the neighbours maliciousness, if indeed that was the reason.

ohnoyou Sun 08-Feb-15 15:30:53

Sorry HeadFairy didn't mean to derail. It's good you're still talking and keeping it open. It will be difficult but I think once the decisions made things will hopefully calm down. Good luck with it.

Seeline Sun 08-Feb-15 15:40:58

You have a right to see any objections lodged against your planning application - as you have the right to respond. Not all Councils will necessarily put them on their web sites, but I would have thought most would be now. You could ask for copies, but would probably be charged for that. The best way is to go to the Council Offices and ask to see them. If you ring in advance they can't even say they can't do at the time.

OP - the right to light thing I think is under civil law, and there are loads of steps to establishing whether such a right exists. It is not enforceable under planning law.

Planning applications need to be assessed to see if there is any significant harm to residential amenity, and this can include a substantial loss of light. This will normally be to principal windows (eg the main front widow of a living room, rather than a secondary smaller one in the side), and will usually relate to principal rooms such as a living room or bedroom rather than a bathroom or utility.

Flosshilde Sun 08-Feb-15 15:51:13

Seeline - if you're not a planner I'll eat my hat.

Mitzi50 Sun 08-Feb-15 15:56:56

My NDNs objected to my extension twice. My first proposal was turned down a so I modified my plans - before drawing up the second set of plans, I went round and asked what they would be happy with and was told "nothing". The second set were approved and my NDNs were extremely frosty every time they saw me. I decided to cheerily wave and say "hello" every time I saw them after about 3 months, they gave in and said "hello" back. We are now on good terms

Seeline Sun 08-Feb-15 18:00:50

Thanks for that pigeon and Seeline. And Flosshilde hope you're enjoying your tea! 😊

Flosshilde Sun 08-Feb-15 19:37:17

It didn't taste of hat. 🤔

HeadFairy Sun 08-Feb-15 20:32:50

Ooooooh seeline..... I may have to pick your brains over the next few weeks 🤔 The window most affected is the kitchen window. It is the only window in the kitchen, but they have a fully glazed door in the kitchen which faces South west and provides most of the light in the kitchen. The window we're talking about has a blind which is drawn most days. My architect has told us to take a picture of their back door just in case they decide to change it to a solid door to further their case.

Rosings25 Sun 08-Feb-15 21:43:41

Right to respond- how is this done? Objector is given 10 minutes at the adjourned planning meeting but as I did not ask three days before the first meeting I can not address the meeting.

seaoflove Sun 08-Feb-15 21:48:15

We were the neighbours that objected. Twice. Their plans were ludicrous though (two storey side extension that would have loomed right over the garden) so I'm not sure why they even bothered submitting a second application after the first got refused!

Seeline Mon 09-Feb-15 08:26:59

Rosings - different Council's have different systems as to what applications go to planning committee and whether you can speak or not. I am not sure whether you are the applicant/objector, but, there is nothing to stop you writing to the planning officer responding to any of the points raised by objectors' letters. I would copy it to your local elected Councillor too.

shovetheholly Mon 09-Feb-15 12:04:53

Just because someone objects to plans doesn't by any means entail them getting their way. Frankly, planners spend most of their time dealing with completely bonkers complaints that don't stand up.

OldBeanbagz Mon 09-Feb-15 12:12:10

Our NDNs who were quite happy when we showed them the plans for our extension, went on to submit an objection at planning. It was for loss of view which was nonsense as they had a massive leylandii hedge blocking their view in any case.

The council overruled their objection, granting us full planning permission and the neighbours haven't spoken to us since the extension was finished and we moved in - 7 years and counting!

RiverTam Mon 09-Feb-15 12:19:14

we objected to our NDN's and they did have to alter one thing, but everything else got through. But we (not they, because they moved out) were the ones who had to put up with 5 months of building works and builders who couldn't give a shit. They left no contact details, left their car parked outside our house for 6 weeks, and now the build has finish won't alter things that they know are an error but they can't be bothered (blinding light shining straight out of their property onto ours - I mean the lights are pointing at our house).

I hate them. I feel totally overlooked by them and oppressed by their additions. I wish they'd never moved here. We will probably move and we've been here for 10 years.

I'm laughing now that various problems with their building work are coming to light. Serves you right, you inconsiderate fuckers.

Flossiechops Mon 09-Feb-15 14:29:29

Oh this thread fills me with dread. We are planning to extend our house to the rear, hoping for a full width single story extension. The main problem is going to be the neighbours that adjoin us as we are east facing the height of the extension would cast a shadow into their conservatory. I am not sure we will even be granted permission due to this. We only moved in last summer and the woman has never spoken to us - just looks the other way, her husband is pleasant enough but i fear problems ahead!

HeadFairy Mon 09-Feb-15 20:53:45

Flossiechops, could your architect look at ways around this issue, a glazed roof perhaps so the light will pass through and on to your neighbours? Presumably if one side is east facing, the other side is west facing? They'll still get afternoon sun.

RiverTam Tue 10-Feb-15 10:08:13

why shouldn't they still get the morning sun too, though? Why is your extension more important? Why is the onus on the neighbour to simply have

Why should a person with a house prevent someone else having a house?
i.e. why should the neighbour have the right to prevent someone building on their land, if it is within the law?

If you want your home to be surrounded by open land, the only way to do it is to buy that land yourself.

ohnoyou Tue 10-Feb-15 10:29:44

Flossie we had a conservatory and our adjoining neighbours (not the complainers) were granted planning permission for a single story extension which would have cast a shadow into our conservatory (I say would of because our conservatory has gone now so it will be our patio area) so I think you'll be ok.

RiverTam Tue 10-Feb-15 11:06:54

No-one's being prevented from having a house. You know what you bought and if it's not to your satisfaction then buy somewhere that is. Why not show some consideration, rather than treating your neighbours as some kind of inconvenience. Why is it always the person causing the inconvenience who's in the right, rather than those being inconvenienced.

I haven't inconvenienced my neighbours one jot. But I've had to go through 2 extensions being built next door, in total over a year of building work, none of which has actually inconvenienced the owners as they've been minted enough to move out whilst all this is going on. They've made it clear that they couldn't give a fuck, just shrug their shoulders at anything we say. We've been here 10 years, next door has had 4 different owners in that time - I daresay this lot won't be here to stay either.

We live on a road that, for a terraced street in London, has very big gardens (the houses are a decent size too, 3 double bedrooms). We could look out of our window at a lovely green corridor. Which is now being built over more and more. Gardens clearly have no value, green space has no value, it's all about sticking a monstrous great studio in the garden and paving over everything. Replacing the original sash window with a huge window the width of the house that totally overlooks our garden now.

But hey! It's all legal and it's their land and fuck anyone who cares that the place that they bought and thought they'd live in with their family is being gradually eroded, and their quality of life is being affected. Yours will be so much better, and that's all that matters, isn't it? Sod your neighbours losing their light - they've still got a bit, haven't they? What the fuck are they moaning about then?

And before anyone says anything - I'm just venting, just the the OP is. I just wish that people would realise how much these things can affect your neighbours. DH has been so down and depressed by everything that's happening next door, he dreads coming home and we look out of our back window and just get an eyeful of their fucking extension. It's horrible and hateful. And we know full well that wherever we move to the same could happen again.

ohnoyou Tue 10-Feb-15 11:46:29

I hear what you're saying Tam and you are in an unfortunate position, but Piglet is right people do have the right to develop their house within the law.

We lived in a terrace house and people were always chopping and changing the layout etc. That was the nature of that kind of living, people want to move in do up and move onwards.

We're in a semi now, we've been here 8-9 years. The house was an absolute wreck, ceilings all down, windows broken, massive cracks all over, urine soaked floors you get the picture. It absolutely couldn't have been left. What we are doing now and what we did then will benefit us but it will also benefit our neighbours. Our house was unsellable, why did we move here? It was all we could afford at the time.

Not everybody who extends are inconsiderate to their neighbours, we have bent over backwards to appease ours. But sadly some people think the amount of time they've lived in their house gives them more of a right to what goes on next door but it doesn't.

SirChenjin Tue 10-Feb-15 11:57:08

Planning laws are skewed massively in favour of the developers though - so to say 'it's within the law' is pretty meaningless, as the law is so wide when it comes to planning (certainly here in Scotland).

RiverTam Tue 10-Feb-15 12:10:00

then the law is an ass! Agree that it does seem to be skewed in favour of the developer.

sorry, having a shitty time at work and then coming home to what now doesn't feel like my home-from-home. I am also feeling even more bitter as we only discovered when the new neighbours put in their planning that the previous extension wasn't legal, but as it was over 4 years ago there's nowt we can do.

Also, I do see a difference between doing up an uninhabitable wreck, a la **ohnoyou**, and taking a house that has only just been completely gutted and done up in the last few years, and doing it all over again. You certainly can't argue that in that case it has improved the area - it won't have made a jot of difference, and in fact has possibly devalued their own house by turning a 3 double-bedder into a one-bed house (with dressing room and study. And fuck-off studio in the garden).

PigletJohn Tue 10-Feb-15 16:13:12

What's the difference between a Conservationist and a Developer?

A Developer is a person who wants one.

SirChenjin Tue 10-Feb-15 16:18:02

It depends on the developer and type of development.

RiverTam Tue 10-Feb-15 16:18:57

what's your point? My house is nice. The house next door is nice, and fairly recently gutted and done up. But apparently not what the owners wanted, which begs the question 'why buy it?'.

SirChenjin Tue 10-Feb-15 16:26:26

It's all about the money, innit? Developers tend to see property developing as a way of making money - if that involves concreting over green spaces, or imposing on the neighbours then too bad, it seems.

RiverTam Tue 10-Feb-15 16:38:29

but my neighbours aren't developers. They're just people who buy a perfectly nice house (paying £££££ for it) and decide it's not what they want (presumably was never what they wanted, given that they put in for planning pretty much as soon as they landed) so then spend more £££££ altering it, at our inconvenience and, we believe, to our detriment. But apparently the only thing that matters is that they get the house they wanted (but didn't buy). Sod us and what we wanted when we bought our house (which was what we did buy).

Flossiechops Tue 10-Feb-15 17:50:20

To be honest i don't want the neighbours to hate us and we may well settle on half the extension size i.e. just extend the kitchen rather the whole width of the house. Because the rear of our house face east we only get morning sun in the back of the house before it moves to the side. The extension would then cast a shadow on the neighbours conservatory because of this. We are going to apply for pp around September time so will have a chat with both sides first to let them know the proposals. If they are against it we will revise them i think. A colleague of mine is just in the middle of a build in the exact same position of house and extension and had no objection from her neighbours so you never know.

SirChenjin Tue 10-Feb-15 18:38:20

I feel your pain Tam - but they are developing the house presumably to add value therefore they are developers.

If it was up to me I would make the planning laws in the UK much more in favour of the local residents and community - or at the very least redress the balance.

LondonGirl83 Tue 10-Feb-15 18:54:47

Tam it sounds like they are changing their house to suit their needs and lifestyle. In London, you should know, finding the exact house you want in the location you want is impossible. Most people buy good enough in the right location and then change what doesn't work.

People have been changing this country's historical housing stock for generations to accommodate an ever changing lifestyle. To fit in modern conveniences like bathrooms and utility rooms, knocking through double reception rooms etc.

Also, planning laws in the UK are very tight compared to the US. In America you can pull down most housing and develop whatever you want. Only recently have some constraints been put in place.

The way people live is changing and that's reflected in changes being made to the housing stock. If you don't want to be impacted by other people's life choices you need to live on a detached piece of land in the country and even then you can't escape an evolving society.

I mean the English live in some of the smallest housing on average in the Western world. Its hardly surprising people are extending for more space.

RiverTam Tue 10-Feb-15 20:20:08

but why should their 'needs and lifestyle' trump ours? And it's not impossible to find the right house in the right place - we did it. It's getting less right by the year, though, and not because our needs have changed, though we've had DD in the interim. It's hard to understand why a large, 3 double bed terraced house is big enough for a family of 3, but not for one bloke on his own (first owner to do the illegal extension), and a couple with no plans for children (I assume, as they've turned it into a 1 bed house).

People keep saying that if I don't want the house next door to be extended etc I should move to the middle of nowhere - well, right back at ya, if all this extra space is so vital then you move to somewhere where you can have all the space you want - not a Victorian terraced house in London!

PigletJohn Tue 10-Feb-15 20:29:26

and of course, why should your 'needs and lifestyle' trump theirs?

SirChenjin Tue 10-Feb-15 20:38:53

Planning laws may be tight compared to the UK - but that does not mean planning laws are not skewed massively in favour of the developers.

SirChenjin Tue 10-Feb-15 20:39:38

tight compared to the US

RiverTam Tue 10-Feb-15 20:45:12

but the supposition on this thread appears to be that they/we should - apparently it's us who should move, us who should compromise etc etc - when they've not had to one jot. It always seems that the people being inconvenienced have to suck it up whilst the inconveniencers have all the 'rights' and law on their side.

The OP wants to kill her neighbours for objecting to her plans. I'm giving you the other side of the story - because, you know, there is another side. The side that has to put up with building works 6 days a week for 5 months. The side that sees the (very rare for London) beautiful green corridor of the gardens - one of the things that drew us to this house - disappear in studios and workshops and whathaveyou. The side that is staring a whopping great illegal-as-it-turns-out-but-jack-shit-that-we-can-do-now extension in the face every day - that came about because we understood it didn't need planning and didn't want to be unneighbourly. Well, look where that got us. So fuck being unneighbourly - been there, done that, got the T shirt. Won't make that mistake again. The side that has glaring spotlights lighting up half our house 'oh yes, it was a mistake, the architect should have taken those off the plans but we're not going to do anything about it'.


If a family of 5 moved in it might at least make sense. But 2 sets of owners - a single man and a childless couple - clearly rolling in cash - not so much. I couldn't give a stuff right now about their rights and the law - they have made us very miserable in our own home and I hate them.

HeadFairy Wed 11-Feb-15 10:28:29

Tam, it sounds like your neighbours are indeed arses.... I hope I'm not. I'm doing my best not to be. I'm very conscious of the impact of building work on the neighbours, we've had to suffer some of that impact ourselves when others have done building work.

Just to give a little context, we bought this house just before dd was born because we were gazumped on another house, we were due to exchange the next day and then the vendor decided to sell to someone else who offered £25k more. Foolishly we'd already sold our other place so we were living at my mum and dad's, so we bought this house after being homeless for three months. It wasn't ideal, we knew that at the time, like many Victorian houses the bathroom is tiny because it's been carved out of another bedroom. We decided that we'd only stay here 5 years and move on, however in that time the market has gone bonkers here (we're in Surrey), to buy a four bed, 2 bath house here now we'd need to find another £250k which we just don't have. The loft conversion will cost us around £60k.

We couldn't have predicted what would happen to the housing market because when we bought in 2009 there were dire warnings of recessions, depressions, housing market collapses etc, but the opposite has happened.

We're not looking to make a quick buck, if we get to do the work we intend to stay until the kids move on, given they're 5 and 7 that's quite a while 

I feel your pain Tam, not all of us are nasty bastards trying to make a fast buck and screw everyone else. Our neighbour came over last night to talk us through what they're planning to say to the council. We've already agreed to move some windows, I will bend over backwards to keep them happy because we will still have to live next door to them and I can't bear the thought of there being tension in this road. It's such a great road.

SASASI Wed 11-Feb-15 12:58:51

I'm not an arse either but I really think our neighbours are! They have an extension very similar to our plans so we feel it's a case of 'do as I say & not as I do'.

They are complaining that our extension will ruin their kitchen view - well their kitchen view is MY garden so they can go royally fuck themselves with that - it's not like they are being blocked from a seaside view or sthing.

Ours are basically against an extension of any scale & planners have told them our plans are merely bringing a modest dwelling to modern day living standards. I told their councillor if they didn't want neighbours they should have bought the house themselves.

I appreciate the building work will be a pain but Cest la vie, we want it completed as quickly as possible. We have also been told they are planning a further extension in a few years, sunroom & utility room. They have made a rod for their own back & we will be as awkward for them as they have been to us.

LondonGirl83 Wed 11-Feb-15 13:34:50

Tam, people in my opinion should be reasonably allowed to do what they feel they need to their own property as long as they aren't harming others.

I believe planning laws exist to prevent unreasonable harm to neighbours amenity but you are defining harm very generously. If you are in a terrace any major extension should be subject to a party wall agreement. In that agreement, hours and days of work are decided by an objective professional. Our partywall stipulated work had to be finished by 5pm and could only happen between very restricted hours on a Saturday. The noise and disruption would only be significant if you worked from home and if you work from home its not reasonable to expect that lifestyle choice to prevent someone else making changes to their own home.

Losing a view of someone else's property can't really be harm either.

To be frank, it doesn't matter that you can't understand someone else's lifestyle needs-- its none of your business and its not your house.

If your neighbour constructs something illegally or doesn't abide by agreements then that's a different matter but its unfair to characterise most development in that way.

[SirChenjin](#) Wed 11-Feb-15 15:06:28

Property developing will rarely 'harm' others - but what they often do is impact negatively on others, and these residents have very few grounds to appeal a planning decision. If you live in an area which regularly refuses applications which reduce light into a habitable room then you should consider yourself extremely lucky - most LA's do not refuse planning on these grounds.

[LondonGirl83](#) Thu 12-Feb-15 11:14:31

If the impact is material I have seen applications refused. The threshold isn't 'any' reduction in light though. Around here doing anything beyond permitted development is hard to get approved as the terraces are so close together. Maybe I am lucky, but I don't think so. I do think planners try to balance out an owners right to change their home to meet their needs and a neighbour's right to not be harmed by smother's actions.

[SirChenjin](#) Thu 12-Feb-15 12:43:41

I suspect the fact that you live in an area where terraces are close together has an impact on their decisions. My experience of being involved in responding to planning apps over the years has opened my eyes massively to the power that developers have in comparison to local residents - with Councillors over ruling planning recommendations regularly.

[LondonGirl83](#) Thu 12-Feb-15 15:55:14

With commercial developers I too have seen the process manipulated by local officials. However, I've not seen that for an ordinary person applying for an extension. I think we are talking apples and oranges here as I agree with what you've said.

[SirChenjin](#) Thu 12-Feb-15 17:49:35

I'm afraid I have seen it - which again reinforces the inconsistent, skewed nature of planning across the UK.

[HeadFairy](#) Sat 14-Feb-15 15:44:12

Wow, just seen their objections... They didn't pull their punches. They've added a couple of things they hadn't mentioned to us, such as we'd over shadow their garden. At 11am this morning the sun had already rounded our house and was shining at the side across all our gardens including theirs so the height of the property wouldn't make the blindest bit of difference. They've also put a really snidey comment that if the house wasn't suitable for us why did we buy it and that we should move. For us to move to a house the size we need around here would cost us three times the amount of the extension, we just can't do that.

[scribblecrabble](#) Sat 14-Feb-15 16:31:20

I've just seen our 'objectors' comments too (Thursday was the cut off date) disproportionately upset me tbh.

Fingers crossed OP that things work out in the end

[LondonGirl83](#) Sat 14-Feb-15 17:29:54

Headfairy, if your objectors are wrong you have nothing to worry about. Ring the planners and ask if them what they think. They may ask to see some evidence to prove your neighbour is wrong which you can commission. However, if they are obviously wrong, the planners will just let you know not to worry. That was what happened with us. The planner said it was clear that their would be no loss of light and that we didn't need to respond with any evidence.

These things work out so don't get yourself upset.

[HeadFairy](#) Sat 14-Feb-15 17:50:05

Thanks for the advice Londongirl, I will try and call the planning office on Monday. What's really frustrating is that when I'm at work I can't make any phone calls, so I sit and fume, frustrated at my inability to do anything.

Another two have put in objections now. The first one across the street have said it will affect their light (how is that even possible, we have a 2 way road between us and by the time the sun dips below our house the angle is such that the shadow is cast on to a different house 3 doors down from them. The other house has objected on the grounds that it will upset the character of the street and will encourage HMOs and what this road really needs is more family homes. I'm so upset because that's all we want to do, to make this house more suitable for a family. Given the bathroom is tiny and the third bedroom isn't big enough to get a single bed in, I can't see how they think we're doing anything other than making this more of a family home.

I could cry, I really could. 😭

We are stuck in 'planning permission hell' at the moment as well. It's a very different situation from yours - we're trying to get pp to rebuild our collapsed boundary wall as a fence (can't afford to build another wall).

The level of bureaucracy is just astounding. In addition to drawings, block plans and forms, we need photos showing what the fence will look like. It will look like a fence FFS! The irony is that when we applied for pp for the 2-storey extension we just had to state 'bricks to match existing'.

I, too, could cry (I did the other night). This has been going on since December and we don't even have a validated pp application yet. At this rate it's going to be May before the pp decision is even made and, in the meantime, we currently have a garden that looks like a reenactment of the Somme and every man and his dog can see straight across our garden and into the house.

HeadFairy Sat 14-Feb-15 18:33:41

That sounds awful Arya... Our garden looks like the Somme too but that's because we've redone it all recently and we're still not finished.

On our council's planning website we as the home owner can make comments too. Dh and I are currently arguing over whether we should or not. I want to write that we acknowledge and respect our neighbours concerns, and why we feel that our plans won't affect them in the way they feel. He says we shouldn't as the council probably won't even consider any rebuttals we make. Any one have any thoughts?

SASASI Sat 14-Feb-15 19:26:18

Have they gone to councilors?

When I discovered our objectors Letter I got 2 councilors to represent us, had a meeting with one of theirs & sent a very detailed letter to all concerned very politely stating all the reasons they were being unreasonable.

Their councillor with whom I had a meeting with rings me weekly with so update - no doubt because there is an election in May & he wants all our votes!

Basically, because planners have recommended approval a councillor has no means to overturn their decision but must represent all people. Their councillor has told me we will get our planning permission but only after he has taken it to MLA at their request - he can't refuse to do so.

I found my planning office to be really awkward with me because technically our architect is the point of contact rather than me.

Planning is such an emotive subject & soo divisive, it's brings the worst out in people.

Sometimes their letter gives me the rage, other times I laugh & think how sweet it will be when building works start.

I know how stressful it is but honestly - fuck them & what they think. It's your property. If for some reason you get a refusal, planners will list why & what amendments should be made to get approval. So you may possibly end up with a different design but that's your worst case scenario.

Have some wine!

Staywithme Sat 14-Feb-15 19:45:47

Don't panic headfairy. Just because people write all these ludicrous letters of objection, it doesn't mean it'll have any impact on your build.

My ~~arsehole~~ neighbours wrote letters of complaint about our extension, during the building work. It was being kept within the permitted size so it didn't need permission. I'd already spoke to them before it started and they'd no issues, but as the other neighbours said, I think the old green eyed monster set in. I was verbally abused, threatened, building was vandalised, etc. the planners and building control were disgusted with them, as were the rest of the street.

I was also sent a snide letter, complaining that I didn't take their needs into consideration, bla bla bla. They sent their poor wee boy round with it and he handed it to my DH who was very shaken up by it. The extension was for a downstairs bathroom so my terminally ill husband could die at home. How fucking selfish was I? 😡😡

Here's the kicker, the asshole is a social worker. The caring professional at her best eh!

Staywithme Sat 14-Feb-15 19:47:04

And breath. Sorry about that, but at least I feel better now. 🙄

Flossiechops Sat 14-Feb-15 20:28:51

Staywithme that's disgraceful behavior - I hope you never speak to them again! Gosh it's incredible how emotive it is. I think some neighbours do have genuine points and objections but then there are those who just love to object to any change!

HeadFairy Sat 14-Feb-15 21:12:38

Oh my God staywithme, that is terrible. Sometimes I wonder if people stop to think before they complain.

Our situation is in no way like yours, but our neighbours opposite have said our development will damage the community of the road, as it's likely

street party (that they contribute nothing to other than drinking the drink and eating the food we fundraise two years for). It's so turning: in comparison our direct neighbours complaints are positively civilised!

HeadFairy Sat 14-Feb-15 21:17:41

Apologies for ranting, I've had a couple of glasses of wine 🍷

What makes things worse is that they are two of the least neighbourly people. One of them is a cone nut.... Always cones outside their house to accommodate their four cars (two of them live in that house) and the other lot have twice dumped cars in the street, one of them dumped for five months outside our house with not a word of apology. It sat there rotting until the council towed it away.

SASASI Sat 14-Feb-15 21:23:11

They sound like absolute twats.

Write a response letter then sit on it for a couple of days. If you still feel so strongly send but if you've mellowed a bit adjust it accordingly ie I said we were disappointed with objectors as our plans are of a similar style to theirs, we would be employing local tradesmen, we're looking to create our forever family home & consider us reasonable people who would be gd neighbours. Anything that contradicts them & shows them To be asses really 😊

LondonGirl83 Sat 14-Feb-15 23:05:28

Don't engage. As I get older I realise some people really are spoiling for a fight and are just trying to upset other people some times. Just breath and do everything you can to get what you need (legally and reasonably) to take care of your family. The negative emotion they are causing you isn't worth it.

Staywithme Sat 14-Feb-15 23:54:59

Thank you FlossieChops and HeadFairy. They are true lily horrible people bug we ignore them as we've more important things to worry about now.

At the end of the day very few people build an extension unless they need it. I don't give a shit what my neighbours build, so long as they do it on their own land. I really don't see why people feel the need to irritate their neighbours. **I must admit I'm tempted to use my darling husband's life insurance to go up a story on the extension as a fuck you to them.** 😊

Though, truth be told, I'll probably fall apart when he leaves me. 😞

ohnoyou Sun 15-Feb-15 07:26:37

I may be wrong but I was under the impression that all applications were discussed alongside any objections at the weekly planning meetings? We certainly responded to the objections in writing and included any evidence that we felt would help our case, such as the information we got from find my shadow, other houses that had similar extensions, the fact our objecting neighbour had their own extension which blocked their light etc. Following approval our points were mentioned in the planning officers report so I assume they helped, and it certainly made us feel justified in what we were asking for.

I hated going through planning permission and at one point we considered withdrawing and extending within permitted development, but I'm glad we didn't as I don't believe the neighbours would have been any happier, they didn't want us to do any work full stop.

Staywithme I'm so sorry to read of what you went through with your neighbours, and what you are dealing with now. I wish you all the best xx

HeadFairy Sun 15-Feb-15 09:25:16

Staywithme that's heartbreaking 😞

HeadFairy Sun 15-Feb-15 10:03:27

Aaaaand another objection.... Neighbour four doors down saying it will affect their privacy in their garden, there will only be velux windows at the back. Seriously wtf are people thinking? Am I going mad now thinking people are objecting purely because they can?

PigletJohn Sun 15-Feb-15 10:06:23

It is quite common for people to object. Some of the objections might be sensible, and some might be silly.

However the decision to approve or reject the application is not down to silly people, nor to the applicant.

Let them have their say and try not to get too worked up.

Marmot75 Sun 15-Feb-15 10:16:37

Yes our neighbours objected to our plans to add a window to the side of our house. We don't know the particular neighbours who objected but we had put notes through everyones' doors saying what we were applying for and offering to discuss or of course they could go through the official planning route if they preferred.

They didn't speak to us about it (which was fine, it's their prerogative) and we only found out they'd objected after permission had been granted

work done.

As I say we don't actually know them to talk to so it hasn't been as awkward as it could have been. But they do seem to keep their curtains closed so perhaps we did (unintentionally) ruin their lives. It's been several years now. By the way, the window in question is in the upstairs landing and we wanted it just to bring light into the hall (end terrace). We never stand there staring into their house so as far as I'm concerned the privacy thing is totally OTT. A

All the houses in our road are close together and we can see into other people's houses and they can see into ours. It's not the right place to live if that really bothers you.

HeadFairy Sun 15-Feb-15 10:24:45

Piglet, you're absolutely right. It's so hard not to take it personally though. Especially when we already have windows that over look their garden on the first floor. I hope the planners are sensible, I'm worried what the cost of resubmitting will do to our finances.

Millais Sun 15-Feb-15 10:55:49

Message withdrawn at poster's request.

HeadFairy Sun 15-Feb-15 11:55:00

Millais, that is just bonkers! 🤔 I'm starting to get a bit of hope from these stories, thanks so much all.... The neighbour opposite who has objected on grounds of loss of privacy can see straight in to our bedroom from both their front first floor window and a loft window in their second floor, so surely planners will say you can't object to loss of privacy where none exists?

fluffygreentail Sun 15-Feb-15 13:10:46

We are just about to sign an order for a loft conversion which won't need PP but still dreading bringing Party Wall act around to sign. Some interesting stories here.

shabbycaddy Sun 15-Feb-15 13:12:03

Think we got off easy with our ground floor extension and 1st floor one, no complaints or objections, in fact the old lady round the back came over and said the silly postman had delivered our post to her, however the letter was about us planning to do an extension for her info, she still didn't get it when we explained and carried on going on about the postman

ohnoyou Sun 15-Feb-15 14:49:24

We withdrew our planning the week before the decision was due as our planning officer said it would be refused due to the roof line. We then changed the drawings and resubmitted, you get one free go at resubmitting where as if we'd failed we'd have had to pay again.

HeadFairy Sun 15-Feb-15 17:05:39

Thanks for that ohno.... I'm going to call our case officer tomorrow and see if he'll give us some pointers. We've just realised our architect is away for half term and the deadline for submissions closes before he gets back so if we're going to do anything to rebut the objections we'll need to do it this week.

Flossiechops Sun 15-Feb-15 19:49:53

After reading all of this we are going to do our extension within permitted development as we only want to go out 3m. It states that we can build up to the boundary too but only 3m to eaves height so this will eliminate the official consultation with neighbours. That said we will still discuss it with them & if they do strongly object will scale it down. I've been checking on the councils website & notice a similar proposed extension down the road was turned down on the 45 degree rule. It's very stressful!

Pangurban Mon 16-Feb-15 07:07:35

At the end of the day, the planners will decide the application based on valid planning issues. If the application contravenes genuine planning issues, it will be refused. If the neighbours objections are not valid from a planning perspective, they will not be given any weight.

I objected to our neighbours plans to build an extension. Their application kicked into touch by planning at the council level and also at the appeals level. There were more issues in the refusal than the points I had objected about.

Notwithstanding the planning issues, their drawings showed part of their new extension on our land. Whoever said that planning applications show you who your neighbours are, it was certainly true in our experience.



Talk

Topics » Property/DIY

Has anyone had their neighbour object to a planning application? (154 Posts)

HeadFairy Fri 06-Feb-15 20:47:02

How did you stop yourself from killing them 😊

Very frustrated, neighbours who previously said they would be fine with proposed building work have lodged an objection claiming their light will be adversely affected in their kitchen.

They are now totally avoiding us, our front doors face each other and three times today they've scuttled away when normally they'd stop to chat.

Not sure what I can do but sit and wait for the planning dept to make their mind up, but just wanted to vent.

Has anyone else had objections against their planning application and still gone on to win?

HeadFairy Tue 17-Feb-15 17:51:17

Oh my God, our neighbour has written a 20 page letter to the council stating why they object. He's put some kind of bullshit equation to back up his case that our house will plunge his house in to darkness.... It's bullshit because the sun sets over one corner of our house, he's directly opposite so the shadow is cast diagonally to three houses down from him. He is actually insane! God I hope the council can see that he is stark staring mad!

LuluJakey1 Tue 17-Feb-15 18:16:34

Wha does HMOS mean?

HeadFairy Tue 17-Feb-15 19:49:58

House of multiple occupancy. Student digs, bedsits and the like.

SASASI Tue 17-Feb-15 20:07:04

Head fairy that's just obscene. Sounds like they have way too much time on their hands!

scribblecrabble Tue 17-Feb-15 21:21:42

oh **headfairy** I feel your pain, all this planning malarky is excruciatingly stressful isnt it? our neighbours have successfully ensured that we have to get planning permission now rather than permitted development, even our architect thinks that someone 'dodgy' is occurring I dont think unless you are living through it you realise how tough it is.

HeadFairy Tue 17-Feb-15 23:02:48

SASASI that's what we said 🤔 Absolutely insane. He's uploaded his interpretation of our drawings superimpose on photographs of the existing street, it's bonkers. On one of the pictures he's plonked what looks like a static caravan on top of our house to show what he thinks the reality of the plan is. He's argued against our architects figures, ie the architect has stated the roof ridge line will be 1.4m higher, batshit crazy neighbour clearly thinks there's some kind of conspiracy and has said the reality will be more like 1.7m.

I really hope the planners take a dim view of this madness. Our next door neighbours (who we're jointly submitting planning with - they're hoping to do something similar to us at the same time) have just been round to discuss what to do about crazy guy opposite. We accidentally had a few bottles of wine and had great fun plotting revenge (which of course we'll never carry out 🤔)

What's made us most angry is that batshit crazy guy has started getting personal. He claims we're trying to destroy the harmony of this lovely street, that there's a brilliant community spirit and we're doing our best to destroy it. I am the chair of the committee that organises a street party

in our road every year, our neighbours are complete lynchpins of that committee, last year we raise £10,000 doing charity fundraisers so we could give the street the most amazing free party. Last year, Batshit guy and his missus stole from a charity garage sale we were having and sold stuff they'd nicked at a car boot sale. Batshit guy picked a fight with the wrong people.

And breathe..... 🤔

SASASI Wed 18-Feb-15 22:08:16

What the actual fuck? He sounds like a complete bellend. Are you sure you want to extend ~~and not move~~ JOKE!

See when you have the extension & years have passed, you will laugh at this! That's what we keep telling ourselves!

HeadFairy Sat 21-Feb-15 20:46:44

It gets better... He's now lodged his third objection. He is claiming our architect is lying because he (the architect) submitted a slight tweak to the plans (we moved some windows to ensure they didn't over look our direct neighbour) and he wrote a covering letter saying there was a precedent for second floor extensions and that most of the houses have second floors already. Batshit crazy guy said he was lying, none of the houses have second floors. Batshit's immediate neighbour has a full second floor with a large window to the side of the property actually facing Batshit's house.

He's clearly stark staring mad!

trixymalixy Sun 22-Feb-15 09:39:00

Oh god. We're about to object to our neighbour's planning application.

They are splitting their garden in two and building a new house on it. What I'm objecting to is the fact that they have sited the house on the east side of the plot directly up against our fence and overlooking our garden. If they'd sited it on the west side of the plot we'd barely see it and it wouldn't overlook anyone and we'd have no objection.

I know they're going to be pissed off at us objecting, but they haven't given any consideration to us. They didn't even bother to come round and tell us themselves.

I think we might pop round and have a chat to them about what we're going to say hoping it might keep things a bit friendlier.

HeadFairy Sun 22-Feb-15 13:55:28

It's definitely worth keeping things as friendly as possible Trixy, I absolutely hate the stress we're going through. At the end of the day it's the planning office that make the decision based on black and white facts, not emotions, so it's not worth getting upset, but it's so hard. Our neighbour is objecting on so many ludicrous points, for example we're going to affect their privacy, when we live on a street of houses facing each other, they have 2 windows looking straight in to our bedroom, neither of which is an original window!

SASASI Sun 22-Feb-15 23:26:40

I'm not sure about England but in NI people only have 10 working days to submit objections - so it will get to a point where the objections he keeps submitting will not be considered at all.

HeadFairy Mon 23-Feb-15 18:19:49

Sasasi, the deadline for submissions is today, so no more surprises, but I do hope he hasn't done too much damage to our application up to now.

HeadFairy Mon 16-Mar-15 20:24:57

I don't know if anyone is still following this thread.... Tomorrow is decision day for our build and our batshit crazy neighbour has managed to squeeze in one more objection, that makes 7 in total now. In all it comes to 45 pages as to why we shouldn't add another bedroom to our house. In his latest gem he's stated that we must not be allowed to damage or remove any of the shrubs in our front garden.

He's absolutely fucking crazy!

Marmitelo55 Mon 16-Mar-15 20:27:37

Good luck -let us know how it goes tomorrow.

HeadFairy Mon 16-Mar-15 20:38:06

Thank you Marmite, I will. I'm not sure I can ever look at him again without hitting him if we don't get it, he's been so down right nasty now.

I'm plotting all sorts of revenge that won't get me arrested 🤔

Mama1980 Mon 16-Mar-15 20:48:50

Good luck for tomorrow.

Flossiechops Mon 16-Mar-15 21:03:52

Bloody hell what a loon - good luck hope it goes your way 😊

Rosings25 Mon 16-Mar-15 21:08:51

Good luck. Our main objector after getting everyone in the street to also object resulting in a defer for site visit, he also asked to speak at committee did not turn up on the day. He said he forgot but I saw his car leave after all the councillors left from outside his house for the meeting. We got permission.

Pooka Mon 16-Mar-15 21:09:04

Good luck!

The planners will take into account objections that relate to material planning considerations. A refusal ground has to be reasonable and sustainable at appeal, and backed by local/regional/national planning policies and guidance.

The problem with analysing impact on amenity is that it does come down to professional judgement rather than a tick box exercise.

Your neighbour sounds challenging!

HeadFairy Mon 16-Mar-15 21:19:30

I have to post a couple of these little gems he's added today, for example:

In terms of parking, there is no off-street parking for either property. The frontages of both houses are too small to qualify for a VCO and parking space at the front. There is no vehicular access to the rear and no other allocated parking or garage space. There is only on-street parking, which is already under pressure from commuters, shoppers and care-workers, as well as residents. More parking is impossible to provide in this case.

He has four cars (there are only 2 of them in the property - we have one car), which he regularly puts cones out for, naturally that takes up a large space.

HeadFairy Mon 16-Mar-15 21:23:45

I particularly love the way he's telling the council how to do their job in this one:

If the Council does decide to grant permission for a raised roof and extended gable, I would ask that the following conditions be imposed to protect the street scene and the character of the area:

1. That the gable be redesigned to improve the strength of character by adopting features in line with those of surrounding properties, such as:
 - a. A clearly delineated roof triangle, made distinctive by timber features.
 - b. A smaller window of circular or arched-top design
 - c. Opaque glass in the new front window
 - d. Conversion of the first-floor window to a bay matching the ground floor, with the existing small roof lifted to the first floor bay.
2. That the new window(s) be exclusively framed in white wood to match the existing windows and that no alternative materials be allowed unless they are extremely effective representations of painted wood.
3. That the existing roof angles be maintained exactly as they are now and not be flattened, as the drawings show, to provide more internal space, which would dilute the original design
4. That, for the brick gable end (No.20), reclaimed brick of exactly the same shape, size, finish and colour be used and that mortar jointing of matching colour and thickness to the original front wall be used to bond them together. The bricks may be reclaimed from other parts of the same building or other local sources.
5. That, for the painted gable end (No.22), that the render and pebble-dash be exactly matched and replaced in whole sections bounded by render, and the whole of the front of the house be repainted, so that there is no discernible boundary between the old and new structure, from either the front or side.
6. That the side walls be designed to be in keeping with the street scene, because they will be above the roofs of adjacent houses and visible when approaching from both directions. The original brickwork was not intended to be a prominent feature. It would become one under this scheme. A decorative treatment, such as patterned, or coloured brick matching the facade would help, reduce the impact. New red rubbers are unlikely to do so. Cladding in slate or tile would be an alternative decoration.
7. That no trees or shrubs in the front gardens be removed or damaged during the works.
8. That close and regular Council or independent inspection of works and finished components (walls, window, roofs, and decorative features) be required during construction.

HeadFairy Mon 16-Mar-15 21:25:50

Under current Permitted Development rights, the maximum dimensions of ground and first-floor extensions have been increased until 2016. This should encourage householders to focus development to the rear. The houses concerned have long rear gardens that would accommodate large rear extensions. There is also a generous access passage of approximately 6' (1.8m) to the side of each house, in which there is already a window for the staircase. This same wall could be used for a window to replace any rear window lost due to extension rearward. There is room for a new corridor to provide access from the main staircase. Was this option fully explored?

Our garden is 40' long, we couldn't extend any more without totally losing our garden... Plus it would seriously affect our next door neighbours light, but of course not bat shit crazy guy's light.

HeadFairy Mon 16-Mar-15 21:27:42

It will reduce our enjoyment of privacy because it includes large (1.2m x 1.2m or 4ft x 4ft), clear glass, vertical windows to the front, flush with the front gable wall, over 2.4 metres (8 feet) higher than the existing front first floor windows. These will have intrusive views into our bedrooms from above, directly across the street. The existing windows are on the same level as our own, so the new higher windows will have downward viewing angles into our rooms. The applicants have made none of the available concessions to our privacy, for example including small or opaque front windows.

What he fails to mention is that he has a velux window in his loft that looks straight down, from above in to our front bedroom already!!!

HeadFairy Mon 16-Mar-15 21:28:10

Is it illegal to send a glitter bomb? Seriously thinking of sending them weekly!!!!

Rosings25 Mon 16-Mar-15 21:31:40

As our objector had asked to speak and we did not in the window allowed by the rules, I emailed every councillor the weekend before the meeting stating that the plan confirmed to all the LDP and giving personal reasons why I wanted permission. My reasons have no basis in the planning regulations but did give the assurance that I wanted to keep the character of the area and needed the accommodation and was not just trying my luck for a profit in a couple of years. If all councillors have the same information it can not be seen as lobbying.

Flossiechops Mon 16-Mar-15 21:35:12

What was your relationship like with them before this? He sounds like a nightmare neighbour to be honest - completely nightmare! 😞

HeadFairy Mon 16-Mar-15 22:02:33

Flossie, it was fine. We weren't pals, but we'd chat about weather and incidentals in the street, he fixed my tumble dryer once (he's an electrician) and I bought them two bottles of really expensive wine to say thanks (nearly £20 a bottle) because he'd refused payment. We showed them the plans a year ago and they said they were fine with it.

He's not even the home owner, his wife has lived there for years, she inherited it from her mother. She was single and a few years ago did a lot of Internet dating (she told us all about it, we had to endure her endless sobbing when dates didn't come to anything) and she met him, they married about a year ago. We've lived he much longer than he has!

I sincerely hope it doesn't go to committee stage, everyone's told me its a nightmare and it gets really political. That actually scares me.

Pooka Mon 16-Mar-15 22:11:35

Are you in a conservation area? The conditions he's suggesting sound like you are - timber windows/reclaimed brick and so on...

Pooka Mon 16-Mar-15 22:13:38

The shrubs and planting in your own front garden have fuck all to do with him, unless they're magnificent TPO covered mighty oaks.

Pooka Mon 16-Mar-15 22:15:55

Parking non issue really - it's a house, will still be a house, albeit slightly larger. Parking standards tend to look at the unit - you're not converting into flats or making more units, so parking not relevant.

HeadFairy Mon 16-Mar-15 22:24:04

Pooka we're not in a conservation area. It is a lovely Victorian road but the houses are all mixed style, I mean really mixed - even two attached houses have different height roofs. So many of the houses have paved over their front gardens it makes me weep, and although it inconveniences us massively we've resisted the urge to pave over ours (he's wrong, we do have enough space to do it, I've had a council planning officer tell me) because we have a beautiful magnolia tree I would never chop down in a million years.

But I'm tempted to really ostentatiously prune the shrubs tomorrow morning! Seriously, what the fuck have our front gardens got to do with him? Theirs is nothing but dead grass and concrete!

SASASI Mon 16-Mar-15 22:26:08

He sounds like he's really done his homework to complain!!

Really hope everything goes well for you.

Ours has been deferred to MLA status, planners have re-assessed our plans, visited site etc & are still recommending approval.

This is the last hurdle & we are hoping to have council stamped approval in May -9 months after application was submitted. So frustrating but Cest la vie.

It will all be worth it head fairy & the building works alone will serve the revenge. Keep us updated!

Pooka Mon 16-Mar-15 22:26:41

Re the overlooking, if you have reasonable distance between windows, then you might actually have a larger field of vision between windows of comparable height than the oblique angle you get between windows in different storeys.

Can he actually see out of the velux though? Usually they're set high enough in the roof slope to make it impractical to gawp out of them (and the mechanism makes decapitation a strong possibility). We have a loft extension, and the velux windows simply provide light, whereas the vertical windows in the dormers are more suitable for nosing 😊

If it does go to committee, then I would make sure you write to your local ward members to fill them in and ask them for support, or at least to persuade them into a neutral position.

If permission is refused, then you can appeal to planning inspectorate. Our local council lets you have a free second go for revised app that tries to overcome objections submitted within a year (so no planning fee, but obviously architect fees for amendments).

Pooka Mon 16-Mar-15 22:32:06

If it's not a conservation area then he's having a laugh suggesting reclaimed materials and really going overboard on the attention to design detail.

It must be supremely galling when he owns a fleet of cars and for you to maintain pretty front garden for his visual pleasure. Not that you wouldn't anyway, but yswim.

If the character is pretty mixed in terms of building types, then that's strength to your arm to change appearance of yours, particularly with NDN applying jointly. More difficult to argue out of character.

HeadFairy Mon 16-Mar-15 22:44:48

The character of the road is all Victorian, with one exception at the end of the road, but our design is deliberately done so it matches the rest of the building. I was going to have wooden sashes to match the others (they've replaced theirs with upvc - it's so galling they're accusing us of so many things they're guilty of!) and all brickwork will match the original, plus the roof will be tiled in slate to match the original (many of the houses that have had loft conversions done have replaced theirs with terracotta replacement tiles, nowhere near as nice) We really love our house and our road, why would we turn it in to a hideous carbuncle? (I appreciate many many do!)

Their loft velux can be looked out of because I've seen his head sticking out of it. There are two on top of each other yswim. The upper one is top of head height, and when it's open in the summer I can see them poking their heads out, the lower one is chest-mid thigh height and I can see them walking around in their loft room.

slicedfinger Mon 16-Mar-15 22:51:20

Good luck. The **MUST** be able to see he's crazy.

HeadFairy Mon 16-Mar-15 23:01:52

God I hope so slicedfinger, not going to be able to sleep at all tonight!

BovrilonToast Tue 17-Mar-15 12:26:17

He sounds bonkers!

I objected to a local landlord converting a three bed end of terrace in to a 10 - yes **TEN** bedroom HMO. (two doors down from my house)

We went to committee and end up getting it thrown out only on the fact that it would alter the street scene (Victorian terraces) This was the **ONLY** thing we could use from the planning framework...

He went to appeal and won the right to convert it in to a six bed HMO. He had his permitted development rights removed so he could not convert the loft. He did it anyway. He got his ten bedroom house. Still makes me fume 6 years on.

He also owned the house over the road which he had also illegally converted in to a 10 bed HMO - and even though the council knew about this they could do nothing. We complained he had breached building regs as I found out he had put a kitchen in the top floor with no fire escape or proper fire alarms. In the end he had to rip out two kitchens and could only let it to six students 🤔

Anyway - my point is HeadFairy, is that unless your application reaches your local planning framework, it doesn't really matter what your neighbours say!

Good luck for today!

Flossiechops Tue 17-Mar-15 16:08:15

Op how did you get on??!

HeadFairy Tue 17-Mar-15 17:35:34

We got refused, I'm absolutely heartbroken. We can't afford to move and the poisonous man across the road has won.

Flossiechops Tue 17-Mar-15 17:41:40

Oh no 😞 in what grounds did they refuse? Would it be possible to alter the plans to fit in with them? Oh boy I'm sorry I thought it would go your way.

ohnoyou Tue 17-Mar-15 17:57:19

I'm so sorry to read that, but don't give up yet. As Flossie asked can you change your plans to accommodate the planners? Speak to the planners, speak to your architect, I'm sure there will be something you can do.

HeadFairy Tue 17-Mar-15 19:31:34

I'm not sure there is much we can do, they said the proximity to the neighbours would affect their light (not bat shit crazy's house, next door neighbour), but it's a window that has full sunshine from about midday onwards even at this time of year. They cited that the extension would break the 45 degree rule, ie there would be less than 45 degrees from the centre of the window to the top of the roof line, but according to our architect there isn't a 45 degree anyway. As it stands at the moment it's a 59 degree angle from the centre of their window to the roofline, and the extension would change that to 69 degrees.

They've also said that despite the fact that every house on the street has a different roof height it would adversely affect the street scene as the gables would be marginally higher than the houses either side but opposite us there is a pair of semis, unaltered externally since they were built in 1895 that have mismatched gables, so I'm baffled as to how they've come to their conclusions.

To be honest I think our architect isn't great at these sort of things so I'm wondering if we hire a planning consultant and tweak the plans and resubmit. I'm also really wondering if bat shit crazy's multiple objections swayed the planners thinking. It's pretty much impossible to prove, but surely it must have had an affect?

Pooka Tue 17-Mar-15 19:54:37

Right. That's a blow.

Did the planning officers report recommend refusal? What did they particularly say about the character of the street, and about the light issue to the neighbours? If it didn't go to the planning committee, and was based on officer recommendation, it's less likely IMO to be w reaction to your over the road neighbours letter and more likely to be a genuine concern about the light impact. Like I said, the planning officer will have made a professional judgement. That's not to say that they're infallible and always make the right call and are impervious to a pile of objection letters, just saying that they should be able to back up what they've said with the reasoning for their decision, and reasons for refusal should be sustainable if you lodge an appeal.

My first thought, depending upon the above. would be to appeal the refusal. If the appeal is successful, then brill. If the appeal is unsuccessful, then you can always resubmit. Alternatively, you could resubmit pronto with tweaked plans, and if that is refused, you could appeal both schemes. Unfortunately there would be a cost implication if you were to employ a consultant, though of course, if you want to tweak the plans, then no doubt the architect would charge for that.

In terms of local character, then an appeal submission could include evidence to support your appraisal of the varied character of the street - photographs showing the variety of building styles and gable heights and so on. In terms of the impact on light to the neighbour, do I recall correctly that that window is a secondary light source in as much as the back doors are glazed? So not the sole means of daylighting to the room? What part of your extension would impact on that window? Is there any room for tweaking the design subtly to increase daylight, or rather minimise impact?

Sorry that it feels like the neighbour over the road has won.

HeadFairy Tue 17-Mar-15 23:05:12

Pooka, you're a star 😊

Ok refusal is on two grounds, the first being the effect on street scene as our house is one of the few to have a road facing gable end, so despite the fact that the roof ridge line will be level with the properties either side, the planners comments was that because the full height of the building will be closer to the road because the gable end is facing the road, the impact will be too dominating.

One of the previous drawings the architect suggested was we could slope the roof away from the road so the full effect of the raised roof is away from the road. Those drawings also had a small gabled dormer window to the front which mirrors a property opposite (which was originally constructed like this) Does that make sense? It means the gutter line will remain the same level as the neighbouring properties which the planner also commented on.

The second issue was with loss of light to a rear facing window at our next door neighbours. This window is the only light source in that room unfortunately (it's not the kitchen window which was the one I was referring to in when we were talking about the glazed door) however we do have a potential solution to that one. The roof of our house is actually in two parts. The front section covers most of the house, the back section only covers the very rear of the house. We had planned to raise both sections to keep the proportions the same, but we don't actually need to raise the back section. In raising it it gives us some decent loft storage space, but I'm prepared to sacrifice that to get the application through. It means that the loft space above the rear bathroom will be just a crawl space instead of a loft we could walk in, but that's a luxury I'm prepared to lose.

I'm going to call the planning officer to ask him if he thinks either of those adjustments would help with the issues he had with the original plan. I want to get a feeling of whether any development of this house will be allowed, or if it's a lost cause. My feeling is in these circumstances it would be better to reapply rather than appeal.

I have been recommended a planning consultant by a friend (she's the friend of a friend) so I'm going to chat to her about how much it would cost

to get her on board. We've spent £3 grand so far, I don't want to give up without a fight.

Pooka Wed 18-Mar-15 06:48:09

It's great that you've got a couple of options for adjusting the scheme to show planner you're trying to address reasons for refusal.

must be very stressful indeed! Our own loft extension is c. 5 cubic cm inside the pd allowance of the time because we have a hip to side gable that I knew wouldn't get planning permission, and that any application I submitted would go to committee because was employee at the time.

Good luck!

ohnyou Wed 18-Mar-15 07:59:40

Head fairy we had to alter our roof plans even though our roof would not have been visible from the road and others had extended using the same design that we had. We were told that planning laws have changed and what was acceptable then was not now. Our planning officer did offer some advice on what would be acceptable.

Our architect wanted us to go to appeal, but we decided against this as we were told it could take up to a year.

I really feel for you I know how upset I was when we were told we would be refused. But we did resubmit and we did get permission in the end.

Good luck with it and please keep us informed.

Seeline Wed 18-Mar-15 08:25:42

Householder appeals (for development like residential extensions) are dealt with separately by the Planning Inspectorate now. They are supposed to be decided within 8 weeks; the current average is 7 weeks.

It's worth speaking to the Planning Officer and seeing whether the Council would see any amendments as making the scheme acceptable.

Going to appeal might be the final outcome anyway.

HeadFairy Sat 21-Mar-15 09:07:24

Seeline, so many people have scared me with horror stories of planning appeals, the prospect is pretty daunting. We're going to have a pre application meeting with the case officer and see if we can resubmit something. If that second submission fails I'm tempted to appeal but dh is not keen to throw good money after bad (his words). There are so few houses around here to buy, there's a huge jump of about £250k between 3 and 4 bed houses and we just can't do that.

Seeline Mon 23-Mar-15 12:10:56

A house holder appeal shouldn't cost you much, if anything. There is no fee to appeal, and in its most basic form you just need to send in copies of the application documents. You don't need to employ a consultant or anything. You can write a letter raising all the points you think are relevant, and want the Inspector to take into account. He will have access to all the relevant documents (including objection letters), and will visit the site. He will then write a decision letter. the Inspectorate website has all the information [details here](#)

HeadFairy Fri 27-Mar-15 15:50:04

Seeline.... Had a really positive meeting with a planning consultant yesterday. He feels we have a really strong case for appeal given the planning department justified their comments that the project would harmfully affect the street scene by upsetting the uniformity and flow of the existing houses. The street is actually characterised by houses that are all totally different, different roof heights, different gable heights, even different coloured bricks on adjoining houses (the builders used each house as a selling point to commission the next house, so they'd use fancy brickwork to demonstrate different techniques they could use - all very quaint!)

Anyway, as a result the planning consultant feels we have a strong case because each house in the road is actually so different.

Even better news, our architect has offered to pay for the planning consultant to prepare the appeal, as he is mortified that we didn't get planning approval at our first attempt 😊

SASASI Fri 27-Mar-15 20:50:16

Great to see a positive update Headfairy, good luck.

Seeline Tue 31-Mar-15 08:16:15

Just seen your update Headfairy - great news!

Nothing to lose by appealing. Fingers crossed.

I have never heard of an architect paying for a planning consultant before 😊

BovrilonToast Tue 31-Mar-15 09:04:17

That's great news! Fingers crossed for you.



Talk

Topics » Property/DIY

help wording objection to neighbours planning proposal (76 Posts)

[annoyednow](#) Sat 16-Jun-12 16:44:37

Is anyone experienced in planning or gone through the process of an objection? My attached neighbour is proposing an extension astride our common boundary of a semi-detached house with garden in the greater London area. Not inner city.

Their house is 3 metres longer at the back. So although it was built originally like this it effect is equivalent to a two storey extension of 3 metres over ours. This in entirety a party wall (even the bit that sticks after our house).

The proposed extension is a single storey tapering tiled roof with two slylight windows starting at a height of 3.8metres and sloping to 2.3 metres. It is 4 metres long. The entire back of the extension opens to the air by folding glass doors.

The surveyor said they have a right to build up to the boundary and could gain access to our garden to do this. This would involve disturbing a thickly planted area of very old woody wisteria. About half or metre in from the area they would be working on is an garden pond with newts for sure but also other froggie things. It is an established amphibian habitat. He said they would put a wooden hoarding up.

The thing is I don't want somebody working on my garden and taking things up. Also, this is not just a once off. Once a building is up that can only be maintained from my side, it would create a situation where they would have a de-facto easement and right to enter my property and keep destroying this area in perpetuity. I do not this burden created on my property.

It would also block the morning sunlight from the back of the house.

I am making points of objection. Can anyone tell me if they are valid or point out anything useful?

Height, nearness and length overpowering. It would altogether create a roughly 7 metres house wall down the attached side of a semi-detached property. I have not seen anything similar on local properties and don't know if there are any guidelines on too much length overall.

The property not being completely built or maintained from their side is potentially creating a nuisance and threat to our established garden and peaceful enjoyment of our property. It would restrict us on that side. Also would close foundation and footings affect our pond. There were no cross sections of foundation in drawings.

Would the completely opening doors cause a noise problem. It's like removing the back of the property. It is a conservation area and we have jutting out french doors. Would the upward noise of slylights cause proplem in bedrooms.

I know people can build up to the boundary wall. But this is not knightsbridge. It is semi-d land in suburbs. Also each case is different and are there any merit in planning to mine.

I also have palm trees and an apple tree near the proposed extension.

The drew incorrect boundary lines in drawings despite correctly outlined site location map. Does this invalidate the application. I hope so as I was so worried about the boundary I am only now looking at the actual development. Also, inconsistencies on application form. Less than one week for submission based on this application.

Can I truly asses this drawing based on incorrect boundaries?

Please help and sorry for annoying long post.

[annoyednow](#) Sat 16-Jun-12 20:45:48

Anyone at all?

claudedebussy Sat 16-Jun-12 20:50:45

i don't know - bumping for you.

there is a planning officer who occasionally comes on here. MarjorieBanks i think, or something similar.

ANTagony Sat 16-Jun-12 20:52:16

Do ou have a link to te planning application it might be easier to read your post with the drawings.

Jins Sat 16-Jun-12 20:54:09

Hi. I'm a planner but I don't deal with residential very much. There is a full MN planning team nowadays but chances are they arent reading the boards at the moment.

I'm on my way out but if you want to pm me the local authority and the application number I'll take a look tomorrow for you

Sabriel Sat 16-Jun-12 23:28:01

The incorrect boundary lines unfortunately don't invalidate the application. Our old neighbours put in a planning appl and indicated on it that half of our drive was theirs. We immediately rang the council, expecting like you that would invalidate it, but all that happened was they were asked to redraw it.

annoyednow Sun 17-Jun-12 09:27:28

Sabriel, Did you then get three weeks to assess the correct re-drawing. Was it astride a boundary?

annoyednow Sun 17-Jun-12 09:39:23

Also, the letter I received from the council said the application could be downloaded or viewed in the planning office. The downloaded version is devoid of some details marked on the hard copy in council. It does not give height and distances in some drawings and I only found out they had this information on original but their computer system or something couldn't replicate it when I rang to enquire about this.

It does not state in letter that one is inferior to the other. Am annoyed about this as this affect evaluation.

Jins Mon 18-Jun-12 10:11:39

I'll answer the specific objection points you made in your OP but I can't be specific without seeing the application details. Hopefully it will give you some pointers

Height, nearness and length overpowering. It would altogether create a roughly 7 metres house wall down the attached side of a semi-detached property. I have not seen anything similar on local properties and don't know if there are any guidelines on too much length overall. There will be local guidance notes and design guidance. They should be available on the council's website. This is a valid objection and you need to stress the way in which the development will adversely impact your property.

The property not being completely built or maintained from their side is potentially creating a nuisance and threat to our established garden and peaceful enjoyment of our property. It would restrict us on that side. Also would close foundation and footings affect our pond. There were no cross sections of foundation in drawings. I can't help on this as I have no idea whether there would be any ongoing maintenance requirement. Likewise I can't tell whether your pond would be affected by works. What sort of newts are they? If they are Great Crested Newts then they are protected, smooth newts aren't. It's worth mentioning.

Would the completely opening doors cause a noise problem. It's like removing the back of the property. It is a conservation area and we have jutting out french doors. Would the upward noise of slyights cause proplem in bedrooms. I can't imagine any situation where this would be taken into account. It's a residential area. There will be very little difference between the noise levels from a completely opening door and an open back door. The suitability of the design for a conservation area is another matter and that's a judgement that I can't make. I wouldn't mention the noise issue though

I know people can build up to the boundary wall. But this is not knightsbridge. It is semi-d land in suburbs. Also each case is different and are there any merit in planning to mine. Each case is indeed taken on its own merits and it may well be that what is proposed is unsuitable in terms of it's impact on your property or its appearance overall.

I also have palm trees and an apple tree near the proposed extension. You can mention these but they are garden trees and standard conditions would probably protect them. Depending on where you are in the country you may find that the conservation team may be glad to see your palms go!

The drew incorrect boundary lines in drawings despite correctly outlined site location map. Does this invalidate the application. I hope so as I was so worried about the boundary I am only now looking at the actual development. Also, inconsistencies on application form. Less than one week for submission based on this application. No the application is not invalidated but you should inform the case officer asap so that corrections can be made or appropriate notice given. If your land is affected then you will be notified as owner

Can I truly asses this drawing based on incorrect boundaries? Yes - you already have and you will be able to include the error in your representation

You do have some relevant planning issues to raise as an objection but be careful to focus on those as that is what will be taken into account. It's

worth asking the planning officer to come and look at the proposal from your point of view but they may not do this

mistlethrush Mon 18-Jun-12 10:17:06

Would help to have slightly more details on the project - and then easier to word a response.

RCheshire Mon 18-Jun-12 10:19:33

Can I recommend that you choose a specific objection (i.e. the one with the most validity/weight) and follow-up on that.

If you sound like you are throwing every possible barrel-scraping objection into the discussion then your 'better' objections will be drowned out and you will come across as a 'NIMBY'

mistlethrush Mon 18-Jun-12 10:19:53

As was said on your other thread, ring the case officer.

There was quite a bit of initial advice there.

As I understand it, your neighbours have no right to carry out any works (eg foundations) that actually come onto your garden.

Not sure about your previous point about the fact that you 'own' part of their existing wall - you'd need a party wall surveyor to advise you on that - and as its party wall stuff, you should be able to get them to pay for independant party wall advice for yourself.

annoyednow Mon 18-Jun-12 12:21:39

mistlethrush,

the case officer is out sick and no one else seems to be able to help me. They say the 'case officer will deal with and determine that'. Unfortunately, I only have until the 21st to submit application so cannot take the chance on it being invalidated or new drawings having to be submitted. I may end up having no submission on file if the case officer does neither of these things.

As their house is longer than ours, some of the party wall is external to our house and we did not know for sure if it was the side wall of their house or an extension of the party wall. We did get a party wall surveyor out to clarify this and they confirmed it was a party wall. I suppose it is more correct to say it is our side of the party wall. Wide old fashioned fascia, soffit and guttering overhang the external party wall and they used this as the boundary line. They did the same the other side onto the pavement. They have a corner property.

Consent has not been given for any development yet as it is still with the Council planners, so we are not in the official party wall award area yet so cannot get them to pay for a surveyor. We will be if they get permission, but we would hope planning consent will be for a modified extension so it won't intrude on us as much.

The party wall surveyor said if they get planning permission they can build right up to the boundary and take up the fence and work from our side. They do have the right to put something under the ground on our side (foundation or footing) and this is where my pond comes in.

This is why my objection to the planning office of the council is so vital and must contain good planning reasons against the development up to the boundary of which one side can only be built and maintained from my garden. They can only build what they get planning permission for.

Too right I don't want to create a new easement on my property for private development. I don't know who or what I could have to deal with in the future. The applicant bought the property earlier this year. It had been a rental, was empty for about a year before purchase and is still unoccupied. I don't know if it will be rented out or sold. I don't know the owner as she and her partner have just visited a few weekends. We are strangers really but they had kept inviting us to see their work. There is nothing to indicate it will be occupied during the building work. I don't know who will actually be living there in the future. If it is to be an investment property, sold on or a home for applicant.

annoyednow Mon 18-Jun-12 12:29:38

Not submit application, meant objection to application.

rcheshire, I do not know which holds more weight. Because of the incorrect boundary line, and lack of measurements on downloaded version of drawings I have not had/will not have time to really think about it. So I want to throw the book at it.

mistlethrush Mon 18-Jun-12 12:46:02

As Jins said, there's likely to be a guide to what is reasonable in terms of extensions available from your Council. You could look on their planning department, try to get to something that says policy or local development framework and look for 'other guides' or supplementary planning guidance etc - and look for things that suggest design or housing design or house extensions.

It is not acceptable to put forward something that requires an overhang over your property - and it is perfectly reasonable to say that you're not prepared to accept that - the planning officer should ask them to resubmit proposals that don't require this - although its not that critical to planning.

Where do the rooflights face - your garden? If so complain re potential noise etc.

Don't bother about the doors leading out onto their garden - not much you can do about that.

Overbearing development is something that should be considered - what height will the wall be? Is it on the southern side of your garden - if the northern boundary, it won't affect sunlight but on any other it will do. These are valid planning concerns. Length of extension is also of relevance - particularly when combined with height.

annoyednow Mon 18-Jun-12 13:21:28

Ok, the roof lights are up upwards, I think. But as it is a close ground floor extension, do you think there could be any upward noise concerns towards bedrooms. The extension is on our western boundary.

When I rang the council, they said the extension was from 3.8 to 2.4 metres in height (all this not marked on downloaded maps). It is 4 metres in length. I do not know if this from their curved french door porch area or from their back wall. But it is an extension from a house wall already nearly 3 metres from our house creating a building line of nearly 7 metres viewed from our side. This is what makes it like the 'Lubyanka' for us. The extension added to the original 3 metres extra length. If the 3.8m map not seem too high, but when it starts 3 metres down our garden, it is very imposing. Looking at some of houses on os map, there are hardly any extensions and those are not along attached boundary of the semi-d's. Most of the other houses are identical in length though.

Is there nothing about their being unable to build or maintain it from their own property?

What about the folding glass doors at back practically opening the entire back area. This is a conservation area and narrow twin french doors in the original houses. Could it be out of character?

I would love to post maps, but don't want to 'out' myself.

Pendeen Mon 18-Jun-12 13:27:17

Your objection will cause the application to be considered by committee rather than delegated powers. From bitter experience I know that councillors can and will be swayed by emotional arguments in spite of their officers' advice.

The party wall surveyor can act for both of you if agreeable. His duty is to the Act not individuals (something which few people appreciate) and there is a great advantage in only using one surveyor. Your neighbour must make reasonable provision for making good after the work - a good surveyor will take account of all the factors.

Although it is quite reasonable for foundations to oversail boundaries - allowing for the fact that establishing exact boundaries is almost never possible) roof overhangs are not usually permitted. If so, use this as part of the objection.

Access to your land for repairs is acceptable however the extension must be designed to minimise the need and the surveyor should take this into account as well i.e. low maintenance materials and finishes. The application should be specific and if not use this as part of your objection.

Easements aren't created that easily speak to your solicitor about this.

Jins Mon 18-Jun-12 14:29:20

You won't get measurements on downloaded drawings because they are drawn to scale. If measurements are marked on them it's unusual.

I think the major objection is the scale of the development and the fact that it will be overbearing.

The noise issue I wouldn't bother with personally and the folding glass doors although out of character may not be unacceptable. Design is a very big factor in conservation areas and that will be looked at closely. If you want to say it's out of character then you can certainly do so.

You don't have to post details here. If you want more detailed advice from the fully qualified planners posting on this thread then you could pm them with details of the application. I've got my own planning consultancy and I'm not about to jeopardise that by outing someone on Mumsnet!

mistlethrush Mon 18-Jun-12 15:03:30

Jins - me neither.

Pendeen - not necessarily - some authorities don't push it to Committee until there are five objectors or a Local Councillor involved.

OP - contact your Local Councillor and get them interested.

Pendeen Mon 18-Jun-12 16:25:16

mistlethrush

Fair point and yes some authorities do have additional criteria however it is quite common for objections to automatically trigger referral to committee.

I practice in the south west so accept this may be different in other areas.

annoyednow Mon 18-Jun-12 18:45:53

Thanks again.

One more thing. Should I trim my wisteria and Roses as they are very high on that side. The reason is they add security as the place has been vacant so long. I intended to trim them when it was occupied. Would this more clearly show the sunlight issue if removed. If they remain would planners say there is high foliage there anyway so extension wouldn't cause much problem.

The difference to me is an extension is permanent but my roses etc can be trimmed.

Jins Mon 18-Jun-12 18:56:02

Can't advise without knowing more sorry. In general sunlight tends to be a fairly weak issue.

tricot39 Mon 18-Jun-12 19:44:16

how long is your garden from the back of your house? their house projects 3m at present but will extend to 7m if i understand correctly?

annoyednow Mon 18-Jun-12 22:37:25

Yes, their house now projects nearly 3m and will project nearly 7m along our western boundary if the extension is built. The existing 3 m is a two-storey and the extension will begin at a height of 3.8 and finish at 2.4m. We have a good length garden but I don't know the length.

I rang the council to see if they had a policy on extension length and they said not set in stone, but 3.5m. I wonder if they will take the entire projection into account. I don't see any extension along the attached side of semi-d's on the road on the os map, never mind one of 7 metres.

annoyednow Mon 18-Jun-12 22:48:30

Last line should read 'don't see any projection along the attached side'.

ladymuckbeth Tue 19-Jun-12 08:03:27

Can only offer my own experience. We currently have an application in for a two storey extension which will certainly impose over one of our neighbours. I have been told by the architect that objections on grounds of restricting sunlight are not a concern - although we both have a south facing garden which might contribute to that fact.

We are also in a conservation area and there is no concern at all that we'll get permission for our wall of folding doors - although there is precedence for them in our street. I can't imagine issues of noise would be considered - if anything it would be aesthetics. Same goes for roof skylights, which are probably rarely intended to be opened and are designed more to bring extra light into the room.

If there is no precedence the sheer length of the extension sounds to me the most objectionable aspect, and many of your other points do come across as a bit "desperate". It's a worrying time though, I can imagine, and it sounds as if you are receiving little reassurance.

Jins Tue 19-Jun-12 08:50:18

OP if you don't want to let people on here know the address (and I can understand that!) then I'd suggest the best thing you can do is contact Planning Aid

www.rtpi.org.uk/planning-aid/what-we-do/

If you ring the advice helpline you will get 15 minutes of free advice. That will go quickly so make sure you explain the situation as accurately as you can. If further assistance is needed they will go through eligibility with you.

vivandtom Tue 19-Jun-12 10:39:15

Had a friend in a similar situation. After discussion, the neighbour brought the extension wall back about a foot into their own garden to allow for foundations and the overhang of the roof and gutters etc. All of the extension was then within the neighbours property. Even though he had a spare foot of his own garden, the neighbour built the wall from the inside of the boundary until the very end of the build when he asked for access to render it. The roof was put on from his side as were the soffits and gutters etc.

The future maintenance access issue should not be the worry you imagine. After all, what maintenance does a bare rendered wall need? Ever? It may improve your security and privacy too.

And, your neighbour will never, ever see it from your side - so you can paint it and make a mediterranean style courtyard if you like - they will never be able to see it.

The right of access to your land for maintenance is something many joined houses (all flats) have over each other.

It doesn't mean half a dozen lads can just turn up whenever they like and march into your garden or climb over the wall.

They Must seek your permission - if you refuse it and you could - then they would have to go to court to seek a legal remedy. They might not fancy doing this - it's expensive and they may not win.

If I came home to find my neighbour in my garden and he said, 'I'm just checking my wall' - I'd call the police.

It's a legal condition - it can't just be imposed will nilly.

Perhaps you should just aim to get them to pull the wall back into their garden enough to make sure all the gutters etc are on their side.

Although.... surely most flat roof extensions would have a slope which drained the rain onto their own side anyway? They can't direct water onto your land.

Is it flat roofed? Is it sloped towards their property?

annoyednow Wed 20-Jun-12 14:15:14

Thank you all so, so much for your comments. I would have gone stir crazy if I did not have anyone to give feedback on issues.

I rang the council again and the planner on this case is away on compassionate leave and they don't know if that will be extended next week or not. They don't know therefore who or indeed if anyone will need to take over the case.

That palm trees comment made me chuckle (not easy at moment). We didn't plant them. The reason I mentioned them is because there is a specific question about any trees on adjoining property within falling distance of proposed development. They answered no. My trees are quite tall and easily visible so no error. To tell the truth I'm annoyed about blatant lies on form and drawings. I'll sup with a long spoon from this extension if I can.

A modified version may be ok. However, this is the proposed extension applied for so need to put views to council.

I have seen in council development plan that extensions should be 'neighbourly' and the new extension should normally be set back from main building line to allow clear visual break from original and new. Is the building line the very back of the house or the whole perimeter of building?

Will I just stick to overbearing and affecting our amenity as joined to us and gives total line of 7m building along our garden? and the inaccuracies (being generous) in app. form. Will I stick bits in from plan and mention policy recommendation is ext. of 3.5 metres or does that look too pedantic. We are the only house it will effect like this.

Will I get opportunity to comment again?

Thank you all again so much. I shall ring that link to day Jins, thank you.

mistlethrush Wed 20-Jun-12 14:37:57

Annoyed - if you want to pm Jins or me with the name of the authority, either of us could look for the relevant design recommendations for you and advise you better.

I would put in your statement that you would not be as adverse to an extension if it was set back from your boundary and therefore didn't result in gutters etc overhanging your property or your trees and plants being severely cut back in order to facilitate the development.

I would be making the point that the house already extends 3m from the back of the house and the additional length would make this extension excessive in length, and overbearing when viewed from your property. As the extension is on the western side of the garden and is the height it is I would also comment on the height and likely additional shading resulting from the proposals.

I can't really help more without being able to see the Council's design guidance or potentially your neighbour's plans.

PigletJohn Sat 23-Jun-12 16:10:28

if the Planning Application says (e.g.) closed to public comment on 30th June, does that mean anything you haven't put in writing by then is too late?

Jins Sat 23-Jun-12 16:50:24

Every planning authority I've ever worked for or with has allowed representations to be made right up to the date of determination.

annoyednow Mon 25-Jun-12 17:37:49

Hi and thanks again. Objection put in and received by council. Planning officer in charge away this week also.

Something else has come to my attention. The house in question is in a conservation area, but not in a street with an article 4 direction, so single storey rear extensions can be built under permitted development. I know this would modify things (if owners could be trusted not to exceed limits), but there would be no evaluation of the potential 6 metres projection from the rear wall of my house in that case. This being the nearly 3m already and the allowed 3m under permitted development. Is this the case? Jeez, I wish we had bought another house now, or in the next street (article 4 dir).

Is it correct to say there are no issues taken into account under permitted development?

annoyednow Mon 25-Jun-12 17:39:47

Is the fact that the house is not and never has been occupied by the applicant anyways relevant?

Jins Mon 25-Jun-12 18:13:26

No the occupation or otherwise is completely irrelevant. Unless the property has been abandoned, and it doesn't sound like it has, then it doesn't matter whether the applicant lives there. Anyone can apply for planning permission on any land without owning or occupying it as long as appropriate notice is served on people who have an interest.

If there's no Article 4 Direction then permitted development restrictions applying to conservation areas would be relevant. Yes there would be no

evaluation of the proposal because it's permitted development. There would be assessment of the proposal if it exceeded the criteria for permitted development but in that case the developer would be asked to submit a retrospective application.

If the current application is refused the applicant may well decide to maximise their permitted development rights and you wouldn't have any right of representation. They may also decide to appeal a refusal

annoyednow Mon 25-Jun-12 18:24:58

Thank you Jins. The adjoining house does not have a level rear wall. The 'main' part is the same distance for most of the house. It then just extends down the adjoining boundary to allow for a side return from the street. This was all built at the same time, I think. Is the rear wall at the very furthest point from the front of the house or back wall of the house where it is stepped in from the road to allow for a side return.

To explain that. Their house is one main block up to a certain point. Then it extends/projects like an extension from the main block but not taking up the full width so there is also a 'back wall' a few metres behind the furthest point of the projected bit. Which is the rear wall from which they can extend 3m under pd. It is the way the house was originally built I think.

annoyednow Mon 25-Jun-12 18:33:13

The party wall act would apply. So maybe surveyor would be keeping an eye on things.

PigletJohn Mon 25-Jun-12 18:35:24

annoyed, do you mean it is sort of an "L" shape?

annoyednow Mon 25-Jun-12 18:41:26

Yes, but look at the L upside down. The projected bit is along our boundary, because it is a corner plot and there is side access from the pavement on the other side.

annoyednow Mon 25-Jun-12 18:42:44

Our house is a block, no projections, and ends nearly 3m earlier than their projected bit.

annoyednow Mon 25-Jun-12 19:11:34

Is this projected bit classed as the rear wall of the entire building or just the rear wall of the original 'side' annexe?

mistlethrush Mon 25-Jun-12 21:08:05

Are you sure that the bit that projects was original when the house was built (or by 1947) and not a later extension (eg our house has a similar type of bit at the back in relation to next door, but its definitely an extension, even though part of it was probably 30 years old) - if it is already an extension, even if it was built a long time ago (but after 1947) it will have used some of the permitted development rights up.

annoyednow Mon 25-Jun-12 21:16:48

I would almost certainly think it was built that way. I think there was a certain area of plot left and the builders modified to fit that. The 'block' of the house does not correspond with ours at all. But the stylised stick-out french doors with red tiling are same style. It's a two storey projection. It is also on the os map, but not as an extension.

annoyednow Tue 26-Jun-12 00:07:00

To make to existing area flow into the new extension, they will have to remove most of the bottom of the rear wall. This is a principal external wall isn't it? Can this be categorized as demolition? If so, would they need conservation area consent and not simply pd? Could that be right?

annoyednow Tue 26-Jun-12 00:38:29

Also, what about this 45 degree angle visible from the centre of nearest window?

mistlethrush Tue 26-Jun-12 07:22:39

[Technical guidance on PD rights](#)

Jins Tue 26-Jun-12 09:15:42

annoyednow - no it wouldn't be classed as demolition to remove the wall as part of an extension under pd rights.

Have a read of the guidance mistlethrush has linked to. I've been trying to sketch the plot from your description and I'm struggling to visualise the relationship between the properties. I think an extension built under permitted development rights would still impact you but there isn't anything you can do about it unfortunately.

mistlethrush Tue 26-Jun-12 09:37:11

But there is a 3m height restriction - which is better than the current proposals from your description.

Jins Tue 26-Jun-12 09:41:34

The height restriction would improve things to some extent but that can lead to a poorer design solution. Swings and roundabouts really but I don't think OP wants any development at all 😞

annoyednow Tue 26-Jun-12 10:37:59

No, Jins. It is not true I object to any development. I do not want someone else's development to become my development. As they can build up to the boundary and force access onto my property to build and subsequently maintain the new extension, I (and my property) could potentially be directly affected on an on-going basis.

This is why I want to see if there it has to go through planning at least so our unusual set-up and dis-benefit to our side can be assessed. I imagine when the pd limits were introduced, it was imagined they started from level playing fields. We already have the nearly 3m on the flank exposed party wall of their rear projection.

Part of their work would take place with their workmen on our property, just outside our french doors to the garden during the summer. This is very much part of our living area. I don't even know if the hoarding/scaffolding would be covering part of our french doors. It would destroy our mature planting and pond.

Is it unreasonable to expect them to build their development within their own property making sure it's build or maintenance does not create a burden on ours?

Is it also unreasonable to not want a 7m exposed house wall (6m if pd) along the adjoining boundary? Anything over the pd guide of 3m must be regarded differently as that limit is there in the first place. Unfortunately not taking account of existing projections.

Also, I think they were taking the proverbial with 'untruths' on the drawings and application form. If they do that when they others will see it. What inaccurate plans will they submit to building control when nobody who is affected will see plans.

I am very genuinely very grateful for your help as this proposed dev. feels like a development on our own property (and it's news to me that we're building). Every case is different and this affects us badly. In their garden, no problem. When it's coming into ours, I'm involuntarily involved.

Jins Tue 26-Jun-12 10:42:14

OP I meant any development in this location. I'm sure you wouldn't be worried if it was on the other side of the property

annoyednow Tue 26-Jun-12 10:55:34

I wouldn't mind if they built an extension that didn't adversely impact on me. Physically or visually. Built in their own garden and maintained from their own garden. The development proposed in the drawings is not that extension, or even entirely on their land.

Jins Tue 26-Jun-12 11:05:01

Actually I'll pick up a few points you raise because I'm waiting for some corrected plans to come back.

I agree that development right up to a boundary causes all sorts of issues and also overlaps many areas of law. Planning deals only with land use issues, you've already explored the party wall issues and there will also be issues surrounding access for maintenance. Planning will look at amenity issues and the impacts of the development on your property. Preventing future access to your land for maintenance is not something that can be controlled by planning permission.

You already have a 3m projection which has been there for some time. Presumably it was there when you moved in and it hasn't been an issue. You have to disregard the development that is already there and consider the additional development. The application proposes another metre or so above pd rights and it is higher. There will therefore be more impact than an extension limited by pd. What you have to consider is the additional impact of the extra height and length. You can try going down the route of the cumulative impact of the proposed development when added to what's already there but the fall back position for the applicant is what would be permissible under the GPDO.

It's not unreasonable to want someone to build entirely within their own property to prevent maintenance issues but this sort of development goes on every day. I let my neighbour have access to our property to maintain his garage roof, it's an afternoon every other year and it's not unreasonable. I don't get involved in this issue very often but how would the courts see the access issue? Would it be unreasonable to restrict access? Do they already need access for maintenance if the existing building is on or close to the boundary?

Inaccurate plans are very common - see my opening paragraph. There isn't necessarily an intention to deceive, it might actually just be an error. Have the plans been corrected now?

annoyednow Tue 26-Jun-12 11:34:54

No, the plans haven't been corrected. The planning officer is away this week also. I don't know when or if anyone is taking over. It is not simply an afternoon though. They will have their builders on my property for I don't know how long weeks/months, outside my french doors, destroying my planting and pond. My point is I want to prevent it becoming an issue for maintenance. And no, I don't want a bunch of strangers forced onto my property for someone else's development. Why would I?

That exposed wall to the side of our garden is a continuation of the party wall, the surveyor said. It is the flank wall of their extra projection, but still a party wall.

Yes, pd does modify it at least. It would be better than proposed plans. Do the planning authority have to grant them the amount they would have been able to build under pd?

I have also let neighbours other side lodge ladder and attend to their roof and fascia/soffit on one occasion. They are courteous, ask beforehand, she supervises and they clear up afterwards. Also day job at most. That is for an existing build. The are reasonable people. I don't trust the other side at all. I don't want a new reason for access created.

Gut-wise, I don't think it was an error, application form also had blatant inaccuracies. Confusing as the couple said they both sold flats to buy the house, but she is down as sole owner (of part of my property as well). Trees within falling distance down as negative. My palms are tall. The boundary line was not drawn falsified to their disadvantage! If they do this on documentation they know people will see, what will they 'try' if only disinterested building control are the only one's they have to deal with.

Sorry for rant. Can't even ask the planning officer on the case anything. Feel ambushed. I can't believe we can't be left to the quiet enjoyment of our own property.

Jins Tue 26-Jun-12 11:51:20

No the planning authority will not grant the amount that would be permitted under pd. If it is refused then the applicant has the right of appeal. If the appeal is dismissed they can apply for an amended scheme which takes into account the reasons for refusal or they could extend under permitted development rights.

I don't know how much access their builder will require to construct foundations but in the vast majority of cases the work is done from the applicants side. You've got the party wall issue there but I can't help on that at all as it's not planning. I don't know what happens if you refuse to give access but you have a surveyor who can advise on that and no doubt a solicitor would have to be involved.

She may well be the sole owner. It won't make a lot of difference but appropriate notice **must** be given to affected owners and if you have shown that the boundary is incorrect and your land is involved then it will have to be amended. If the trees are within falling distance then the planning officer will see that when they inspect the site.

Planning officers don't just take the forms as gospel, they make their own judgement after site inspection and using the representations from consultees. I wouldn't expect them to pick up a boundary inaccuracy without evidence from the owner but they will definitely spot the trees.

annoyednow Tue 26-Jun-12 12:04:38

Thank you Jins. Building control may not pick up on boundary inaccuracy if replicated in their plans under pd route.

Jins Tue 26-Jun-12 12:12:51

No building control won't be too concerned with boundaries. Have you seen page 17 of the guidance mistlethrush linked to?

That might make a pd extension unworkable.

mistlethrush Tue 26-Jun-12 20:36:35

Jins - based on what the OP's said about the back of the property, yes, p17 might be good on the pd issues.

Ormiriathomimus Tue 26-Jun-12 20:37:39

How about:

"Hell NO!"

Just a thought 🤔

mistlethrush Tue 26-Jun-12 20:56:14

I'm not sure that the Case Officer would accept that as a justification for refusing the application! 🤔

annoyednow Tue 26-Jun-12 22:31:05

Oh, I wish that pg17 was applicable. The original extended bit/annexe is roughly two-thirds the width of the fullest width of the house. There is only one step in the building. So they are building onto the rear of the extended bit, not wrap-around. There are not 3 steps like the example on pg 17.

Husband's first reaction was that Orm. Over my ... came second in relation to a bunch of someone else's builders in our shrubs.

He can't believe we could be forced to do it and someone can interfere with our property. We're not involved in any development work. We'll get the stress of someone's else's dev. I'm way more pessimistic and accept people will try and dump on us from a height. He is happy for them to take us to court, in theory. We couldn't afford this though. We do have a legal expenses as part of our insurance schedule. Have to see how this works.

mistlethrush Wed 27-Jun-12 10:16:52

Annoyed - why don't you write to the planning officer setting out all your issues with the proposal, and indicate that if they simply off-set the proposed development by 1m from your boundary you would withdraw your objection?

Pendeen Wed 27-Jun-12 11:47:58

In theory it is possible to construct the extension with - for example - eccentric foundations and (as I mentioned above) carefully select the materials to ensure that minimal disruption is caused to your property from construction and future maintenance.

On several occasions I have had to design extensions or new buildings with these conditions imposed - it is more difficult and certainly more expensive but not impossible.

OP, as your concerns relate so much to the disturbance (both immediate and future) this may also be worth following?

annoyednow Thu 28-Jun-12 23:38:18

I wish I could choose foundations that didn't involve disturbing my area. Also materials to minimize disturbance, but I'm not doing the build. I will be always on the defensive. They are completely willing to run a coach and six through our enjoyment of our own property. And it seems the law allows them.

You know I have chairs either side of my french doors and was sitting out there this evening. With the cat and the froggies and the smell of honeysuckle and roses. I was thinking 'they can rip all this up'. Look at any part of your own homes and think how you'd feel if some stranger could come in and destroy it (minding your own business on your own property) to do something for their own benefit on theirs. And then I thought 'and they can then keep ripping it up'. I'm going to spend my summer holed up in my front room or looking at a hoarding/scaffolding/someone's else's builders from the back through my closed garden doors. We're going to be paying the mortgage for someone else to benefit from our property!

Think I'll check in legal, but I think party wall act rips up right to peaceful enjoyment of your own property.

tricot39 Fri 29-Jun-12 06:50:24

In some ways you are right about the party wall but it is also the tool which you would use to do what **pendeen** says.

It is a couple of weeks since you first posted about this - have you tried talking to your neighbours about your concerns as suggested on your thread? Invite them to look at your planting and pond. You will find out then if they are prepared to be accomodating. That's not necessarily what you will get if you try to conduct negotiations through statutory bodies....

I also think if they are at planning now it will be winter at the earliest before work started. However if you obstruct matters you might delay it until next summer and force the situation you dont want! Talk to them!

annoyednow Fri 29-Jun-12 11:42:25

We haven't seen them for around a month. They don't live here and never have. They bought a house that had been rented out previously. The house has been vacant for over a year.

They have various workmen doing stuff inside and then leaving various discarded fittings in the garden. I think we need to strengthen our wooden fence (our property and completely on our land). Otherwise, I wouldn't be surprised if they felt perfectly entitled to get their workmen to move it out of their way.

They had been coming around at weekends cleaning up before and kept coming next door to say come over and see what we've done. They called one evening and really were quite persistent I came over and see what they'd done already. I thought they were being very social. When I was over there, they then informed me they were going to build an extension on the boundary and they'd 'have' to place workmen our side. The did not show us any paper drawings. I was reeling quite honestly. He (who doesn't appear to be owner or applicant acc. to planning form) patronisingly said they wall would then be there if we wanted to extend. Yeah, sure we'd get planning permission to extend 7 metres. They didn't say they'd already put in the application and seemed quite happy when I said we were going on holiday. Maybe they thought we wouldn't get time to comment.

The application form and drawings have 'inaccuracies' on them. These are hit and run people. They bought next door, but are not our neighbours really and we have no relationship with them. I think negotiation for them means telling us what they are going to do on our property.

Jins Fri 29-Jun-12 12:30:39

OP whilst I sympathise entirely I can't change the planning system and make it work for you 😞

Planning is concerned with land use issues and amenity. If the proposal isn't appropriate or has a negative impact then it will be refused. You are able to make your views known but it will not be your decision as to whether or not your amenity is unreasonably affected. Planning is intended to protect us all, you from adverse development and your neighbour from unreasonable restrictions on their right to develop.

If it is refused then the applicant may choose to exercise their right to build under the GPDO. There is nothing at all that can be done about that, it's been enshrined in law for many years and the limits are designed to ensure that the chance of an adverse impact is minimised.

Please just discuss your fears and concerns with the planning officer when they return or it is passed to someone else

annoyednow Fri 29-Jun-12 14:07:09

Thank you for replying Jins. I will have to accept whatever the outcome of the planning process will be. Even if it's refused, I know they can do the 3m long x 3m high extension on their land up to the boundary. .

What I am incandescent about is their seeming ability to trample over and deprive us use of part of our property for their personal project.

I've been looking at the pond and there is a rockery area surrounding it. Some of the large rocks have been set firmly in the soil. I wonder if the party wall act will allow them to dig the area up to flatten it out. The area is quite uneven. They would have to cut away my wisteria. The act says something about removing fittings and furniture. Does destroying and digging up correspond with this? Plus killing my froglets.

Don't forget we're not building. But my property is being converted into a building site. The very area opening into the garden through the french doors. If we were renting I'd be moving as it will curtail our ability to enjoy the property.

Jins Fri 29-Jun-12 14:15:24

I can't comment on party wall issues and I've no personal experience because we haven't got one as we own the boundary wall.

Take appropriate advice when you need to and try to stop worrying about it as you can't do anything yet anyway

pamplemousse Fri 29-Jun-12 14:43:56

I'm really sorry if what follows comes across as overly harsh but I think there are some things you can do to improve your personal lot without confrontation.

I've read your posts over the last few days and you seem to have a general problem with neighbours full stop. Particularly when you live in an attached house, there needs to be a level of acceptance that you will be affected by the way other people choose to live their lives. I've lived in a terrace with a teenage girl playing her music full blast for most of the day when I had a newborn baby, and her and her alcoholic Dad spent most of the evening / night rowing with highly audible bad language. I appreciate that your situation isn't comparable, but the tack we took was to politely make them aware that we could hear and request that they keep the volume down. For the most part this was effective.

Try and talk with your neighbours in a non-confrontational fashion. They probably aren't aware of your mounting concern for your wisteria and froglets..... Invite them over for coffee and cake so you can both discuss plans and come to a mutually agreeable solution. This might not be your 'ideal' scenario, but it may be a hell of a lot better than if you left it, or objected in a sufficiently fierce way to get their backs up.

annoyednow Sat 30-Jun-12 00:08:48

Pamplemousse, did your neighbours come into your property to play their music, or have their arguments in your living room. Then it would be comparable to building their development from my garden. Would you have politely asked them to leave and then when they waved an act at you and said 'tough, we have a right of access' offered coffee and cake.

They are simply owners of the attached property. It is empty. They do not live there and we have haven't seen them for over a month. They would be perfectly aware of our situation if the council has circulated a copy of the objection.

I don't talk to my neighbours in a confrontational manner. Maybe that is the problem. Boundaries and all. Literally and figuratively. The guy who came over re. me parking with bumper covering sloping stone of dropped kerb and when I apologized started shouting at me. yep, that was definitely my issue.

And the nigh on 10 hour fire in neighbours garden. I should have politely said if she has it on for more than a reasonable time, I would call environment.

I must be missing something. These people are literally turning my home into a development site for their project and I am getting their backs up..

Maybe I should move out, rent another property at my own expense and their builders could use my house for bathroom , kitchen etc.

mistlethrush Sat 30-Jun-12 07:01:27

Annoyed - you need to ensure that you get a good party wall surveyor appointed (at their expense) who can advise you properly on your rights and exactly how much disruption is acceptable on your property if they build something to the boundary. Indeed, you might want to get a party wall surveyor to give you some advice now, paid for by yourself. I can't advise on party wall issues as I don't deal with that sort of issue. I do know that they can't just put up eg gutters over your land without your express consent - I've recently dealt with a proposal that put a roof over a flat roofed section of a building whose outerwall formed the boundary - the Planning Officer asked for details of how the rainwater could be dealt with because a gutter would not be acceptable in the circumstances. Whilst their proposal is more significant in terms of building a wall on the boundary, the issue of the guttering is the same.

annoyednow Mon 23-Jul-12 18:55:43

This case has not yet been decided. The inspector will be calling out to inspect the site and will call to see from my perspective as well.

One thing I am very concerned is they have reiterated their claim to ownership of flank wall and part of our garden. I got a party wall expert out before (at huge expense) because when I saw the plans I was unsure what it was all about and he did not hesitate in saying it was an extension of the party wall. Measured etc. So the exposed flank wall of their house on our side is actually 'our face' of the party wall. He said the fence is not even the boundary but ours and on our land entirely as it is aligned with 'our side' of the party wall. The boundary itself is on the other side of our fence. This is really cynical stuff. I'm stressed to the hilt.

Haven't seen the owners for six/seven weeks now. They don't live there. They have builder guys going in irregularly. Do not want these people near our property when they start building if their strange claim on to our side is anything to go by. Need to think about what I am going to do if they physically trespass and remove our fence.

annoyednow Thu 26-Jul-12 17:00:50

Out of interest, does anybody know if there has ever been a prosecution for 'recklessly or knowingly' filling in the wrong ownership certificate (A

instead of B) on a planning application. When the applicant breezily declares they are sole owners of part of neighbour's garden and also part of public pavement on the other side. Although aforementioned neighbours have got in chartered surveyor who refutes claim, to still persist.

They said ownership goes from eaves down both side to where line hits the ground, even though their eaves oversail building line. An architectural technician drew the maps up and is the agent making the claim. They don't seem to understand that a house wall that straddles the boundary is a party wall and not wholly owner by them. Also, they don't seem to understand (or want to) that the imaginary boundary line runs roughly down the middle of party wall and fence continuing from 'our side' of party wall is our fence completely within the boundary of our property.

If they make such an aggressive claim without suitably qualified people verifying it, surely this is reckless at the very least. I've been stressed out of my mind and we had to fork out for surveyor to find out if they were right.

muddyboots63 Wed 01-Aug-12 12:55:46

Hi! You have my sympathy as I am going through the same myself. This will cost you money to sort it out even if you are in the right. Check your household insurance to see if it covers legal expenses and notify them straight away if you do have insurance. (Any delay can invalidate a claim). You have two issues, what they are actually planning to build and secondly where it is being built. The first concerns planning the second concerns your legal rights which is not the role of planning. By the way, as for access there is a legal right of access to maintain property but not for new development. If your neighbour is a bully (mine is) the only way to counter them is be sure of your facts (costs money) and hit him hard. I put mine on a notice for an injunction including costs for encroachment last week regardless of any planning decision. Apparently a new set of plans has just been submitted to planning that I have yet to see. I told them that over a year ago but it took actual legal action before they listened. He also has a legal duty of care to your property. Photograph everything before any work starts. Good luck!

annoyednow Tue 07-Aug-12 14:08:48

Thank you for your posts.

Mistlethrush, thing is we haven't got as far as the building stage yet (of course they could just career ahead under pd). Trouble is they still maintain that the party wall is not a party wall and is entirely owned by them. The planning inspector was out and looked at it from our garden and house. On this basis, I think they have requested form B be filled in. I don't believe they have a chartered surveyor around. I think they are going on what their nincompoop of an agent says (maybe he is just arguing their wishes). He is not chartered/ rics.

Oddly enough, male half of couple has shoved a note in the door. She alone is the sole owner stated on application form, but note is from him alone. If they were to fill form B out, they would have to add him as well, I reckon. Ye Gods. Reckon they think they are going to to browbeat us. Why can't they get a goddam chartered surveyor to look at the boundary. Mind you, the fact they don't speaks volumes.

Muddyboots, it's so stressful, isn't it. Yes, we do have legal up to 50,000 per incident on insurance. As there is no legal dispute, I didn't think of using it. I will ring to find out. You put them on notice for an injunction based on the planning application, is that right? Did that take long and did your insurance cover the cost. Can you choose the solicitor? If they were convinced there was a valid basis, I believe they would have had proper surveyor and would be sending solicitors letter. I think they are trying to fudge and bulldoze ahead. You've had a year of this! I think I'd end up on the grog! You're quite right about the two issues. In a way the boundary issue takes the attention from the other. Their agents reply was absolutely pathetic in response to the boundary line. He resorted to capital letters to make points and just said as there is a roof and stuff above it they must own everything underneath. For a 'party wall surveyor' he had no understanding of them. Before I had the chartered surveyor around, I thought they may have some sort of squatters rights , but I know now it is all baloney. What sort of people are they? What hard necks.

Talk

Topics » Property/DIY

Has anyone ever built something that planning had refused and how likely are they to actually come and check? (52 Posts)

Almostnever Sun 08-Mar-15 08:42:14

Obviously if they do you risk having to take it down at potentially huge cost but in all honesty how often do the planning authority actually check after a build?

If you re submit amended plans but then build to your original refused plans how big is the risk? If you employ private builder regs inspector and show them plans of what you have done not what was approved then is it possible to get away with it unless a neighbour etc makes a complaint?

wowfudge Sun 08-Mar-15 09:03:54

Don't do it. You won't get final sign off. Very high handed just to do what you want for whatever reason. It would just be a free for all of everyone took that approach. Selfish and very inconsiderate of your neighbours.

Do you want to be the scowling law breaker outside court in the DM photos in years to come and fall out with everyone in your neighbourhood?

It is honestly not worth the potential angst, just to get one over on the planning authority.

mandy214 Sun 08-Mar-15 09:30:09

Have come across it several times through work. You won't get sign off, Councils do regularly issue enforcement notices (which more than likely means you will also be in breach of your mortgage conditions).

Almostnever Sun 08-Mar-15 09:44:16

Thanks for replies. Not trying to be high and mighty. We have no neighbours within a mile and are not overlooked or affecting anybody else.

We applied to put in a conservatory under permitted development and its agreed to a certain depth but we had hoped for an extra metre as it makes a big difference to its usability.

A planning consultant off the record said risk it anyway so I wanted to hear others experiences.

In previous houses no one from planning has ever checked anything we have applied for after the build. Building regs sign it off based on the plans you show them. So that can be what the builder has worked to not necessarily what was approved.

TheWildRumpyPumpus Sun 08-Mar-15 10:12:11

Why did planning refuse it if you are in the middle of nowhere and not affecting anybody else?

Has it actually been refused or have you just not applied for planning, doing it under permitted development ?

senua Sun 08-Mar-15 10:18:21

It will be a nightmare when you come to sell.

Flossiechops Sun 08-Mar-15 10:21:05

Why don't you just apply for full planning permission rather than try to squeeze it in under permitted development? Doesn't sound like what you are trying to build is unreasonable?

specialsubject Sun 08-Mar-15 10:44:38

Do it properly - may cost a bit more now but will be worth it. Sounds like an appeal will also be worth it.

as mentioned, you'll be stuffed when selling if you ignore the rules. Also a vendor who breaks planning brings up big red flags; what else have they done?

SASASI Sun 08-Mar-15 10:47:56

My parents did what you are suggesting with a sunroom 6 years ago. Also countryside, no neighbours.

All signed off, no issues. This is NI though. It will be luck of who comes out to assess you though.

Personally speaking I wouldn't have done it but I am worrier!

you could try it then go for retrospective planning if necessary?

Marmitlover55 Sun 08-Mar-15 12:28:42

Our builder accidentally built our extension 30cm longer than the plans were for. We were randomly selected for monitoring by the planning dept and a planning officer measured it and noticed the difference. We did get a letter from planning enforcement but off the record they told us to wait 4 years and it would be ok. We got full building regs sign off and not planning to move, so should be ok.

Yepcomfortable Sun 08-Mar-15 12:33:07

Message withdrawn at poster's request.

tryingtocatchthewind Sun 08-Mar-15 12:45:46

As another poster said why squeeze it in under permitted development, for the sake of a few £100 apply for full permission. With no neighbours you'll get it.

You'll make your house difficult to sell as it will have an unlawful extension attached

MrsFlorrack Sun 08-Mar-15 12:57:50

Planning dept don't need to go and check. Building Control often report violations to them. So when you apply for your building control cert. they'll catch you.

Not worth it. And if you've already been refused they will throw the book at you.

Pooka Sun 08-Mar-15 13:04:28

Apply for planning permission if you want it larger than permitted development size. If you get refused, then build to max of permitted development.

Private building control do liaise with local planning authority. Not always, but mostly.

Pooka Sun 08-Mar-15 13:05:08

Are you in the green belt? That would have an impact on likelihood of planning permission.

MrsDumbledore Sun 08-Mar-15 13:29:52

We have a neighbour who is in the very expensive process of tearing down a large extension they have had for years, as it did not have proper permission. It was picked up when new houses were built close to it. Apparently the legal battle has cost them 100s of thousands. Not worth the risk (although that is a bigger build than you are talking about).

Marmitlover55 Sun 08-Mar-15 13:37:20

Not sure why that wouldn't have been covered by the 4 Year Rule MrsDumbledore?

Almostnever Sun 08-Mar-15 13:57:29

Hanks for all the replies.

We have already done planning permission for the allowed 40% increase in the past. So this is additional allowed under PD for 3m beyond the original line that you are also allowed.

We are not in green belt.

The planning officer is just (quite acceptably) sticking to the exact rules on size. Due to a strange shape it would have made a big difference to add an extra 1metre as it would allow us to put a door in on the side.

We will have a private building inspector as that's what we have always done.

The builder has suggested he could make the roof in such a way as to incur minimum costs if we later had to lose the extra metre but obviously it's still a risk.

I'm a bit on the it's morally wrong side but DH more of the as its really not affecting anyone else then it's worth the risk.

I appreciate the replies and thoughts. Consensus seems to be no on lots of different reasons.

Almostnever Sun 08-Mar-15 17:00:25

Out of interest are there any planning officials amongst us who can say how often they do random checks?

Almostnever Sun 08-Mar-15 17:53:01

Anyone?!

Marmitlover55 Sun 08-Mar-15 17:54:24

Our builder said if was the first time it had happened to him in 25 years...

RaphaellaTheSpanishWaterDog Sun 08-Mar-15 18:02:03

Planning dept don't need to go and check. Building Control often report violations to them.

Apologies for hijacking, but whilst I don't doubt that this is true, I've often wondered how this varies if an independent building inspector is used?

On our last project - restoring an unmortgageable (non-listed) Georgian thatched house to its former glory that involved adding a kitchen extension under permitted development - we opted to use an independent building inspector that was recommended to us by our architect.

The inspector visited during the build as you'd expect and whilst he was quite conscientious in that respect, he seemed to pay less attention to our other ongoing works that were covered by our building regs - such as new bathrooms, removal of internal walls etc.

When sign-off time came round we were in the process of selling and I for one was more than a little concerned that he would pick up on a few things that to me were pretty obvious - for example we hadn't fitted extractors in utility or bathrooms. We had no structural calcs for our steels as the architect said he knew the size required from past experience.....but after a cursory glance around and a request for some pics of the steels being fitted etc, which we provided he signed off with no questions asked.

We knew that apart from the extractor transgressions the rest of the work had been done using a 'belt and braces' approach. Our buyers were happy with everything and their lender and solicitor raised no queries - but then of course we had provided the sign-off cert - and our sale went through with no real probs.

I'm convinced though that as an independent he was less thorough than a council building inspector would have been.....or am I just being cynical?

Almostnever Sun 08-Mar-15 18:39:02

Raphaella I think you are right.

Our independent building inspector just asked us for a copy of plans and didn't appear to cross check them with what the planning department had actually approved. He just asked for what the builder had worked off. It was all above board but he wasn't really thorough in terms of checking vs what was allowed, more that it meant requirements for structure and safety etc. Hence us wondering if s metre difference would actually get noted when everything else would be spot on.

Pooka Sun 08-Mar-15 18:39:10

I don't think you're being cynical. I do think that the previous system of council operated building inspectors going after council operated planners meant that there was naturally a greater degree of cooperation between the departments. Quite often they occupied adjacent offices, or at least adjacent floors, under the same divisional umbrella.

I don't know whether they are less rigorous in terms of applying the building regs than the council run ones. I suspect they might be, but then the council building inspectors are themselves likely to vary in terms of their approach in my experience. Some were sticklers, and some rather more relaxed.

Almostnever Sun 08-Mar-15 18:39:20

Sorry A metre difference

RaphaellaTheSpanishWaterDog Sun 08-Mar-15 19:49:08

Thanks **Almost** and **Pooka**

Yes, I guess that in all walks of life you get varying degrees of rigorousness.....and a difference in the way things are approached, although the end result is the same or pretty similar.

It just made me think that had we used the council's building control guy, we may not have got our completion cert, or at least would have had to jump through more hoops to get it.....

Not that it matters, I've decided that hell would have to freeze over before I had another extension built and luckily there's not too much in this house that'll require building regs!

Almostnever Sun 08-Mar-15 21:02:17

Raphaella I said the same and yet here we are again.... <mug>

Almostnever Sun 08-Mar-15 21:02:34

DH still wants to risk the metre tho!

SaltySeaBird Sun 08-Mar-15 21:13:24

As long as a neighbour doesn't complain and you're staying there the next four years DH said if it's only a metre extra you probably could get away with it, but don't tell anyone, even friends, what you've done as somebody could put in a complaint even if you would never have thought that they would.

Pooka Sun 08-Mar-15 21:18:29

Personally, if you're not green belt, and you have no nearby neighbours that would cause trouble, then I'd risk it too.

Worst case scenario, you have to apply for retrospective planning permission. Actually, worst worst case would be that plus refusal/dismissed appeal/demolition, but that sounds unlikely.

If the proposal wouldn't impact on neighbours, your house isn't listed or on a conservation area, and wouldn't impact on green belt/isn't in an area of outstanding natural beauty, then it's hard to see that retrospective permission would be refused. If after 4 years the extension has not attracted any involvement from the planning authority, it would be deemed an existing development, exempt from enforcement (unless you've hidden it behind straw bales or some other subterfuge). 😊

Of course, it would be better to apply for permission first, before you go ahead, because then you wouldn't have the fear that you might be found out. If it's as innocuous as you suggest, then you should get permission.

OliviaBenson Sun 08-Mar-15 21:25:24

I don't understand- are you saying you haven't applied for planning permission but have been told you need it as the size is over permitted development limits or have you had planning permission refused? If the former, just stick in an application- it's not worth the grief.

Almostnever Sun 08-Mar-15 22:41:08

OliviaBenson we have already had planning approval for a 40% size increase. We then applied for an additional extension under permitted development rights. This has been deemed a metre too long but that metre would actually make a big difference mad as it sounds.

We can't apply for it under planning as they would automatically say no on the basis of the 40% rule.

So we either reduce the size or reapply for PD with the reduced size and then build the bigger version anyway.

We absolutely have no neighbours who would be able to see it or even get to see it and it isn't in anyway overlooked or affects anyone else whatsoever.

charlestonchaplin Sun 08-Mar-15 23:52:10

Some of us are confused because we understand permitted development to mean that you go ahead and do the work (within the rules). You don't have to apply to anyone. Your talk of 'applying under permitted development' is confusing, but maybe you know something we don't.

Agrestic Mon 09-Mar-15 01:50:47

I can't help with if you'll get away with it but I purchased a house that had an 'illegal' conservatory added about 20 years prior. The fact that it was illegal came up at the end of the buying process, can't remember exactly when. It wasn't a concern as I was going to rip it down anyway.

I had to take out additional insurance to cover that part of the building before I took it down. It was about £30 for a year. If I didn't want to take it down it wouldn't have been a problem but I would have to have renewed the insurance every year.

Maseface11 Mon 09-Mar-15 08:08:42

I don't know if this helps but until 30th March 2016 the sizes for permitted development have been increased. If you live in a semi or terrace you can build 6 m from the rear (of the original house) and if you live in a detached you can build 8m from the rear subject to neighbour consultation and not having had your permitted development rights removed for any reason. www.planningportal.gov.uk/permissions/commonprojects/extensions/ will give you more info.

AnneElliott Mon 09-Mar-15 08:15:28

A private building inspector is unlikely to check what you have got planning for. DH is one, and that's not their job. Whereas when he worked for the

council the building control dept shared a copy of building regs dwgs with the planning team, thereby picking up any discrepancies.

You are taking a risk, but it's usually the neighbours complaining that gets you caught, so if you haven't got any, then it's more likely you'll get away with it. The issue will come if you try to sell as it will probably be picked up then.

DH knows quite a few people who have done this though, and no one has been caught.

I have to say I would worry too much about it. Have you tried appealing the original planning decision?

Seeline Mon 09-Mar-15 08:22:51

Charleston - you can apply to a local authority to see if something is pd. If it doesn't meet the requirements, then you need to apply for full planning permission.

almost I was a planning officer, but always dealt with local authority building inspectors. We automatically checked the plans submitted for building regs to check that they matched the planning ones. If there were any alterations during the build the inspectors alerted us to that. I don't know how that would work with private ones.

Although you have no near neighbours, there could well be complaints about your build. Parish Councillors often spot things, people out walking dogs, or riding know every inch of the countryside!

I guess because you mention a 40% limit you are within an open area of countryside where the council has local policies to restrict building? If so, if the conservatory is reported, it is extremely likely that the Council will take enforcement action against the build. Most Councils really don't like it when their rules are blatantly ignored - especially if you have been officially advised that it required planning permission.

Almostnever Mon 09-Mar-15 19:59:44

Thank you everyone.

It's a tricky call I guess but I appreciate the replies. Think we will stick to the rules. Rules is rules and all that!

cerealqueen Mon 09-Mar-15 21:29:26

This man tried it

and his castle had to be torn down!

gincamelbak Tue 10-Mar-15 11:24:15

Have you already got an extension on the property? If so, you don't also get permitted development on top.

The best course of action (which may not be of any use if you've already built or previous owner has already built an extension via planning permission) is to extend to the maximum allowed under permitted development and then any future extensions done by applying for planning permission.

Your unlawful extension can be picked up if a planning officer is just driving past the house, sees building work and then checks records.

The new permitted development sizes apply to X additional metres or Sq metres - additional to the original building.

I wouldn't recommend just building and hoping for 4yrs to pass unnoticed - if you were to sell the house you would have to apply retrospectively for a certificate of lawful development/use and prove the extension has been there for the required amount of time which is a pain in the backside when under pressure to sell. The estate agent/solicitors will expect to see the proper planning approvals for any and all extensions.

charlestonchaplin Tue 10-Mar-15 12:09:45

Thanks for the explanation Seeline.

PiratePanda Tue 10-Mar-15 20:41:13

Seriously?! You will not be able to sell it. Any buyer's solicitor will ask for the planning permission documents, and that will be that. Why would you do such a thing? Even if you plan to die in the house, what about whoever inherits it?

Marmitlover55 Tue 10-Mar-15 20:54:57

I'm not sure I understand! As I mentioned up thread, our extension is 30cm bigger than the plans. We have full building regs sign off. The planning dept just said to wait for 4 years to elapse (if we didn't bother applying for retrospective planning permission) and it will be fine. We are not planning to sell, but if we did want to sell, what would be the issues? Thanks.

PiratePanda Tue 10-Mar-15 21:16:00

Because mortgage lenders won't lend and buyers are nervous and do not want to face the potential prospect of being forced by the council to tear down the work or the cost of applying for and securing retrospective planning permission. You might be lucky and find a risk taker able to pay cash. I wouldn't buy your house in the circumstances you outline.

TeddyBee Tue 10-Mar-15 21:58:34

Wish we had an independent inspector. Harrumph. Stupid bleeding extractor fans.

Almostnever Tue 10-Mar-15 22:16:35

Piratepanda it's not quite like that.

Sorry if I haven't been clear I struggle to Understand it myself!

The house had already had extensions done in the past up to the 40% size increase limit.

On advice from a planning consultant and the local planning department we knocked down some of the building (an old extension) and replaced it elsewhere as a better arrangement of the space for us.

Now we are hoping to add a bit more space and were told to do this under permitted development (as we wouldn't get anymore thru planning) which allows a specific increase off the original footprint without planning.

We have done this and they have measured it slightly different to what we hoped and the conservatory type bit will need to be a metre shorter according to their reply but this metre is actually quite crucial to letting us have a door in the right place.

So the question was shall we risk the metre?

It will need sign off which our independent building Inspector can do and as there is planning approval and will be PD approval even if anyone walks by and sees building going on unless they bring a tape measure and check sizes it won't look like the work being done is any different to what they would expect.

There would be no reason for the planning department to come and check it unless they did a random spot check.

We absolutely do not plan to move in the next 20 years and in the future we are hardly screwing over the kids if they are forced to knock down a bit of wall! In fact the builder suggested risking it and building the wall in a way that makes it a bit cheaper if we do have to knock it down and change it altho the thought doesn't appeal after 12months of builders on site!

AnnieMoor Tue 10-Mar-15 22:17:18

If you use a private building control company, they are required to notify the local authority of the proposed works. So regardless of who you use, the Local Authority has a record of the application.

Almostnever Tue 10-Mar-15 22:29:15

Yes of course they are but none of them have ever measured anything in previous houses. Just checked safety issues, structural safety etc. It seems unlikely they would notice in amongst what is huge amount of work being done.

Anyway, we aren't going to do it!

shabbycaddy Tue 10-Mar-15 22:35:31

We have an extension on ours which was built 25 years ago without planning , when we bought we just got an indemnity insurance on it which the seller paid for to cover any problems. Solicitors could pick up the problem, but as you say if building regs sign it all off can't see it being flagged that easily, just watch out for the ordenance survey which might pick it up in years to come if they need to measure your house and boundaries, very unlikely this will happen though. They regularly visit the new build sites I work with and will throw up fence lines being out by very minimal amounts which causes all kinds of problems.

gincamelbak Tue 10-Mar-15 22:52:56

You don't get permitted development"allowance" once yyou have already extended the property.

It's very easy for builders to say just do it, and bank on nobody noticing. But applying for planning permission for one extension and building something different (even if "only" by a metre) is actually illegal. It's not just about knocking back a wall, it's about potentially risking criminal proceedings.

And building control inspectors do measure things.

Best to just not risk it, like you say.

Marmitlover55 Tue 10-Mar-15 22:59:06

almostnever I think piratepanda might have been addressing me. Our extension is 30cm too long (builder error) and I think she is saying she wouldn't buy our house. The planning dept are aware of the error but aren't interested in enforcing an order and told us to either apply for an amendment (if in current year), apply for retrospective permission (which hd said wouldn't be s problem as next door neighbours extension is considerably longer or just wait for the 4 year rule if not selling imminently. We decided on the latter - hood we won't regret that...

Seeline Wed 11-Mar-15 09:57:32

gincamelbak the permitted development rights have been changed, and no longer include a maximum volume allowance. Provided the additions don't cover more than half the plot, and all the other criteria are met, you could actually have several extensions built as pd.

It is not illegal to build something that needs planning permission without acquiring permission. It becomes illegal if the Council serve an Enforcement Notice, and that Notice is not complied with within the allowed timescale.



Talk

Topics » Property/DIY

planning woes (26 Posts)

B52s Fri 17-Aug-12 14:17:16

We wanted a loft conversion, called the town planning department to be told it could be done under permitted development and no planning permission was required, so we started work. Two weeks off finishing, the council wrote to us after someone complained stating that we do need planning permission as we are in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. We have stopped work but have spent about £15k so far, and are now getting consultants in to put together our planning permission request.

The bottom has fallen out of my world, the DS's are sharing a room, we have a half-finished loft and may have to put it back to how it was, which we can't afford.

If the council had originally said we needed planning permission, we would have requested it before we started any work, but they said we didn't need it. Now we do.

I feel sick and can't eat, or sleep. Have to keep going for the 2 DS's though. Why does this always happen to us?

Montblanc Fri 17-Aug-12 14:19:57

Do you have it in writing that the council said you could do it under permitted development?

So sorry this is happening, I can't imagine a loft conversion being refused unless it's particularly garish but I don't know much about these things.

B52s Fri 17-Aug-12 14:25:03

No, it was just a phone call. I have the name, time and date of when I made it (Friday 13th - of course), but nothing in writing. DH has been speaking with the Enforcement Officer who sounds reasonable enough but with our luck we'll have to tear it down. It's a dormer across the back of the house, if we were 1/4 mile north we wouldn't be in an AONB so it would be permitted. I am heart-broken - and for my boys.

GrendelsMum Fri 17-Aug-12 14:25:14

But as far as you know, you may still very well apply for planning permission and have it granted? There's no reason to suppose that it will be denied from what you've said, just that you do need to have it.

Even if you do apply for planning permission and are subsequently turned down with your existing plans, it's an all or nothing situation - you can go to appeal, or you could adapt your existing plans.

I think you've leapt straight to the worst possible scenario (which is very understandable) when there doesn't seem any reason to imagine this is the case.

B52s Fri 17-Aug-12 14:33:43

Yes, planning permission may be granted. There are plenty of extensions and conservatories in our street already, but we would have the first dormer window on the estate. It worries me that there is a reason for that.

It was due to be finished in 2 weeks - the dormer is up and rendered, but planning takes at least 8 weeks to come through, so there's 2 months of not knowing - I'm not sure how I'll cope with that.

God I feel so stupid.

B52s Fri 17-Aug-12 15:57:29

The consultant reckons we won't get permission with it as it is and may have to change the structure drastically. I don't know how much that's

going to cost. Feels awful.

B52s Fri 17-Aug-12 16:04:59

I feel sick reading my own posts.
Sorry - sinking into a world of doom. I don't know what to do.

Sausagedog27 Fri 17-Aug-12 16:06:25

I'd put in a complaint to the ombudsman- appalling behaviour if the council had advised that no consent was required. I hope that the council are reasonable in handling this- for info 8weeks is just a target- in reality it can be pushed through after 4 weeks so I'd pressure the council for a resolution ASAP.

Also if it is bad news- you can appeal the decision. Or just leave it and wait until they take enforcement action, this is quite rare IMHO and they would have to tread carefully. You could also contact your local member and explain the situation, they can put pressure on internally as well.

B52s Fri 17-Aug-12 16:15:32

Thankyou Sausage. The consultant suggested we write to the council enforcement officer in reply to his letter explaining the situation and asking whether planning is likely to be approved, and if not, on what grounds, so we can work with that.

I thought we were doing everything by the book!

spoonsspoonsspoons Fri 17-Aug-12 18:00:02

Did building control not flag up that you needed planning permission?

B52s Fri 17-Aug-12 19:01:52

No, Spoons, they said we didn't need planning as it was a permitted development. I checked with the duty planning officer who said no planning permission was required. So we went ahead, and now, 2 weeks off finishing, find out that original advice was wrong.

The building regs inspector who came round said everything was okay, but building regs and planning dept are two separate entities.

spoonsspoonsspoons Fri 17-Aug-12 19:19:19

Just wondered as where I work building control will check if planning permission has been granted. I guess in this case if the duty planning officer wasn't aware that it couldn't be carried out under permitted development then the building control officer wouldn't either.

Were you asked for an address when you spoke to the duty planner? Were you aware you were in an aonb? It's always wise to get these sorts of things in writing. I'm not sure where you stand if you only had verbal confirmation.

B52s Fri 17-Aug-12 19:41:43

We knew we are near an AONB, but didn't realise it covered the estate as well. I gave the address to the Duty Planning Officer, but only got a verbal confirmation. We are now trying to apply, but a box dormer is apparently unlikely to get it.

B52s Fri 17-Aug-12 19:51:43

Thankyou for all your help, am off on holiday tomorrow, will update (if there is one) when we return.

B52s Fri 31-Aug-12 15:17:32

Not much further with it really. Have spoken with a solicitor, AONB people and another consultant. Will probably have to compromise if the council will agree to that (although will cost thousands) and if not, will have to re-instate the roof but will hopefully get the Ombudsman involved then to get the council to help pay.

Still not eating or sleeping, but feeling better than 2 weeks ago.

GrendelsMum Fri 31-Aug-12 16:21:26

So do you have to replace your dormer window with a Velux window?

It's a shame you've gone through all this hassle, upset and expense, but I'm sure the room will be just as nice for your DS. I had a loft conversion with a Velux for ages, and it was lovely!

B52s Mon 03-Sep-12 12:13:57

Looks like it GrendelsMum. We won't have space for 2 rooms up there though, we wanted a double and a small spare. We wanted a spare room, but now we will have gone from a 3 bed to a 3 bed house which cost about £30k. So we wouldn't have done that. Just depressing really.

Seeline Mon 03-Sep-12 12:20:20

Have you actually submitted a planning application yet? Wait and see what the outcome of that is. If permission is refused you have the right to

appeal to the Planning Inspectorate. In my experience, it is unusual for domestic additions to have to be completely removed. Keep discussing things with the planning department and see if you can get them to agree a compromise that suits you. You can always submit a second application for a revised proposal. Hope things work out for you.

dinkystinky Mon 03-Sep-12 12:22:30

Even for permitted development you should have submitted plans to the planning dept no? If so, why didn't they pick up on it earlier?

dinkystinky Mon 03-Sep-12 12:23:24

p.s. worth going around the neighbourhood with camera taking photos of loft conversions that have been done to prove there is "precedent" in connection with the loft conversion planning application you're now having to make. Good luck.

Mandy21 Mon 03-Sep-12 12:30:35

Did you tell the planning officer everything that was involved in your plans i.e. saying you were having a box dormer rather than just saying it was a loft conversion. Have you spoken to the actual person you spoke to when you initially rang? I think the problem you will have is that most councils (and this is a sweeping generalisation so I could well be wrong) say that they will give "general" guidance over the telephone but nothing is to be relied upon until the council have considered your plans / put something in writing.

I would also wonder why your builder / architect didn't think that you'd need planning permission. As far as I know box dormers (whether its an AONB or not) are not likely to be classed as permitted development.

Hope you get it resolved though!

B52s Tue 04-Sep-12 15:18:39

There's loads of 'should haves' and 'what ifs' I am thinking now. There is no precedent for a dormer on our estate, box or traditional. Both builders who quoted said it would be a permitted development, as did the duty planning officer (verbal only). Permitted development doesn't need plans at all, so the only dealings with the council beforehand was to check we weren't in any area which would mean we'd need planning permission. We were advised we weren't and didn't need to get a permitted development certificate either, so we went ahead.

We have commissioned a planning consultancy firm to help us try and get retrospective planning, but I'm not hopeful.

We are a parish council but I don't know if they decide on planning or accept the councils recommendations.

Seeline, we are doing what you suggest.

B52s Mon 26-Nov-12 15:41:53

WE GOT PLANNING PERMISSION!!!! Just heard, so happy, it's been such a fight. I am going to make an official complaint to the council about the whole way it was handled. It cost an extra 2 grand to get, but will be worth it.

higgle Mon 26-Nov-12 16:19:40

Well done! so pleased to hear your good news.

NorthPolo Mon 26-Nov-12 19:52:43

Congratulations, what a relief for you

2kidsnosleep Thu 02-Mar-17 11:43:57

I know this thread is dated but I'm hoping you'll be able to respond and tell me who you used to help you submit planning in an AONB. I'm in the same boat...



Talk

Topics » Property/DIY

Help! How do we go about professionally objecting to a neighbours planning application? (22 Posts)

[justanotherquestion](#) Tue 08-Sep-15 21:43:36

We have just discovered that people who are intending to buy our neighbours property have put in a planning application that would (we feel) seriously affect our enjoyment of our property and potentially affect it's value.

We live in a conservation area in a detached house but with a very restricted width to the plot. Our (new) neighbour is planning to build up to the boundary fence, such that the view from one of our kitchen windows (a gorgeous sash window at that) will now be a brick wall at less than 10 ft distance. It will also impact on warmth and light since our kitchen is dark and cold. We feel the development is too much for the plot and will dwarf our property and make us feel hemmed in. What arguments/rights do we have? We are thinking of employing an architect - is this necessary?

Would love to hear from others, who have been through this with successful/unsuccessful outcomes.

[MisForMumNotMaid](#) Tue 08-Sep-15 21:49:56

Most councils have free sessions with someone from the planning department. The could be a good sounding board to discuss your concerns and that discussion could help you formulate you objection points.

I've successfully got permission for houses and extensions in the past and objected to others.

You have no right to a view, the right to light laws are very complex and limited, right to privacy will just effect no/ size of windows.

My unprofessional opinion is your strongest point is its out of keeping from a conservation point of view and overdeveloping their plot by going to the limits of the plot.

[justanotherquestion](#) Tue 08-Sep-15 21:50:40

Just thought I would add a correction: the distance from the window to the brick wall would be less than 6ft.

[SDTGisAnEvilWolefGenius](#) Tue 08-Sep-15 21:57:23

We objected to a planning application to put a block of 8 flats at the bottom of the garden.

We read the relevant planning laws carefully, so we knew we were objecting on valid grounds, got copies of the plans, so we knew not only what they were planning, but who the developers were - and then we found other developments they had done locally, where they had breached the planning consents they were given.

If you look at your council's rules, you may find that developments have to be in character, or that there are specific rules about distances from adjoining properties - find all the relevant rules and write your objections around them.

In the end, we submitted a 9 page document detailing our objections,,and then I attended a site meeting with a council representative, and was able to make our points in person.

The application was turned down, and the developers came back with a much more suitable plan (three town houses) which none of the neighbours objected to, and so it was approved.

Research is the key.

[justanotherquestion](#) Tue 08-Sep-15 21:57:39

Thank you Mis, interesting that we have no right to a view! Bit worrying that you can wake up and look out at a brick wall!

[justanotherquestion](#) Tue 08-Sep-15 22:03:05

Thanks SDTG, you are right I need to do a lot of research - gah - it always happens when you are busy with other projects does n't it? Hopefully, I will find something about distances.

[Acer77](#) Wed 09-Sep-15 14:02:54

How high are they building? Single storey or two storey? If it's single storey it shouldn't be much worse than a fence - in fact if you ask them to render it and paint it white you can grow climbers up it and it will look rather nice (better than an old fence in fact!) and if painted white will reflect light into your room... Two stories is a different matter... If that is the case I would expect it would affect your right to light so worth investigating that avenue of objection....

[Acer77](#) Wed 09-Sep-15 14:19:16

Something like this? If rendered and painted white then it'll look smart and bright instead of like a boring old brick wall!



[justanotherquestion](#) Wed 09-Sep-15 18:19:01

Acer that wall does look good, I have to say. It is single storey but, whilst I currently do not know the heights it will be a lot higher than the current fence and since the houses are so close together anyway, it will restrict what precious little light we manage to get.

[Acer77](#) Wed 09-Sep-15 19:35:58

Take a look at the plans. You may be able to request the height of the wall is reduced and get them to have a pitched roof sloping away from the wall back towards their property - that would hopefully reduce the impact a bit? Better than a full height wall! Then insist that they render and paint it on your side...If the white wall faces any direction other than north then it will reflect light back into your kitchen when the sun shines on it... Hope that helps! Maybe have that as a back up request if your full objection is rejected...?

[Acer77](#) Wed 09-Sep-15 19:38:53



Like this...

[throwingpebbles](#) Wed 09-Sep-15 19:40:49

If you can afford it would get professional advice from a property lawyer as to whether you would have any legal options (eg rights of light or covenants that might help) and also from a planning consultant to help you formulate clear grounds of objection as planning is quite a specialist area

[Hamishandthefoxes](#) Wed 09-Sep-15 19:42:12

Your objection should focus on planning issues- over development, poor design, conservation area or out if keeping with the area etc rather than the effect in your view or the value of your house as neither of those are relevant to planning decisions. Mentioning them makes it easier for developers to dismiss your other points, no matter how valid.

[APlaceOnTheCouch](#) Wed 09-Sep-15 19:47:05

I second everything **SDTG** said. We've both objected to, and countered objections on planning applications.

As it's a conservation area, it might be worth speaking to your local councillor and asking them to object on the wider argument of it not being in

keeping with the area.

There's not much point in employing an architect. A planning consultant is more relevant but I'm not sure it would be that beneficial at this stage. If you have valid grounds for objection then they are likely to be upheld. If they're not valid then they're likely to be over-ruled and a planning consultant won't make any difference. They're just good at putting the arguments together.

[APlaceOnTheCouch](#) Wed 09-Sep-15 19:48:38

Forgot to add, if your other neighbours are equally concerned about the planning application then get them to write letters objecting to it too. Ditto if you have a residents' association or a conservation group.

[justanotherquestion](#) Thu 10-Sep-15 09:52:37

Thank you all, some very useful ideas here. Please keep the ideas coming. As I sit here in this mornings sunshine it seems all the more poignant that this could be coming to an end soon. I think whatever they put up, whichever way the roof slants, (but slanting it backwards may help) it will affect our light at the side, but not at the rear. The neighbour at the other side would not be affected due to the sun position, but even if they do not come out at the sides and just come out behind the property our side windows are going to be in shadow.

We can afford to consult professionals - we have to - the alternative, if they got permission, would be that we would need to either extend ie match their dwelling, so that we can put roof lights in, or move!

[justanotherquestion](#) Thu 10-Sep-15 09:53:14

Do we consult an architect or planning consultant - what is the difference?

[APlaceOnTheCouch](#) Thu 10-Sep-15 11:03:55

At a very basic level - an architect draws up plans so you could offer an opinion on the drawings your neighbours have submitted but their opinion is no more or less valid than that of the architect who drew up the plans for your neighbour iyswim

A planning consultant is actually an expert in planning regulations and to a certain extent housing legislation. They are best placed to construct an argument using planning legislation in your area. As a PP said, access to light isn't usually deemed suitable for an objection but a planning consultant could object on a different basis that would still get you the end result that you want eg there may be valid objections based on visual amenity; the conservation status of the area; access, etc. There may be some party wall issues that they could use and there may also be some restrictions on your and your neighbour's deeds about where you both can build eg sometimes there will be a clause about allowing access or right of way.

It might also be worth a call to whichever agency granted the conservation status eg I'm in Scotland so it would be Historic Scotland. They might be able to offer some advice.

[justanotherquestion](#) Thu 10-Sep-15 12:23:17

Thank you a place on the couch - very useful.

How do I access a planning consultant? We are in London. Do I just google one - I've never heard of these specialists before.

[wonkylegs](#) Thu 10-Sep-15 12:47:18

Loads of planning consultants around basically they are planners in the private sector, check out the Royal Institute of Town Planning for members. An architect will be able to give you advice as any worth their salt also needs to know the planning rules otherwise they can't do their job however you are unlikely to get value for money as they tend to specialise in building new work rather than preventing it and some architects are better at doing this than others. So unless you have a handy architect friend a planning consultant is probably a better bet. You cannot object over losing your view or the affect on your property value - these carry absolutely no weight in planning legislation. Scale, being overbearing, out of character, not meeting guidelines may be a better bet it will depend on the exact issues that you have, it's hard to comment without seeing their plans and your house however please be aware that the government has recently been eroding the planning rules especially in London so it is easier to get permission than ever before and it's harder to object.

[Mcnorton](#) Thu 10-Sep-15 12:53:06

Most councils should have the planning register online so you can see the plans and there will be links for how to object. I've objected to property developer extending next door and council upheld objections (there were a couple of issues and more than one objection) but the developer has ignored it and council seemingly can't afford to enforce it. So we still have students peering into our toilet window from an illegal roof terrace above. Still, if they want to see DH and DS having a wee I guess they'll enjoy the view. 🙄

[Seeline](#) Thu 10-Sep-15 13:01:20

You should definitely be able to see the plans on line via the Council's web site.

You shouldn't need a professional to make your objections, but if you do, a Planning Consultant is the right person. Architects think they are experts, but they are not.

In terms of grounds to object on, there are general issues, but it would be worth looking at your Council website under 'planning policy' there should be some form of Local Development Framework/Local Plan document which sets out the Council's rules on development. there may also be a Residential Design Guide which gives more information. Speak to the Planning Officer as to what may be relevant, or your local Councillor. general things:

Residential amenity - extension should not have a detrimental impact in terms of dominance, enclosure, loss of sunlight/daylight, or loss of privacy.

Conservation Area - if it is just a single storey rear addition, it will be harder to argue, but if it can be clearly seen from public viewpoints, is it in keeping with the character of the house, other properties, and the general character of the conservation area?



Talk

Topics » AIBU?

to think cars should be banned from towns and cities (144 Posts)

[chrome100](#) Fri 26-Apr-13 19:55:36

I don't own a car, mainly because I am too poor but also because I don't really need one and get around from A-B either on foot (short distances), cycling (medium distances), or bus/train (long distance). I am not a lentil-weaving hippy by any means but I really dislike the way that the dominance of the car has influenced our towns and cities - children can't play out, we are always waiting at junctions and traffic lights, running and walking necessitate several lengthy pauses to cross busy roads etc etc.

Why can't we create some kind of system whereby cars must be left on the outskirts of a city and everyone wanting to move around inside it has to walk/cycle/use the bus? I know this is hugely unrealistic and expensive but the impact this would have on our daily lives would be immense. The general environment would be so much more pleasant, we'd be to roam (ok, maybe I am a bit lentil weaver 🤪)

I know some people are disabled etc and allowances could be made for that but the vast majority of car journeys within a city (I think) could be avoided if people gave themselves more time to get to where they were going.

I'd love to live in a town town with no traffic, to cycle along with no cars and not have to fight dangerous junctions as a pedestrian.

[overprotection](#) Fri 26-Apr-13 19:56:57

I think pedestrians should be banned from towns and cities, they hold up traffic by crossing the road too much.

[caroldecker](#) Fri 26-Apr-13 19:58:51

Also buses - blocking the road at every stop

[Freddiemisagreatshag](#) Fri 26-Apr-13 19:59:43

I think we have this already. It's called pedestrian areas

[StatisticallyChallenged](#) Fri 26-Apr-13 20:01:13

And what about those who actually live in the city centre? Are you suggesting I should park my home 6+ miles away from the house even though many of the places we need to get to are in areas not really served by public transport?

[Lazyjaney](#) Fri 26-Apr-13 20:02:46

I think people should be banned from towns and cities, they cause nearly all the problems.

[VinegarDrinker](#) Fri 26-Apr-13 20:04:21

I totally agree. Obviously some towns and cities will need a serious overhaul of their public transport systems to allow for it though.

(We are also car-free, can you tell?)

[VinegarDrinker](#) Fri 26-Apr-13 20:05:40

I'd also like to see driving distances that are easily walkable banned (with obvious exceptions for the disabled etc).

[nancerama](#) Fri 26-Apr-13 20:06:49

Rather than banning or restricting car use, I'd love to see some real thought going into planning consents and town planning to make the use of a car less necessary.

I used to live in the Netherlands, where everything you need is a walk/short cycle ride away from home and public transport is reliable, frequent and affordable.

Unfortunately the UK seems to prefer the American way of life with massive out of town supermarkets and retail parks taking business from local shops and thereby increasing car use.

[dopeysheep](#) Fri 26-Apr-13 20:06:55

I definitely think more pedestrian areas should be created. Also more tunnels/bridges over busy roads so you can move around more freely.

[Bowlersarm](#) Fri 26-Apr-13 20:07:47

Won't happen any time soon. Car is king.

[overprotection](#) Fri 26-Apr-13 20:09:32

I'd also like to see driving distances that are easily walkable banned (with obvious exceptions for the disabled etc).

To enforce this we could either:

- a) Have police follow people around to see if they drive a short distance and then get out of the car.
- b) Microchip everyone and put a tracker in their car, to see if they drive it somewhere they could have walked.

A fine use of government resources I'm sure all will agree.

[VinegarDrinker](#) Fri 26-Apr-13 20:12:06

Ok, you're quite right, in the **real world** I don't actually think it should be made illegal.

[chrome100](#) Fri 26-Apr-13 20:12:41

You're right - I live 20 mins walk from the city centre so I can access everything I want on foot, give or take and also the train station. I accept this would be harder for those living in the leafy suburbs. However, many suburbs are only 5 miles away from the city centre - an easy distance to cycle or if not bus and possibly walk for those with more time.

Everything would need hugely overhauling but, imho, it would be worth it.

[sleeplessbunny](#) Fri 26-Apr-13 20:14:47

YYY

everyone can learn to ride motorbikes instead! 😊

[HoHoHoNoYouDont](#) Fri 26-Apr-13 20:15:00

Everyone should drive these when inner city. I saw one yesterday, they're great.

Twizy

[expatinscotland](#) Fri 26-Apr-13 20:16:49

I think we should bring back horses and carriages, ankle-deep horse shite mixed with horse piss is much better.

[HollyBerryBush](#) Fri 26-Apr-13 20:22:29

I think they should do away with towns and cities and make people stay indoors and only interact through the internet and do shopping online



[imour](#) Fri 26-Apr-13 20:24:14

go live in the country then ~~knæb~~

[Eskino](#) Fri 26-Apr-13 20:27:17

Holly I thought they had?

<twitches nets>

[AngiBolen](#) Fri 26-Apr-13 20:28:13

I agree. And I drive everywhere. Subsidised buses/trams are the way to go. I'd be laughing.

[nailak](#) Fri 26-Apr-13 20:30:25

but how would all the buggies fit on the bus?

[SchroSawMargeryDaw](#) Fri 26-Apr-13 20:30:41

What happens if you are disabled but don't drive and you use taxis? Also, what would happen if the government decided you just weren't disabled

enough but you still couldn't walk any sort of distance?

[thereonthestair](#) Fri 26-Apr-13 20:33:58

So what do you do with me. I am lucky, I live in a city centre, and for me I cycle or walk, or get the train. My ds has cerebral palsy. He can't ride a bike nor walk. What do you want us to do fly. If I had my way more congestion charging, more costs at bringing a car into the centre, better park and ride and much better public transport are all priorities. I am happy to pay far more tax for that. But I have to drive a little when I am transporting ds, and walking, cycling and bus just don't work. If they did I would use them more. But they don't because most people won't pay the tax we need to.

[VinegarDrinker](#) Fri 26-Apr-13 20:34:17

There would be affordable public transport at the end of every road in this utopia **shro**

[VinegarDrinker](#) Fri 26-Apr-13 20:36:58

thereonthestair exemptions for the disabled have already been mentioned upthread.

If I ruled the world I would be giving all parents Bakfietsen though - free disability adaptations if necessary bakfiets.nl/

[MTSgroupie](#) Fri 26-Apr-13 20:37:47

It takes me 90 min to drive to my parents.

It takes me 5 hours to catch a bus to the station, train to Euston, Euston to x and then bus to their house.

I think that I will stick with my car.

[StanleyLambchop](#) Fri 26-Apr-13 20:38:40

The vast majority of car journeys within a city (I think) could be avoided if people gave themselves more time to get to where they were going.

And if you cannot drop your child off at school any earlier than 8.30, then have to be in work, the other side of the city by 9.00pm? Or if you live in the city centre and work miles away? What about the elderly? My parents do not qualify for a disabled badge but they still can't actually walk very far, so going anywhere really is impossible without a car. I think there are too many variances to make this a realistic plan.

[VinegarDrinker](#) Fri 26-Apr-13 20:42:17

MTS that's exactly the kind of situation that would be ideal for joining a car club imho, assuming you don't do the journey on a daily basis.

[BackforGood](#) Fri 26-Apr-13 20:42:20

Yup. YABU
and ridiculous
and clearly got no idea of how my life works

[StanleyLambchop](#) Fri 26-Apr-13 20:42:53

Public transport is also aimed at the able bodied. Again, my parents could not manage to walk to & from bus stops. So better buses is not the solution for everyone.

[JollyPurpleGiant](#) Fri 26-Apr-13 20:43:28

Commuting by public transport would cost me £19.50 per day. And would take 3 hours a day. Commuting by car takes 1.5 hours.

An online calculator tells me the journey costs me £8.12 in fuel if I drive. Obviously other vehicle costs would have to be added in to the calculation in order for the costs to be accurately compared.

[VinegarDrinker](#) Fri 26-Apr-13 20:45:05

Stanley in general the elderly are more time rich than others, so free services like Dial-a-Ride can work really well.

[HoHoHoNoYouDont](#) Fri 26-Apr-13 20:45:10

I think I would have to cycle as I wouldn't want to mix with common smelly people on public transport 🤢

[Sirzy](#) Fri 26-Apr-13 20:48:37

Lovely idea if places actually had something resembling decent public transport.

I live in a reasonable sized town but the public transport is frankly horrendous with the nearest train station being 15 minutes drive away (or over an hour on the bus) - that train goes to 2 locations only! I will do that when I need to go to Liverpool but anywhere else it is much easier to drive.

MTSgroupie Fri 26-Apr-13 20:49:34

Vinegar - actually when I lived in London that was exactly what I did. However, I live in the burbs now and catching a bus with my weekly Sainsburys shopping and trailing kids isn't a workable situation 😊

In my defence I don't drive a petrol guzzling SUV.

VinegarDrinker Fri 26-Apr-13 20:50:31

Online shopping!

<car free bore icon>

CloudsAndTrees Fri 26-Apr-13 20:53:15

It might make your life more pleasant, but I can assure you that having to use buses would make my life much more unpleasant. I like being able to park in town. I like that I can shop and then drop my bags in my car then go back for more. And it's quicker.

StanleyLambchop Fri 26-Apr-13 20:56:07

So Vinegar- would car-club cars be exempt from these car free cities then? Surely a car is a car, just because it is owned by a car club does not mean it will not block up busy junctions, stop our children from being able to play out, etc etc .

VinegarDrinker Fri 26-Apr-13 21:00:51

Stanley the car club suggestion was in response to a poster wanting to drive out of town, not in to town.

Although actually yes they do massively reduce the issues around car use, partly because they discourage "flippant" car use and partly just because of the logistics - 50 or more people share one car, so 50 x less cars on the road, needing parking space etc.

tallulah Fri 26-Apr-13 21:01:05

YABVU. Where we used to live they pedestrianised the town centre. Delivery drivers were allowed through, as were taxis, and cars with Blue Badges. It was more dangerous than when there was a steady stream of cars through, because firstly you didn't expect to see a car and secondly the vehicles that were allowed through drove as if they were on a normal road.

You've obviously never suffered health problems either. I had to go to a hospital right in the city centre for chemotherapy. There was a shuttle bus to parking in the shopping centre but the last thing you want after 4 hours of chemo is to be on a bus surrounded by sick people. Perhaps I should have cycled there 😊

What is this crap about children playing out too? That's what gardens are for.

thereonthestair Fri 26-Apr-13 21:02:48

I am actually quite anti car. I don't need one much. I don't use it much. Backfielts doesn't actually work for a child, a walker and wheelchair. Maybe if I was fitter! It also doesn't always work when I am pushed for time. So I go back to pay more taxes have better public transport, make the choice cost and time neutral then persuade people to ditch their cars some of the time.

StanleyLambchop Fri 26-Apr-13 21:06:46

Stanley the car club suggestion was in response to a poster wanting to drive out of town, not in to town.

But you don't know that the parents house was not in the centre of another town, so they might have to drive in/through that town to get to their parents house.

VinegarDrinker Fri 26-Apr-13 21:08:01

Yes indeed, your suggestions are far more sensible! I think measures such as the congestion charge should be balanced with incentives for walking/cycling where possible, purely because of the positive effects on the environment and the rest of society.

StanleyLambchop Fri 26-Apr-13 21:11:40

Thereonthestair, the problem with persuading people to ditch their cars some of the time is that they are expensive to insure, tax, fuel and maintain. Most people accept the costs in exchange for the convenience. If we were encouraged to use public transport for some of the time, it would not make it cost effective to run the car and pay the bus fares at the same time. Only one or the other really works.

imour Fri 26-Apr-13 21:21:22

who would choose to pay a bloody fortune to be squashed on public transport with slow old people , shopping trolleys,buggies,kids,smelly fat sweaty people, urgh no thanks ill nip to town in my car 😊

thereonthestair Fri 26-Apr-13 21:22:29

Stanley. I completely disagree. I do a real mixture, my main method of transport is bike. But this week I have been on foot, in a car, on trains, on buses. The choice is always convenience based, but it does have to be better to go by public transport because it is not yet cost neutral in this country. However if you don't drive much fuel doesn't cost much. And I have to maintain a bike as much if not more than my car. It really is a lifestyle choice. My car is an expensive luxury. I don't really need it (that much - apart from for ds and related needs) and as such I accept that I pay for the convenience. It would actually cost more to use it more so I choose not to. That's what I mean about incentives. I pay to park in my city centre area, it's part of the cost of where I live, and I'm lucky to have the choice. I accept that I should pay because I believe we should all pay for the congestion. But I am not lucky to have a disabled child who cannot walk or cycle. And for his sake you cannot ban cars. I would like there to be fewer about though, especially if it takes a disproportionate amount of time for me to drive him when others do have choices his disability has taken away from me. When I am already spending hours extra a day doing things others take for granted.

VinegarDrinker Fri 26-Apr-13 21:27:17

Re maintenance costs etc, may I bring up Car clubs again

<broken record icon>

BarredfromhavingStella Fri 26-Apr-13 21:28:59

Fuck off, just fuck off-right to the other side of fuck.

StanleyLambchop Fri 26-Apr-13 21:36:30

But insurance/tax costs of a car are the same however much you use it. Once I have paid those costs I want to get my money's worth, not have to shell out again in bus fares to somewhere I could easily drive to. As for car clubs, can I once again bring up convenience. Sharing one car between fifty other people means you won't always be able to have use of it when you want. Presumably it is not free either, so some casts are payable. And what do you do once you have driven it to the place of return? Get the bus home 😞

expatinscotland Fri 26-Apr-13 21:37:55

Get fecking real, OP. The city centre is what it's always been - a place for business and trade, not some fecking Shangri-la where we all link arms singing Kumbaya whilst the children play with the fairies.

The automobile is vital to trade and business. Has been for decades and isn't going anywhere.

VinegarDrinker Fri 26-Apr-13 21:44:36

Get the bus home? What?! I'm not sure you understand car clubs at all. There are 6 Zipcars within 5 minutes walk of our flat (closest 30 seconds), that's how car clubs work.

StanleyLambchop Fri 26-Apr-13 21:55:26

Vinegar- I am not sure that you understand that not all areas in every town have nice, convenient car clubs. Having just googled, the ones closest to where I live are a fair distance away. Hence my initial point about there being so many different circumstances, this idea could never work.

VinegarDrinker Fri 26-Apr-13 21:58:28

No, of course they don't currently. But lots do, and as a long term solution to the problem of too many cars on the road they are a great addition that should be widely promoted and subsidised.

caroldecker Fri 26-Apr-13 22:04:18

And the weather - the Netherlands is significantly warmer and drier

VinegarDrinker Fri 26-Apr-13 22:09:00

If it's freezing cold or raining you can use the cheap utopian public transport that runs from the end of your road 🙄

expatinscotland Fri 26-Apr-13 22:28:51

yes because we have so much money to throw at this cheap public transport.

BigKidsMadeMeDolt Fri 26-Apr-13 22:35:13

what about delivery vans or tradesmen who need a vehicle to transport their equipment to wherever they are working?

can just see a white van man loading all his gear into some panniers (sp?) and getting on his bike.

BadgersNadgers Fri 26-Apr-13 22:40:02

You're jealous of car owners. Just green eyed jealous and want to spoil all our car driving fun.

VinegarDrinker Fri 26-Apr-13 22:43:41

I had a car. Sold it. Now happier, thinner and better off 😊

[MidniteScribbler](#) Fri 26-Apr-13 22:51:22

So because you can't afford a car, no one should have one? You're an idiot.

[cantspel](#) Fri 26-Apr-13 22:55:32

I haven't ridden a bike since I left school many moons ago and I am not going to start again now.

[VinegarDrinker](#) Fri 26-Apr-13 22:55:35

Was that to me or the OP?

Personally I could afford a car fine, thanks.

[BadgersNadgers](#) Fri 26-Apr-13 23:04:43

Nah VinegarSprinkles, OP. Glad you can afford a car though.

[janey223](#) Fri 26-Apr-13 23:23:27

Can we at least just ban cutting through the side streets? I waited 10 bloody minutes tonight to cross the 'lets just cut through here' road in the middle of my street tonight. Of course the drivers all stop and wave each other past but ignore the toddler desperately trying to run across the road.

[YoniMontana](#) Fri 26-Apr-13 23:26:20

This has been invented. It's called a park and ride. But nobody round here uses them...

[chrome100](#) Sat 27-Apr-13 00:06:33

Um, ok. I think calling me an idiot is uncalled for. And, trust me, I am not jealous of people owning a car.

A lot of the reasons people have given for needing a car are because public transport and other alternatives are so shit in this country. I agree - sometimes it's more of a hassle/expense to get the bus and in those circumstances I can totally see why people choose to drive. My suggestion is that, rather than build carparks and widen roads, we focus on looking at other ways of getting about and investing in these alternatives: better transport links, more car clubs, metro systems etc. I am not suggesting that people who are elderly/disabled/white van men should all pootle about on a bike, but there are thousands of people who are NOT elderly/disabled but just can't be arsed not to drive and can't really see that they don't need to. These are the ones that can drive less and in doing so would make a generally better environment for all.

My colleague, for instance, drives the 1 mile to work every day and pays £40 a month to park her car at work. She is fit, healthy, single - there is no reason why she couldn't walk that distance. It's people like her that I think would benefit from better investment in these alternatives. I think there must be a different way of doing things.

[LRDtheFeministDragon](#) Sat 27-Apr-13 00:08:19

My town is pretty much like this. It has a lot of streets only taxis and buses can use, and very limited and expensive parking in the centre. Unfortunately, once you limit cars, you notice how many buses you need. And how many are full of tourists who wander out into the street, clog up the bike lanes on the pavement because they don't know what these are, etc.

I am in favour of the idea but it has to be pretty carefully thought through.

[imour](#) Sat 27-Apr-13 00:32:55

My colleague, for instance, drives the 1 mile to work every day and pays £40 a month to park her car at work. She is fit, healthy, single - there is no reason why she couldn't walk that distance. **chrome100**

what the hell has being single got to do with her walking to work or not, that made me laugh. there is a reason she doesn't walk it's because she owns a car and wants to drive and it's her money paying for it not yours.

[chrome100](#) Sat 27-Apr-13 08:14:57

By "single" I mean she doesn't have kids so doesn't need to drive anyone anywhere. Realise that was a poor choice of word, apologies.

Ok clearly IABU and a massive idealist who has no idea about anything. But I still think some people are just lazy fuckers.

[StanleyLambchop](#) Sat 27-Apr-13 08:45:21

Chrome, I don't think your idea is necessarily a bad one, but - as a car driver I resent the idea that I should pay all the costs associated with car ownership, and then be expected to use public transport on top of that. The amount of money that car owners generate for the economy could not be replaced easily if everyone switched to public transport, which is why councils/governments are reluctant to consider the measures you suggest. So I think for most people it has to be a one or the other type arrangement.

I would certainly not pay to keep my car taxed and insured just to sit in the suburbs not being able to drive anywhere in it. Having one car between 50 in a car club will not bring in the same amount of revenue as 50 people having their own cars. So it comes down to economy v environment. In the current climate I know which one will be priority.

[ItsAFuckingVase](#) Sat 27-Apr-13 09:00:53

Well done OP. You've just banged the final nail in the coffin of the high street.

I don't want to drive into the city centre, because it is a fucking massive inconvenience to be limited in what I can bring back. It's a pain in the ease having to find space for a load of bags on the bus or train, and not have the contents spill out. Even more so when everyone else has a load of bags.

I drive into the city centre for meetings. To use public transport would add hours of non productive time to my working day. And then to add to it, we're not exactly renowned for our ideal weather conditions in this country, so I'd also get to turn up to said meeting pissed wet through. And there's nothing worse than having wet trouser bottoms flapping against your leg. Not sure it'd be a good look professionally either.

[ItsAFuckingVase](#) Sat 27-Apr-13 09:01:49

*pain in the arse

[undercoversahm](#) Sat 27-Apr-13 09:07:55

I am with you **OP** It would be transformative. We could have bikes with carts dragged behind for the shopping (cargo bikes). And a few electric taxis for those who really can't manage. But let's make first moves at least to prevent the overwhelming dominance of motor traffic...it restricts and blights as many lives as it liberates. We are making a start with pedestrianised zones, Trafalgar Square's new design, Queensgate and Boris Bikes in London have made a big difference. The full externalities of car travel should be charged as a starter (this won't be popular but we need even bigger taxes on car use to properly reflect the harm they cause).

[undercoversahm](#) Sat 27-Apr-13 09:09:53

itsafuckingvase Do you need to buy so much? In any case, Most bought goods can be delivered.

In our utopia the public transport would be regular and cheap.

Also, what about video conferencing? Do you really need to be physically present at meetings? That is so last century.

🗺️ an answer for all your gripes.

[ItsAFuckingVase](#) Sat 27-Apr-13 09:22:43

I buy what I want to buy. And you know, it's nice to get out of the house and actually see and touch things in a shop, rather than second guessing sizing and wondering whether the colour of something is as shown on a screen.

I like to choose my own food. I buy my meat from a butcher, my fruit and veg from the market, bread from a bakery etc. As far as I'm aware, none of them offer an online shopping service.

And yes I have to physically attend meetings. I'm an engineer, and you can't really manage a project without visiting the site from time to time.

[MonstersInception](#) Sat 27-Apr-13 09:23:32

Message deleted by MNHQ. Here's a link to our [Talk Guidelines](#).

[ItsAFuckingVase](#) Sat 27-Apr-13 09:26:58

Also, regardless of how regular or cheap public transport was, it would still be more inconvenient for me to use.

If I was driving my car and pulled in every half mile or so the journey would take longer. And that's without taking into account the fact that I get in my car and drive straight where I need to go. A bus or train will always serve a large customer base, so the journeys are mapped in a way to be most convenient to the majority, as well as being cost effective.

[ImTooHeckyForYourParty](#) Sat 27-Apr-13 09:29:51

Who has time to walk everywhere or hang about for public transport that may or may not be on time and may or may not be full (if everyone was forced to use it, you'd end up seeing full buses go past you!) and when you finally got one, it would take an hour to do a 20 minute journey. It would take hours to do anything!

[hedgefund](#) Sat 27-Apr-13 09:31:29

'Why can't we create some kind of system whereby cars must be left on the outskirts of a city and everyone wanting to move around inside it has to walk/cycle/use the bus?'

we have these already, they are called shopping malls 🗺️ though you can't usually use the bus in the mall granted

more shopping malls!!!

[IThinkOfHappyWhenIThinkOfYou](#) Sat 27-Apr-13 09:35:15

Last time I had to get public transport to work it took 1hr and 50 mins and cost something ridiculous like £9. It's a 20 min drive. I live in a largish market town and work in my closest city.

[teacher123](#) Sat 27-Apr-13 09:48:15

I hate hate hate hate hate public transport with a passion. I hate having to wait around for buses/trains, I hate not being able to get to my exact destination, I hate having to cart my stuff around and not be able to control the environment that I'm in. Too hot? Air con on, too cold? Whack up the car heating. You don't have to listen to other people's music etc etc.

I can afford to run my car and it is my choice. I have a car that is in the lowest car tax/emissions bracket, and I do not drive it unnecessarily. There is no public transport from where I live to my work, it would quite simply be impossible to get there without my car. That said I am quite happy to walk a long way to do things, and would never drive into town unless I had heavy shopping to bring back.

[lurkedtoolong](#) Sat 27-Apr-13 09:48:16

I volunteer at a Foodbank in the next town. It takes me fifteen minutes to drive there. It would take me about an hour and a bit to walk each way. Despite it only being 5 miles away I would have to take 3 buses. Frankly it's now looking like too much hassle for a couple of hours volunteering a week. I'm sure that's a fairly common experience.

You can't even think about banning cars until public transport is cheaper and more convenient.

That's taking aside the fact I don't actually want the government/smug fuckers further restricting what I choose to do with my life.

[Chocotreckie](#) Sat 27-Apr-13 10:02:05

My oh works for a car company - what about his job ?

Think about the revenue and the potential unemployment from the whole car industry - design/engineering the new car, assembly, sales , petrol stations, repair garages , car park attendants etc etc

[ljjkk](#) Sat 27-Apr-13 10:02:40

I still think some people are just lazy fuckers.

Undoubtedly true.

I wish your idea could come come true, OP.

I would like all shopping centres beyond a certain size to charge for parking (min. rate). I have a feeling that city centre shopping would have a massive resurgence.

[TheSeventhHorcrux](#) Sat 27-Apr-13 10:06:39

I think cyclists should be banned. Not just from cities and towns. Just generally.

I don't want to be forced to crawl along at 15 miles per hour on a 60 mile per hour road watching their bottoms wriggle unattractively in Lycra.

[dreamingofsun](#) Sat 27-Apr-13 10:16:00

the impact of not using a car would be immense....kids wouldn't be able to do competitive football as there would be no away matches; i'd have to stay away overnight for business trips; no more camping holidays; husband would be jobless so we would have to move house.

we live in a town centre, so you are suggesting we park at the edge and walk through the dark and rain to our house? Great. Sounds like heaven.

you sound like you must have loads of time to waste, unfortunately not everyone else does

[TheSeventhHorcrux](#) Sat 27-Apr-13 10:54:39

My colleague, for instance, drives the 1 mile to work every day and pays £40 a month to park her car at work

Well she sounds like a lazy fucker with more money than sense 😊

[StanleyLambchop](#) Sat 27-Apr-13 10:58:35

We are making a start with pedestrianised zones, Trafalgar Square's new design, Queensgate and Boris Bikes in London have made a big difference.

But London can implement such schemes because it already has a good public transport network in place. Try looking beyond our capital and it is not the same elsewhere. It would be totally impractical to start digging huge great tunnels under our cities to create an underground system.

MrsJohnHarrison Sat 27-Apr-13 11:06:10

Come and live in the wee village I live in. We have 3 pubs, 2 shops, a chippy, an Indian restaurant, a Chinese restaurant and 23563 hairdressers. We are 6 miles from closest town, buses stop at 4pm, none at all on Sundays. What should I do when I work evenings in said 6 mile away town? There is no path to there and the road is a twisty country 60mph road which is not lit. Our car is essential!

KobayashiMaru Sat 27-Apr-13 11:08:38

How am I meant to cycle with four small children and some shopping? 🙄
Sanctimonious twattery.

chrome100 Sat 27-Apr-13 11:20:00

I've read all your reasons/excuses why you need a car, some of them are valid, some not. I think many boil down to not wanting to inconvenience yourselves. That's your choice, but is the reason why we live in a world that relies so heavily on the car - simply because people can't be bothered for it to take longer for them to get around, they can't be bothered to carry shopping etc which is what people did in the past (and what many people without a car do perfectly fine today). You can dress it up all you like with "but how would I do XYZ without a car" or "it would take me XXX to do a 20 minute journey" - it still amounts to the fact you can't be bothered.

I'm not being sanctimonious, at least not intentionally, I don't think you are all twats for driving, it's perfectly normal to seek out the path of least resistance. The point of my post is that cities and towns would be far better off without cars, or at least with fewer of them, and quite frankly we can't keep going at the rate we are. Improving that requires a certain element of sacrifice on all our behalves.

DowntonTrout Sat 27-Apr-13 11:24:53

Obviously you don't live in a small village in Yorkshire where everything is up/down a lot of very big hills. Cycling is for the seriously fit (the tour de France will come through here.)

Public transport is poor, expensive and inconvenient.

On the other hand, I live in London during the week, where it's mostly flat and the public transport is fantastic. I don't need a car there. But the number 1 hazard as a pedestrian, IME, is cyclists! Who seem to believe that traffic regulations do not apply to them, don't stop at red lights and who come flying through, usually along side a stationary bus so I can't see them, just as I am crossing with the green man. Never mind the cutting corners or even swerving onto pavements.

Disclaimer- not ALL cyclists, probably a small minority, I know many are considerate and that cyclists face their own issues with buses and taxi drivers etc.

VinegarDrinker Sat 27-Apr-13 11:25:59

Kobayashi that is exactly what the majority of families in the Netherlands do. Have a look at my link to the Bakfiets site upthread. Or look at Emily Finch for inspiration. bikeportland.org/2012/06/28/with-six-kids-and-no-car-this-mom-does-it-all-by-bike-73731

(I have one child, soon to be two. We are planning three minimum. We have no plans to get a car.)

As for those asking who has time to walk, cycle or take public transport, many of us manage just fine thanks. Both DH and I work, in busy jobs. I work shifts including nights and weekends. We also do various voluntary things in our "spare time" eg nursery committee. In other words we don't have much time to spare.

We both commute by bike, including the nursery drop off. It does not take significantly longer, In fact it often works out quicker than driving in London. It also stops us having to spend extra time going running/swimming/to the gym. It is easy to make assumptions that driving is always quicker when **in towns and cities** (the point of this thread) it often isn't.

It doesn't have to be all or nothing. It can't be at present. But if everyone thought about how they could cut down their car usage, maybe run one rather than two or more cars, it would be hugely beneficial to the whole country.

chrome100 Sat 27-Apr-13 11:29:25

I live in Calderdale actually, which is in Yorkshire and every hill out of the valley is getting on for 20%. I am not suggesting cars are banned from villages where there are no buses, but from major towns where people driving to them or living in them leave their cars in "ports" and use alternative methods of transport.

ItsAFuckingVase Sat 27-Apr-13 11:42:56

OP you're very very wrong. The world is a different place now than it was in the good ole days when we walked 20miles to get to school etc.

Local economies depend on the business generated by their town centres and high streets. Those are dying a death as it is. Making it even more difficult for people to access their town centres and high streets will drive people away altogether. Especially with the boom in out of town shopping facilities.

Aside from the above, our world has evolved and now a lot of us live in a deadline driven society. Time is precious, and it's very natural to want to

maximise the things you can get done within a certain timeframe. Employment is far more fluid than ever before, in terms of people being able to commute to other towns for work. And that's before you taking into account people who have to travel as part of their job. And then aside from that, I think most people given a choice would far prefer to have a commute in the car of an hour and spend time with their families, than spend double that trudging around on multiple trains and buses that don't go exactly where they need to be. And probably in the rain.

And finally, drivers contribute an incredible amount of money to the government coffers. Ever litre of petrol sold generates around 80p in combined duty and VAT. Parking costs in town centres generally go straight to local councils.

VinegarDrinker Sat 27-Apr-13 11:50:23

We shop locally precisely because we don't have a car! We don't use supermarkets or drive to big out of town shopping centres. Instead we do smaller regular shops, all in local independent shops and our local high street.

A lot of very fixed mindsets on this thread.

Sirzy Sat 27-Apr-13 11:53:16

Who are you to decide who does and does not have valid reasons for driving or owning a car? Just because you make the choice not to have a car doesn't mean that everyone wants to live the same way as you.

chrome100 Sat 27-Apr-13 12:01:05

It's not about "wanting" to live a certain way, it's about "needing" to. By that I mean changing the way we live in order to improve life for everyone - personal sacrifice for common gain. This is why we recycle, why we pay taxes, why we take the time to pick up our litter etc. Driving less and only when strictly necessary would hugely improve our general living environment for everyone.

Vinegar is right - there are a lot of people on this thread who are exceptionally stuck in their ways, churning out the same excuses. No, it's not up to me to decide who has valid reasons or not - that's my opinion, and one I am entitled to just as you are to yours.

teacher123 Sat 27-Apr-13 12:03:08

Vinegar drinker-you also have a very set mindset! I shop locally, walking into town to go to the butchers etc, but when I need to buy washing powder, loo rolls and nappies I drive to tesco's. As long as it is legal for me to drive the car that I pay for wherever and whenever I want to drive it, I will make those choices thank you very much. There is no way that I could do my job and get ds to child care without a car. Even if we moved house. We will be a 2 car family probably forever, and that is our choice.

Talk

Topics » AIBU?

to think cars should be banned from towns and cities (144 Posts)

chrome100 Fri 26-Apr-13 19:55:36

I don't own a car, mainly because I am too poor but also because I don't really need one and get around from A-B either on foot (short distances), cycling (medium distances), or bus/train (long distance). I am not a lentil-weaving hippy by any means but I really dislike the way that the dominance of the car has influenced our towns and cities - children can't play out, we are always waiting at junctions and traffic lights, running and walking necessitate several lengthy pauses to cross busy roads etc etc.

Why can't we create some kind of system whereby cars must be left on the outskirts of a city and everyone wanting to move around inside it has to walk/cycle/use the bus? I know this is hugely unrealistic and expensive but the impact this would have on our daily lives would be immense. The general environment would be so much more pleasant, we'd be to roam (ok, maybe I am a bit lentil weaver 🍷)

I know some people are disabled etc and allowances could be made for that but the vast majority of car journeys within a city (I think) could be avoided if people gave themselves more time to get to where they were going.

I'd love to live in a town town with no traffic, to cycle along with no cars and not have to fight dangerous junctions as a pedestrian.

HerrenaHarridan Sat 27-Apr-13 12:06:05

[Like here?](#)

chrome100 Sat 27-Apr-13 12:06:14

Teacher - so why do you think Vinegar can manage it and you can't? What are the differences between your lives? Do you think yours is more busy? Without knowing either of you I suspect it's because Vinegar is prepared to make sacrifices that you are not.

Sirzy Sat 27-Apr-13 12:07:30

It is about wanting to, it's about you wanting everyone to make the same choices as you when everyone has different lives and different circumstances.

You seem to be sure that nobody needs to drive in a city centre or town centre which is frankly bollocks!

chrome100 Sat 27-Apr-13 12:09:24

No, not that "nobody" needs to drive - sure, some people do, some of the time but not as many that think they need to drive now.

KobayashiMaru Sat 27-Apr-13 12:10:07

yeah, that will work well for a 2 hour cycle in the pouring rain with a newborn baby, and twisty narrow roads with no cycle paths. 🙄
The netherlands is mostly flat and set up for cycling.....

Bugger off, I'm keeping my car.

Sirzy Sat 27-Apr-13 12:16:04

But you are trying to decide for other people which journeys they need to make - what makes you think your way of wanting things is right? You have a very high and mighty attitude.

VinegarDrinker Sat 27-Apr-13 12:16:33

Cycling everywhere was fine in the Netherlands, it is flat, really, really flat. Not a bit flat, but table flat.

However, shopping was hard work with two DCs still in nappies. Every other shop was a nappy shop. DH alternated food shopping and nappy shopping and shopping every day. Shopping for 5 is no lightweight matter on a pushbike with two DCs on board.

We sobbed with gratitude when we were able to get a car.

chrome100 Sat 27-Apr-13 12:18:40

I think I am right because no one can possibly argue that having more cars on the road is a good and pleasant thing and that fewer cars would be a horrible, dreadful way to live.

VinegarDrinker Sat 27-Apr-13 12:18:41

teacher - how is my mindset fixed? I've done living with a car, and living without a car. I am just giving my examples of how it can work to be car-free despite kids, commuting etc etc. I don't really care what other individual people do, but I do care about the ever increasing number of cars on the road and people's ostrich approach to it.

DeepRedBetty Sat 27-Apr-13 12:19:28

One thing that's only been skirted round is getting stuff delivered. There seems to be an idea that if you order stuff on line and get it sent to you, you've magically cut out vehicle use. But instead you've just transferred the vehicle use to the retailer.

I've been driving round the suburbs and villages round here daily for nine years, collecting up dogs for their walks and taking them home again, and the numbers of delivery vans for supermarkets and parcel deliveries has increased many times fold. From the point of view of other road users, they're a massive PITA; although most drivers are courteous, they are often delivering on narrow streets and are as bad as getting stuck behind the bin lorry, and some companies have them on such a tight schedule (Tesco and DPD are definitely guilty) that they are forced to drive like loons, and I've seen them consulting hand-held computers while driving. I had to jump off a zebra crossing out of a Tesco van's path, he wasn't looking at the road, he was typing something into a tablet!

DowntonTrout Sat 27-Apr-13 12:19:40

Actually, it is about not wanting to but needing to.

I don't want to have to use my car. I manage well without it in London because the infrastructure and facilities are there.

In Yorkshire I need to, because they aren't. I, personally, couldn't cycle, even if I wanted to, because of two prolapsed discs in my back, and I can't walk the 3 miles to town. Neither could I carry anything heavier than my handbag.

You choose to do what you do because you can. I don't have the luxury of being able to make that choice. That's not an excuse, it's how it is.

VinegarDrinker Sat 27-Apr-13 12:20:57

Sirzy - the fact you choose to drive impacts on me and my children in myriad ways. It is not value neutral.

VinegarDrinker Sat 27-Apr-13 12:27:40

Downton so you do not live in a town, then, in which case this wouldn't apply. Or if you do it is one with no/inadequate public transport?

teacher123 Sat 27-Apr-13 12:28:22

Vinegar said up thread that she lives in London. You cannot compare local transport like with like where I live (not a million miles from London in a market town). My job is 20 miles away down backstreets and I have to be at work for 7.45am having already dropped ds off at child care. Dh works all manner of shifts so cannot be relied on to take ds to childminders every day so I have to be able to. I. Couldn't. Get. To. Work. Without. My. Car.

I don't use my car for short unnecessary journeys. Petrol is expensive and we pay a Shedload of tax every journey. I pay insurance. All you cyclists, are you insured if you hit a pedestrian?

Sirzy Sat 27-Apr-13 12:28:57

My choice to drive means I can do my voluntary work which makes a massive positive impact on hundreds on young people.

My choice to drive means I can get DS to hospital in 10 minutes when he has an asthma attack which has a positive effect on his health and means we don't need to call an ambulance.

My choice to drive means we can travel to a whole host of places with ease for days out and holiday and support the economies in those places.

I would use public transport if I lived in a location which had a halfway decent public transport system.

chrome100 Sat 27-Apr-13 12:29:17

Downtown - I accept you can't walk/cycle, that's fine. If driving is genuinely easier, drive. But for every person in your position there are many, many more (like my aforementioned colleague) who simply DO NOT need to drive and shouldn't do. This is the point of the thread.

VinegarDrinker Sat 27-Apr-13 12:29:28

Betty - true, and in fact I can't remember the last time we did get something delivered tbh, but even so one vehicle delivering many, many products is still much more efficient than multiple cars, both in terms of traffic and environmental impact.

VinegarDrinker Sat 27-Apr-13 12:33:57

" I would use public transport if I lived in a location which had a halfway decent public transport system."

This is the crux of it, and I don't think anyone on this thread would say car use should be penalised until this is put in place.

We could not live car free if I lived in a place with crap public transport. Yes we cycle 95% of journeys but decent public transport is an essential back up.

dreamingofsun Sat 27-Apr-13 12:35:53

perhaps you could explain to me how my son and I are supposed to get to his football fixture tomorrow which is 15 miles away down hilly roads with no public transport?

would you be prepared to cycle 10 miles to work down narrow country lanes at 5am, and do a 10 hour day and cycle back? And thats the nearest job.....the others involved a 90 min car journey.

inconvenience is not really the word.

though i do agree there should be less cars in towns.....so i can drive mine more quickly.

VinegarDrinker Sat 27-Apr-13 12:40:58

Did anyone actually read the thread title? This is about **towns and cities** people.

(FWIW I currently cycle 6 miles to work, work 13 hour shifts then cycle home. I am 30 weeks pregnant. I don't think everyone else could or should do the same, but it certainly isn't impossible or even especially onerous tbh.)

DowntonTrout Sat 27-Apr-13 12:47:53

Well I do live in a town. In Yorkshire. And have lived in this town for my whole life. It is actually a conurbation of small villages with a "town centre."

At the moment I am spending weekdays in London for a short period. I am amazed at the transport system, the ease of use, and how much money I save as opposed to running a car. My DD travels anywhere for free. It's fantastic.

My town, at home, just does not have this travel infrastructure. To get a bus to/from the centre is more expensive than a taxi if there are two of you. On top of that, buses aren't direct and taking a bus from my home to somewhere across town, meaning two or three buses could take four hours, bearing their infrequency, and maybe £20 if two of us. There are no trains nearby, either walking distance or on bus routes, except in the town centre.

Oh dear, on top of this it's a 4x4. Never mind that we were the only ones to get through the roads with snow drifts higher than the car this winter. At least I'm greener the other 5 days a week.

teacher123 Sat 27-Apr-13 12:48:28

As long as you're not a person who doesn't have a car for principled reasons and then cadges lifts off people-that really does piss me off something chronic!

Fwiw I do agree that many town centres would benefit from improved infrastructure and regeneration, as traffic is ugly and polluting in cities. HOWEVER, until alternatives exist, I'm not going to even consider changing the way I get myself from A to B. When we lived in London my car would sit unused for a fortnight as I did everything on public transport. Here, it's impossible.

Sirzy Sat 27-Apr-13 12:49:35

I live in a town though as do many people. Doesn't change the fact that the idea of the op is completely unworkable

VinegarDrinker Sat 27-Apr-13 12:55:35

The OP didn't say people who live in towns or cities shouldn't drive cars, though. She said people shouldn't drive cars in the centre of towns or

I ordered 2 things online for delivery. They were delivered yesterday, when I was out. They're now at the sorting office, which is in the town centre. I can just about get there before closing after work if I drive. If I don't drive, it is physically impossible to get there. I can't rearrange delivery as there's every chance again that I won't be in.

I think it's great that you don't want to drive. I like people being able to exercise their freedom to make their own decisions. But I don't want mine taken away.

Also, there is no little high street where I live. If I want to go to the butchers, bakers etc I need to go into town.

[dreamingofsun](#) Sat 27-Apr-13 13:01:50

i did read the thread and i do live in the middle of a town centre.

however, there is very little public transport, its very slow and doesn't go to many of the places we need to. a simple 40 minute journey by car would change into several different methods of non-car transport and an overnight stay.

[DowntonTrout](#) Sat 27-Apr-13 13:13:50

But read my posts **vinegar** whether you consider where I live in Yorksire as part of a town (it is) or not, my point is that in central London I don't need or use a car. It's great, I feel enlightened.

Still couldn't manage without a car at home though, and bearing in mind you have to drive through the town centre to get anywhere, what do you propose I do? If everywhere had great transport I suspect many would get rid of their cars. But considering London has these great transport links but it is still gridlocked just proves that even with the infrastructure in place, sometimes it's still not practical/ desirable all the time.

[KobayashiMaru](#) Sat 27-Apr-13 13:21:05

You seem to be missing the point though that people may live in one town or city and work in another, and have other business in still others? So if I am allowed a car, but not allowed to drive into any town or city, how many bikes do I need precisely? I mean, if I am to bike around my own town with four children hanging off me, then collect my car somewhere on the outskirts, drive to the other town outskirts, presumably my 5 person bike comes with me, does it? OR do I have another one there? Or am I to use buses and trains with a double buggy and a load of shopping?

not really thought this through, have you?

[BoneyBackJefferson](#) Sat 27-Apr-13 13:40:37

chrome100

I think that the point of the thread is that you would like to be able to dictate what people do.

Just because you don't think that a journey by car is unnecessary doesn't mean others think the same.

[WorrySighWorrySigh](#) Sat 27-Apr-13 13:45:36

I think that you would be naive to think that achieving this would be about building cycle paths and improving public transport. My town centre is already pretty much dead in terms of daily shopping. Banning cars is not going to revive it.

[Freddiemisagreatshag](#) Sat 27-Apr-13 13:49:29

I occasionally work in a town that is 20 minutes drive away. If I have to do an on-site meeting, I charge my client for my time. If I got the bus I'd have to get 2 buses and the journey would take just under two hours each way. I don't think I'd have a client very much longer.

[IThinkOfHappyWhenIThinkOfYou](#) Sat 27-Apr-13 16:41:31

I do live in a town. I work in the next city. The city even has a park and ride but I don't use it because it's shit. I also drive my dcs to school in my town. It's just over 2 miles, it is walkable (I could get a bus for about 1/4 of a mile of the journey) but I would have to walk an almost 5 mile round trip to come home and pick up my car to drive to work. I would also have to leave early and pay for breakfast club. Youngest dc in nursery cannot stay at school breakfast club so I would have to walk him a further 3/4 of a mile to the before school club. It would cost £13.50 a day for the extra childcare alone. This is in a town.

[ljkk](#) Sat 27-Apr-13 20:25:15

All you cyclists, are you insured if you hit a pedestrian?

We have something like that thru CTC.

Awful lot of motorists aren't insured, anyway. Okay it may be illegal, but doesn't stop a frightful lot of people from not bothering.

I wish OP's dream could come true. If only infrastructure was designed differently. Problem is so few ruddy professional jobs around here. We moved here because DH was working locally and I could commute (17 miles) on train & bike. But then my job finished & DH's company keeps

China was your utopia, OK, but the modern planners have planned all the new cities on assumption that car will be king & have redesigned the old cities in same way. They could have planned wide cycling boulevards in every city and just a few key access roads for private auto traffic, plus good public transport links. They decided not to do things like that. 😞

Plomino Sat 27-Apr-13 20:38:08

Cars being banned is all very well if you have a 24 hour permanently running reliable transport system , because you have to account for the fact that not everyone works 9 - 5 hours . I work shifts . Like so many of my shift worker colleagues , I can't afford to live in London , so I live out in the counties . I finish work on a late turn at about 11pm . The last train home is 2215 . After that , the next option is to catch the trains up until 1am to Peterborough , which is about 50 miles from home , and get a cab . Except that for some shifts ,I now finish at 3 am . Which means without a car my only option is to sleep on a bench at Kings Cross till the first train at 5.45 . Not ideal when I have to be back for work at 3pm .

It's a nice idea , but one that assumes that every town and city is only used and worked in by those who live in it .

LunaticFringe Sat 27-Apr-13 20:45:55

Message withdrawn at poster's request.

Hulababy Sat 27-Apr-13 20:53:14

I used to live IN the city centre. What would have been expected to do? Never drive to my own house?

I drive into town and park as it is cheaper for me to do so than get the bus - plus more than half the length of time taken than if on the bus. nd if doing a big shopping trip I don't want to lug loads of heavy bags about on public transport.

How far from the city centre are we talking about too?

Hulababy Sat 27-Apr-13 20:56:27

I live 5 miles from town.

The car takes me 15 min.

The bus, including walking to/from bus stops, waiting times, etc - 40 min.

Cycle - ages! It is VERY hilly in Sheffield. Way back would be an absolute killer as all uphill; not very practical. And a nightmare with heavy shopping bags!

Walk - well over an hour, and more! Can you imagine with children, a return trip - and with bags of shopping? Hmmm.

Pigsmummy Sat 27-Apr-13 21:13:42

Nice idea but pure nonsense in practical/economic/evolution terms

Freddiemisagreatshag Sat 27-Apr-13 21:16:19

Ah but. Think of the number of threads it would generate on here. "AIBU to think this journey should have been allowed" "I saw the woman's sister's cousin from across the street driving when she should have been walking"

dreamingofsun Sun 28-Apr-13 10:36:41

having read this thread again, i confess, that like many, i have jumped to the wrong conclusions. The poster is not saying we shouldn't use cars, we can use them as much as we like, just not in town centres. this is so her kids can cross roads more easily.

this would mean:

1. people in the suburbs would have their streets used as carparks by those working, living and shopping in the centres
2. my insurance premiums would go up, as the insurance company would argue its not as safe to park my car overnight in a street as it is in my drive or garage
3. people living in town centres would feel nervous walking home alone late at night from their cars and would be at a higher risk of getting mugged.
4. there would be a massive increase in demand for wheelbarrows (to cart things such as camping kit, shopping etc from cars to people's houses)
5. also a massive increase in cyclists in town centres as people would use them as a means to move from their cars on the outskirts to city centres. So the posters kids would need to be careful crossing junctions anyway

LessMissAbs Sun 28-Apr-13 13:02:23



Firstly, stop comparing to London. Frankly put - if you drive in central London you are probably a wanker as public transport is clearly better. Driving in Leicester is another matter.

Secondly, I'm put off giving up my car just by the self-righteous, holier than thou attitude of some non-car drivers on this thread. If you want to live your limited life without the luxury (yes, luxury) of a car then bully for you. But accept that it will be limited and you could be stuck in an emergency. Oh, and that it in no way makes you better than someone who chooses to drive.

In the end, there is such thing as free will. You cannot dictate who should and shouldn't drive. There are too many laws already.

Maybe try North Korea? They sound like they have the same views on controlling the masses.

(disclaimer: I'm in a foul mood, sorry)

Mother2many Tue 30-Apr-13 00:46:18

Interesting... I know, our city buses stop running at 8:00 pm... start up at 6:00 am. So that would screw up alot of people...

Would be better to see more people car pool! SO many people travel alone...



Product tests

mumsnet
by parents for parents



My Mumsnet 

Menu 

Talk

Topics » Legal matters

Conspiracy and intimidation re planning permission what can I do? (27 Posts)

[iknowimcoming](#) Sat 13-Dec-14 17:11:43

Will try to cut long story short! Just had second planning application we have submitted to replace crap house with nice house refused, which on paper should be no big deal. However next door neighbour has a group of friends and relatives whom he instructs to write in and object (we are talking about 30 people) so the council have to be seen to be considering public opinion and refuse us. On second application we have asked people we know in village to support if they don't mind and they have, one of them has today received a mildly intimidating but not directly threatening email from a prominent objector. Is there any action we can take about the conspiracy and /or the intimidation? So angry and frustrated! 😡

[LineRunner](#) Sat 13-Dec-14 17:19:07

Your first issue is to understand the **legal grounds** on which the planning applications were refused, and then to work with Planning Dept to overcome these.

Any objections have to refer to these legal grounds, not just say they don't like it.

The second issue is how the objector got the private contact details of the supporter. Ask the Planning Dept how this happened - this kind of private data should be redacted if the letters are published. Complain if necessary.

[ReadyToBreak](#) Sat 13-Dec-14 17:20:39

If objectors are sending intimidating emails/letters then contact the police.

[iknowimcoming](#) Sat 13-Dec-14 17:24:23

The grounds for refusal are size and scale so entirely subjective, it appears the council are either being bullied by the objectors or something more underhanded but we can't tell which. Re personal details - they are published on the planning website which is how he got her email address.

[iknowimcoming](#) Sat 13-Dec-14 17:25:44

Would the police really be interested? The letter is sarcastic. Us doesn't threaten directly just points out her bravery at giving her details!

[iknowimcoming](#) Sat 13-Dec-14 17:26:42

Sorry - but doesn't threaten

[Pooka](#) Sat 13-Dec-14 17:27:46

All letters, whether objections or supporting letters, will be on the planning file. I believe they are of public record, so addresses cannot be redacted. Certainly aren't in my local planning authority.

Planning permission has to be refused on legitimate planning grounds. If you feel that the reasons for refusal are not sound, then you do have the right to appeal. What have the planning officers said about what's wrong with your proposals? Or have they recommended permission and the councillors refused against professional recommendation?

[Pooka](#) Sat 13-Dec-14 17:29:37

Yes, scale and size are subjective. Just because they're subjective doesn't mean that the assessment is wrong.

Best way to test that would be to appeal. See what a planning inspector thinks.

[iknowimcoming](#) Sat 13-Dec-14 17:32:27

Size and scale not in keeping (it is) and overbearing on neighbours (it isn't). We are going to appeal but I'm worried the same conspirators will get

involved in this too.....

iknowimcoming Sat 13-Dec-14 17:41:01

Planning officer also won't discuss case at all with my architect so won't suggest what we could/should do to get approval, appears to just read objections then refuse it, no discussion whatsoever, also considering formal complaint against her

Pooka Sun 14-Dec-14 09:14:49

So is it being refused by the planning committee (made up of elected councillors) or under delegated powers (by the chief planner)?

Its unusual for a planner or, more likely, the chief planner to refuse to engage at all with agents/architects about development.

It would be worth seeing whether the chief planner would respond to a complaint.

Pooka Sun 14-Dec-14 09:29:41

I think that planning reports should be available after a decision has been made. So that should show the thinking of the planner. Either in recommending refusal and it being refused then by the chief planner under delegated powers, or by the committee of councillors. Or by recommending permission, and that recommendation being overturned by the committee of elected members.

The report should refer to the relevant planning policies/the national planning policy framework and should explain how a conclusion has been reached in balancing the material planning considerations.

The reason/s for refusal should be clearly linked to the planning policies and the appraisal of the proposal in the report.

You say this is the second application to be refused. If the second application has addressed the concerns raised by the first, then I think I'd be appealing and coming to the conclusion that the council (either the chief planner, or the committee) are just not going to grant permission. So best to appeal.

You seem to have concerns that there might be something 'off' in the way the case is being handled. You're totally entitled to that opinion, but generally I'd say that would be very unlikely. If it's the case that the committee are just vetoing, it could be that the objectors are being given too much weight in the decision making. If the case is never getting to the committee and is being refused by the chief planner under delegated powers, then it's more likely (in my opinion) that there's a fundamental issue with your scheme.

The whole point of the planning inspectorate is that there is no local knowledge or experience - the inspector will not have practised or worked in the area and will be able to view the proposal in relation to planning policy with no bias (intended or unintended).

Sorry for the screed, and I know it doesn't really relate to your original enquiry. Response to that is that objections and support letters are part of the public record and it is not generally possible to object to or support a proposal anonymously. The planning file is public. That's part of the reason why I always say that the work of the planners is to imagine the legitimate planning objections, regardless of whether they have actually been submitted, because it's not unknown for people to not want to object because they don't want to antagonise their neighbours.

iknowimcoming Sun 14-Dec-14 09:30:26

It's the planning officer refusing it, haven't got anywhere near anyone higher sadly, both times she has just refused it no discussion at all, she even put in her refusal report last time that we didn't try to discuss any amendments! Am going to ask architect to push her to discuss what we can do to get it approved and see if she will offer anything at all this week. Otherwise am definitely going to complain. 😞

iknowimcoming Sun 14-Dec-14 09:38:43

Sorry x posted. Thanks pooka!

Pooka Sun 14-Dec-14 09:58:24

I would definitely push for a discussion on how to improve the scheme. I'd be wanting a paper trail of trying to resolve the issues because it's unreasonable for the planning authority to refuse to enter into any dialogue or to refuse to discuss proposals with you, in my opinion.

If no joy, then I would definitely appeal. At least if you then get an appeal dismissal you'd have another concrete indication that the scheme is unworkable in its current form, and back to the drawing board. If the appeal is allowed, then fabulous! 😊

Obviously I don't know what the issues are in your case. There might be incredibly strong planning reasons for refusal (am thinking green belt, new dwelling disproportionately large in comparison to original, as an example of there being a strong presumption against development). There might be planning issues that would suggest that you need a fundamental rethink. Or it might be something that is easily tweaked or that an inspector would find acceptable.

Good luck!

iknowimcoming Sun 14-Dec-14 10:27:56

Thanks, yes all points in refusal covered by amendments in second application. Yes definitely going to appeal since architect thinks we will be successful if we can eliminate the nimby element, if appeal fails then we will probably look at another architect, since he has advised us that our scheme is acceptable and within planning guidelines etc, if it fails at appeal I will feel we have been ill-advised by him. It is hard at times to

overlook the fact that the longer the plans take to get approved the more money he makes 😏

Moniker1 Mon 15-Dec-14 13:51:49

In this area before any planning application goes in the applicant has an informal chat with planners - thus daft ones shouldn't go in and minor changes can be made first if advised.

Why haven't you spoken to the planning officer/ asked for an informal discussion. It would frustrate me if everything was coming second hand through an architect.

LineRunner Mon 15-Dec-14 15:52:41

Are you relying on your architect for information or have you spoken to Planning yourself?

iknowimcoming Mon 15-Dec-14 15:59:51

No such thing as informal in this area sadly, you can submit for pre- planning advice, at a cost, but it's not worth the paper it's written on and just means the whole thing takes longer. The architect is our agent and is supposedly more experienced/better at this stuff than us so he deals with planning dept and copies us on everything he send receives, this is how most apps are done round here so nothing weird in that. I actually left the planning officer a voicemail around 2 weeks ago, still waiting for her to call back 😞

iknowimcoming Mon 15-Dec-14 16:01:58

Incidentally she only converses with the architect via email never phone or in person, it's all like some massive secret society. I have the rage today with it 😡

LineRunner Mon 15-Dec-14 17:29:09

Have you spoken to one of your local councillors?

iknowimcoming Mon 15-Dec-14 18:14:41

Line - only when we first sent in the application, we sent him our plans and explained all the changes to address the previous refusal and objections. He only acknowledged the email never got involved more than that. He was however heavily involved in the previous app as the local loons got him on side and he called it in for committee etc. This time he hasn't been seen so we assume he doesn't agree with the locals but as he's not our local councillor (we live in a different, but very close by, area) I'm not sure he could or would help us. What do you suggest we ask him?

Pooka Tue 16-Dec-14 08:20:37

You could ask him to intervene in terms of getting the planner/chief planner to talk to you.

The email correspondence sounds logical to me - unfortunately planners at the local planning authority here have at the moment roughly 100 applications on the go at one time. Site visits can involve a day of hitting the streets and doing one after another. Phone lines to the planners only open for a few hours a day. As people leave, they're not being replaced. It's a nightmare. If you then have 15 messages from different applicants, it can make sense in terms of workload to fire off 15 emails rather than making 15 phone calls. It isn't great, but it's understandable. Workloads might be different in your LPA.

Re the informal advice. Our LPA used to do excellent pre app advice, free of charge. Then the powers that be saw this as a money spinner and it became chargeable. But because it became chargeable, the amount of work involved massively increased. Site visits, meetings and so on in order to provide simple pre app advice, because obviously if you're paying for something, you want evidence of a great deal of work being put in. The by product is that our LPA charges for first app, but second is a free go, if permission refused. So increasingly, agents use the first app as if it were the pre app informal advice, and then use the second go to address issues from the first application. The end result is that again, workloads have increased for a diminished staff.

Moniker1 Tue 16-Dec-14 13:36:13

Are you sure there is no explanation for refusal?

Did it go to the area committee who voted against?

LineRunner Tue 16-Dec-14 15:28:20

So it did go to the Planning Committee?

iknowimcoming Tue 16-Dec-14 16:06:52

Pooka - almost identical system here as with yours.

Line- no not planning committee just refusal by planning officer

Moniker - there will be reasons for refusal, just haven't had report yet, but we've been told it will be size and scale.

Moniker1 Wed 17-Dec-14 13:06:48

I would not give up hope. And don't be too sure that the neighbours' input is crucial.

Be willing to bend to suit planning requirements. Planners stick to the rules. They don't have time to say 'I'll bend the rules here a bit for this person' or 'I'll make a new rule for that one'. Maybe they also have to be seen to be doing their job so a refusal followed by a bit of discussion and change to plans proves that they have.

This is just my experience. Some people ~~my DB~~ believe that planners have a vendetta against them. Why would they give themselves that hassle?



Talk

Topics » Nurseries

ENFIELD COUNCIL - Planning Permission: Nursery children not given access to their garden because they make 'noise'?! (8 Posts)

Ozlemaksu Mon 16-Sep-13 19:59:26

Dear parents

Our children at Nursery On The Green are being denied access to their garden by heartless individuals at Enfield Council, because the local authority deems the children are causing a nuisance by playing and having fun whilst enjoying out door play! What are children supposed to do? That's how they learn and it's all to important for little people to throughly engage in playing in their own garden.

Enfield Council, are recommending a refusal to the planning application, which was to secure permanent use of the garden. The children only had temporary consent to use the garden previously. We are seeking justice for those children who do not have a voice or standing to represent themselves - no pun intended.

It is fundamentally incorrect when children attending nursery, some 50 hours per week, are denied use of their garden. They can not exercise, learn and develop their most basic needs. The children attending NURSERY ON THE GREEN, are the most pleasant and well behaved children around. As a parent, I am honoured and very proud of the people providing an outstanding care for the most precious little people of our lives, they are all first class teachers and they provide a first class service.

Please support our cause to get the planning application granted. There will be a consultation on the 24th September 2013 at the Enfield Civic Centre Conference Room at 7.30pm. Please join us in our search for securing those children with some use of their garden.

We have launched an online petition to lend our support to those children which are affected! What is next, are they going to stop children from playing in schools and in parks also?! This is absurd. Please take five minutes to sign our petition and let's all stand up for our children.

<http://chn.ge/1aFiuKS>

Thank you.

Cindy34 Tue 17-Sep-13 08:47:31

Does seem a bit odd, though don't know the area so the garden may be very close to other properties, the building may have been residential not commercial property so change of use consent may have had limitations placed on it, plus there may be local public space available. Nurseries do not need a garden, they need access to outdoor space so that can be a local park.

Good luck with the campaign. Planning committee will need to take everyone's views into account, within the constraints of the planning rules.

Cindy34 Tue 17-Sep-13 09:30:04

Sorry, having looked at the planning apps and location plans, plus Google Maps, I agree with the council.

- planning permission for the nursery was originally refused.
- variation to consent did get approval, though I see a miss match between max number of children planning permitted (24) vs Ofsted registration (47), plus consent did not include use of garden.
- temp consent of garden use has been tried.
- 12 objections to continued use of the garden. very close residential properties.
- there is a public open space within a very short walk, 1 road to cross.

Children have a right to play but they don't have to do it on site, it can be at another location. I know of several nurseries who have no garden, they use a local park. Sure that may not be ideal but not all buildings have a garden and where there is a garden, noise levels do need to be taken into account.

With the open space down the road, I don't see how you will be able to appeal the decision (once it is made).

Sorry, on this occasion I feel town planning have it right.

For those wanting a look at the planning apps: search enfield planning portal using: en2 6nf postcode.

OrangeOpalFruit Tue 17-Sep-13 09:43:44

It seems pretty unfair on the children who attend the nursery. While I would be annoyed if a nursery opened up next door to me I do think that children should be outside as much as possible. Ideally I suppose they shouldn't grant planning permission at all for nurseries in buildings without usable outdoor space, because I don't think such premises are really suitable for the purpose.

BoulevardOfBrokenSleep Tue 17-Sep-13 09:48:17

It's not unreasonable to be making noise in the daytime, surely?

They're not going to be out squealing on the trampoline at 2am....

Willyswife Tue 17-Sep-13 14:42:34

I am shocked at Cindy23's response - would you not have schools in residential areas? This premises is a commercial property, it was originally built as a meeting hall for the Ancient Order of Foresters and used to hold parties, wedding receptions etc. The application requests that children (all under 4 years) have access for a total of three hours a day - maximum number of children at any one time 9. With a school playground less than 220m away and a total of 470 pupils - will 9 children make a difference to neighbouring properties - SURROUNDED BY BIGOTS!!!/emo/te/5.gif

Willyswife Tue 17-Sep-13 14:44:40

SORRY THAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN CINDY34! The nursery is also closed from 6pm each evening and no one around at weekends. You could potentially have a couple of semi's on this site and then have screaming unsupervised children in the garden all day, every day, evenings and weekends - I know what I would rather have.

TenthMuse Tue 24-Sep-13 14:41:20

OP, as it happens I live in Enfield just round the corner from the nursery and saw the article in the local paper. To be honest, I was really shocked by the small-mindedness and self-interest of those who have placed these objections.

I'm also a primary teacher, and I completely agree with you about the importance of children having easy access to outside space - it's crucial to early education, and while I'm well aware that there is usable open space nearby (I live opposite it!), it won't be anywhere near as secure and will be logistically more difficult to use on a regular basis.

I fail to see how a maximum of nine children playing outside for a few hours a day would create an intolerable amount of noise. And, anyway, surely the sound of children playing is infinitely preferable to traffic, barking dogs, car alarms and any of the other noises you would expect to experience living in a London suburb? And I would have thought most people would be out and about (at work, shopping etc) for at least some of the time the outside space was being used - if the application were for evenings/weekends the situation would obviously be different.

Sadly, there is an element in our society that is somewhat intolerant and ambivalent towards children. Being a local resident, and knowing the area well, I suspect that there are some people living nearby who have little else to do other than writing letters to the council about things that irk them (indeed, I am acquainted with a couple of them!).

Suffice to say, I've signed the petition and will encourage friends who live locally to do the same.



Talk

Topics » Property/DIY

neighbours WILL object if we proceed with planning application... what now? (31 Posts)

NeatFreak Sun 29-Jul-12 20:06:39

We have a good relationship with our neighbours and advised them that we were talking to an architect about a potential extension. We explained our ideas and said we would show them plans before submitting them. We've now done this and they aren't happy with our plans as it will be oppressive and block their light into their conservatory. I think there was some misunderstanding when we initially talked to them as they were ok in principle before they saw the plans.

Our architect thinks that any objections they have will be dismissed with insufficient grounds so we are stuck as to what to do... we want to keep a harmonious relationship with them (they really are lovely!) but the plans can't really be altered much if they are still to give us the space we would like.

The options are to go ahead despite their concerns (would this also impact on timescales if they object?), modify plans to compromise with them or move house. I don't really want to do any of them!

Any advice, thoughts or shared experience would be much appreciated (lodges self back between rock and hard place)

wisecamel Sun 29-Jul-12 21:21:43

Lovely neighbours are very easy to take for granted. Do you need the space more than you need their goodwill? For example, are you attached (literally) to them? Shared drives, that kind of thing?

NeatFreak Sun 29-Jul-12 21:26:00

Thanks. We are all detached with no shared drive or anything. Our house is slightly set back from theirs so we would block the light from around a third of their garden (we already block the conservatory). Only other issue is that our proposals would take us right up to the boundary line so if there was any maintenance needed on the brickwork we would have to hope they would allow us access...

wisecamel Sun 29-Jul-12 21:32:58

It's tricky. We are not extending our house because it really would shade the neighbour's conservatory and I would hate it if my neighbour on the other side did that to me - but then we are terraced and I need them to like me as we have small, noisy kids that they are very generous and kind to.

Personally, I wouldn't do it, particularly if you think they may have valid points in objecting and it may be a step too far to assume that they would let you have access for maintenance - at the very least, can you step in the extension to give you a bit of room on your land to do this?

UnexpectedItemInShaggingArea Sun 29-Jul-12 21:33:04

We went ahead with two neighbours objecting. One sold up and moved house, the other put up a 6 foot fence between us.

We went ahead because their reasons for objecting were really petty / spurious, your neighbours sound like they have more serious objections, albeit they may not be strong enough to stop planning permission being granted.

In your case I would be really cautious at proceeding with an extension right on the boundary. You may need access to their garden for building / maintenance and people do get really upset at losing sunlight from their garden.

If you have a dispute you will have to detail it in the seller's pack when / if you move...

tricot39 Sun 29-Jul-12 21:36:47

if you build up to the boundary you will need a party wall award. the neighbours cannot stop the work but they could drag the award process out and create delay and expense. you will have to pay for their surveyor and engineer. they might run up a big bill quite easily. if you can bear it i would get the architect to draw up some quick sketch options dealing with their concerns. you can see whether it is as big a compromise as you fear.

i suppose it also depends on the orientation. if you are blocking sunlight from their garden then that will be a bit grim for them and im sure you wouldn't like it if your other neighbours did something similar to you?

wisecamel Sun 29-Jul-12 21:41:14

tricot39's idea is good - you said that they agreed in principle, so they must have had an idea what 'OK' would look like. They would be pleased to

be asked and at least you'd know how far apart your ideas were and if compromise would be achievable.

bisjolympics Sun 29-Jul-12 21:42:00

If you were my neighbours and built up to the boundary despite my objections to your plans I wouldn't be allowing you any access for maintenance.

Blocking the light from a third of their garden sounds really unneighbourly and a large extension. As others have said, how would you feel if the same was done to you?

frostyfingers Sun 29-Jul-12 21:49:33

I would try and find out what they would find acceptable - try and work with them as much as you can. Major neighbour issues can make your house hard to sell, so tread carefully.

jalopy Sun 29-Jul-12 21:52:46

Does their conservatory have any impact on your light levels or vista?

NeatFreak Sun 29-Jul-12 22:06:23

Just to clarify, our neighbours are lovely and we wouldn't go ahead without their approval, I was just mulling our options over out loud. I think I was just taken aback as we thought showing them the plans would be a paperwork exercise but my rational head is back on now!

It isn't a massive extension but our gardens are quite small and our house is set further back from theirs.

Dh and I have spent the evening looking at alternatives that may work- it won't give us exactly what we want but it would be a compromise for both of us. It would sort downstairs out but upstairs would be more tricky. Dh has spoken to the neighbours about what they would find acceptable so I'm hoping this will be ok. The architect is keen for us to go ahead regardless but we couldn't/wouldn't do that.

Fwiw, our other neighbours did the same a couple of years ago and we had no objections as it gives us more privacy but I realise that different people have different views and use their garden differently.

Thanks for all the advice

mylovelymonster Mon 30-Jul-12 08:54:50

Can you not do a ground floor extension (leaving yourself space around for access for maintenance, rather than needing to use your neighbours' garden) and go up into the loft instead?

Everyonehasaprice Mon 30-Jul-12 09:02:58

I have to say that I think you should go ahead but try and compromise a little. My next door neighbours are doing the same to us with their plans for an extension. We get on well with them, we don't like their proposed extension but they'll get planning permission so what is the point of objecting? I think our relationship with them is more important than objecting when we would not succeed. That's what the planning process is for, to allow someone not involved to make a decision on planning grounds.

BegoniaBigtoes Mon 30-Jul-12 09:10:53

Yes go to them and say you don't want to go ahead with anything that would upset them, but ask if they could describe what would be OK. Often people just want to feel listened to and that they have some influence, and then you might find they are more flexible.

Aftereightsaremine Mon 30-Jul-12 09:11:23

When we did our extension a few years ago we kept our neighbours informed every step of the way, including inviting them over when architect was there. We told the architect that under no circumstances would we proceed with anything they were unhappy with. And we also live in a detached house. The result is that we have maintained great relationship with both sides.

We also bought presents for our neighbours when the work was finished as thank you for putting up with us having builders for a year.

herhonesty Mon 30-Jul-12 09:23:48

We're in a very similar position – it's 50-50 as to whether or not we'll get permission for a two storey, if not, we'll just go for single storey. But if we don't get double storey, we'll eventually move, as we'll outgrow the house as the kids get older.

It's difficult for us because we have a very bad relationship with her. We put permission in to put a drive way in the front which got turned down (we are in a conservation area) and since then she has bad mouthed us to everyone who will listen – properly nasty stuff. She shows no respect for our rights, putting up nasty fencing against our hedge, coming onto our property to tack ghastly fencing on top of existing stuff and creosoting it, putting in windows that over look our garden without planning permission etc, parking across our gate, etc.

Part of us thinks "she's going to make our life hell if we put in permission, should we bother??" and we're scared of the inevitable backlash. But then the other part of us thinks that this is in fact bullying or at the very least intimidation. The planning system is in place to make objective decisions (admittedly, this doesn't always happen) particularly when there are diverse opinions.

You should look at it in the long term as well. If you don't apply for planning permission, the next person who lives in your house might. Nothing lasts

forever.

mollymole Mon 30-Jul-12 09:26:51

Why don't you ask your neighbours to come round and meet with you and your architect to try and reach a compromise suited to all of you.

dinkystinky Mon 30-Jul-12 09:31:43

Our neighbours objected to our original planning permission for extension on flat roof for bathroom - this was after talking to them about our plans and how it would look before the application went in. They didn't even tell us until we were told by the council it was rejected (and we thought we got on well with them till then). We left things for a year and planning rules changed so did what we wanted upstairs under permitted development (the extension was actually larger than originally planned but still not huge). We explained to the neighbours we were sorry they didn't like it but we were going to do it and we were assured by our architect it would not be obtrusive/obstruct light/views from their bedroom as they claimed. We've had it done a year now and the neighbours have confirmed they were OTT in objecting to it - in fact they've applied under planning to do the same to their house now (but got it turned down as they've already used planning - at the same time as us - to do their side return)!

Pattypooped Mon 30-Jul-12 13:15:28

I am confused why your neighbours will lose light if your plans are within planning guidelines.

Planning guidelines are there to protect neighbouring houses - if your plans are 'passable' then I'm unclear what they object to?

There is no legal 'right to light' in the garden, I don't think. I guess this largely comes down to which way the gardens face (You may have already said, I may have missed that) and I totally understand that blocking existing sunlight/evening light wouldn't be fair.

I agree you have to keep the peace with neighbours, but you also have to weigh this up against the fact it's your house. Is there any real point in going through the horrible upheaval of building works to build an extension that's not going to suit you as a family? I would never build some sort of 'compromise' which meant we would have to move house in the future.

In your position I would either go for the extension you actually want/need or just move house.

NeatFreak Mon 30-Jul-12 14:43:50

Thanks for the interesting feedback.

I'm not sure what way our garden faces ☹️. We get no sunshine where the extension will be (and where both our patios are) from about midday so we both have a seating area at the back of the garden, which won't be affected at all by building works.

Our architect is coming round on Wednesday to discuss our options so we will see if he can come up with some realistic alternatives and if not we will then have to consider how to proceed. I think they may agree to a side extension behind our garage- as it does not extend beyond the existing depth of the house- but will object to building out further than that so we may look at ways of building out at the other side of the back of the house (sorry, that is confusing me so it probably won't be very descriptive!). I think it is doable with a few tweaks but I suspect it will interfere with the architect's 'vision' 😊...

Sigh, it was all going so well!!

sweetkitty Wed 01-Aug-12 07:18:17

We had this with our first plans for an extension the neighbours objected to loss of light and feeling boxed in, it got passed regardless, we had to put scaffolding in a part of their garden (it's a side part about half a metre wide overgrown with weeds) they said no. Due to this and other reasons we decided to move house. Then we looked at it again and thought lets make the extension smaller, the neighbours were happier with this, we're about to start work in a few weeks.

NeatFreak Fri 03-Aug-12 12:32:35

Just thought I would update that we now have a new set of plans that the neighbour should be happy with- we have kept the boundary extension as a single storey and extended the full height extension in the other direction, meaning downstairs is actually bigger but upstairs slightly smaller- it is a reasonable compromise and should be granted planning permission so hopefully it is all go now...

Thanks for all the comments and advice 😊

Laurensdad Sun 04-Aug-13 14:35:39

We are in exactly this position. We discussed our planned side extension with our neighbour directly across from us (as they will be the ones looking at it) and they said they had no problems with it. They even offered to take some of the paving blocks (that we would have to lift) to use in their own garden!

After we put the planning application in they asked us how it was progressing, whenever they saw us on the street.

Then, with 24 hours left to go on the deadline for objections, they put in an objection. We were stunned!

Then 2 more of our close neighbours also put in objections - although both these were after the closing date, so not sure how much impact they will have.

All 3 of the 'last minute' objections followed a visit from one particularly unpleasant neighbour, who has complained about everything we have done to the house since we bought it. We know that this person orchestrated (or encouraged) these objections, but there's nothing we can do. Fortunately, we opted for a 'pre-planning' application, and were assured that there 'should' be no problems. We'll see how it goes.

What I find most upsetting, apart from people changing their minds without telling you(?) is the unpleasant tone of these objections. Some of them are rather personal, with 2 of them basically saying that if we want more space we should move house.

1 objector has even invented facts and figures about the houses and 1 of the others has an extension of their own!

wonkylegs Sun 04-Aug-13 16:05:57

Unfortunately a pre planning discussion holds no weight at planning stage and even though you can be assured it's fine at the meeting/in the report it can be meaningless at the final stages, if the planning officer changes their mind or you just get a different officer who interprets the rules slightly differently. It's very frustrating and can make a mockery of the process at times.

Objections only hold weight if they are based on things that are part of the planning rules - neighbours often think reduction in the value of their house or loss of view are valid objections they are not. Loss of privacy, massing, character, scale are valid however.

One of the reasons I find domestic work so unattractive is the unpredictability of neighbours. Nice reasonable normal people quite often go a little mental when next door proposes an extension. Sometimes objections are valid, more often than not they are a bit crazy. I once had a neighbour object over the fact that he wouldn't be able to wash his car in private (it didn't overlook his house, garden, terrace just the small bit of yard he washed his car in).

Laurensdad Sun 04-Aug-13 16:17:39

Don't hold out much hope for the new 'Neighbourhood Consultation Scheme' - from what I have been reading there are 'so' many people who just use the planning process to have a go or settle scores. Very sad!

MummytoMog Mon 05-Aug-13 10:36:52

I was quite surprised that our 'friendly' neighbour chucked in an objection to our plans. It was a perfectly sensible suggestion (about surface water drainage) that if he'd asked me about, I would have passed onto the architect. But it does leave a little bit of a bad taste in the mouth, as did the one who raised questions about the protected trees in our garden. There are no protected trees in our garden, there are a lot of mature trees, but none of them are protected (three ash trees, a weeping willow, a damson tree and a chestnut tree). The problem with these objections is that it delays things and can often lead to extra expense. The planning process has ended up costing quite a bit more than I originally thought (thanks to having to withdraw the original plans, split them into two and then resubmit them both separately, paying AGAIN).

mirry2 Mon 05-Aug-13 10:46:21

We live in a semi and our neighbours recently built a rear extension that has blocked the light to a third of our garden and to half our living room, and had their house gutted and renovated at the same time. We objected to planning at the time but it was still passed. Our neighbours never discussed the works with us; moved out while it was going on and haven't even had the courtesy to acknowledge the 5 months noise or disruption we experienced while this massive building works were going on. We always got on reasonably well with them before this works took place but haven't exchanged a word since.

Laurensdad Mon 05-Aug-13 14:34:45

What really worries me is that one of my objectors is an ex Councillor and failed parliamentary candidate, who currently works for a local MP. I don't know much about politics but I feel sure she should have declared that along with her comments as this makes her more than just your average objector. I am also concerned that she will try to use her political connections to get the application stopped.

gillviola Wed 07-Aug-13 16:55:27

Just because your neighbours object, it does not mean that you won't get planning permission. Our neighbour objected and claimed all sorts of reasons why it should not be granted including the loss of light (even though he had a similar extension himself) and that the stress of it was causing his hair to fall out! He also signed his letter with fake qualifications to make it look more official- we were still given permission.

Laurensdad Wed 14-Aug-13 17:40:44

Well - we did get planning permission, despite 7 objections. I am just a little disappointed at the unpleasantness shown by some neighbours (who we had hitherto considered friends).

I am especially upset by the neighbours who gave us their "full support" only to lodge an objection with 24 hours left to go!

Still, that's life I guess, and I suppose we will just have to hope that people see just how small and insignificant (as opposed to earth shattering and huge) it actually is when it is completed.

Moral - if you want to find out how people really feel about you - put in a planning application!

Itscoldouthere Thu 15-Aug-13 11:34:58

Laurensdad - I'm glad you got your permission and it is a shame that you had objections but try not to think that people don't like you, surely they are just being protective about their own home and in the long run hopefully all will be forgotten.

I hope your build goes well -good luck with it all.



Talk

Topics » Property/DIY

Builder not followed plans...roof too low on extension and other issues (44 Posts)

bloodybuilder Thu 26-Jul-12 22:14:18

Oh god I dont know where to start
Name change as this story will identify me!

We bought a run down Victorian terrace which needed gutting. We employed a builder who we knew as he did a massive project next door to our old house and the finish was good, we liked him, and there didnt seem to be any major problems.

An architect drew up plans, we submitted planning permission and listed building consent (grade 2 listed). We have had a single storey kitchen building out and into side return extension, created open plan living/dining/playroom, bathroom moved upstairs, new stairs etc etc

The floor for the kitchen went in this week. It meant the ceiling looked worryingly low. We measured it, and it is 20cm lower than the plans. Our expensive kitchen wont fit now - well they'll have to take the plinth off the tall units so now it wont line up and look right. Also there are two steels which are meant to be flush with the ceiling above in the old part of the kitchen, and these are hanging below - so now that section of the kitcheb looks quite boxed in rather than sleek. I'm not really explaining this vey well..

Basically he's done his own thing rather than follow the plans, apparently because he had difficulty getting the beams in. (not sure I believe this he has form for lying to us) The whole roof on the extension is too low, prob by 30cm.

He wasnt even going to tell us - even though he had the kitchen plan which said a minimum height needed for the tall units (taken from architects plans with some leeway).

We have had problems with him previously - he moved a wall in the kids bedroom in further than on the plans (to get loft stairs up) which makes the bedroom smaller, he used metric rather than imperial bricks as specified by conservation officer (luckily she passed it), made the bifold door opening smaller so now we have to get bespoke doors etc etc...

Relations were good to start. His finish is of high quality and he has a good eye for detail. I like (? liked him)

Rather stupidly because I trusted him we had no contract (and didnt think if it to be honest - i know i know stupid). Initially I was probably too friendly taking fresh coffee and cake etc and now he is getting annoyed with me for sending curt emails asking what has happened.

He is NEVER wrong and it is always someone elses fault.....

Oh shit. This is a nightmare. I am due dc3 in 7 weeks and we are about to move into another temporary accom/house of friend as the house is still not liveable. Oh, did I say it was 2 months late already and we have already put the kitchen delivery back 6 weeks

Any ideas what I can do?

Thanks for getting this far

bloodybuilder Thu 26-Jul-12 22:28:07

anyone - please???

or do you know of a forum that might help?

EMS23 Thu 26-Jul-12 22:34:55

If get legal advice as it sounds like the whole thing needs to be redone.

tricot39 Thu 26-Jul-12 22:35:58

I have every sympathy with you. A similar situation has now happened to us twice (except I had a detailed priced scope of works which made the money side easier) and it is just so frustrating.

First time we got a highly recommended builder - and the week before our job started he sacked all his direct labour and subcontracted our job to an idiot with sub-DIY skills. It was terribly quality and 16 weeks over on a 12 week programme by the time we got other people in to fix the bodes. The boss eventually apologised unreservedly but it was too little too late.

Second time I was super cautious and went with a builder recommended by a picky architect friend and who had done some lovely joinery for us. He talked-the-talk but just built what he liked, ignoring the drawings, and the onus was on us to correct things and coordinate between trades. It was exhausting and 10 weeks late on a 12 week programme.

You don't want to hear this but you should probably make arrangements for somewhere to stay with the new baby. Even if you are decorating etc after they leave you don't want to bring a newborn home to that. It will probably make you feel better if you know that you have somewhere sorted to come home to (assuming that it is not a homebirth??).

I would suggest that you get back to the original architect and ask for some suggestions on how to unify the bodged levels in the kitchen - you could perhaps use a floating plasterboard box downstand with lighters in it to disguise the steps. You may have to pay an hour or so consultation fee. Then get on to the kitchen people and get them to adjust the kitchen design if you can so that it doesn't have to be bodged too. If you end up with a solution that looks reasonably OK (even if different to what you planned) then in time you will feel less angry about it all <voice of bitter experience> and noone else will notice.

If you want the work done fairly soon then you must keep relations good (at least superficially) with the builder. Keep buying the cake and keep smiling if you can. It will keep them focussed on the job and mean that they can't write off your comments if you present them in a calm friendly way. It is best done in person and confirmed in writing. Sniffy emails tend to make the builder more likely to spend time being annoyed with you than getting finished! Sadly you also have to just accept that there will be extra expenses to sort out his mistakes.

Hope it is all sorted for you soon!

fossil97 Thu 26-Jul-12 22:38:48

Did you have any agreement at all - he must have put in a quote based on the plans? I take it the architect hasn't had any involvement supervising the site work?

I imagine you will have to have a meeting with a precise list of all your problems and if they can't be fixed, negotiate money off to accommodate them. It sounds like the job is to far along to rebuild the roof 😞.

poorbuthappy Thu 26-Jul-12 22:38:50

Solicitor now.

Don't think it matters re contracts. You had plans. He ignored them.
I repeat, solicitor now.

Noqontrol Thu 26-Jul-12 22:40:33

Aren't the planning dept from the council supposed to check it every step of the way? Mine did, no room for error.

bloodybuilder Thu 26-Jul-12 22:40:44

Thanks for reply. At least the roof needs to come off and extension built taller, and steels put in the right place.

We might not bother do the other stuff he has done wrong.

We have nowhere to live - we rented somewhere for 3 months and have no money to do it again. I'm about to have a baby. I don't think I can just suck it up though - it will bug me forever.

Does anyone know my rights? We didn't have a written contract. I've paid all but £10k - as he's almost finished. I dont have home contents insurance as we couldn't have it when building work going on- so that would have given some free legal advice.

bloodybuilder Thu 26-Jul-12 22:41:49

Sorry that thanks was to first reply- will read others now

OlympicRelay Thu 26-Jul-12 22:48:16

Suck up cost of legal advice.

bloodybuilder Thu 26-Jul-12 22:51:37

Thanks so much for replies. Replying on phone so can't scroll up and get posters names- sorry.

Yes we have had a detailed breakdown quote which is good and accurate. We just didn't sign anything saying he had to stick to plans...

The kitchen company can take the plinth off the tall units but it will look shit to be honest. It's a small terrace so the low ceiling really makes a

difference.

Oh shit. I should have noticed it before maybe.

poorbuthappy Thu 26-Jul-12 22:56:26

Oh bollocks to that. Notice what? If you were a builder who would be able to notice it then I assume you wouldn't be paying someone else loads of money to do the bloody job for you. Nothing in writing agreeing to stick to plans??? Then what is the point in having plans?? Crap builder. Don't pay. Get to solicitor. Suck up legal costs.

bloodybuilder Thu 26-Jul-12 22:57:44

Tricot38 so sorry to hear it happened to you and thanks for your helpful suggestions. We really can't afford to rent anywhere else we have used up all our savings on this project, borrowed loads from my parents and over budget...

Noqontrol Thu 26-Jul-12 23:01:51

But surely this needed to be approved by the council? If the builder hasn't followed the plans then do not pay him any more. I would ring the planning dept and see what they suggest.

bloodybuilder Thu 26-Jul-12 23:02:39

Poorbuthappy- great name. That's me. I am happy and have to remember that. Noone died. I have a wonderful dh and 2 almost 3 (fingers crossed) children, lovely friends and live in a great (but overpriced area).

This is just the absolute pits though.

I will try and find a solicitor to speak to tomorrow. Scary. I suppose I'm worried that we won't win and then will be lumbered with court expenses. I need to check with another builder to see what the architect has drawn is possible.

Shit shit shit

I love mumsnet.

tricot39 Thu 26-Jul-12 23:03:34

I thought it would bug me forever but it does fade with time. Probably took about 3 years tho! Just threw out all the paperwork yesterday and even seeing the snagging lists wasn't the horror I thought it would be.

The legal route is tricky. You might spend more money and time on that than getting it sorted. It depends how wrong it is.

Changing a roof and steel levels is a massive amount of work and he will say you should have spotted it sooner.

It is worth a quick chat with the architect to see what can be salvaged surely?

bloodybuilder Thu 26-Jul-12 23:05:26

The building control have passed it all but haven't seen it with the roof on yet. Isn't building control about making it safe though rather than following plans? It's safe. It just looks wrong and doesn't maximise space in the way the architect designed.

The plans did get listed building consent but it looks like keeping so will probably pass that as well

So builders absolutely have to follow the plans, by law?

bloodybuilder Thu 26-Jul-12 23:06:51

Yes I probably should have spotted- but surely he should have discussed it with us when he put it in a different place?

tricot39 Thu 26-Jul-12 23:07:04

Just to add that plans often vary during the course of the job due to unforeseen circumstances. Op will spend years arguing the toss about that paying a solicitor then still have to pay to get the bodes sorted. The legal route isn't worth the hassle or risk imo.

bloodybuilder Thu 26-Jul-12 23:07:17

Yes I will definitely get architect out.

bloodybuilder Thu 26-Jul-12 23:08:32

Hmm that's my worry.

If there are unforeseen circumstances then shouldn't he tell us what they are rather than leave it too late to do anything about it??

Noqontrol Thu 26-Jul-12 23:08:43

Well I thought they did, but maybe that's just the experience I had here. The planning dept were a bit OTT really, strutting around in shiny shoes holding tape measures, but at least it turned out ok (ish). I'd ring them first and take it from there. But do not pay any more at this stage.

tricot39 Thu 26-Jul-12 23:09:43

Yes he should have discussed it but his argument would be that it changes nothing.... Winning a legal argument in this situation is very difficult and often pointless.

poorbuthappy Thu 26-Jul-12 23:10:19

Not building control, planning.

Building control is all about safety, energy levels etc. Planning is about sticking to plans.

Where did you get the builder from? Recommended? Advert? Cheapest quote? (not being sarcastic just asking questions honest 😊)
have you spoken to any other customers? Does this builder have form? Google is your friend here...

Yes legal is tricky, and that's what bastard people who rip you off bank on: you don't want to have to deal with the hassle etc etc.
Makes me mad. 😡

tricot39 Thu 26-Jul-12 23:17:04

Oh hang on. Re-checking your posts you have a listed building. Check with the conservation officer- i think there is a more onerous requirement to stick to the plans in that case. By not agreeing changes with you and planning he has taken on more responsibility for it changes not being approved.

You could try using that to scare him into raising the roof but i would try to find a way of living with the steels if you can.

bloodybuilder Thu 26-Jul-12 23:18:31

he did a whole renovation next door to one we were renting next to. it was good - the house went from being worth 500k to 1.1 million 😊
his finish was good - there were a few problems. i suspect the guy who owned it was more experience than us. i think he has an ok reputation apart from always running late.
he was slightly more expensive than other quotes, and came down a bit for us so prob only 5k difference.
arrrggghh

bloodybuilder Thu 26-Jul-12 23:20:17

there were signs though - everyone else is always wrong/the kitchen company were unprofessional/our architect is shit etc etc

bloodybuilder Thu 26-Jul-12 23:21:20

HMM yes good point I will chat to conservation lady tomorrow

But if she demands we change it - is he liable if we didnt have a contract?

bloodybuilder Thu 26-Jul-12 23:23:10

I actually cannot cope with moving for 8th time to another friends house while they are on holiday (we have lovely friends). I should be nesting. I am 32 =6 and feeling huge and slow.Dc1 starts school in september.
Sorry for wallowing. I know others have worse worries. its only money and a home not an illness

Artyjools Fri 27-Jul-12 09:10:36

OP, so sorry you are having such a bad time, especially with a baby on the way. I really feel your pain as we are having major problems with our building works at the moment and it seems that problems with steels are common.

Anyway, just to clarify a few legal points for you. You DO have a contract with him. Ok, it is an oral contract rather than a written one, so there may be evidential problems in establishing exactly what was agreed - what the contractual terms are. However, it is clear that he agreed to build the extension more or less in accordance with the plans. I say "more or less" because we all know that plans often cannot be followed to the letter and it must be right that minor amendments can be made, perhaps major ones if necessary.

In addition, there is an implied term in all contracts where services are supplied (s13 Supply of Goods and Services Act), that those services should be supplied with reasonable care and skill. Of course, it isn't up to you to spot his errors. If you were skilled enough to do the work yourself, you would be doing it wouldn't you !!

If he is in breach of the contract, the damages awarded by a court would be such as to put you in the position you would have been in had the contract been properly performed. So enough to have the work redone. So the previous poster who thought that it would be pointless winning a legal argument is mistaken.

The question is has he breached the contract? You really need to see a solicitor to help you establish that. Some offer free preliminary advice, so look online for a firm that does that. Perhaps your first step should be to tell the builder that you are not satisfied with the work and that you will take legal action if he doesn't rectify it.

Good luck!

bloodybuilder Fri 27-Jul-12 10:05:29

Thanks artyjools it's a bloody nightmare
Isn't it. Sorry you are having problems too.

I hate confrontation but I also want a nice home!

It's going to get very messy as there's no way he's going to put it right it's a massive job now

Thanks for legal advice. I have also posted on diynot (when noone reied initially) and even though dear old mumsnet is much better with advice it seems to say the same. They are contractually obliged to follow the plans even though we only have a verbal contract

bloodybuilder Fri 27-Jul-12 10:12:46

Artyjools we have chatted a lot on other threads about extensions/kitchens etc (other name)

What is the latest?

Artyjools Fri 27-Jul-12 10:37:55

It has been / still is pretty grim TBH. Our first structural engineer refused to provide us with insurance details (so obviously didn't have any), and because of obvious errors in the plans, the builder was reluctant to proceed on that basis, so we had another structural engineer have a look at the plans. He changed the roof steels, at more expense to us. Massive delays whilst new steels were made. Had lots of guys on site to put the new steels in. New steels turned up - too short. Argument between new engineer and steel guy as to who was to blame. Then some discussion about what was going to hold the steels up anyway and now talk about the chimney having to come down (more expense to us). In the meantime, we have only half a roof and the rental period for the scaffolding and tin hat roof is drawing to a close (about 4 weeks lost), so will probably need extending. We had intended to go on holiday but have decided against it as we can't be sure that the house will be secure in time.

The guys who are on site couldn't be nicer and they are embarrassed at what has been happening. It isn't their fault, so I can't be cross with them. TBH DH and I are at the totally numb stage now.

Who is doing your kitchen? I have to make decisions fairly soon and I seem incapable of making my mind up at the moment.

bloodybuilder Fri 27-Jul-12 11:13:36

Oh god what a nightmare for you. I feel exactly the same- numb and withdrawn. Trying to remain positive as the finish on the main house is great and we are really pleased with our choices so far.

I will pm you with my normal

Name!

Sausagedog27 Fri 27-Jul-12 11:32:59

I'd second talking to the conservation officer- if he hasn't followed plans precisely it can invalidate your whole listed building application and they can issue enforcement against it. Also for a listed building you could be prosecuted for undertaking works without the benefit of consent. This is all unlikely if you explain to the cons officer- but it might be useful to relay this to your builder so that he corrects the issues. I'd be fuming if it was me- have you ordered your kitchen units? He needs to come back and sort out these issues for you- and if that was a reason he couldn't follow original drawings then he should have owned up. Sorry your in this situation op.

skandi1 Fri 27-Jul-12 16:46:30

As others say, legal advice required.

Part of problem is that he has now built something you don't have planning or listed building consent for and if the ceiling is very low you won't get building regs certification. Ditto on build regs cert for beams and walls in wrong places.

You can't leave really. Sorry. Last thing you want when you are expecting.

Get in touch with your architect and get him to help identify the worst problems and those which won't pass build regs and those you don't have planning or listed building consent for.

Wish I could be more helpful. It's utterly crap for you and don't blame yourself, it's not up to the client to notice if a supposed professional isn't doing the job correctly.

Murtette Fri 27-Jul-12 23:26:50

Has the pitch of the roof changed too or just its height? You should check the pitch as, if that has changed, it may be too flat for tiles meaning that it won't be watertight as the tiles can't do their job properly. Not only would this be problem for you as water will, eventually, end up leaking into the roof void & then the room itself but it should be picked up by a surveyor when you come to sell which may affect a potential purchaser's decision about whether to buy the property or what to pay.

We have bought a property where it appears that the builders mucked up the roof pitch but it still got planning & buildings regs approvals. Unfortunately, it leaks.

bloodybuilder Sat 28-Jul-12 01:31:19

Sorry didn't disappear. Had super stressful day talking to architect solicitor etc etc , meeting builder tomorrow

Really appreciate all replies. We are def going to get him to change it. Will reply more tomorrow
Great opening ceremony huh? Wish I hadn't stayed up quite so late now...

lalalonglegs Mon 01-Oct-12 21:49:12

bloodybuilder - did you get anywhere sorting this out? I hope so - it sounded hellish.

bloodybuilder Mon 08-Oct-12 12:02:40

Hi. Yes after much sucking teeth he put it right. It's not a perfect finish but 1000x better than too low beam. He still hasn't finished so is now 6 months behind but we are getting there and relations are ok. I've had dc3 since last posting!

Fizzylemonade Mon 08-Oct-12 18:59:44

I love it when we get an update, congratulations on dc3 have some 🌸

I am glad you are happier with the builder, it is so stressful, especially as you were pregnant too.

bloodybuilder Mon 08-Oct-12 20:12:19

Indeed. It's funny, now the baby's here despite living in a building site I'm much less stressed. I think it's because we're actually in rather than constantly moving while the build runs on and on

Thanks so much to everyone for their advice, it really really helped in negotiating with him. Thanks for the flowers too!

lalalonglegs Mon 08-Oct-12 20:42:52

Yay - a happy ending. Out of curiosity, how did you twist his arm? Did he hold his hands up or did you have to get heavy with him, drag the architect, building inspector and everyone else into it?

bloodybuilder Mon 08-Oct-12 21:16:00

It was very heated at first, even with architect at the meeting. My husband was amazing-very calm and collected and just let him vent but stood his ground. After holding out for a few days he called and said he was going to put it right We didn't threaten legal action but he knew we were serious and also we know half of the local area and he wants to protect his reputation. To be fair, he's actually a nice guy who mucked up so i think it was his conscience He's done some other dodgy things but I won't go into it...

It massively delayed things further but was worth it as kitchen looks amazing!



Talk

Topics » Property/DIY

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Basically he's done his own thing rather than follow the plans, apparently because he had difficulty getting the beams in. (not sure I believe this he has form for lying to us) The whole roof on the extension is too low, prob by 30cm.

He wasnt even going to tell us - even though he had the kitchen plan which said a minimum height needed for the tall units (taken from architects plans with some leeway).

We have had problems with him previously - he moved a wall in the kids bedroom in further than on the plans (to get loft stairs up) which makes the bedroom smaller, he used metric rather than imperial bricks as specified by conservation officer (luckily she passed it), made the bifold door opening smaller so now we have to get bespoke doors etc etc...

Relations were good to start. His finish is of high quality and he has a good eye for detail. I like (? liked him)

Rather stupidly because I trusted him we had no contract (and didnt think if it to be honest - i know i know stupid). Initially I was probably too friendly taking fresh coffee and cake etc and now he is getting annoyed with me for sending curt emails asking what has happened.

He is NEVER wrong and it is always someone elses fault.....

Oh shit. This is a nightmare. I am due dc3 in 7 weeks and we are about to move into another temporary accom/house of friend as the house is still not liveable. Oh, did I say it was 2 months late already and we have already put the kitchen delivery back 6 weeks

Any ideas what I can do?

Thanks for getting this far

bloodybuilder Thu 26-Jul-12 22:28:07

anyone - please???

or do you know of a forum that might help?

EMS23 Thu 26-Jul-12 22:34:55

If get legal advice as it sounds like the whole thing needs to be redone.

tricot39 Thu 26-Jul-12 22:35:58

I have every sympathy with you. A similar situation has now happened to us twice (except I had a detailed priced scope of works which made the money side easier) and it is just so frustrating.

First time we got a highly recommended builder - and the week before our job started he sacked all his direct labour and subcontracted our job to an idiot with sub-DIY skills. It was terribly quality and 16 weeks over on a 12 week programme by the time we got other people in to fix the bodes. The boss eventually apologised unreservedly but it was too little too late.

Second time I was super cautious and went with a builder recommended by a picky architect friend and who had done some lovely joinery for us. He talked-the-talk but just built what he liked, ignoring the drawings, and the onus was on us to correct things and coordinate between trades. It was exhausting and 10 weeks late on a 12 week programme.

You don't want to hear this but you should probably make arrangements for somewhere to stay with the new baby. Even if you are decorating etc after they leave you don't want to bring a newborn home to that. It will probably make you feel better if you know that you have somewhere sorted to come home to (assuming that it is not a homebirth??).

I would suggest that you get back to the original architect and ask for some suggestions on how to unify the bodged levels in the kitchen - you could perhaps use a floating plasterboard box downstand with lighters in it to disguise the steps. You may have to pay an hour or so consultation fee. Then get on to the kitchen people and get them to adjust the kitchen design if you can so that it doesn't have to be bodged too. If you end up with a solution that looks reasonably OK (even if different to what you planned) then in time you will feel less angry about it all <voice of bitter experience> and noone else will notice.

If you want the work done fairly soon then you must keep relations good (at least superficially) with the builder. Keep buying the cake and keep smiling if you can. It will keep them focussed on the job and mean that they can't write off your comments if you present them in a calm friendly way. It is best done in person and confirmed in writing. Sniffy emails tend to make the builder more likely to spend time being annoyed with you than getting finished! Sadly you also have to just accept that there will be extra expenses to sort out his mistakes.

Hope it is all sorted for you soon!

fossil97 Thu 26-Jul-12 22:38:48

Did you have any agreement at all - he must have put in a quote based on the plans? I take it the architect hasn't had any involvement supervising the site work?

I imagine you will have to have a meeting with a precise list of all your problems and if they can't be fixed, negotiate money off to accommodate them. It sounds like the job is to far along to rebuild the roof 😞.

poorbuthappy Thu 26-Jul-12 22:38:50

Solicitor now.
Don't think it matters re contracts. You had plans. He ignored them.
I repeat, solicitor now.

Noqontrol Thu 26-Jul-12 22:40:33

Aren't the planning dept from the council supposed to check it every step of the way? Mine did, no room for error.

bloodybuilder Thu 26-Jul-12 22:40:44

Thanks for reply. At least the roof needs to come off and extension built taller, and steels put in the right place.
We might not bother do the other stuff he has done wrong.
We have nowhere to live - we rented somewhere for 3 months and have no money to do it again. I'm about to have a baby. I don't think I can just suck it up though - it will bug me forever.

Does anyone know my rights? We didn't have a written contract. I've paid all but £10k - as he's almost finished. I dont have home contents insurance as we couldn't have it when building work going on- so that would have given some free legal advice.

bloodybuilder Thu 26-Jul-12 22:41:49

Sorry that thanks was to first reply- will read others now

OlympicRelay Thu 26-Jul-12 22:48:16

Suck up cost of legal advice.

bloodybuilder Thu 26-Jul-12 22:51:37

Thanks so much for replies. Replying on phone so can't scroll up and get posters names- sorry.

Yes we have had a detailed breakdown quote which is good and accurate. We just didn't sign anything saying he had to stick to plans...

The kitchen company can take the plinth off the tall units but it will look shit to be honest. It's a small terrace so the low ceiling really makes a

difference.

Oh shit. I should have noticed it before maybe.

poorbuthappy Thu 26-Jul-12 22:56:26

Oh bollocks to that. Notice what? If you were a builder who would be able to notice it then I assume you wouldn't be paying someone else loads of money to do the bloody job for you. Nothing in writing agreeing to stick to plans??? Then what is the point in having plans?? Crap builder. Don't pay. Get to solicitor. Suck up legal costs.

bloodybuilder Thu 26-Jul-12 22:57:44

Tricot38 so sorry to hear it happened to you and thanks for your helpful suggestions. We really can't afford to rent anywhere else we have used up all our savings on this project, borrowed loads from my parents and over budget...

Noqontrol Thu 26-Jul-12 23:01:51

But surely this needed to be approved by the council? If the builder hasn't followed the plans then do not pay him any more. I would ring the planning dept and see what they suggest.

bloodybuilder Thu 26-Jul-12 23:02:39

Poorbuthappy- great name. That's me. I am happy and have to remember that. Noone died. I have a wonderful dh and 2 almost 3 (fingers crossed) children, lovely friends and live in a great (but overpriced area).

This is just the absolute pits though.

I will try and find a solicitor to speak to tomorrow. Scary. I suppose I'm worried that we won't win and then will be lumbered with court expenses. I need to check with another builder to see what the architect has drawn is possible.

Shit shit shit

I love mumsnet.

tricot39 Thu 26-Jul-12 23:03:34

I thought it would bug me forever but it does fade with time. Probably took about 3 years tho! Just threw out all the paperwork yesterday and even seeing the snagging lists wasn't the horror I thought it would be.

The legal route is tricky. You might spend more money and time on that than getting it sorted. It depends how wrong it is.

Changing a roof and steel levels is a massive amount of work and he will say you should have spotted it sooner.

It is worth a quick chat with the architect to see what can be salvaged surely?

bloodybuilder Thu 26-Jul-12 23:05:26

The building control have passed it all but haven't seen it with the roof on yet. Isn't building control about making it safe though rather than following plans? It's safe. It just looks wrong and doesn't maximise space in the way the architect designed.

The plans did get listed building consent but it looks like it will probably pass that as well

So builders absolutely have to follow the plans, by law?

bloodybuilder Thu 26-Jul-12 23:06:51

Yes I probably should have spotted- but surely he should have discussed it with us when he put it in a different place?

tricot39 Thu 26-Jul-12 23:07:04

Just to add that plans often vary during the course of the job due to unforeseen circumstances. Op will spend years arguing the toss about that paying a solicitor then still have to pay to get the bodes sorted. The legal route isn't worth the hassle or risk imo.

bloodybuilder Thu 26-Jul-12 23:07:17

Yes I will definitely get architect out.

bloodybuilder Thu 26-Jul-12 23:08:32

Hmm that's my worry.

If there are unforeseen circumstances then shouldn't he tell us what they are rather than leave it too late to do anything about it??

Noqontrol Thu 26-Jul-12 23:08:43

Well I thought they did, but maybe that's just the experience I had here. The planning dept were a bit OTT really, strutting around in shiny shoes holding tape measures, but at least it turned out ok (ish). I'd ring them first and take it from there. But do not pay any more at this stage.

tricot39 Thu 26-Jul-12 23:09:43

Yes he should have discussed it but his argument would be that it changes nothing.... Winning a legal argument in this situation is very difficult and often pointless.

poorbuthappy Thu 26-Jul-12 23:10:19

Not building control, planning.

Building control is all about safety, energy levels etc. Planning is about sticking to plans.

Where did you get the builder from? Recommended? Advert? Cheapest quote? (not being sarcastic just asking questions honest 😊)
have you spoken to any other customers? Does this builder have form? Google is your friend here...

Yes legal is tricky, and that's what bastard people who rip you off bank on: you don't want to have to deal with the hassle etc etc.
Makes me mad. 😡

tricot39 Thu 26-Jul-12 23:17:04

Oh hang on. Re-checking your posts you have a listed building. Check with the conservation officer- i think there is a more onerous requirement to stick to the plans in that case. By not agreeing changes with you and planning he has taken on more responsibility for it changes not being approved.

You could try using that to scare him into raising the roof but i would try to find a way of living with the steels if you can.

bloodybuilder Thu 26-Jul-12 23:18:31

he did a whole renovation next door to one we were renting next to. it was good - the house went from being worth 500k to 1.1 million 😊
his finish was good - there were a few problems. i suspect the guy who owned it was more experience than us. i think he has an ok reputation apart from always running late.
he was slightly more expensive than other quotes, and came down a bit for us so prob only 5k difference.
arrrggghh

bloodybuilder Thu 26-Jul-12 23:20:17

there were signs though - everyone else is always wrong/the kitchen company were unprofessional/our architect is shit etc etc

bloodybuilder Thu 26-Jul-12 23:21:20

HMM yes good point I will chat to conservation lady tomorrow

But if she demands we change it - is he liable if we didnt have a contract?

bloodybuilder Thu 26-Jul-12 23:23:10

I actually cannot cope with moving for 8th time to another friends house while they are on holiday (we have lovely friends). I should be nesting. I am 32 =6 and feeling huge and slow.Dc1 starts school in september.
Sorry for wallowing. I know others have worse worries. its only money and a home not an illness

Artyjools Fri 27-Jul-12 09:10:36

OP, so sorry you are having such a bad time, especially with a baby on the way. I really feel your pain as we are having major problems with our building works at the moment and it seems that problems with steels are common.

Anyway, just to clarify a few legal points for you. You DO have a contract with him. Ok, it is an oral contract rather than a written one, so there may be evidential problems in establishing exactly what was agreed - what the contractual terms are. However, it is clear that he agreed to build the extension more or less in accordance with the plans. I say "more or less" because we all know that plans often cannot be followed to the letter and it must be right that minor amendments can be made, perhaps major ones if necessary.

In addition, there is an implied term in all contracts where services are supplied (s13 Supply of Goods and Services Act), that those services should be supplied with reasonable care and skill. Of course, it isn't up to you to spot his errors. If you were skilled enough to do the work yourself, you would be doing it wouldn't you !!

If he is in breach of the contract, the damages awarded by a court would be such as to put you in the position you would have been in had the contract been properly performed. So enough to have the work redone. So the previous poster who thought that it would be pointless winning a legal argument is mistaken.

The question is has he breached the contract? You really need to see a solicitor to help you establish that. Some offer free preliminary advice, so look online for a firm that does that. Perhaps your first step should be to tell the builder that you are not satisfied with the work and that you will take legal action if he doesn't rectify it.

Good luck!

bloodybuilder Fri 27-Jul-12 10:05:29

Thanks artyjools it's a bloody nightmare
Isn't it. Sorry you are having problems too.

I hate confrontation but I also want a nice home!

It's going to get very messy as there's no way he's going to put it right it's a massive job now

Thanks for legal advice. I have also posted on diynot (when noone reied initially) and even though dear old mumsnet is much better with advice it seems to say the same. They are contractually obliged to follow the plans even though we only have a verbal contract

bloodybuilder Fri 27-Jul-12 10:12:46

Artyjools we have chatted a lot on other threads about extensions/kitchens etc (other name)

What is the latest?

Artyjools Fri 27-Jul-12 10:37:55

It has been / still is pretty grim TBH. Our first structural engineer refused to provide us with insurance details (so obviously didn't have any), and because of obvious errors in the plans, the builder was reluctant to proceed on that basis, so we had another structural engineer have a look at the plans. He changed the roof steels, at more expense to us. Massive delays whilst new steels were made. Had lots of guys on site to put the new steels in. New steels turned up - too short. Argument between new engineer and steel guy as to who was to blame. Then some discussion about what was going to hold the steels up anyway and now talk about the chimney having to come down (more expense to us). In the meantime, we have only half a roof and the rental period for the scaffolding and tin hat roof is drawing to a close (about 4 weeks lost), so will probably need extending. We had intended to go on holiday but have decided against it as we can't be sure that the house will be secure in time.

The guys who are on site couldn't be nicer and they are embarrassed at what has been happening. It isn't their fault, so I can't be cross with them. TBH DH and I are at the totally numb stage now.

Who is doing your kitchen? I have to make decisions fairly soon and I seem incapable of making my mind up at the moment.

bloodybuilder Fri 27-Jul-12 11:13:36

Oh god what a nightmare for you. I feel exactly the same- numb and withdrawn. Trying to remain positive as the finish on the main house is great and we are really pleased with our choices so far.

I will pm you with my normal

Name!

Sausagedog27 Fri 27-Jul-12 11:32:59

I'd second talking to the conservation officer- if he hasn't followed plans precisely it can invalidate your whole listed building application and they can issue enforcement against it. Also for a listed building you could be prosecuted for undertaking works without the benefit of consent. This is all unlikely if you explain to the cons officer- but it might be useful to relay this to your builder so that he corrects the issues. I'd be fuming if it was me- have you ordered your kitchen units? He needs to come back and sort out these issues for you- and if that was a reason he couldn't follow original drawings then he should have owned up. Sorry your in this situation op.

skandi1 Fri 27-Jul-12 16:46:30

As others say, legal advice required.

Part of problem is that he has now built something you don't have planning or listed building consent for and if the ceiling is very low you won't get building regs certification. Ditto on build regs cert for beams and walls in wrong places.

You can't leave really. Sorry. Last thing you want when you are expecting.

Get in touch with your architect and get him to help identify the worst problems and those which won't pass build regs and those you don't have planning or listed building consent for.

Wish I could be more helpful. It's utterly crap for you and don't blame yourself, it's not up to the client to notice if a supposed professional isn't doing the job correctly.

Murtette Fri 27-Jul-12 23:26:50

Has the pitch of the roof changed too or just its height? You should check the pitch as, if that has changed, it may be too flat for tiles meaning that it won't be watertight as the tiles can't do their job properly. Not only would this be problem for you as water will, eventually, end up leaking into the roof void & then the room itself but it should be picked up by a surveyor when you come to sell which may affect a potential purchaser's decision about whether to buy the property or what to pay.

We have bought a property where it appears that the builders mucked up the roof pitch but it still got planning & buildings regs approvals. Unfortunately, it leaks.

bloodybuilder Sat 28-Jul-12 01:31:19

Sorry didn't disappear. Had super stressful day talking to architect solicitor etc etc , meeting builder tomorrow

Really appreciate all replies. We are def going to get him to change it. Will reply more tomorrow
Great opening ceremony huh? Wish I hadn't stayed up quite so late now...

lalalonglegs Mon 01-Oct-12 21:49:12

bloodybuilder - did you get anywhere sorting this out? I hope so - it sounded hellish.

bloodybuilder Mon 08-Oct-12 12:02:40

Hi. Yes after much sucking teeth he put it right. It's not a perfect finish but 1000x better than too low beam. He still hasn't finished so is now 6 months behind but we are getting there and relations are ok. I've had dc3 since last posting!

Fizzylemonade Mon 08-Oct-12 18:59:44

I love it when we get an update, congratulations on dc3 have some 🌸

I am glad you are happier with the builder, it is so stressful, especially as you were pregnant too.

bloodybuilder Mon 08-Oct-12 20:12:19

Indeed. It's funny, now the baby's here despite living in a building site I'm much less stressed. I think it's because we're actually in rather than constantly moving while the build runs on and on

Thanks so much to everyone for their advice, it really really helped in negotiating with him. Thanks for the flowers too!

lalalonglegs Mon 08-Oct-12 20:42:52

Yay - a happy ending. Out of curiosity, how did you twist his arm? Did he hold his hands up or did you have to get heavy with him, drag the architect, building inspector and everyone else into it?

bloodybuilder Mon 08-Oct-12 21:16:00

It was very heated at first, even with architect at the meeting. My husband was amazing-very calm and collected and just let him vent but stood his ground. After holding out for a few days he called and said he was going to put it right We didn't threaten legal action but he knew we were serious and also we know half of the local area and he wants to protect his reputation. To be fair, he's actually a nice guy who mucked up so i think it was his conscience He's done some other dodgy things but I won't go into it...

It massively delayed things further but was worth it as kitchen looks amazing!



Talk

Topics » Property/DIY

Council just rejected my extension plans !!! Help !!! :(((((37 Posts)

mumtosp Tue 09-Feb-16 17:47:24

Hi all,

I am hoping someone can come along and offer some advice as I seem to have an architect who is bad at communicating and may also not know what he's doing... and I am now in a panic ! 😞

I've attached pictures of the original plan and also the extension. You can see in the original plan, that the house has been extended to the side, beyond the original side line of the house and this was done under permission.

So my architect said that since we are doing a rear extension of 6m, that falls under permitted development (PD) as opposed to needing planning permissions. Everything was submitted end of Dec and we were hoping to get everything approved by now. Then this morning, when the architect called the council, they said it was rejected 😞 😞 😞 (this is the Bromley council btw)

My council apparently told my architect that it will be approved only if we demolish the existing side extension - where the WC is. This didn't make any sense to me as the current extension has already been approved by the council!

So I called the council myself and they said that under permitted development, the rear extension cannot touch the side extension even if the side extension was previously approved. They also said that this is the rule and the architect should have known not to submit this as a 'permitted development' project! I have also read on a few other websites and they all seem to say the same thing.

My architect keeps on insisting that this rule falls under a grey area and every council interprets it differently! Is that so???

Also, he is saying that if we want to stick to our 6 m extension, then we should do what the council is saying and knock down the existing side extension.

So then I told him, why can't we just submit this as a proper planning permission and keep the side extension... he says that under planning permission I can only get a rear extension of 4 m... is that correct ???

I don't know what to do next 😞 😞

Sorry for the long post and thanks in advance 😊

wonkylegs Tue 09-Feb-16 18:02:37

Permitted development will take in to account existing extensions as part of what is already allowed so in your case I would have applied for planning permission and not gone for PD. There are limits to what is acceptable for extensions but it depends on the developed area of the plot and also local planning guidance, relationship to neighbouring properties etc. it is not a hard and fast 4m rule, he may be correct though of this is what your circumstances dictate.

A good starting point for guidance is the planning portal website this will give you a good overall view as a householder, your council probably (not all do but most do) has a householder guidance section on their planning section of their website which gives guidance for your circumstances. If you can't find it (sometimes they are good at hiding them) let me know what council it is and I'll have a look for you.

AveEldon Tue 09-Feb-16 18:06:35

Has anyone else in your street with a similar house done a similar extension?

wonkylegs Tue 09-Feb-16 18:12:13

Just saw it was Bromley - had a look at their website and didn't see anything amazingly helpful but I'm just on my phone. They do link to the PD rules which if you can wade through them explain PD with diagrams www.planningportal.gov.uk/uploads/100806_PDforhouseholders_TechnicalGuidance.pdf

They just point householders towards the planning portal for guidance as to what is likely to be acceptable for a planning application, so I'd start by looking there.

Imperialleather2 Tue 09-Feb-16 19:59:26

I'm in exactly this situation although nothing is built yet. We have a 5M deep extension approved under Pd but we now want to do a side extension and have to resubmit the whole lot. Likewise under planning permission we won't get 5M for the back extension

. I asked planning my planning guy what he thought and he didn't think it would be a problem and didn't mention the not touching aspect.

Now I'm really worried. Sorry I know that is not help!

Quodlibet Tue 09-Feb-16 20:29:45

I would just accept demolishing the side extension - it's only small and won't massively alter the dimensions of the room your architect has proposed. Presumably you can do the demolition as part of the build - you don't have to do it prior!

notthe1Parrot Tue 09-Feb-16 21:10:17

Our planning department (outer London) offers a pre-planning advice service (I expect you pay for it!). Many of the rejections I see on the planning portal have not taken up this offer....

Fizrim Tue 09-Feb-16 21:18:38

Is it (the planning permission) something to do with the extension being a certain percentage of the current floor space? I'm no expert, though!

mumtosp Tue 09-Feb-16 22:18:36

Hi all,

Thanks for your replies!

Imperial Our build also hasn't started yet... in fact we just completed on the property last week and intend to continue renting till the build on the new property is not done.... hence why the extended time period is annoying me! All the best with your plans... I do hope they get approved 😊

Parrot I will have a look at the pre-planning service... however an initial read on the website indicates that this itself is a long wait...

Quodlibet that's what we may end up doing... I just want to make sure I have all the information at hand before I do that (something my architect should have done)

wonkylegs thanks for checking! 😊 the fact that you mentioned that our current plans are not valid under permitted development makes me even more mad at our architect.... surely someone who does this for a living should have known that!! 😡 😡 we are now thinking of contacting a more local architect for advice so that we know what will be allowed.... I would rather lose the side extension and get the 6m extension under PD as opposed to keeping the extension and not getting the 6m extension under planning permission....

mumtosp Wed 10-Feb-16 10:28:57

Also, I should ditch the existing architect and find a new one ... right?

McBaby Wed 10-Feb-16 12:40:50

Can't you just build the pd rear a few cm narrower so it doesn't touch the side extension and comes out fully from the back of the original house?

mumtosp Wed 10-Feb-16 13:57:26

McBaby that's another option we have thought of... will need to confirm with the architect (hopefully a new one) that then the plan will be approved 😊

MrsFlorrack Wed 10-Feb-16 14:14:13

Ditch the architect. Poor advice!!

Furthermore his advice regarding what you can get planning consent for doesn't actually make sense.

Under permitted development you'd only be able to extend out to a certain distance. However you can apply for planning for a much larger extension and still obtain this. That's what it's for.

My reading of what you relayed as his advice regarding applying for planning essentially follows permitted development rules. So that way he would be guaranteed to obtain consent (you can still apply even if it's PD if you wish).

And if he advised you could use permitted development to essentially extend an existing extension, this is completely incorrect! Only a building which hasn't previously been extended (or at least after 1949) can use permitted development rights.

Bromley is about as unhelpful as councils get. If I were you and you wanted a much larger extension, then submit what is known as a pre-app. It's £90 in Bromley and they will give you a good indication as to whether they'd refuse your application or they wouldn't see any valid objection to it.

It all sounds like poor unqualified advice from an architectural technician.

Is he RIBA registered? If not he isn't really an architect and shouldn't be providing this type of advice and you should ask for your fees returned.

For example (different council same rules), I wanted to extend our current house to include a much larger kitchen diner. However part of the extension would be within 2 m of a boundary and I wanted to continue the 3.3m ceiling height of the main building into the extension.

Under permitted development I could have built the extension but only with a ceiling height of 2.4m (Max 3m eaves). So I applied for planning and was granted this. Currently sitting in extension Mning.

Get a properly qualified professional to assist you. Get a planning consultant rather than an architect for this.

wonkylegs Wed 10-Feb-16 14:31:43

Mrs Florrick - can I just make a minor correction. You do not need to be RIBA registered to be a properly qualified architect. You need to be ARB registered (architects registration board), RIBA membership is entirely voluntary and additional to registration and makes you a chartered architect but you can be qualified and legally practice without it as long as you are ARB registered. I like many others have both!

mumtosp Sun 14-Feb-16 20:59:52

Mrs Florrick thanks for the detailed advice... So are you saying that even if we showed that we intend to demolish the side extension where the wetroom is, we cannot get our new extension under PD? Now I am 🙄

FriedSprout Sun 14-Feb-16 22:04:35

Sent you a pm hope it helps 🙄

Waxlyrically Sun 14-Feb-16 23:37:24

www.planningportal.gov.uk/uploads/100806_PDforhouseholders_TechnicalGuidance.pdf might be useful to you as explains it with diagrams.

I am not clear what is an existing extension so think it is either because it projects too far back from the rear elevation as original p. 16, as a whole is too close to the boundary p.20 or because in combination the extension is now more than half the width of the original p.24. Not being PD doesn't mean you can't apply for planning permission though.

mumtosp Mon 15-Feb-16 14:32:29

Waxlyrically thanks for that link !!! that was very helpful... I now know exactly why our plans were rejected and if I can understand this, I don't see why my architect thinks this is grey area. He's the one with a degree in architecture !

Seeline Mon 15-Feb-16 14:59:45

if I can understand this, I don't see why my architect thinks this is grey area. He's the one with a degree in architecture !

Because he is not a planner - they are different!!

PD rules are generally the same for every Council - although can vary from property to property depending on the planning history.

The guidelines for development if planning permission is required vary from Council to Council - the guidance is contained within their Local Planning Framework.

The Bromley Local Plan policy for extensions is

***RESIDENTIAL EXTENSIONS
POLICY H8**

The design and layout of proposals for the alteration or enlargement of residential properties will be required to satisfy all of the following criteria:

- (i) the scale, form and materials of construction should respect or complement those of the host dwelling and be compatible with development in the surrounding area;
- (ii) space or gaps between buildings should be respected or maintained where these contribute to the character of the area;
- (iii) dormer windows should be of a size and design appropriate to the roofscape and sited away from prominent roof pitches, unless dormers are a feature of the area.*

Also residential design guidance document here:

[residential design guidance](#)

Your proposal will have to meet the requirements listed for pp to be granted if you decide to go ahead with applying.

MrsPJones Mon 15-Feb-16 21:56:01

We used just-planning.co.uk when our application was declined. The guy is a former planning officer. We were really happy with his advice and service.

shovetheholly Tue 16-Feb-16 09:26:11

I don't understand... why don't you just take it through planning, instead of trying to squeak it through permitted development? It doesn't cost that much (proportionately to the build)?

mumtosp Wed 17-Feb-16 19:57:00

Seeline and **MrsPJones** thanks for the added info! 😊

shovetheholly we didn't want to go through planning as that would restrict us to a 3m extension where as under PD we can have 6m... which is what other others on the street have already done....



mumtosp Sun 21-Feb-16 22:14:58

Update: submitted our new plans... Showing that we will demolish the existing side extension. Council has registered the plans and sent out a letter to the neighbours giving them 21 days to raise any concerns....

Last time the council rejected our plans and never sent it to the neighbours... So this is a definite progress 😊 😊

Can someone explain what is a certificate of lawfulness and do I need one? If the neighbours don't our plans the council has said that we can go ahead with the build.... So do I still need a certificate of lawfulness ??

TIA 😊

shovetheholly Mon 22-Feb-16 09:41:26

mumtosp - I don't think that sounds right. I might have got this wrong - because it's very hard to get clear guidance on this, but as I understand it, there are 3 'levels':

- permitted development up to 3 metres
- permitted development up to 6 metres, which is subject to neighbour consultation and notification of the local planning team but NOT full planning permission (which is what you're doing)
- full planning permission: where planners will consider the merits/demerits of the scheme individually. This means you can actually go larger than the PD limits in some cases.

I think the Certificate of Lawfulness is just an official, written confirmation that your proposals fall into one of the first two categories, and that they are legal and do not require full planning permission.

I'm sure someone who is an expert in this area will clear this up!!

Seeline Mon 22-Feb-16 09:59:01

shove is basically correct.

If something doesn't meet the pd requirements, then you need to apply for full planning permission. PP can be granted, and often is, for developments that exceed the pd limits. Each Council will have its own policies (as referred to in my previous post) which it will use to assess the development. If the proposal meets those requirements, pp can be given. The Council will look at things such as the impact on neighbouring properties in terms of overlooking and visual impact, and the impact on the character and appearance of the area.

A Certificate of Lawfulness for a Proposed Development can be granted if a formal application is made for a proposal which meets all the requirements of pd. they can be useful to show that pp wasn't required for a development when selling a property.

thewookieswife Mon 22-Feb-16 10:55:26

I thought the certificate of lawfulness was just a thing in Scotland?

Seeline Mon 22-Feb-16 11:24:38

No - definitely exists in England **wookie**

mumtosp Mon 22-Feb-16 14:40:18

shove Seeline are you saying that I don't necessarily need a certificate of lawfulness, but it's a good to have when we come to sell the house?

Seeline Mon 22-Feb-16 14:45:18

If you are sure that what you are doing is pd, then you don't have to have a Certificate. They are useful if the design of an extension/alteration may be open to interpretation. If the proposal is straightforward, it is unlikely that you would need a Certificate. However, sometimes prospective purchasers require proof that pp was not required for something so if you have had a Certificate granted, you have that proof.

Seeline Mon 22-Feb-16 14:46:40

[government advice on Certificates here](#)

shovetheholly Mon 22-Feb-16 14:59:26

I am in the early phases of getting plans drawn for an extension, and I am definitely going to go through the whole planning process because what I'm doing is slightly unconventional (I have architect friends with crazy ideas! 🤪). If I were doing a more standard extension, I would just get a

certificate - I do think it's worth having because there are then no issues when you sell.

Seeline Mon 22-Feb-16 15:11:31

shove - you either need full planning permission or you don't. If your proposal is pd, you can't apply for planning permission - the Council will probably either convert it into a Certificate application or return it.

shovetheholly Mon 22-Feb-16 15:22:30

Sorry, I put that REAAAALLLY badly! My proposal is not PD! So we are going for permission as a matter of necessity. 😊 We have supportive neighbours and good architects, so fingers crossed.

I was just saying if it were borderline PD, i.e. if I were in the OP's shoes and questions had been raised about one element (in her case, the side extension), I'd see the certificate as a kind of insurance policy - something that'd help me sell the house at a later date. I wouldn't want to assume PD for something that might be queried at a later date IYSWIM.

mumtosp Mon 22-Feb-16 19:58:26

Understood.... I don't really need a certificate, but it would be good to have... Especially given the confusion around the side extension. One more question... Once my application has gone through the 21 neighbour consultation period and assuming no one has raised any objections, I can go ahead with the build right?? I can always get the certificate of lawfulness at a later stage?

Thanks 😊

Seeline Tue 23-Feb-16 08:55:00

It's easier to get one before you start - although if you have been through the consultation procedure with the council, that should be sufficient so make sure you keep all the paper work.

To apply for a certificate post-development, you have to apply for a Certificate of Existing Lawful development, and therefore have to prove that the development was pd at the time it was built, which can be harder. Alternatively, once the proposal has been up for 4 years, and the Council have taken no action against it, it becomes exempt from enforcement action. Not quite the same thing, but means the council can't then ask for it to be removed/altered, so again, make sure you know the date it was finished - Building Regs completion certificate or something.

mumtosp Tue 23-Feb-16 12:07:46

Thanks **Seeline**. It sounds as if I should be sorting out the certificate of lawfulness now while the build is yet to start. I will look up on the council site on how to go about it...

Kilby37 Fri 10-Feb-17 12:42:54

Hi, I'm looking for people's stories about planning for my phd research, over on the surveys/students thread here on Mumsnet. I'd be really grateful if you could take a look and consider contributing.

www.mumsnet.com/Talk/surveys_students_non_profits_and_start_ups/2851018-Wanted-Your-experience-of-the-UK-planning-system-for-PhD-research?watched=1



Talk

Topics » Property/DIY

Help with Neighbours extension plans (21 Posts)

fitzy73 Sat 20-Jun-15 09:14:46

Hi all,

I was wondering if someone could shed some light on a planning application for me.

We live in a Semi D in Se London / North Kent. We bought the property in 2006 after it had been extended to the boundary of the non adjacent neighbour. A garage and second floor, plus rear extension, were added to our house before we bought. There is a gap of about 1 foot between the side of our house and the non adjacent garage.

Our adjacent has now applied to build up his house, adding an extra story on top of his existing garage and building out the back. I don't have an issue with that per se. They keep themselves to themselves and aren't really friendly with anyone in the area, but we are on civil terms.

We received notification of the planning application a few weeks ago, but the plans themselves were missing on our local councils website until this week. The plans went on the site sometime this week, and I had a look at them last night.

The plans include an alarming "form closed cavity between properties" on the drawings. This will, effectively, make our house a terraced house!

I understand that having a 1 foot gap isn't ideal, for cleaning etc, but surely making our house a terraced house will decrease it's value?

Further, and as I understand it, we should have been given the plans with a Party Wall notice at least 2 months ago. We have not received these, which makes me think the neighbour knows bloody well we will object.

If / when I object (I have until Wed to do so) do I need to consult a solicitor to get the wording right? Should I mention in the objection that I have not received a Party Wall notice?

I'm really annoyed that they didn't even have the courtesy to knock on the door and tell us of their plans. As I mentioned earlier I have no objections to them building on and up, but NOT against my house!

Any views / observations really appreciated.

PF

StonedGalah Sat 20-Jun-15 09:31:25

I can't help as our neighbours applied and received planning permission but thankfully didn't end up doing any work.

But is your extension to the boundary? You mention a foot space, if you're not at the boundary then they can't go over.

However if your house is built to boundary, then is it a bit hypocritical to not allow them to do the same?

fitzy73 Sat 20-Jun-15 10:20:15

I think it is to the boundary, though possibly a few inches short. Not sure where I would find this info - as mentioned we bought the house after it had been extended.

All the other houses on our street have extended in the same way ie to within a few inches of the boundary. Adjacent properties then do the same, leaving a tiny gap between the houses. We are fine with that but do not want to be joined to the neighbours house, effectively making a terrace of four houses!

fitzy73 Sat 20-Jun-15 10:21:32

Actually I just looked and there is definitely a few inches between our boundary and theirs.

LIZS Sat 20-Jun-15 10:26:07

Are they actually using your wall as part of their extension or leaving a similar gap their side, not that a 2' gap is useful for either maintenance or access. I think a party wall agreement needs to be issued in advance of the work commencing not pp application. You may be able to see the

plans of before and after your extension online or at your council offices if you request. At that time I would have thought a 1m gap was standard.

[honeyandfizz](#) Sat 20-Jun-15 10:27:10

I'm pretty sure that councils don't allow extensions that cause the terracing effect anymore. I have been looking at our local planning rules and they don't here (Birmingham), there is a minimum gap but I can't remember whether it's a foot or a meter. Have you checked the councils rules? Also do you have a window on that side as you could object on the basis of light lost.

[LIZS](#) Sat 20-Jun-15 10:27:52

Planning office don't look into land ownership as such so they can apply across the boundary line.

[honeyandfizz](#) Sat 20-Jun-15 10:38:29

Actually i just had a look and this was the guidance:-

"Two storey extensions, including bedrooms over garages, can have a significant effect on the street scene. The loss of the gap between detached or semi-detached homes can create the impression of a continuous frontage. This is called the 'terracing effect'. It can be out of character with the appearance of the area and is best avoided. For example, on the first floor, you may need to reduce the size of the extension to leave a visible gap between the houses or set it back from the front wall of the original house".

So it doesn't actually say its not allowed just not preferred. I think its perfectly reasonable to object under those circumstances that you describe though.

[fitzy73](#) Sat 20-Jun-15 11:42:58

LIZS - they are effectively using our wall.

See attached screen shot of their proposal (I've taken out any identifying information) and also a rudimentary diagram of how the houses are situated.



As per my diagram they want to fill in the gap between the houses. Because the houses are at an angle, it could be argued that our rear does sit on the boundary - thought I don't know.

The front is not on the boundary.



[fitzy73](#) Sat 20-Jun-15 11:57:38

There are no windows at the side of our house (I believe it was a condition of planning of the guy who did the extension).

[fitzy73](#) Sat 20-Jun-15 16:09:13

Also can anyone advise on what exactly I say in the objection?

[TheUnwillingNarcheska](#) Sat 20-Jun-15 16:59:27

If this was happening to me I would hire a planning consultant who would be the best person to argue anything.

They know the correct way to phrase any ~~objections~~ "comments" and their knowledge of the system is better than anything you can find on the council website about what you can comment on.

[Pangurban](#) Sat 20-Jun-15 20:17:23

Is there a boundary fence between your properties at all? If there is a few inches to spare, I must admit I'd get one up pronto so there is something between you and your neighbours. You can put it up all on your property and object to the plan if they plan to do something on your land. If some of the land ownership on the proposed site is by someone else, I believe they have to declare this on the application form. If they are thinking of trying to build on your property, I'd refuse to allow them to do this.

A party wall agreement does not have to be issued to obtain planning permission. If one is necessary, it will be issued in relation to the actual construction. The council do not have anything to do with that.

A chartered surveyor is what you would need, I think. They are expensive, though.

[newstart15](#) Sat 20-Jun-15 21:32:39

You can object and perhaps speak to the planning officer if the plans have not been available and therefore you have had reduced time.

Party Wall act is separate to planning and you should receive notification prior to build however if your neighbours need to access your land to

build I would have that conversation now. It may make them rethink their extension.

I think the fact they didn't discuss with you is worrying so you may need to prepare for active discussions.

BlackbirdOnTheWire Sat 20-Jun-15 21:36:34

I'm not entirely sure what 'form closed cavity' actually means. I think you need to seek clarification of that before you go any further, since I don't understand how they could intend to fill in a wedge between the properties, especially with the widest opening at the front - what's the distance between the properties there?

I'm just wondering - with absolutely no specialist knowledge - if this is a shorthand. 'Form of construction: closed cavity wall on the side of our house nearest this particular neighbour' rather than 'closing the gap between properties'?

Haven't a clue myself but I'd definitely find out first because if it does turn out to be that you don't need to worry or go to as much expense. I'd start by phoning the council and asking them what that means on the plans. They're usually pretty helpful! If they think there's an ambiguity, they'll want to look into it too.

BlackbirdOnTheWire Sat 20-Jun-15 21:38:14

Meant to say that one of the reasons I wondered is because of the party wall thing - if it's just referring to the form of construction of their wall, then the party wall agreement isn't necessary because you wouldn't have a shared wall.

BlackbirdOnTheWire Sat 20-Jun-15 22:02:00

And another thought (I've been searching for building regs for us in the meantime and this has been bugging me!) - if the garage is at the front, nearest the road, and they are building over it and extending over the back, it would make much more sense if they were 'closing the gap' at the back, where the extension is and where your house is nearest to them. Why on earth would anyone demolish and then push out the existing wall/foundations/subfloor in order to gain at maximum an extra 12" of width? We decided an extension of 2' into our own garden - which would massively increase light into our house - was way too costly.

On the other hand, any new wall (and the new storey above the existing garage qualifies, as well as the kitchen if that's the extension) would need to meet fire regs as a thermal wall - so that could fit with a 'closed cavity' wall, ie pumping the cavity full of fire retardant stuff.

Again, I don't know. I just can't see it's worth the expense to extend a garage by a foot at most in width! Only useful if you have a pointy car!

Pangurban Sat 20-Jun-15 22:30:20

You'd need to check the party wall act, but if they are digging a certain depth within a certain distance of your foundations (think it's 3 metres), they should issue party wall agreement. You can look this act up online.

charlestonchaplin Sun 21-Jun-15 00:28:35

It is worth bearing in mind that if your property has been extended to the boundary or a few inches shy of the boundary, your foundations are likely to be encroaching on your neighbour's land. I don't know what the full implications of this are, but I feel it is likely to be very relevant.

BlackbirdOnTheWire Sun 21-Jun-15 00:56:07

Pangurban my first thought was 'but they wouldn't be digging foundations, they're building on top of an existing building' - then remembered that there's a rear extension too...

The 3m rule is if you're building within 3m of a neighbour's building and going deeper than their foundations - though how they'd know, I don't know. But it's possible you could build within 3m and not have to serve a party wall notice if your foundations are shallower.

You would have to serve a party wall notice if you're building up against the boundary too, regardless of neighbour's buildings.

I'll definitely be watching this thread with interest to find out what the neighbours are intending and whether it's allowed...

TwoAndTwoEqualsChaos Sun 21-Jun-15 01:00:09

You can always phone and talk to your Planning Office for advice.



Talk

Topics » Property/DIY

Listed building advice please. (22 Posts)

CheeryCherry Thu 27-Feb-14 08:10:12

We are considering buying a grade 2 listed house but have a few concerns. Rang the local planning office who just said to look at the portal online. This didn't help.

I just want to know basic (probably stupid) questions answering...

Can you put shelving up without asking?

Can you put climbing plants on the outside of the house?

Can you replace the current tiled (not original) kitchen floor with other tiles and underfloor heating?

Just a bit worried about energy bills as there is no energy rating survey on it.

Thanks in advance.

Jackthebodiless Thu 27-Feb-14 08:33:03

You can do all the above, op, as long as you don't change the external appearance, eg change colour of front door, install UPvc windows etc.

We've been in a listed building for over 20 years and it's been no hassle at all.

wonkylegs Thu 27-Feb-14 09:26:53

English Heritage explains listed building constraints [here](#)

They also have practical advice pages [here](#)

There is also an article about living in a listed building [here](#)

Hope that gives you a better idea

GrendelsMum Thu 27-Feb-14 09:29:13

Jack isn't quite right when she says that the only thing you need to worry about is changing the external appearance. It's a very common mistake, though, and a lot of people (including builders and estate agents) will repeat it.

If you live in a listed building, you can't make any changes that will alter the historic fabric of the building without first getting Listed Building Consent. That means that you can't alter the historic fabric inside as well as outside.

Most obviously, you can't knock down an original wall without LPC. You also can't make holes in the ceilings for recessed light fittings, put new windows in existing walls, change the windows without LPC, etc etc.

I can't imagine that putting shelves up would be a problem, and if the tiles are modern, then that wouldn't be an issue either. However, it's always worth being prepared for surprises, and telling your builders to be extremely careful when taking things out - you might find an original floor under the modern tiles. We've found the original Tudor wall, complete with wattle and daub, behind some 60s fitted wardrobes, for example. Luckily our restoration builder was working on the house that day and so recognised immediately what they'd found and stopped anyone attempting to knock through!

You can make repairs, but not changes - what is a repair and what is a change can be a tricky subject, and the easiest thing to do is to phone up the Conservation Officers and outline the specific work you want to do. I suspect that the COs will be more flexible about calling something a 'repair' if they are happy with your general approach to the building.

You can put climbing plants up the outside of the building, but you should be very careful about causing damp issues.

I would say that living in a listed building is a very considerable added hassle and expense, although I'm aware that not everyone finds this (lucky

bastards!). Ours is a major restoration project rather than buying a finished house, which may be the problem, but we're having to put in for repeated LBCs, which is hard work and time consuming. We also have to use specialist, more expensive tradespeople for every job, and buy much more expensive materials. For example, I can't go and buy Dulux paint to repaint our bedroom this week - it needs to be paint suitable for lime plaster. Really, it is like being on one of these TV programmes!

There are also additional issues around things that would normally be passed - believe it or not, we've needed Planning Permission to put up a small greenhouse, which included a visit from the local Parish Council.

I hope this helps (it's rather a spiel!) - if you have specific questions or want to PM me the sales details of the house, please do.

GrendelsMum Thu 27-Feb-14 09:29:53

Cross posted!

CheeryCherry Thu 27-Feb-14 09:42:56

Thanks all, that is very helpful. I think the only changes we would want to do over time would be the climbing plants (the front of the house is a bit minimal and unsymmetrical) and the kitchen tiles.

GrendelsMum how do you know what the plaster is made from? I would have just merrily bought Dulux Once and cracked on with it! I have noticed the downstairs exposed stone walls have been painted white (I wonder why?) - I would prefer them natural so would want to get all that off - if it is even possible. I would also want to repaint or remove the paint on the wood floor in the attic room, but I can't imagine that would be a problem. There are no ceiling lights in the house but that is not a problem for me.

cathyandclaire Thu 27-Feb-14 09:52:49

We have 2* listed house and have had very few problems with renovations. They don't want you to tear out original fireplaces/staircases/coving etc but that's what made us fall in with the house anyway.

Painting/flooring (with the exception of original flags and tiles) we haven't had permission for. We have added/knocked down walls, added bathrooms, converted the cellar with no problems at all (with LBC consent), the listed building people just like you to ask and listen to advice. If you get permission it's all VAT free atm too!

We had painted/plastered stone vaulted ceilings sandblasted. They look amazing but it was a HIDEOUS mess. Not sure I could cope with it again! All the rest of your plans are straightforward I think.

Our house is Georgian and we just use Dulux or nice Farrow and Ball.

If I bought another house I'd be totally happy getting a listed building.
Good luck!

Seeline Thu 27-Feb-14 09:55:40

Grendels Mum has given you a very detailed reply, and as a former Planning Officer I would agree with what she has said 😊

Definitely internal alterations can require LBC, not just changes to the exterior.

The fact that the property is Listed will also restrict what can be done without the need for planning permission (two separate controls). As she says, you will probably need permission for any extensions, as well as outbuildings, sheds etc.

I would advise you to speak to the Conservation Officer at the Council to discuss any works, before commencing. As each LB is so different it is hard for websites etc to give precise details of what can be done. Breaking the rules can lead to hefty fines.

CheeryCherry Thu 27-Feb-14 09:56:31

cathyandclaire I have looked into sandblasting... don't think I could cope as there is a wall in the kitchen and a wall in the lounge that would need doing. The fall out would be too enormous!
Thanks.

ohblank Thu 27-Feb-14 09:56:33

Hello, we have newly moved into a listed building and met with the conservation officer a few weeks ago. The things that surprised me were that it is the interior as well as the exterior that is listed and also that listing includes the grounds. We were told that, technically, we would need permission to put a children's playhouse in the garden, even though it is a temporary-ish structure.

The woman we met said we could change kitchens / bathrooms / repaint / put up shelves without consent but just about anything else would need it as they want the work recording. In our case, we want to remove some fake wood panelling and change a 1970's fireplace - both things we would get permission for without question, but even though they are not part of the original fabric of the building, LBC is required.

ohblank Thu 27-Feb-14 09:59:29

Oh and buildings insurance is much more expensive as the rebuild cost for a listed building is higher. I think we had to request a rebuild valuation as part of our buildings survey.

MoreBeta Thu 27-Feb-14 10:03:10

I live in a Grade II listed building and to be honest it depends a lot on your local Conservation Officer who frankly are a law unto themselves.

My conservation officer ordered me to put in brushed steel plug sockets to replace white plastic - even though everyone else has them round here. I don't mind doing that but it was just so arbitrary. He ignored all the other plastic drain pipes on other houses but told me if I took my plastic pipes I had to replace with cast iron or cast aluminium. The modern Velux in the roof that can't be seen has to be replaced by a conservation grade velux but only if I take it out. I can leave it in and he can't order me to remove it.

the boiler flue I fitted they can do anything about as it is a modern condensing boiler even though it is quiet out of keeping with the property although the slate roof it sticks through had to have Welsh slate tiles - not Chinese.

He ordered me to use lime hair plaster to refill where I had channelled out for wiring even though some walls have been filled in the past with ordinary brown plaster. He ordered no sanding of floors even though some floors had been sanded by previous occupants and those that weren't were covered in hardboard and heavily damaged.

I asked if I had to take up the concrete floor in basement that had been illegally installed. He said no but gave strict instructions not to tank out the basement or put any kind of paint on except lime distemper. There is plastic membrane sticking up round the edges of the concrete for goodness sake.

He ignored down existing down lighter spotlights but told me not to touch the hallway floor which is brown earthenware tiles some of which are from the 1970s mixed with older earthenware tiles even though it was listed in 1953. The other houses in my area all have large York stone slabs or Regency black and white ceramic tiles. He wouldn't let me replace my brown tiles with exact replica tiles handmade to Regency patterns at the Jackfield tile museum in Shropshire.

He ignores satellite dishes on the fronts of houses but insists on certain types of door knocker.

What Grade II means is inconsistent between Conservation Officers.

What people do is just do things round here without telling the Conservation Officer. There is an architect who also seems to get permission to build modern extensions on the Regency houses round here that are frankly an outrage but he is quiet influential and the council seem to let him do projects others can't get through.

[soapnuts](#) Thu 27-Feb-14 10:05:02

The paint thing really does depend on how much work has already been done - most lime plaster walls will be long gone by now so if it's modern plaster it's not a problem to use normal paint (the plaster itself can cause damp problems but that's another issue!). We've got two grade 2 listed houses and we've done quite a bit to both but we've never needed to get LBC (we have checked!) so there is a huge difference between houses.

[MoreBeta](#) Thu 27-Feb-14 10:06:34

I apologise for dreadful typos in that last post. I have 3 builders drilling, sawing and hammering about 3 m away from my ears.

[GrendelsMum](#) Thu 27-Feb-14 10:37:10

😊 [MoreBeta](#) and the builders

Yes, LPC is very dependent on your Conservation Officer, and when someone leaves or retires, you never know who's coming in to replace them. I think ours are fussier than most, but certainly not the worst!

We have a lot of the historic plaster left, hence the no Dulux rule. The previous owner used the wrong paints inside and out and it's caused a right nuisance - paint bubbling up off the plaster, bad damp problems downstairs, etc etc. With a lot of time and expense we're well on the way to having that sorted.

I should probably also say we are spending an absolute fortune - partly to fix all the problems caused by the previous owners as well as to bring it up to modern standards.

[MoreBeta](#) Thu 27-Feb-14 10:46:06

Yes we are spending an arm and a leg too. Putting stuff right that previous owners did. A small Georgian replica window costs £1000 for example. It cost £3000 to refurbish the rest of the windows so they would actually open instead of being jammed shut. The list of expenses goes on and on and on.

To be honest I think the Conservation Officer takes advantage of people who buy a house and are foolish enough to ask permission.

A lot of people have told us to just ignore the Conservation Officer and just get on without asking because he is just completely over the top. He admitted in an email that he had ordered me to use a certain type of plug socket and light switch finish because he just 'likes that sort of fitting' even though as I pointed out the Georgians did not have electric!!!

As I said other people just do stuff without asking and as can be seen in my house a lot of it was really wrong but the Conservation Officer has refused to be sensible and work with people.

[TunipTheUnconquerable](#) Thu 27-Feb-14 10:48:34

I am 😞 at him telling you what sort of plug sockets to use.

Surely the standard white plastic ones are more honest, anyway.

I have all this yet to come - hope my Conservation Officer isn't like that. (You don't happen to know anything about the Ryedale ones by any chance,

Beta?)

[MoreBeta](#) Thu 27-Feb-14 11:04:32

Tunip - no but I do know Ryedale. 🙄

My advice is if you are having a lot of work done - get a local architect to put the application in for you. They often know the ropes and the Conservation Officers don't try it on so much. Frankly ours just tries to get away with stuff and push the boundary almost up to Grade I standard. He has a Masters degree in Conservation from a local 'poly' university and worked on canal preservation for a while so he thinks he knows stuff. Frankly he lives in a modern 2 bed flat and knows nothing about living in listed buildings at all.

I have lived in and looked after listed buildings nearly all my life and I am a member of SPAB and hence know a fair bit. I was putting lime wash on walls and replacing pan tiles on oak timber framed barns in my school holidays 35 years ago long before he appeared on the scene. He backed off once I made it clear I wasn't going to be bullied and knew a lot about the subject.

He is just a petty bureaucrat who over steps the mark because he can.

He also has a list of favoured suppliers he likes to push on people as well - which I find quite dubious and hence I ignored.

[GrendelsMum](#) Thu 27-Feb-14 11:09:23

He sounds like a right nuisance.

Our new one seems (crossed fingers!) like a bit of a find. Came out to give advice on a problem, gave sensible advice, told me that I'd inadvertently screwed up on something but that she'd pretend she hadn't noticed, and told me that we'd count the latest works as repairs.

[TunipTheUnconquerable](#) Thu 27-Feb-14 11:56:45

We're not having a lot done to start with. Half of one gable needs to be retiled and there's a stretch of flat roof that needs the roofing felt replacing (and we'll take the opportunity to add insulation).

I'm assuming we'll need LBC for the tiling because they'll want to approve the materials. I don't know how easy it will be to find an exact match for what's already there.

Ultimately there are some internal walls I'd like to rejig, to create a decent-sized master bedroom with en suite, but it would depend on understanding the different phases of construction much better - we don't yet even know which internal partitions and doors were added by the last occupant. (It was a care home so had to meet fire regs.) That would be much more complex and would require an architect and might not be allowed, but I would only want to do it in any case if I felt I wasn't compromising the history of the building, let alone what the Conservation Officer might think.

Beta - we've discussed Ryedale houses on here before when I was posting under a different name - we've been looking for a long time!

[wonkylegs](#) Thu 27-Feb-14 12:48:30

Sounds like I should be thankful for our local Conservation officer who seems to have her head screwed on the right way. She often seems to suggest what she thinks would be ideal solution but does understand practicality/feasibility etc. I think she's probably quite straight talking to me because I'm an architect rather than Joe public.

[MoreBeta](#) Thu 27-Feb-14 13:15:17

wonky - very interesting you are an architect and the Conservation Officer is being sensible/practical.

I really get the impression that the Conservation Officers (there are 3 of them) round here always back off when an architect gets involved. In fact everyone who has a listed house round here talks openly of how to 'get round' listing rules by using certain architects.

Not suggesting in any way that you are being anything other than pristine in your dealings but it certainly is a very well known fact round here that there are rules for 'little people' and rules for 'other people who are well connected'.

Some of the decisions are downright bizarre and contradictory.



Talk

Topics » Property/DIY

It's not a listed building- how do I prove it? (13 Posts)

carabos Sat 25-Mar-17 20:35:05

We moved 6 months ago to a property which is part of a converted former school. Before offering on this house we got very close to offering on another but withdrew because it needed work that we were unable to get permission for because it is listed. There was an awful lot of palaver to get to that stage so we made the decision that we wouldn't view any more listed properties.

When we found our now home, one of the first questions we raised with the agent and the lawyers was whether it is listed- all confirmed not. Happy days, move in.

Since then we have been told by most of the neighbours, repeatedly, that the building is listed. I always breezily respond that it isn't, but they won't have it. Thing is, they keep saying that as a community we can't do this or that that needs doing or would improve the environment because it's listed. IT ISN'T LISTED ffs!

How do I prove it? Do I need to get whatever official confirmation that our solicitor got at the time of purchase? It's bonkers, if you came here and looked around it would be obvious it isn't listed anyway. 🙄 It is of no architectural merit or historical interest.

Bluntness100 Sat 25-Mar-17 20:43:31

Why do you need to prove it? And to who...the neighbours?

My home is grade 2 listed. If I google my address I can see the listing. It describes my home and when it was listed.

Grade 2 listing is not particularly restricting, so I don't know what you're talking about. Yes you can't change the structure. Yes you cannot remove original features. Yes you cannot change the fundamental character, and yes that includes things like the colour you paint your front door, but that's about it. Why buy it and want to change these things though anyway? . Very very few listed properties list also the grounds and detail them so you can't change, however yes it needs to be in keeping. But again why would you wish to do something that wasn't. You cannot build in the grounds unless it's in keeping. Fair enough in my view.

Sorry op but sounds like a bunch of people who don't know what they are talking about and I don't see what you have to prove to them. If it's listed it's a matter of public record and easily googleable.

dancingqueen345 Sat 25-Mar-17 20:47:25

Go on the Historic England website- I think that's what the pp is referring to.

LilyLongtree Sat 25-Mar-17 20:48:03

If you feel you need to prove it historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/ put your post code in and print off the map or list.

carabos Sat 25-Mar-17 21:08:49

Thank you **LilyLongtree** I've done that. I will hand out the map at the residents' meeting. There are lots of listed buildings in the village, but this isn't one of them.

shirleycartersaidso Sat 25-Mar-17 22:22:04

Are they confused about local listing? My house is locally listed but it has no restrictions as it isn't Listed.

carabos Sat 25-Mar-17 22:35:28

I don't know **Shirley**. We were discussing purchasing the freehold at the meeting and a couple of them said they thought we wouldn't be able to do that as it's a listed building- not sure why they think that would make a difference tbh. They also use it as a reason not to do this that and the other around the place. They're lovely people and polite but very firm about this point 🙄. It's becoming a bit wearing tbh.

inneedamoreadultieradult Sat 25-Mar-17 22:41:57

I would just not attend resident meetings and do what i want to the property if they have a problem with it it will be on them to prove that it is listed. But then again im an antisocial bugger.

Haint Sat 25-Mar-17 22:46:28

Are you in a conservation area? Perhaps that's where the confusion stems from

HaggisMuncher Sat 25-Mar-17 22:55:03

The National Heritage List has a searchable map and provides the most up to date information. Historic England are the body responsible for designation so if it's not on there it ain't listed.

A building can be curtilage listed if it's ancillary to a building named on the NHL, e.g. the stable block associated with a country house can be protected even though not identified in the listing entry or identified as listed on the map. In the case of a school, however this would seem unlikely as the school would probably be the principal building.

Information on local listing is normally available on local council websites though coverage is variable. It doesn't have any legal backing (unlike listing where unauthorised works can be a criminal offence) but are often supported in local planning policy. Your local conservation officer or planning dept should be able to tell you if a local list exists.

are you in a conservation area at all? Could be a source of confusion.

Good luck!

DancingLedge Sat 25-Mar-17 23:06:36

It's certainly possible for leaseholders to get together and purchase the freehold of a listed building.

carabos Sun 26-Mar-17 10:37:56

I'm kind of taking that approach **I needamore** but from the other direction- I'm intending to take control 😊.

Lucisky Fri 31-Mar-17 12:41:41

As Haint says, they may be confusing being listed with being in a conservation area, some people think it's the same thing. My previous neighbours insisted we were all listed (terrace of cottages), and even though I had written proof we weren't, they still refused to believe it!



Talk

Topics » Property/DIY

Listed building, stairs too steep and dangerous, planners say no. Anything we can do? Feeling low today (42 Posts)

Staverton Mon 05-Dec-11 13:40:49

We are about to exchange on a grade 2 listed terrace which requires complete renovation. It has the most dangerously steep stairs. The treads are just 18cm, which is 7cm less than required for current health and safety standards. With two young dc and plans to have a 3rd there is no way we can live with them.

There are about 15 other similar cottages in the road under the same listing. Over half of them have changed the stairs. I spoke to a conservation officer on Friday, and she is coming out tomorrow to the property. She basically said no way can we change the stairs. They are stricter now, it's part of the character of the house etc etc even though listing only mentions the outside. I could (and have) cry. We have already spent money on the solicitor, architect etc etc.

Any advice?

HarrySantaatemygoldfish Mon 05-Dec-11 13:44:19

Take a deep breath.

Now, as the house is very old I assume tons of children have managed quite happily up and down those stairs, as will yours.

If you love the house I would go with it. Put good stairgates up and teach your children to climb as soon as you can. They are tiny for such a short time, you may really regret passing on the house for such a minor problem in the great scheme of things.

Anyway, wait until the conservation office has been.

Staverton Mon 05-Dec-11 13:48:24

Thanks for your reply!

It's not just the kids it's our parents and us. They are so steep you fall backwards when you walk up them as the majority of your foot isn't on the step.

The last lady had a stair lift

Poledra Mon 05-Dec-11 13:48:57

Meet with the conservation lady. Ask her what can be done, what advice they can offer. I live in a Grade II listed property, which has had quite a bit of work done on it (before I moved in). The conservation officers can be your best friends in this sort of case, if you approach them in a 'how can we fix this so we are both happy?' fashion rather than more gung-ho. Work with them, and see what they say. Also, it's worth mentioning the changes to the other houses - OK they are more strict now but there's precedent there!

There are no guarantees, but DH and I have found that this approach works best with our conservation people (including the tree preservationists, if the Grade II listing wasn't enough!).

Staverton Mon 05-Dec-11 13:49:25

Also my dd is a climber and fearless (bad combination) and will climb over any stairgate

AgentProvocateur Mon 05-Dec-11 13:50:08

I second HarrySantaatemygoldfish's advice - it may seem a big problem now, but it's amazing how quickly you'll get used to the narrow treads. If they can't be changed, do what you can to make them safer - ie, a second bannister at child height, for example.

Staverton Mon 05-Dec-11 13:54:11

Thank you

Yes I'm def going to be very nice to her tomorrow. I have knocked on doors and know who has changed them (some without permission)

I think we would pull put despite £££ spent as someone will fall down them. Also I think it will become an unsellable house when we finally come to sell.

It is bonkers

HarrySantaatemygoldfish Mon 05-Dec-11 14:08:31

What about putitng on those deep ridged tread edgings you get in public buildings?

ElderberrySyrup Mon 05-Dec-11 14:11:28

Someone (probably on here) once said never buy a listed building unless you would be prepared to live in it as it is, because you can never count on getting the listed building approval, even if the conservation officer has seemed positive about it in advance.

If it was me I would probably be inclined to not worry too much about the children, but think about keeping the (or getting a better) stair lift for the parents. One of my friends has a stair lift (because she's disabled) and it is really not that obtrusive.

You are right to be cautious about resale though. My old house was a terrace with very steep stairs and several of my many viewers cited them as the reason why they didn't want to buy it.

Lizcat Mon 05-Dec-11 14:15:20

I grew up with a staircase like this with a beautiful, but deadly traditional radiator at the bottom to crack your head open on when you fall. My parents retained a stairgate at the top till they left the house when I was 31 to remind everyone to proceed with care. We moved to the house when I was 8 and we only had one accident in the 27 years and actually it occurred because my sister was playing a silly game on the stairs - she was 13 at the time and should have know better.

You do get used to them the more you travel up and down them and the feeling you are going to fall does lessen the more you use them.

Staverton Mon 05-Dec-11 14:18:33

Sorry just a quick reply but about to head out the door thanks so much for replies will read in detail in a bit
Stairlift has gone and staircase also v narrow so it looked really obtrusive

typicalvirgo Mon 05-Dec-11 14:41:05

I hate to be the voice of doom and gloom but i am renting a very old house which is also listed and also has a ridiculous set of stairs in them as you describe. They are also oak and have a turn in them. They look beautiful and in keeping with the house.

BUT I fell down them a month ago (no alcohol involved) and hurt myself very badly. I can't wait till we move out.

Sorry, thats probably not what you wanted to hear, but thats my experience.

ElderberrySyrup Mon 05-Dec-11 14:43:37

I wonder if the increased strictness re listed buildings is one reason why period houses have got cheaper relative to newer ones in the last 25 years.

GrendelsMum Mon 05-Dec-11 15:58:04

Someone (probably on here) once said never buy a listed building unless you would be prepared to live in it as it is, because you can never count on getting the listed building approval, even if the conservation officer has seemed positive about it in advance.

That was my sister (a conservation officer) via me - and I think it's good advice.

I should say that you seem to have a (very common) misunderstanding about listed buildings. People always think that only the outside is listed, and you can do whatever you like with the inside. That's not the case at all - the inside is listed as well as the outside, so the people who have changed theirs without permission have broken the law, and could have been legally required to rebuild them as they should have been. It doesn't happen often, but it does happen occasionally. (My sister says that if they get the feeling someone is starting to damage the historic fabric of their house by unauthorised changes, they may move to upgrade the listing a notch, so from Grade 2 to 2 Star.)

On the other hand, as Poledra says, talking to the conservation officer will often result in a solution that everyone is fairly happy with.

Don't forget that if you need LBC for the stairs, at least you'll get VAT off!

Pendeen Mon 05-Dec-11 16:24:37

It is perfectly possible to challenge the opinion of the conservation officer.

I have been successful (admittedly on a very small number of cases) where, in spite of initial advice from the CO that works would not be permitted, I have managed to obtain permission for alterations.

COs do not have the final say in Listed Building applications and appeals are possible.

This, however can be a long and expensive process but given that several similar cottages have received approval you have at least a chance. This is provided (a) the status has not changed - as mentioned above by GrendelsMum and (b) you are willing to compromise on the detail i.e. to accept as a final solution stairs that may be somewhere between the existing and your ideal.

MrsMagnolia Mon 05-Dec-11 16:29:10

Message withdrawn at poster's request.

MoreBeta Mon 05-Dec-11 16:42:38

"That's not the case at all - the inside is listed as well as the outside, so the people who have changed theirs without permission have broken the law, and could have been legally required to rebuild them as they should have been. It doesn't happen often, but it does happen occasionally."

IME round where I live, the local conservation officer does nothing where internal changes have been done on the quiet but just waits for a new buyer to come along and unsuspectingly buys the house. Then the conservation officer pounces and forces them to rebuild/reverse any unauthorised changes.

In one case near me, an old lady ripped out the Georgian staircase because it was too steep for her. When she died, the house was sold and the new owner was told (after she had bought the house) that she had to have a hand made Georgian replica staircase fitted. The conservation officer knew full well that the old lady had no money to do the work so he just waited for a new buyer who had money.

To be frank, I would leave the staircase as it is. Your family will get used to it. Just fit stairgates top and bottom.

said Mon 05-Dec-11 16:54:10

What would happen if you just replaced them? Who would know? Could you keep the originals elsewhere (where?) and put them back if you ever sold house/got told off?

MoreBeta Mon 05-Dec-11 16:57:15

said - that is exactly what people do round where we live. The problem only comes to light when a new owner asks for planning permission to add an extension, etc. Once they do that, the sky falls on them as the planning officer comes to inspect and finds a whole load of unauthorised changes.

BramblyHedge Mon 05-Dec-11 17:04:00

We live in an old terrace with 19cm treads and have three kids. The 5 and 3 year old have always been fine with them (3rd is baby). They have also both fallen down the stairs when larking about and not been injured though obviously to be avoided. They are just used to them and know how to walk up and down them safely.

pinkappleby Mon 05-Dec-11 17:06:50

No advice, only our experience to share. We lived in a house like this, and both DH and I both fell several times, it was not nice. We always wore sensible slippers with backs to help minimise the chance of it.

It was not a problem for the DCs, as they are smaller I guess and we were the first people I knew to get rid of stair gates as we trained the babies to go up and down them from as soon as they could move themselves so that if we ever left a gate open they would not start climbing and then fall back.

We did get used to it and were reminded when visitors had a sharp intake of breath. I used to 'overstep' when I went round other people's houses too.

DorothyGherkins Mon 05-Dec-11 17:12:50

You ll adapt if you dont change them, I promise you! Our stairs are like this, and we all said initially we felt like we were going to fall backwards! Nobody has fallen, young or old, and I can negotiate them even at night without a light on

minciepie Mon 05-Dec-11 17:19:22

Just a thought. Would it be possible to install new and more generous stairs on top of the old narrow stairs? In other words you would leave the old staircase in place but then install a shallower staircase in front and surrounding it, hiding it but preserving it underneath. Hard to explain without drawing but hopefully you see what I mean.

That might possibly satisfy the listed building officers (because the old feature is preserved and can be revealed in future if desired)?

lisaro Mon 05-Dec-11 17:24:01

To be fair - the house had the stairs when you originally viewed it, and I would hazard a guess you knew it was listed.

cat64 Mon 05-Dec-11 17:33:16

Message withdrawn

JustifiedAncientOfMuMu Mon 05-Dec-11 18:02:07

The tread on ours in 20cm. TBH I've never even thought about the steepness of them, as loads of houses round here are the same and I'm used to it. It's certainly never a problem.
I can imagine how 2cm might make quite a difference though.

ElderberrySyrup Mon 05-Dec-11 18:32:58

MoreBeta, that's very interesting.
The message I will take away is that next time I look at a listed building I will ask very detailed questions about what work has been done and whether listed building consents were obtained.

Staverton Mon 05-Dec-11 19:42:42

Thank you everyone for your replies. I have read and absorbed!
We did know it was listed when we offered but because loads of people have changed the stairs we naively assumed it wouldn't be a problem. They seem especially steep because the winder at the top is very sudden so it feels like it is a sheer drop from a narrow platform -difficult to explain

Also as the landing is so small it's easy to trip coming out of the bathroom and go straight down the stairs. Sounds great doesn't it for a whopping £480k price tag.

Pendeen interesting about your challenges (and you poor thing going through it). So who has the final say if it's not the conservation officers? I wonder if there's anyway of finding out if it will pass an appeal as if it's impossible we will probably pull out

Minciepie- we have that very same idea. I will ask as a last resort but don't want to mention it to the last minute. It does cause problems with the basement though and putting stairs down there.
Thanks again.

smartyparts Mon 05-Dec-11 19:52:01

We live in listed building with quite bonkers stairs. No two treads are the same, they go round a corner and some are barely wide enough to place a foot. To exacerbate the matter, we have no banister.

Our children have always coped perfectly well from toddlerhood on - you just get used to it.

MoreBeta Mon 05-Dec-11 20:50:19

Elderberry - I am trying to buy 2 listed buildings at the moment and am in contact with the council conservation officer as there has been a lot of correspondence on both of them so yes you are right. Do check everything and if possible get the conservation officer to look at it before you buy.

In nearly every listed building I have been in there are very clear signs of staircases, guttering, windows, walls, doors, fireplaces, cornicing having been removed/changed without permission.

montmartre Mon 05-Dec-11 21:16:00

Sorry to interject- but MoreBeta- is the NZ thing off then?

MoreBeta Mon 05-Dec-11 21:19:32

Sadly we will never go now. The exchange rate would have made it a really horrendous decision as we were on a special investment visa.

We still have our visa but in reality we will never use it.

montmartre Mon 05-Dec-11 22:36:42

I'm sorry to hear that- you had sounded so excited previously.
Glad to hear you have a new project though! 😊
</hijack>

ElderberrySyrup Tue 06-Dec-11 09:37:41

MoreBeta, does that mean you have decided it is time to buy, rather than waiting for further falls? <sorry for hijack OP>

Staverton Tue 06-Dec-11 09:41:48

No hijack away. Maybe we should pull out. This is quite a good deal for the area though despite the work
Meeting planning lady today (everything crossed)

MoreBeta Tue 06-Dec-11 12:06:49

Elderberry - these are defunct commercial buildings that have been partially or wholly unoccupied for a while and in a poor state of repair.

The price of commercial buildings has already fallen by 50% in some provincial towns. I am sure residential property has to follow if the economy does not improve. If the old commercial buildings have no businesses in them, then surely the people that worked in them now have no job or earn less.

In the end residential property has to have some relationship with commercial property prices.

ElderberrySyrup Tue 06-Dec-11 12:13:27

Oh that's interesting MoreBeta, thank you.

mousysantamouse Tue 06-Dec-11 12:20:48

can someone explain to me that if The treads are just 18cm, which is 7cm less than required for current health and safety standards the current stairs are not in line with those standards how it can be enforced? seems silly to me to "have to keep" the house unsafer than it could be.

ElderberrySyrup Tue 06-Dec-11 12:25:35

they're regulations for new builds but they don't apply retrospectively.

Pendeen Tue 06-Dec-11 15:02:03

Staverton

The Grade of your building's Listing is important - the vast majority are 2 and the applications are dealt with by the LA.

I have had a project where an approach to the local councillor resulted in the CO changing his approach i.e. from confrontational and not willing to negotiate to something more reasonable. This was for a school project (and the adverse publicity also helped) but in your case the fact that there are plenty of precedents must count for something!

If you don't succeed with the council then you can appeal to [Pickles' Empire](#)

Good luck.

Pendeen Tue 06-Dec-11 15:09:35

mousysantamouse

The OP problem is the opposite to this - she wants to change the staircase to the current standards but fears the CO will refuse to grant listed building consent to allow her to do so.

isitmidnightalready Sat 10-Dec-11 00:25:25

If you are nervous, then pull out. I always think you should trust your instincts. Where I live there are 1,000 houses, and I have heard of 2 people coming a cropper in a final way through falling down stairs in the last 5 years. I am not joking.

Talk

Topics » AIBU?

to buy a new house next to social housing? (150 Posts)

[plentyofsoap](#) Sun 09-Jun-13 22:18:00

I had a casual conversation about a house we are looking to buy with a group of friends today. One who is a friend of a friend said it sounded lovely, but we would be mad to buy near those in social housing?! I once had a neighbour who caused me huge problems and she owned her house therefore it makes no difference to me. This was ignored by her. Am I missing something or is she just being a snob?

[Boomba](#) Sun 09-Jun-13 22:19:39

She is a snob

[hellhasnofurylikeahungrywoman](#) Sun 09-Jun-13 22:21:46

She is absolutely right.

I am a feral thug and a second class citizen because I live in social housing.

(Is she related to my mother?)

[gordyslovesheep](#) Sun 09-Jun-13 22:21:53

she is being daft - my house is opposite the social housing on the estate - lovely row of 3 bed terraces with young families in - no issues what so ever BUT if there where you at least have the housing association to turn to which you don't if they own it!

[BuntyPenfold](#) Sun 09-Jun-13 22:23:02

I have had both awful and lovely neighbours in social housing, but the awful were truly dire, unbelievable even.

So I would be wary.

[raisah](#) Sun 09-Jun-13 22:24:51

My formet boss pulled out of a house sale once she found out that a small social housing project was planned 2 streets away.

She also decided to have her baby in a private hospital because 'you can catch all sorts of germs in an NHS hospital'. Absolutely charming women

[RhondaJean](#) Sun 09-Jun-13 22:25:26

When I bought my new build the surveyor noted it was close to social housing which might affect the resale value. It was written in the report!


I wanted it so I bought it regardless.

[kim147](#) Sun 09-Jun-13 22:26:33

Message withdrawn at poster's request.

[Crumbledwalnuts](#) Sun 09-Jun-13 22:28:16

Location for resale is important but you know that? If you are staying, and it doesn't bother you then it doesn't matter but it would affect when you

 Keep bump-botherers at bay with our top tips



Sleep404 Sun 09-Jun-13 22:30:22

All new build estates now have some element of social housing included and if the stupid sales reps didn't point it out, no one would be any the wiser.
Neighbour opp me is SH and is lovely, neighbour next door isn't but if I could I would pay for her to move. shes a nightmare. Of course the opposite could be the case too.
Your friend is a snob.

financialnightmare Sun 09-Jun-13 22:32:57

TBH, I work in this sector and most 'needy' people are cared for in their own homes these days - which may well be privately owned.

(I've recently moved into this sector and there are alarmingly high numbers of offenders everywhere. Some in social housing and some cared for in their own homes (i.e. 'monitored').)

So to be blunt, there is no way of telling. I've always lived near social housing places. Your own children might end up there one day. Or you. It's just part of normal life.

CustardOmlet Sun 09-Jun-13 22:34:05

I am one of the bigger snobs (have to be honest!) and iv just bought a house opposite social housing. The houses are well looked after, don't look scruffy or un cared for and the children were all playing happily outside. I'm happy with it!

Wholetthedogin Sun 09-Jun-13 22:45:10

I thought that all new builds had to have a mixture of private and social housing or have I got that wrong?

teenagetantrums Sun 09-Jun-13 22:51:28

I live in social housing we have loads of cctv very safe here I have never had a problem, but seem that roads near the estate get burgled quite a bit, so the kids here leave the estate as they know we either have nothing worth taking or will know their mothers and take stuff of what they perceive at rich people..

CloudsAndTrees Sun 09-Jun-13 22:51:56

Depends on the area.

sleeton Sun 09-Jun-13 22:54:40

Social housing? Is that Council Houses? I thought many of these were now privately owned since the Thatcher government's Right-to-Buy legislation. If so, how would know whether the ones near your prospective purchase were owned or rented?

MaryPoppinsBag Sun 09-Jun-13 22:57:12

All new building sites have to have affordable housing 15% I think.

CloudsAndTrees Sun 09-Jun-13 23:03:42

There was a rule about new building sites over a certain number of homes having to have social housing, but I thought there was talk of the condemns scrapping it because it was leading to less housing being built.

Disclaimer - I might be making that up!

LilMissSunshine9 Sun 09-Jun-13 23:08:28

I found out today that the houses opposite me are rented out to those on benefits - to be honest I haven't had any problems at all but it does explain why a group of men were going along the houses and painting them. If my neighbour hadn't told me then I would never have known

ParadiseChick Sun 09-Jun-13 23:40:32

Enter I stay was originally a council scheme. Since right to buy its such a mix. My row is owned, council, owned, council, council, owned, owned, owned but let out.

Variety is the slice of life, friendliest place I've lived and the norm for towns around here.

schooldidi Sun 09-Jun-13 23:49:08

My estate is a mix of SH and privately owned. We had hideous neighbours to our right, in a private rental, they were truly awful and I was thrilled when they moved out. Our neighbours on the left are SH and are lovely, they help us out with DIY (because we're rubbish at it) and give us homegrown tomatoes etc when they have too many. Across the road there are 3 SH, 2 are lovely, one family is less lovely but not a major problem.

So we have no regrets buying our house next to HA properties. We got a much better house for our money than we would have done in a



Keep bump-botherers at bay with our top tips



on staying here forever so resale value doesn't really bother us.

[LessMissAbs](#) Sun 09-Jun-13 23:49:40

I bought a house a year ago in a new development with the compulsory social housing percentage. Many of the other houses are privately rented. Already, there is a difference between the social houses and the privately owned/rented ones. I've had to phone the police about (middle aged) boy racers with noisy exhausts racing around the development late at night - they live in the social housing, about the noisy parties they've had, the bike shed has been broken into, bikes stolen and left damaged, and my neighbour has had his car stolen. My neighbour is thinking of selling up and moving because of it, I hope she doesn't. It's still a nice place to live and it's not unbearable, but I was actually shocked at the difference.

We just have to put up with it. You're not supposed to talk about these things are you?

[plentyofsoap](#) Mon 10-Jun-13 07:07:17

Thanks for the replies. The sales rep stated that they were part rent part buy. I know all new housing estates have to have a certain number. It is a forever house, so we don't plan on moving for a very long time if we could help it. It is in a nice area and a good price as the last buyer pulled out at the last minute. Her comment just took me by surprise without any actual facts to back it up with!

[GailTheGoldfish](#) Mon 10-Jun-13 07:10:19

I live on one of the new estates which has some social housing and it is bloody lovely, there is no way to know which homes are privately owned and which are not. Unless you know for sure there are issues with the neighbours I would go for it, same as with any house purchase.

[nurseneedshelp](#) Mon 10-Jun-13 07:17:52

I'm in social housing and it's mostly really nice!

However, when I was looking to buy last year it would have put me off! Just goes to show how fickle I am!

[williaminajetfighter](#) Mon 10-Jun-13 07:50:01

I'd be more concerned about buying on a new estate as new builds tend to depreciate more quickly/appreciate less quickly than established homes.

[TooTabooToBoo](#) Mon 10-Jun-13 08:06:55

I live in SH.

My street is ex SH, most bought with about 10 still SH. I am in a terrace of 4, in the middle.

My neighbours love me as prior to me they had neighbours from hell, drug dealing, DV, late night parties, culminating in police raids and eviction by force (again, police involved with doors smashed in).

2 doors up, private house, their sons were a nightmare, boy racers and late night parties, fights, awful basically, I called the police several times but it made no difference. Only stopped when they left home and their parents let the house to a gorgeous family, thank god!

So, you could get a neighbour like that OR, more likely, a normal, working, family, just like mine!

Agree that there's more you can do wrt complaining with a SH tenant, than with private.

I love my house and my street. The HA keep it lovely round here.

[washyourhairforgodssake](#) Mon 10-Jun-13 08:27:41

Be v careful. I will prob get flamed for this....we live in part social part private housing and some of the families from the social housing are practically feral. Filthy kids running about swearing at all hours, stealing toys from our garden, drunk aggressive adults smoking shouting and swearing, just awful. We are moving. It has made our lives a misery. Of course not all social tenants are like this but if I were you I would go and see the house on a sunny weekend day so the neighbours are outside and you can get a better idea. Don't take chances if this is your forever house.

[KittensoftPuppydog](#) Mon 10-Jun-13 08:35:27

I've lived in social housing and it was great. I'd steer clear of developments that have lots of bedrooms though. Means really large families, which can be problematic.

[BuntyPenfold](#) Mon 10-Jun-13 08:38:23

I second that **washyourhairforgodssake**.

That sounds like where I lived, I moved further from my job and school to get to a better area, which was fine, quite different in atmosphere. (and the HA didn't help, so don't kid yourself they will.)

The HA did move one of the worst families on, after years of complaints, but not until a drunken fight resulted in very serious injuries - permanently



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Then they moved across town, to another area of social housing.

VulvaVoom Mon 10-Jun-13 08:46:08

Just for context my DM and DPILs both live in council houses and have done for years. I also consider myself working class.

DH and I own our house on an ex council estate, so about half are owned and half are social housing. In the main the social housing tenants are fine (same goes for the owned ones) BUT sometimes a new family moves in to a council house and they're a total pain. Leaving rubbish outside - two Asda trolleys have been outside of one of the flats for about a month. And last night, some people down the road had a very noisy /drunken BBQ with Karaoke till late ~~because they don't have work in the morning~~

So yes, it is judgy, but I probably would have thought about it more in hindsight but it's pretty much the best we could afford and ex council houses are great value.

Weegiemum Mon 10-Jun-13 08:47:13

We live near a very large area of previously rather notorious social housing - friendliest place I think I've ever lived. We have never had any bother with living here, it's great.

Big advantage to us is that our 4-bed house cost 25% **less** than an identical one barely half a mile away, due to the postcode!

Tablioep Mon 10-Jun-13 08:55:21

I third what washyourhairforgodsake said - I lived on a mixed development. Two families out of many in SH ruined it for everyone. It only takes one and I'd never buy in a mixed development again - especially as it took 2 years of recording disturbances, HA involvement and police involvement to get it to court and for them to be evicted. Far too risky especially if it's your forever house.

VulvaVoom Mon 10-Jun-13 08:58:43

And the thing about almost feral kids - wasn't going to say this but the kids who are in social housing around here seem much more bolshy/naughty - I caught one boy chucking huge branches over my fence after whacking them against it.

They also roam outside in the road more than other kids and seem to get left to their own devices till fairly late at night.

And why oh why do people in social housing ALWAYS sit out the front (when they have back gardens) I just don't get it??

Principality Mon 10-Jun-13 09:03:14

If its just part buy part rent, I wouldn't worry too much...

When we bought our part buy/rent out 5 years ago the minimum income they would accept from applicants was 37k!

plainjaney Mon 10-Jun-13 09:06:11

vulvavoom there is a street of terraces near to me and whenever the sun shines they pull the sofa out onto the front pavement and they all sit there with cans of lager.

In fairness they dont have back gardens, more yards, but putting the sofa out?



Takver Mon 10-Jun-13 09:08:02

We back onto a new HA development, I'd say where we live it is a positive advantage as there are a lot more families with kids than in the other bits of our town, and social housing tends to be laid out in a more child-friendly way (so better for playing out).

eminemmerdale Mon 10-Jun-13 09:13:01

Our vile socially spiralling, but common as muck really, ex neighbours sold their house, because the 'council' lot opposite were being relet to 'rough families' and it was getting 'dreadful' 😞 Mind you, they also said, when we moved in next door, that they were so relieved, because 'if a black family had moved in, we'd have had to have moved. We're not racist or anything, but 'they' have so many children don't they...!' Nice couple..

washyourhairforgodssake Mon 10-Jun-13 09:13:52

The younger kids on our development sometimes just stand at our gate staring into the garden. They don't say anything, just stand there. Makes sitting outside in the sun impossible.

FionaJT Mon 10-Jun-13 09:14:08

As Principality has just said, if it's part rent part buy you are hardly going to be surrounded by huge families living on benefits, as those schemes are still out of the financial reach of many of us who are in work 😞

Chunderella Mon 10-Jun-13 09:17:34



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pay. I agree with the poster who said she'd be more worried about it being new build, but it would be naive to pretend the social housing thing is irrelevant. For the record I live in a HA property on a council estate myself.

BuntyPenfold Mon 10-Jun-13 09:21:50

I had that **washyourhair**
Also 'Can I come in your house?'
'No'
'Can I come in your house?'
'No'

repeat ad infinitum.

3 year olds out playing until long after dark, screaming and shouting at all hours, black-out blinds needed to shut out the blue flashing lights, plants all smashed, washing lines swung on, hammering on the door next day with 'I know it was you called the police on me' etc.

stepawayfromthescreen Mon 10-Jun-13 09:23:16

we lived in a new build on a new estate. Our road was almost 50/50 private/housing association.

It didn't bother me at all when we bought the house, didn't put us off buying it.

And then we moved in.

The housing association tenants (not all but at least half) stayed up late partying, even on week nights (didn't have to get up for work), left rubbish, (think sofas, knackered cars, old freezers etc) on their drives. They'd sit on their front doorsteps drinking alcohol from early evening onwards and then the arguing/fights would start). The kids ran around night and day from toddler years onwards, climbing on cars etc. The housing association weren't bothered.

We moved house, but it took us a while to sell (at height of boom) an we dropped the price twice. The estate agent said it would take longer to sell and achieve a lower asking price cos of the 'state of the HA properties (unkempt gardens/skips/cars being permanently 'fixed')

I can promise you I'm absolutely not a snob and I didn't give it a 2nd thought when we bought the house.

sydlexic Mon 10-Jun-13 09:23:31

There are many lovely families in social housing, there are many lovely people on benefits. There are some estates where they send the not so lovely people.

Walk around the are you are looking at, see what the people are like. Have a drink in the local, look at crime statistics, read the local paper. Make a judgement on evidence.

toboldlygo Mon 10-Jun-13 09:30:45

The part rent part buy schemes aren't social housing though are they, they're the 'affordable' homes that all new build estates must have a certain percentage of. Many have conditions attached so that they go first to local people, you have to prove a connection to the area etc.

I say 'affordable' because we both work full time and still can't afford the ones in our town. Neither can anyone else, they've been for sale for over a year despite them removing the local connection criteria months ago. Plus they're the size of a shoebox with no gardens and no parking.

We rent privately adjacent to a street of council housing ending in a cul-de-sac of HA houses/flats and I would certainly think twice about buying in a similar area in the future due to the behaviour of the majority of the tenants.

Peetle Mon 10-Jun-13 09:32:53

Depends on the nature of the social housing - it may be delightful and it may be a nightmare.

However, when buying a house you should always think about what will happen when you want to sell; social housing (and lots of other things) will put people off (and thus reduce the value) so don't buy it.

MusicalEndorphins Mon 10-Jun-13 09:37:59

Call the police and ask about crime in the area, and as poster above suggests, check police stats for the area.

We were pre-warned by a friend of dh when we were house shopping, that a certain end of town had a lot of nice homes (at good prices) but also a high rate of break in's. We did call the police and it was true. Lot's of social housing there, as well as run down buildings and boarding houses.

I think it also does depend on what you are used to, I have 2 friends (they don't know each other) who each lived in really rough crime ridden areas in other cities who say anywhere in my city is better than where they used to live! (both live here now)

Crowler Mon 10-Jun-13 09:39:56

The housing associations in my neighborhood are grim. Maybe this is because I live in London. Who knows.

The kids are always out, til all hours.

There are a lot of menacing dogs.

curry Mon 10 Jun 13 09:45:17



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house block, we have slightly unsavory neighbours (druggy with constantly broken windows at one end, Steptoe's yard with endless, ever changing, scrap vans and trucks parked outside, blocking the road, and nappies strewn all over the garden.)

Not all social housing estates are equal, especially in cities. Some are run down and full of people I would never want to live near, while others are lovely and calm with a strong community.

Unless you move somewhere expensive and exclusive, it's nigh on impossible to completely avoid the sort of people your friend is envisaging.

And apart from the two sets of not so near neighbours, I prefer the ones I do have to the sort who complain if your curtains aren't open entirely symmetrical or your kids have toys in the garden.

Re: the comment about social housing reducing the value - unless it's a new build, the current price probably already reflects the location.

MackerelOfFact Mon 10-Jun-13 09:46:59

I take it you're not in London, then! Practically impossible not to live very close to social housing - everything is side-by-side and that's why I love it.

If you're planning on living in a solitary grand mansion on the edge of a sprawling sink estate, then perhaps have a rethink, but a row of privately owned properties (any of which could be let to tenants on HB at any time) adjacent to a row of 'social' housing properties (any of which may have been sold on privately) should be fine.

Look for the usual clues about what all of your neighbours are likely to be like to live close to, not just the socially housed ones.

Crowler Mon 10-Jun-13 09:47:48

It is impossible to not live close to social housing in London, I agree.

froubylou Mon 10-Jun-13 09:49:30

I owned an ex-council house some years ago and one immediate neighbour had bought, one was a lady on her own with 2 kids, 1 a teenager, 1 an 7/8 year old with some learning difficulties. Both sides were absolutely lovely.

I now live in private rented accomodation. We had the original Neighbours From Hell next door until a few years ago. Horrendous. A couple about our age, both drug addicts, both alcoholics, both absolutley puddled. There was nothing we could do other than call the police every weekend and also involve my landlord over a dispute with a gate at the bottom of the passageway which I wanted off as post was pushed through to blow away into the passageway, no one could get to my front door and the lock was broken anyway resulting in me being locked in or out with a young baby on several occasions.

There is a new estate just around the corner from me. 50/50 social rented/shared ownership. Its been built for about 18 months and already has a reputation for being 'rough'. However around the other corner is an older council estate (60s/70s built houses) and although it does have a bad reputation, some of the residents on there wouldn't want to live anywhere else. But the resell value of any of the properties is massively affected by the postcode.

Meanwhile my friend lives about 2 miles away in an ex council house. Probably 80% are owned now, though it is a big estate. I'd give my left nipple to live where she lives! Its beautifully kept, quiet and safe for the residents, the majority of which I would suggest are older.

So my advice would be to proceed with caution. Agree re the comments look at the number of bedrooms which will have an impact on whether larger families can move there. No problems with larger families but they can tend to be a bit rowdy! I'd also personally avoid estates with or very near to 1/2 bedroom flats. I'd rather take my chances with families if I have a family that single folk/couples. The problem with large blocks of flats is you do sometimes get groups of people with similar issues (such as drug abuse or leaving prison) all in one place which IMO can make their problems worse. And everyone elses.

And don't just look at that estate when making your decisions. We had a huge 'sink' estate for want of a better word the other side of town. It has been 'redeveloped' over the last 6/7 years. Which has involved knocking the houses down street by street and rebuilding. Whilst they are rebuilding the families from the houses knocked down are rehoused. They have priority preference on all the housing lists which means they could go anywhere in the area with minimum waiting times as they were top of every list. Quite a few families have chosen to move to areas with very long waiting lists (think 7 years +). This has resulted in families from a very rough, very poor part of town where unemployment, drug and alcohol problems, teenage pregnancies, high % of offenders etc etc etc are the norm, to being neighbours with more 'normal' working class neighbours and the clash hasn't always been good.

I am sure some of the families have benefitted from seeing a different way of life. And am sure some of the families have embraced their new neighbours with open arms and cups of tea. But I know there have been massive issues as well.

The sad thing is that many of the families who moved away from the original area to start afresh somewhere else, have now moved back in to the newly built houses. Which were beautiful when first built. Now when you drive through the fencing has been taken down and scrapped, gardens turned into dogshit infested weedpits and the new eco efficient energy systems are running at full capacity to grow weed!

Complete waste of money. The houses themselves don't make bad estates, its the people that live in them!

plentyofsoap Mon 10-Jun-13 10:03:29

Very interesting... think I may be loitering around the house in the next week. Its not far from where we live now (not London) and I have relatives



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currently occupied and I am tempted to speak to them about any problems. I will also check the crime stats.

squeelybean Mon 10-Jun-13 10:04:02

We've had a lovely big estate built near us which had a mix of social housing, part buy and private housing on offer. My BIL bought a part buy and its been a nightmare.

The SH part now looks like a giant car park with cars jacked up, kids everywhere at all times of night hanging around the beautiful play area they built and to top it off because it is now known as a notorious council estate none of the private owners could sell to move on so have rented property out cheaper than the local rate as they cant get tennants.

Bil is stuck there because the house price has dropped drastically because its not a desirable area even though the houses are lovely and he bought it when prices were high.

We're on a great Council estate with brilliant neighbours because all the drug dealing drunks with loads of kids were moved into the bigger houses on BILs estate! We had 4 very dodgy years living here.

Go and look on a sunny day like the previous posters said and dont think the Housing associations are very helpful with problematic tennants because it can be a real battle.

noisytoys Mon 10-Jun-13 10:09:00

We bought a flat on the edge of a council estate and paid £20k more than a flat in the estate. The estate is lovely with no problems at all that I can see I am thinking of selling up and moving a few roads into the estate and saving £20k

Crowler Mon 10-Jun-13 10:09:59

I have not had occasion to complain to the housing authority (LBHF) - but I have complained to a housing association and they were incredibly on the ball.

Lighthousekeeping Mon 10-Jun-13 10:14:23

It totally depends what kind of an estate it is. My friend just bought a beautiful flat opposite an estate. She never spoke to any of us who live in the area unfortunately. She's now moved in, went for a walk to the local offy to find it had a buzzer on the door. She was buzzed in to find all the products behind bars, even the person serving. She then had to walk home passed a gang who followed her all the way home. No amount of complaining to anyone is going to stop that intimidation. She hasn't been out on her own again 😞

BuntyPenfold Mon 10-Jun-13 10:15:50

I found the HA extremely unhelpful. They didn't want to know. They know if they move families, the problem just starts up elsewhere, and also they were plainly afraid of some tenants. A female staff member told me she didn't want to offend Mr X as 'he knows where I live.' He knows where I live too, just opposite, I said. "How do you cope?" she said.

But of course you wouldn't get any of that in writing.

burberryqueen Mon 10-Jun-13 10:20:20

it really could vary depending on the social housing - i bought a flat on the edge of an estate and it was OK for a few years but when my children got older it was horrible, the play park was full of broken glass and teenagers having sex, children were attacked, there were people throwing stones at my window. and it took two PCOs 13 days to arrive.

squidworth Mon 10-Jun-13 10:22:23

My only worry and this would be for any house is how quickly can I sell it if I need to, I have bought my forever house to sell two years on. I have no problem with social housing but buying a house is too big a commitment to not look at all possibilities. You could swap the word social housing to being next to a pub/next to a main road/ railway/electricity pylon it effects value resale then you should be careful.

Lighthousekeeping Mon 10-Jun-13 10:23:32

I don't think for a minute it has anything to do with being snobbish either. Just that each estate is different. Some are fine. You can't predict what could happen in years to come though.

expatinscotland Mon 10-Jun-13 10:28:48

Depends.

choceyes Mon 10-Jun-13 10:36:20

We live in a privately owned house in a council house area. It's arranged so that it's one street private housing, one street council housing etc. Agree with posters above who said it does affect the resale value. Our house has hardly gone up in price since we bought it 8 years ago. But as it's so much cheaper than similar house 1 mile away, we save money every month by not paying out on a more expensive mortgage, more on interest



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The house itself is lovely. I love it. All the private housing is occupied by young professional couples, singles or families.

The council house tenants are lovely too. Never had a problem at all, and this is in an area considered to be rough (although that is a myth, it was rough 10 years ago, but has considerably improved since then, but the label still sticks).

It can get a bit noisy on a hot day and there are hooded youth hanging about in street corners, but it's never bothered me and I've never felt threatened. I walk straight through the gang of youths and they are always polite and move aside and say hello 😊.

Their parents have a tight reins on the kids. One kid said something to my DH about wanting to nick his bike, and my DH went straight to his parents and said what he said and his mum promptly told him off and apologised to my DH. That kid never said anything since.

They always enquire about my 2 small DCs too, saying how much they've grown etc.

And I have walked around at night time and and walked back from night outs in town without a second thought.

My parents have a house near council housing near London and it is very rough. So it really depends on what kind of social housing it is.

[Thingiebob](#) Mon 10-Jun-13 10:47:42

Walk around the are you are looking at, see what the people are like. Have a drink in the local, look at crime statistics, read the local paper. Make a judgement on evidence.

This.

[SmellsLikeTeenStrop](#) Mon 10-Jun-13 10:53:37

I second the advice to check the area out and talk to the neighbours if you can. DH and I bought an ex-council house in an estate where we already knew several families and they all love the place so that was a pretty good recommendation to us.

[IfNotNowThenWhen](#) Mon 10-Jun-13 13:50:01

I think that living by newly built HA is worse, because these days , in order to get social housing, you almost have to have serious problems. This , obvs, doesn't mean that everyone in HA is a nightmare, but lots are. I lived on a newish Ha estate, and...never again.

However, there are older council estates that I would happily live on, because they tend to have been in the tenants families for years, and when those houses were allocated ordinary low income families could get a house, so those estates havent become dumping grounds for families with enormous problems.

Sink estates have been created by the social housing sell off, and lack of new council homes. When my gp s got their council house, council estates were seen as the height of convenient modern living, and most were nice communities.

[FaithLehane](#) Mon 10-Jun-13 14:32:49

I live on an estate that is a mixture of social housing, privately owned and privately rented. The majority being privately rented. There are about 5 social housing houses (ours being one of them). Are most problematic neighbours are the ones who privately rent. Unfortunately we live in-between 2 privately rented house and both neighbours are fucking pains in the arse! Both are young male professionals with flash cars and they all play banging bloody rap music and drum and bass music ALL the time. When they're not playing music they're revving their cars and racing around the close at 50 miles a fucking hour! Funnily enough the quietest residents are the social housing tenants. (Although I don't tell my kids to keep quiet at 6am at the weekend any more to piss off the next door neighbours 😊).

[FaithLehane](#) Mon 10-Jun-13 14:33:09

Our not are

[FaithLehane](#) Mon 10-Jun-13 14:36:40

IfNotNowThenWhen ours is a new build estate, and as I said above the problematic residents are the ones who rent privately. They change tenants almost every year (been here 5 years now) and every single one have been trouble and totally inconsiderate. Being a social housing tenant myself I know that most want to keep hold of the secure tenancy so don't do silly things like playing loud music etc.

[CelticPixie](#) Mon 10-Jun-13 14:37:18

It's not uncommon sadly. I used to work in an estate agent as a teenager and the ammount of times people would be really interested in a property only to change their minds once they realised it was near a council estate was unreal. That and people asking in advance. "Are there any council houses near this?", fucking snobby cunts.

I know lots of people who live in social housing, including members of my own family and they are perfectly nice, respectable people with jobs who've never broken the law. Both my parents grew up in council houses as well and I will never look my nose down on it for that reason alone.

Incidentally my street is right next to a small council estate. We have never had any trouble from there, the trouble we've experiences comes from the private rentals and privately owned properties on our own street!

[HeffalumpTheFlump](#) Mon 10-Jun-13 14:43:26

I live in social housing, so am not being snobby. If we ever manage to buy a property, I personally would rather it wasn't next to social housing because of our experience with the completely useless housing association found here.

One of our neighbours who owns his propretv has had his windows smashed. his car ruined with blue paint. his locks superalued repeatedly and



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to the HA and the police, nothing has been done about this scumbag.

Sorry but that's enough to put me off for life. We are hoping to move because of our own problems with scumbag neighbour, but at least we dont own this place!! Nice neighbour is well and truly stuck because scumbag neighbour has ruined the garden, communal hallways etc and no one wants to buy nice neighbours flat!!

[FaithLehane](#) Mon 10-Jun-13 14:45:02

And why oh why do people in social housing ALWAYS sit out the front (when they have back gardens) I just don't get it??

Seriously? FFS! 😡 I don't sit out front at all, I also can't sit out in my back garden either because my ear drums would burst from the music played at club level by PRIVATE TENANTS on the estate. 😡

[burberryqueen](#) Mon 10-Jun-13 14:48:20

something i never noticed tbh.....

[Boomba](#) Mon 10-Jun-13 14:48:42

fucking snobby cunts

that sums it up nicely **pixie**

[Crowler](#) Mon 10-Jun-13 14:50:19

Snobbery? That's madness.

It doesn't matter how nice the people are who are living there, the estates are an outright eyesore. There's a reason people want Victorian or Georgian terraced houses and not 1970's tenement-block style architecture.

I must live near sinkholes.

[burberryqueen](#) Mon 10-Jun-13 14:57:23

i agree it is not snobby to notice that people keep broken washing machines in their gardens and have not worked for three generations.

[HDEE](#) Mon 10-Jun-13 15:00:10

I grew up in a council house, and a council flat was my first home for three or four years until I could buy.

There is absolutely no way I'd ever buy in a council or SH area if I could at all avoid it. It's true that the vast majority are normal families, but unfortunately there will always be one or two families in these areas who ruin it for everyone, and woe betide anyone who is brave enough to complain. It's easy to say 'complain to the council' but who is going to be the one to sit scared to leave the house for fear of verbal abuse, or worried to find the damage on the car every morning - will it need slashed tyres replacing, or just a window?

Also, it's easy to spot which houses in a development are SH. It shouldn't be, they should look exactly the same, but many will look uncared for. Gardens won't be tended to, there will be rubbish and furniture left outside, and meter boxes are often left open of hanging off their hinges.

It's not very MN acceptable to bash SH, but I wouldn't choose it over my private estate.

[HeffalumpTheFlump](#) Mon 10-Jun-13 15:00:42

Oh and it doesn't help that scumbag neighbour has dumped his old cooker right outside my lounge window. Why does everyone else have to pay for the council to pick these things up/ or take them to the dump and the anti social ones don't? The council still eventually take them away... I think those of us who pay are being taken for mugs!

[Lighthousekeeping](#) Mon 10-Jun-13 15:01:11

It's not snobby at all. Go and walk around some of the London estates on a night and see how long it s before you are crapping yourself. Why would anyone buy in to that if they have the choice? You would never beable to sell it for one. I have very close experience of this recently. It's a con building these lovely appartments so near to estates.

Everyone practically has advised the OP to go and see the area first hand as everywhere is different. That's not been snobby.

I was brought up on a council estate so was my mother. Half my family still live on it. Up North. Completely different to an inner city estate.

[Kneedeepindaisies](#) Mon 10-Jun-13 15:03:26

It's just the whole " You never know who might move next door to you if they're in social housing." crap.

As you said you had a horrible neighbour who owned their house. They are much harder to deal with.

propertyNIGHTmareBEFOREXMAS Mon 10-Jun-13 15:05:57

I would be wary. A friend did similar and now has scrambler bikes whizzing around her estate late into the night.

Dahlen Mon 10-Jun-13 15:16:21

Depends. I lived on an HA estate for a while and had no problems. My neighbours were lovely and the estate was generally well-kept. No real problems with crime or anti-social behaviour.

Less than 7 miles away, another estate was always full of litter and regularly had the police turning up.

In my current role I have noticed a disturbing trend for new builds to go to the dogs within a couple of years because of the anti-social behaviour of some of the HA tenants. This isn't tarring people on benefits, because by the same token I have seen older estates become better than ever.

I think the poster who made the comment about the age of estates has made a good point. Older, established estates are proper communities and it is well documented that social cohesion has a huge effect on the crime and anti-social behaviour.

New builds don't have that, and a combination of things like not enough social housing, stricter criteria to get it, time-specific tenancies and the bedroom tax mean many tenants will be transient and therefore never invest in their property or community.

ParadiseChick Mon 10-Jun-13 15:28:36

Maybe it is an age of the scheme type thing. I have elderly neighbours who have lived in their council owned house next door since it was brand new. They've never bought it from the council, happy to rent. That's not unusual up here and it's by far an inner city sink estate.

ParadiseChick Mon 10-Jun-13 15:30:18

PS We own our home and a garden that resembles a scrap yard - being approved a mortgage doesn't automatically give you a sense of decency!

I think my neighbour wishes we were social tenants - she'd have someone to complain to then.

Snog Mon 10-Jun-13 15:33:22

Whether or not she is right, and whether or not she is a snob, it will affect the resale value as she won't be the only person who won't be interested in buying the house for this reason.

Have a look at how the neighbours' houses are kept and try to meet them. Most places are close to social housing in the city where I live, but there are only a few streets that are rough/where you shouldn't leave your car/ walk alone after dark/ get burgled once a month. Look at the crime figures for the street.

TooTabooToBoo Mon 10-Jun-13 15:39:31

I love all these sweeping generalisations about all SH tenants.

FWIW, I'm the only SH tenant in a row of 4, my house and gardens are the best kept by far (with the exception of 1 neighbour who is on a par)

My NDN's front and back gardens are an eyesore, as are the windows - broken vertical blinds and never been cleaned (young, healthy, working family so I know they are capable of keeping things tidy if not pristine).

The only time I've sat outside my house on a sunny day (with a cup of tea) has been to keep an eye on my DD who was playing out with the other children, who's parents were also sat outside chatting.

So, no there aren't 3 yo's from SH running around til all hours. In fact, the youngsters who were running around unsupervised (as I mentioned on another thread earlier today) were private tenants.

You can't tar everyone with the same brush - you'll get as many scum bags in SH as you will in private rented/owned, they just tend to be further spread out in private houses.

Fluffycloudland77 Mon 10-Jun-13 15:43:29

When we went house hunting Dh turned one house down because the houses over the road had bars at the windows.

Or Juliet balconies, as the rest of us know them 🙄

CelticPixie Mon 10-Jun-13 15:57:29

I'm quite appalled the snobbery on this thread. And that's what it is, snobbery. Yes some council estates are rough, but trust me I live on a street of private houses and you are just as likely to get dodgy neighbours there as well. We had drug dealers living opposite us at one point and, they owned the home themselves. In the early hours of the morning you'd often see mini buses full of people turning up on a "drug run" to get some "gear". Then early one morning there was a raid, the occupants were arrested and last we heard sent down for a long time.

At the end of the street lives a druggo, heroin addict I believe, who lives there with her kids and an endless stream of rough, dodgy unsavoury



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always there, usually kicking the doors down, as are social services to check on the children. She often has loud music blaring out till all hours as well. The house is owned and paid for by her ex-husband who is the children's dad.

So there you have it. You can have bad neighbours anyway, and to those sneering and saying that they'd never buy an ex council property. They are solidly built with big rooms and often very large gardens. You get a lot more for your money than you do when buying the boxes that pass for modern houses!

[treaclesoda](#) Mon 10-Jun-13 16:05:53

There is an upmarket new-ish development not that far from me, all 'private' housing, was thought to be quite a prestigious address. When it was built, admittedly at the height of the property boom, the houses cost around £200 to 250k. It has had no end of trouble. Several of the houses were bought by drug dealers and other criminal types. Many others were bought by investors as buy to let properties, and there is a high turnover of tenants. There have been gunshots fired through windows when presumably someone has fallen out with someone else. Several of the houses have been for sale for ages now, and won't sell, although that is partly because of the housing crash. But anyway, it's rougher than most of the 'rough' estates in town. So based on that, I wouldn't hesitate to buy a house near social housing, because you can get crap neighbours no matter how expensive your house or how 'desirable' your address.

[Justfornowitwilldo](#) Mon 10-Jun-13 16:08:39

It is down to the specific area. There is a notorious council estate nearby. There are others around the area that are well regarded. This is the one that everyone avoids. A large number of houses were built that border on this estate. They used the name of a nicer area a mile away to sell them! The problems are caused by the proximity to the estate, not by the social housing and part ownership properties that were built as part of the new housing.

There was low uptake on the part owned and social housing and, after the first phase of building was completed, on the privately owned properties too. Kids from the estate broke into completed but empty properties and had parties, there was a lot of graffiti and the worse it got the harder it was to get people to move in. They dropped the prices and now you've got mainly landlords and that first wave of people who bought off plan and have seen the value of their homes drop 15%+ and are stuck there. Many of the houses have car ports not garages and there's a lot of theft from cars and keying. To get to the anywhere on foot you have to go through the estate. After the first few times they've been harassed and groped by teenage lads most women give up. That's in daylight. No-one would try it after dark.

In contrast to that, there's a large council estate closer to the centre that has an outstanding primary, about 20% of homes now privately owned and prices that are the closest to those that have never been council owned of anywhere I've seen. In my area you'd be better off living on that council estate than in the new build private estate.

[Crowler](#) Mon 10-Jun-13 16:09:32

Drug addicts and troublemakers can't generally afford to rent alongside professionals in the southeast. Perhaps this accounts for the discrepancy. It's not really for you to say that modern buildings are better. They depress the house values. People want period buildings.

[ParadiseChick](#) Mon 10-Jun-13 16:11:55

Don't be daft Celti Pixe, those sneering are in ivory clad town houses or Georgian piles!

the new build development scheme a 2 minute walk from my place is soulless, the houses are poky with small bedrooms with no storage and stamp sized gardens. The people there go to the same parks, schools, shops, get on the same buses, go to the same fetes and community events as us. The only difference is they've got no room for a trampoline and are paying £500 a month more than me for the privilege.

[Damnautocorrect](#) Mon 10-Jun-13 16:16:40

The new build I bought 10 years ago, the houses were lovely, nice young families. The flats different story, drug dealing and police all the time. So based on that I'd have no problems moving next to the houses but would think hard about flats

[ParadiseChick](#) Mon 10-Jun-13 16:17:59

'Trouble makers' don't always have to be able to afford to rent in these areas to live there though do they?

They could be inherited homes.

I've seen that happen a few times. My aunt is in a world heritage site, the most expensive area of Edinburgh. Her neighbours were seriously from hell. 12 of them in a 3 bed house - not tiny kids either 8 - 28 really then mum and dad. Main doors broken, stair windows smashed, police raids on a fortnightly basis - truly awful.

She still managed to sell for £1.2m.

[TheReverseStitch](#) Mon 10-Jun-13 16:19:34

I used to own a house on a council estate, we moved just to get away from it, downsizing considerably to be able to afford to move away.

Where we are now it is all privately owned, with just a few renters, and whilst there is always the odd horrible neighbour they are few and far between.

had some horrible neighbours move in. Just 2 or 3 horrible, trouble families in our small street changed the whole feel of the place and attracted bad sorts from all over the estate to our street. What started off as a nice street quickly changed.

On the council estate for every hard working, decent, lovely family (of which there were many!) there was more awful families. It was a sink estate, up north with little to no employment. We celebrated when we moved away.

usualsuspect Mon 10-Jun-13 16:22:12

people who live in SH are just the same as anyone else.

They are not a different species.

Crowler Mon 10-Jun-13 16:24:11

Paradise chick that's true but they are in the minority so they account for fewer people's bad experiences.

ParadiseChick Mon 10-Jun-13 16:36:10

So you really believe the ability to get approved for a mortgage determines people's behaviour? Because that's what it boils down to!

TheReverseStitch Mon 10-Jun-13 16:36:49

They aren't a different species, they are the same as everyone else of course.

That said, some (like the rest of the general population) are total shits and living in an area populated by them can be very unpleasant, for the other SH tenants and any private renters/owners alike. Like in every aspect of life, one or two bad ones who are in the minority spoil it for everyone else.

Our neighbours on one side were SH tenants and had been all their lives, they were a wonderful family and we are still in touch with them since moving. They struggled and suffered with the scum families that moved to our street the same as we did. Sadly for them they couldn't just choose to move away like we did and had to keep requesting to be moved, which still hasn't happened.

Crowler Mon 10-Jun-13 16:41:38

No, I think a person's behavior would inform to a large extent whether they can get a mortgage. Important distinction.



Talk

Topics » AIBU?

to buy a new house next to social housing? (150 Posts)

plentyofsoap Sun 09-Jun-13 22:18:00

I had a casual conversation about a house we are looking to buy with a group of friends today. One who is a friend of a friend said it sounded lovely, but we would be mad to buy near those in social housing?! I once had a neighbour who caused me huge problems and she owned her house therefore it makes no difference to me. This was ignored by her. Am I missing something or is she just being a snob?

Crowler Mon 10-Jun-13 16:44:51

Not only a mortgage, but private rental in certain areas. This is not to say nice people get mortgages and bad people don't (in case that's your next comment) but being a professional is fairly incompatible with a host of antisocial behavior, on both the causal and effect sides.

CelticPixie Mon 10-Jun-13 16:50:43

Crowler, please don't talk crap. People don't get approved for mortgages for all sorts of reasons. Number one being that they can't afford it. As house prices increase along with the need for a hefty deposit it's becoming more and more common for people to go into rental accommodation rather than buying, and most of them end up in private rental now because there is such a shortage of SH. And what happens with private rental is that there is a high turn over of tenants with families rarely staying in one place for very long - mainly due to private landlords being money grabbing tossers. There should be MORE social housing!

MoodyDidit Mon 10-Jun-13 16:52:52

no dont do it op

i live in social housing and me dh and our dcs are right wrong uns



usualsuspect Mon 10-Jun-13 16:54:07

You think professionals don't take drugs or have parties?

You think they don't have teenage children who have free houses when their parents are away? And invite all their mates round?

Boomba Mon 10-Jun-13 16:55:11

Hahahahaha

usualsuspect Mon 10-Jun-13 16:56:01

,<hands Moody a can of Special brew>

Shall we sit out the front on the sofa?>

Dahlen Mon 10-Jun-13 16:56:47

Paradise - that's a bit of an over-simplification. It's not about having a mortgage or not, in the same way it's not about benefits or income or anything. It's simply about emotional/time/practical/financial investment in the house.

There is a link between how long someone remains in a property, their roots in their community and how well they maintain their house. They have a vested interest. People who buy rather than rent (BTL excepted), tend to have longer occupancies than tenants. Long-term HA tenants also have that vested interest. On established estates many of the elderly tenants remain from the days when it was the norm for all but the well off to live in council-owned property, when there was no stigma attached.

Many new builds simply don't have that investment of commitment because they have no history, so they rely on people's investment in the property. Those who qualify for HA tenancies these days usually have a significant 'need' in a way that wasn't the case years ago. Drug addicts, for example, will be prioritised over a couple with no dependents. If you get the single mother or couple who has been patiently waiting for a 2-bed house, you'll be on a winner. If you get the drug-addict who likes to move regularly to escape the bailiffs, you might feel differently.

There are no hard and fast rules. Every tenant/owner is an individual just as every estate is unique, but there are trends.

I would never buy a house on a new estate, whereas I'd happily buy from an established community. I don't give a damn about whether people own/rent work/claim benefits. I do care about crime and anti-social behaviour.

CelticPixie Mon 10-Jun-13 16:57:18

usualsuspect. I have relatives who would be considered professional. They own their own home in an area that is considered VERY desirable and yet their son still ended up in prison for drugs offences.... So indeed you are correct.

squidworth Mon 10-Jun-13 17:01:27

What this thread does show you that if you did need to sell the pool of potential buyers is reduced by how they view SH.

usualsuspect Mon 10-Jun-13 17:02:17

My sister lives on one of the most expensive streets in my city.

She lives opposite a notorious drug dealer.

Nice MC drug dealers are just the same as SH drug dealers.

Boomba Mon 10-Jun-13 17:04:44

For those advising OP take a look at the area first....shes BUYING A HOUSE!!

I reckon she's had a look at it, don't you

MoodyDidIt Mon 10-Jun-13 17:04:50

ha usual 🤔

<chinks can of SB>

Boomba Mon 10-Jun-13 17:18:16

S'funny, poor people 'sit out front' and its common and distasteful. MC folk sit outside and its a laaverly community

Blueskiesandbuttercups Mon 10-Jun-13 17:31:44

I think you'd be utterly bonkers.

Where we live there has been a new estate built with social housing amongst a range of properties(some not cheap)all fine and dandy except the council have been moving problem families from elsewhere into the social housing.Some have dreadful problems and other residents are suffering.

Unfortunately when you sell you have to declare any neighbour disputes so some are going to experience a drop in value.

In the name of pc obviously we'd all say it wouldn't bother us but really unless you're loaded and can cope with losing money and stress I wouldn't take the risk.Also if I was to spend £350 k on a house I'd kind of like to have a peaceful life.

I have a friend a few streets down who was in social housing with neighbours from hell,the council were utterly pants so they had to go into private rental even though they couldn't afford it.

TheReverseStitch Mon 10-Jun-13 17:40:56

Blueskies Our council was useless with the problems on our street too, I doubt that is a rare problem sadly.

Unfortunatelyanxious Mon 10-Jun-13 17:44:23

Message withdrawn at poster's request.

Lighthousekeeping Mon 10-Jun-13 17:44:34

What can they do when there's gangs roaming the streets of the estates? The police are no better. I think some people on here are viewing council estates through rose tinted specs or else they are very lucky not to live opposite one of the roughest ones in London. I bet the helicopters don't keep them awake on a night.

usualsuspect Mon 10-Jun-13 17:48:37

OP is not talking about London.

Not everyone on MN lives in London.

CelticPixie Mon 10-Jun-13 17:56:37

Usual, for a lot of Southerners, the UK ends on the outskirts of London don't you know? ;)

TheReverseStitch Mon 10-Jun-13 17:58:52

Lighthouse Yes, that's what I think too about rose tinted specs. Anyone who won't acknowledge that there are some awful people and families in SH have never lived where I was living.

I know awful, aggressive, antisocial, criminal neighbours can be found even in the nicest areas but you are far more likely to find a concentration of them in SH than in a privately owned area, that is just the reality of it.

When we lived there it was stress, violence and threats daily. The children were feral and the adults were usually under the influence. It was quiet in the mornings, but they were out in the streets until very late and nights were scary at times. By that I mean scary for all the non-scummy residents, both in SH and in privately owned, we were all equally scared.

Justfornowitwilldo Mon 10-Jun-13 17:59:16

New builds are more vulnerable because they're a blank canvas. You have no idea what kind of community will develop. You can go to an existing estate and see what the place is like, but you have no idea what a place that is currently a building site and will become 300 homes will be like.

The issue with the council deciding to use one location to rehouse known problem tenants is serious. Everyone has the odd bad neighbour but ending up with a cluster of them moved in next door because they were bad neighbours is unique to social housing.

TheReverseStitch Mon 10-Jun-13 18:01:14

YY to this

"The issue with the council deciding to use one location to rehouse known problem tenants is serious. Everyone has the odd bad neighbour but ending up with a cluster of them moved in next door because they were bad neighbours is unique to social housing"

They move them to another area and they just continue to cause all the same problems in their new area and everyone else suffers for it.

usualsuspect Mon 10-Jun-13 18:03:27

If a problem family are evicted from SH for anti social behaviour, they usually end up in a private let.

So to say they are all housed together on one estate is bollocks.

pipsqueakz Mon 10-Jun-13 18:03:41

Unfortunately you get anti social behaviour anywhere you go. Whether people are in social housing or not. It can be frustrating too. I was in social housing but was a responsible tenant. The people around me neighbours drove me out and now private rent. There are two social housing rents in our cul-de-sac but there no trouble single mums who work full time. Just research the area before you take any decisions.

TheReverseStitch Mon 10-Jun-13 18:06:42

Usual No, not all trouble families are in SH, some get rehomed in private or even in B&Bs, but there is a concentration of them in SH areas compared to non-SH areas. I don't see how you can deny that really.

I have lived on 3 different council estates, in 2 different cities and this has been true of all of them.

Justfornowitwilldo Mon 10-Jun-13 18:09:29

Often when they build new build estates they're building them on greenbelt on the outskirts of a town. They're often not in an area that people want to be in, close to family and friends, close to public transport, walking distance to shops, close to primary schools etc so the social housing in them isn't considered very desirable. The HA still have to fill it. It tends to be 3 bed minimum and nowadays commonly spread over 3 stories, so you're ruling out older people and young families.

Crowler Mon 10-Jun-13 18:09:48

Blimey, seems like an awful lot of willful ignorance on this thread.

Of course professionals have parties and of course there are professionals who are assholes. But if I had to take my luck with the neighbors, I'd rather they were employed than unemployed.

NettoSuperstar Mon 10-Jun-13 18:10:21

Justfornow, has a good point.

I live in an HA flat, most of them here are owned, the HA are very careful about who they put in here because of that. It's also opposite the Police Station!

My friend moved into a new build HA house a few years ago, it's on a scheme on a brand new street.

It's not rough and awful as such, ut you wouldn't uy there, whereas you'd uy where I live, and pay over the odds for it!

You need to visit at all times of day and night, and in all weathers.

(Sorry, the key to the right of the V on my keyoard is not working)

Justfornowitwilldo Mon 10-Jun-13 18:13:28

I'm sorry to break it to you but there are families who are are total nightmares who are moved rather than formally evicted because it's an easier process for the council.

usualsuspect Mon 10-Jun-13 18:15:12

Yes lots of wilful ignorance.

Do you think all people who live in SH are unemployed?

Boomba Mon 10-Jun-13 18:23:34

Which is fair enough **crowler**. And that makes you a snob. Which was the point being made and argued

you'd rather take your chances with the employed, than the unemployed

Righto 😏

Does that extend to MC stay at home mums I wonder?

Justfornowitwilldo Mon 10-Jun-13 18:28:55

That would be a stupid thing to think **Usual**.

The reverse is true though. Most people who are long term unemployed are living in social housing. They couldn't afford to live elsewhere. This includes areas of economic deprivation where there isn't employment but it also includes those who are heavy drinkers/substance abusers who lead chaotic lifestyles and can't hold down a job. People living like that are very unlikely to be simultaneously managing mortgage payments.

Crowler Mon 10-Jun-13 18:32:32

Social housing has much higher concentrations of unemployed people, obviously.

I think you're being a bit disingenuous about the social ills that stem from unemployment vs voluntary SAHM-hood.

Owllady Mon 10-Jun-13 18:33:34

my MIL and Gran live in social housing and it doesn't matter whether they worked or not, they are nice people in lovely **homes** and they both live in nice communities. they still know their neighbours 😊 who they get on with 😊

Owllady Mon 10-Jun-13 18:33:56

they don't live together btw
what weird set up

TheReverseStitch Mon 10-Jun-13 18:38:07

No, I said earlier that on the sink estate I lived on last there were plenty of decent and hard working people on the estate, both employed and unemployed and a mixture of private owner-renters and SH tenants.

But that said, there was a much higher concentration of unemployed, very undesirable people on that estate than you would find in your average non-SH street.

There is no generalisation that fits them all. You can't say they are all unemployed, or they are all scummy because they aren't. There were lovely families doing their best for them and their children.

But you can't pretend, or expect others to agree with you, that these awful families don't occur in a higher concentration in SH than in non-SH areas, it is just the way it is.

These awful families exist. They exist in lovely, naice MC areas. They exist in your average run of 2-bed terraces. They exist in apartment blocks. Sadly, crappy antisocial people exist everywhere and in all walks of life but there is a higher proportion of them found in SH than in non-SH. That is just the reality of the situation.

usualsuspect Mon 10-Jun-13 18:39:49

Look cut to the chase, you don't want want to live or associate with people like me who live on CE.

Fair enough I don't want to live near people who look down their nose at me either.

So everyone's happy.

[plentyofsoap](#) Mon 10-Jun-13 18:41:17

Well I have just been with dh again to have a closer look. The houses appear to be extremely well kept and there was not a lawn sofa in sight. I have spoken with the neighbours who privately own their house and they state that they have had no problems at all with either noise or anti-social behaviour. They appear to be 2-3 bedroom houses and some bungalows. I will go back at night and the weekend.

[Justfornowitwilldo](#) Mon 10-Jun-13 18:43:04

Agree totally **Owllady**. Being unemployed doesn't make people bad neighbours. There are some things that make people both unemployed and bad neighbours like heavy drinking/temper issues/being a wanker, but their unemployment is a result of their behaviour not the cause of it.

[TheReverseStitch](#) Mon 10-Jun-13 18:43:32

Owl The crucial thing you mentioned is that they are nice people, the people I am referring to are not nice people. They are rude, aggressive, threatening, sometimes substance abusing, sometimes prostituting, sometimes drug dealing people. They aren't the ones we are talking about.

In my experience, most people on a council estate are good people doing their best for their families. Then there are the scum who ruin the entire neighbourhood with continual antisocial and criminal behaviour. They are in the minority but they can take a nice community and ruin it. I saw it happen, I moved into a SH estate onto a nice street. Within 6 months, we had 3 new families moved into the street that I since found out from the housing manager were moved because of their behaviour elsewhere, and the street was a war zone.

[TheReverseStitch](#) Mon 10-Jun-13 18:45:51

Usual I was a person like you on a CE. I have rented and owned in a CE, I know people judged me for it too.

The difference is that I'm happy to accept that most were good, honest people but that the area was ruined by a minority of scum.

That said, would I put my money into a house on or near a SH estate ever again?

Fuck no!

[Owllady](#) Mon 10-Jun-13 18:47:16

Can I tell you something, maybe not completely unrelated to this thread but I live in a privately rented house opposite some pillars of the community the house is £££ and I assume their business is too

They have verbally abused my daughter who is severely disabled in the street, they have verbally abused me and my husband in the street

Having money does not in any way make people nicer. In some ways it makes these 'nasty' 'not nice people' think they are more powerful

They don't have issues with drugs or alcohol, as far as I know.

[Owllady](#) Mon 10-Jun-13 18:48:13

my rented house is worth about 500k, if that helps set the scenario <sigh>

[Justfornowitwilldo](#) Mon 10-Jun-13 18:49:18

YY to how quickly it can change. When a 'problem' family moves in the ordinary people move out and within 2 years a street can go from being desirable to last resort.

[TheReverseStitch](#) Mon 10-Jun-13 18:50:09

Owl Like I said, shitty people exist in all walks of life!

[Blueskiesandbuttercups](#) Mon 10-Jun-13 18:50:51

Plenty it may be ok now but if the council decide to move problem families in from elsewhere it may not stay ok.

It isn't just your house value that could plummet but quality of services eg our local school is feeling the hit.

We don't live in London. There are serious social issues everywhere.

[Justfornowitwilldo](#) Mon 10-Jun-13 18:54:24

You get arsehole neighbours everywhere. That's a given. You're more likely to get a specific type of arsehole neighbour in social housing because their behaviour also limits their ability to make enough to pay private rent or a mortgage.

Some of the worst stories of long term harassment in the papers, particularly involving verbal abuse and vile letters, seem to involve the kind of

people you'd expect to find are JPs. Some of them have been.

Owllady Mon 10-Jun-13 18:56:56

I meant to say their house is worth about 1.5 mill, not that it matters but they are honestly the worst sort of people I have had to deal with, though I have managed to deal with them better - in all honesty. They haven't been violent

Justfornowitwilldo Mon 10-Jun-13 19:03:54

I'm sorry you've had to deal with people like that. I hope the abuse has stopped.

Crowler Mon 10-Jun-13 19:07:15

Owllady, although your point is taken that wealthy people can be assholes (of course)- no one was making any generalizations about any one person. More the case that when you reach a critical mass of unemployed people, it is extremely bad - and this is what's happening in a lot of estates these days. It's not the golden era of public housing.



Talk

Topics » Property/DIY

Why don't builders in the UK build houses with a basement and 3 floors? (18 Posts)

SirChenjin Tue 13-Aug-13 18:00:23

Drove past yet another insipid new housing development that is being ~~thrown up~~ built and as always, the houses are teeny and only 2 floors. I know that land is at a premium around here, so why don't builders in the UK build bigger houses over the same sized patch of land by building a basement and a 3rd floor? 😊

EagleRay Tue 13-Aug-13 18:06:44

I live in a house with 4 floors, including a basement and I love it (it's not huge, just tall and narrow/shallow). I get quite depressed when I see new builds as they're generally uninspiring and would love to see some more radical/intelligent stuff being built. However, my house is on a hill (it slopes down away from the house), hence the basement being there - not sure how it would work on most houses. Also, I think the amount of stairs would drive most people nuts!

I think digging downwards is quite expensive too? And I must admit my basement is damp in parts, but at the same time it's lovely and cool when the weather is hot.

Periwinkle007 Tue 13-Aug-13 18:07:24

i expect it will be because it will cost them more, take them longer and be more effort. I agree though - the dimensions of modern houses, lower ceilings etc frustrate me.

SirChenjin Tue 13-Aug-13 18:09:34

I'm sure cost comes into it, but building in this way seems to occur in other countries - so why not the UK? I wonder if we're too accepting of tiny, overpriced new builds?

kelda Tue 13-Aug-13 18:11:15

The lack of basement is probably due to the water table. I live in a town where all houses have basements, and they have to pump out millions of liters first before they can build them. They everyone wonders why their cellars get flooded.

Don't know why houses aren't taller.

FruitSaladsNotPudding Tue 13-Aug-13 18:11:17

I suppose because people in this country are prepared to put up with cramped, cheaply built homes. I think making self build a practical option would help. I'm sure I read somewhere that about 40% of houses on the continent are self build, although I'm not sure how true that is. But if people has the option of building their own place, it would raise the bar.

lamnormalish Tue 13-Aug-13 18:11:47

We are - I read somewhere we live in some of the smallest housing square footage wise in Europe.

thegraduand Tue 13-Aug-13 19:06:52

They are building lots of houses round here with 3 floors, to be honest I don't like them and they are a pain. They have gone for a funny like townhouse design, they don't look family friendly

SirChenjin Tue 13-Aug-13 19:06:59

I read that too lamnormalish 😊. That's interesting about the water table, I hadn't thought of that.

What to we need to do to get house builders to change, I wonder? Self build is a great idea, but with land the price it is it seems that only the developers can oafford it

TerribleTantrums Tue 13-Aug-13 19:15:50

A lot of countries have houses with basements because it gets so cold that they have to have deeper foundations, so it doesn't make much

I'm not keen on tall, thin houses personally. There are quite a lot of 3 and 4 storey houses where I used to live in East London, and I preferred being in a flat. In those tall houses everything that you need seems to be on a different floor, and if you have DC you are forever returning things that they have moved.

CanadianJohn Tue 13-Aug-13 19:17:11

I'm not sure about the water table problem... in Canada, almost all houses have a basement, and most new houses are guaranteed for 50 years against water seeping into the basement, so they must have got the sealing worked out.

As regards cost, surely in England the builder has to dig down at least 4' (1.3 m) for the footings and foundations, so what's the problem in digging an extra few centimeters? Again, in Canada, most houses are raised off the ground a couple of feet (60cm) so the basement is about 3/4 below ground level, which allows for small windows in the basement.

Often, inexpensive new-build homes have the basement unfinished - that is, concrete floor and insulated walls, but no wallboard, and the ceiling is unfinished. The basement can be used as-is for the furnace, hot water tank, washer/dryer, storage, or as a kids playroom.

Or, of course, you can have someone finish the basement, or do it yourself.

FairPhyllis Tue 13-Aug-13 19:20:14

I think part of it is that we are putting up with poorly designed homes, but having a basement is also not as simple as digging down - everyone I know in the US who has one has to have and maintain a sump pump because the foundations of the house are generally below the water table.

Even in the US they are not generally used as regular living space - they tend to be used as dens/dumping grounds for most people I think. Some people convert them and rent them out - I would hate to live in one full time as there is very little light in them. Then you have the problem of complying with fire regs if it is being used as regular living space.

Parietal Tue 13-Aug-13 19:25:01

Houses are probably only 2 floors because of planning permission. Get the planners to approve 3 story houses & I'm sure the builders would love to put them up - sell for more with not much more work.

Xmasbaby11 Tue 13-Aug-13 19:27:37

I know quite a lot of 3 storey new builds around where I live. They are still bland, and involve a lot of stairs. They always have lots of bathrooms.

TheWookiesWife Tue 13-Aug-13 19:30:41

we need to get a celeb on the case ! any got Kevin McClouds number ?!?! he could do for homes what Hugh FW did for fish !

breatheslowly Tue 13-Aug-13 19:34:16

3 storey houses aren't as attractive to most buyers as 2 storey houses with the same sq footage. In 3 storey houses round here you either get the odd townhouse layout without all of the reception rooms on the ground floor or you have the reception room and kitchen space of a 3 bed but with 5 beds above. Most families aren't huge, so prefer more reception room space rather than bedroom once they have enough bedrooms. Locally 3 storey houses mean sloping roofs and veluxes/dormer windows and no loft, so not enough storage. And all of that is if you can get planning permission for 3 storeys as mostly you can't build higher than the other local buildings.

BikeRunSki Tue 13-Aug-13 19:36:08

Lots of 3 storey new builds around here. The historical style as it were is weaver's cottages with big open too floors, so there is a precedent for 3 floors. Basements are difficult and costly to engineer, as has been mentioned. Canafa has also been mentioned, but many parts of Canada are permafrost environment, so groundwater is not such an issue. Third floors also require bigger/ deeper foundations, possibly a more costly type of foundation construction, and also fall under much stricter fire regulations - eg escape systems, sprinklers on third or higher floors, all of which adds cost.

SirChenjin Tue 13-Aug-13 19:37:53

Sadly I don't have Kevin McCloud's number - wish I did, and not just for the purposes of this thread 🙄

I'm not so keen on some of the self build monsters on Grand Designs - I think too many of them look like civic amenities - but surely to goodness we could build more attractive, spacious housing and make better use of the land we have in the UK without encroaching on the valuable, remaining green space (which, in the central belt of Scotland here is disappearing fast)



Talk

Topics » AIBU?

To think my uncles neighbour can't build houses in his garden?! (42 Posts)

[SodaFountain](#) Tue 30-Jul-13 13:41:37

My aunt & uncle are retired and live in a quiet country road & have a very long garden. Their neighbour (a solicitor) has put in a planning application to extent his own house and build two more houses in his own garden... My uncle is devastated and obviously opposing it. I am surprised that the neighbour may be able to do this, any advice?!

My uncle did mention there were asbestos sheets in the garden (have been there years) which may have contaminated the land...

[Onesleptillwembley](#) Tue 30-Jul-13 13:45:07

If he gets permission then course he can. Why is your uncle 'devastated'?

[Seeline](#) Tue 30-Jul-13 13:46:07

It will depend on what the policies are of the local Council. However, if the property is really in open countryside, and not within a village it is unlikely permission would be granted.

If the property is within the boundary of a settlement as defined within the Council's Local Plan, new dwellings may be acceptable subject to certain criteria being met.

If you look on the Council's website you should be able to see their local policies.

[kilmuir](#) Tue 30-Jul-13 13:46:44

they need to comment on application with planning department. raise objections etc

[YouStayClassySanDiego](#) Tue 30-Jul-13 13:46:51

If planning permission is granted then yes he can build in his own garden.

[SodaFountain](#) Tue 30-Jul-13 13:47:13

Why is your uncle 'devastated'?

Because his garden isn't overlooked, it's quiet and peaceful and it will be neither if two large houses are built meters away from it, that is why.

[Shinyshoes1](#) Tue 30-Jul-13 13:48:56

Well unfortunately there's not a lot he can do about it if planning permission has been granted

[jacks365](#) Tue 30-Jul-13 13:48:59

It's common near me. A lot of properties with larger gardens have sold off land as building plots once they have the planning permission.

[MrTumblesBavarianFanbase](#) Tue 30-Jul-13 13:51:33

My parents are like this - anyone wanting to build a new house in their quiet village is the devil, and they are very outraged that anyone would be allowed even consider applying to do so.

Really though, people have to live somewhere, and if the garden is huge and there is room for 2 houses, and he does the planning application properly and follows the law and regulations, why on earth shouldn't he build houses in his garden? Perhaps because your uncle is more important than his neighbor, or your uncle's wish for quiet is more important than 2 other families wishes for a house to live in...

[MrsTerryPratchett](#) Tue 30-Jul-13 13:51:38

We have a massive and very worrying housing shortage. Unless there is a very good reason, I tend to think that NIMBYism is pretty much always wrong. This is already residential because there are houses. Surely better than out of town development.

I'm biased, I work with some people who have to sleep rough or have 8 people in a one bed. If not more.

[HatieKokpins](#) Tue 30-Jul-13 13:51:43

His land, and if he gets planning permission, he can do what he likes with it.

[LazyMonkeyButler](#) Tue 30-Jul-13 13:53:51

I can completely understand why your uncle is devastated. I imagine having two large houses overlooking his garden may not only limit his privacy but also lower his own house value.

I have lots of neighbours and 6 houses can see into my garden (if they wanted to). However, the other houses were here when we moved in. Yes, I would be annoyed if the 6 became 12.

Your uncle & aunt need to put a very strong opposition to the planning application in, otherwise I imagine the neighbour will be allowed to build on his land.

[MrTumblesBavarianFanbase](#) Tue 30-Jul-13 13:55:36

Lowering the value of your house isn't grounds for objecting to planning applications **Lazy** - limiting light and being able to see into your property from windows are though.

[LIZS](#) Tue 30-Jul-13 13:59:04

He presumably will be notified of the application and given the opportunity to object. How well do they get along with neighbours, has such a proposal been discussed before now? They should be able to access details of the application via the council website or view at the council offices. That will also give specific areas for objection (access, being in keeping, environmental issues such as established trees and the type of ground although maybe that could be decontaminated etc). Such developments are a current trend but often the applicant will apply, a little cheekily, for as much as possible and then it gets watered down somewhat during the process. However recently there has been a backlash against this type of back garden development so the parish council may also object or it may be felt that it doesn't fit the local development plan.

[DadfromUncle](#) Tue 30-Jul-13 15:40:09

My guess is that the type of development envisaged isn't going to do much to address the "housing shortage" Does that shortage even exist outside the London/SE bubble? In spite of the last development round here selling very very slowly (even before the crash), we're due for about 3000 extra houses on various greenfield sites because of central government targets. When we have concreted over everywhere and we all live in tiny houses with no garden and no parking with packed buses and trains and gridlocked roads what will we have gained exactly?

[LondonMan](#) Tue 30-Jul-13 15:44:27

If the neighbour does this, then the uncle should as well, and with the profit he can buy an even nicer house than his was before it was overlooked.

[xylem8](#) Tue 30-Jul-13 15:46:31

Any chancer can apply for planning permission, getting it is another matter!

[xylem8](#) Tue 30-Jul-13 15:47:34

'Does that shortage even exist outside the London/SE bubble?'

YES!!!!

[Whothefuckfarted](#) Tue 30-Jul-13 15:53:55

Someone on the road where I used to live had space in their large garden. They had plans drawn out for another plot plus house, got permission granted for the house then sold the land.

[MrsTerryPratchett](#) Tue 30-Jul-13 15:57:45

When we have concreted over everywhere and we all live in tiny houses with no garden and no parking with packed buses and trains and gridlocked roads what will we have gained exactly?

There's your problem. Houses. If we lived in flats with lovely outdoor communal space and lots of great, cheap transport, because densification means you can have this, we would be fine. People wanting a large house with a large garden, not overlooked, on a quiet road is one of the issues. This causes sprawl, expensive transport and services and a lack of space for everyone else.

[Justforlaughs](#) Tue 30-Jul-13 15:58:14

Lots of people apply for, and get permission to build in their gardens. Other people do not get the permission they require and will either need to scale back on their plans or forget about them altogether. It all depends on the local authority. Your uncle will have the right to object to the proposed development. If the development does go ahead he MAY be entitled to compensation from the neighbour.

[mrsjay](#) Tue 30-Jul-13 15:59:28

it is getting quite popular round here somebody built a garage and 6 months later it has been converted into small house i was 😞 also people are

selling their gardens to builders and they arnt even that big but the plots are costing a fortune, so yes he can do it but your uncle can complain to the planning department and stop the planning permission,

[LaurieFairyCake](#) Tue 30-Jul-13 16:07:59

Only 6% of Britain is built on.

We need a lot more houses.

[everlong](#) Tue 30-Jul-13 16:11:53

I know quite a few people that have done this.

Big garden - need some cash = sell land or build a house and sell.

Is be surprised if the neighbour doesn't get pp tbh.

[TabithaStephens](#) Tue 30-Jul-13 16:14:26

We are already not self-sufficient for food, water and other resources. We have enough houses, but too many people. We are already the most densely populated large country in Europe. How many people do you think we can fit in here?



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25 points (86% upvoted)

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25 Local people's views 'being ignored by planning inspectors in favour of developers'

(telegraph.co.uk) submitted 4 years ago by ParanoidPete

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[-] borez Geordie in London 15 points 4 years ago*

They put this turd up in Kensal Rise (West London) last year.

You can't really see it in the pictures but it's a sodding bright gold building in the middle of an urban street. It looks like King Midas just took a shit. Looks gorgeous when the sun shines. /s. We call it the Nugget.

At the time tons of people complained about the plans, didn't make one iota of difference though, it still went up.

It's basically a big shinny thing designed to attract foreign investors who will buy these £300,000 one bedroom flats (yeah, you read that right £300,000, for a tiny flat made out of cardboard) but never live in them thus pushing the property values and rents in the area up. Again.

Gentrification, everywhere in this area.

People are taking backhanders here, they have to be.

permalink embed

[-] CptES Scotland 14 points 4 years ago

There is literally nothing in the world that can be made better by being that colour.

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[-] NotMud 5 points 4 years ago

Certain types of omelette?

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[-] NotMud 12 points 4 years ago

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NIMBY!

I jest. Calling anybody who objects to a building or development a 'NIMBY' is preposterous and needs to stop. There are some seriously negative changes being made in both urban and rural parts of the UK - making money for wealthy people while shitting on everything and everybody else - that should come under more scrutiny. It's your responsibility to take an interest in your 'back yard' because otherwise, a toothless council will allow an exploitative developer to belch a gilded cumfart onto your street. Or worse.

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[\[-\]](#) [G_Morgan](#) [Wales](#) 7 points 4 years ago

Did they actually ask for smoke damaged pub finish for that building? It reminds me of the back room of the local working man's club before the smoking ban. 30 years of being painted by smoke.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [borez](#) [Geordie in London](#) 2 points 4 years ago

Ha, you're right, this turd is an eyesore in many ways than one I guess.

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[\[-\]](#) [BobLeeJagger](#) [Essex](#) 4 points 4 years ago

Probably one of those colour schemes that looked better on paper!

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[\[-\]](#) [borez](#) [Geordie in London](#) 4 points 4 years ago

Or done intentionally to [attract investors from places like UAE](#) where their own property market crashed spectacularly a few years ago.

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[\[-\]](#) [NotMud](#) 1 point 4 years ago

More likely they never bothered to print it out. Fairly sure that's a default colour in MS Paint...

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[\[-\]](#) [Rofosrofos](#) 4 points 4 years ago

an article.

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I used to live near this and it looks quite nice in my opinion. The prices are not really higher than the average new-build in that area either.

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[\[-\] specofdust](#) 1 point 4 years ago

Until we have a glut of housing and the price starts to lower it's going to be an attractive investment to overseas investors. When the house market does start to become sensible because we build a few million homes, prices will drop, and those using them as homes will be comparatively untroubled, while those using them as investments and buy to lets will take the hit.

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] dead-yossarian](#) [Scottish Borders](#) 2 points 4 years ago

and who is building those homes ? the developers arent going to build a shed load of new homes as then they will make less money , instead they going to complain how they cant build where the fuck they like and where will make the most money for them . Also if a shed load of homes are built who exactly is going to buy them ?

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] specofdust](#) 0 points 4 years ago

All the people who're currently unhappy about super-high house prices eventually, at first largely the wealthy, and investors.

There's plenty of market for new homes in the UK.

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] BobLeeJagger](#) [Essex](#) 17 points 4 years ago

There's a housing shortage and roughly 90% of Britain is undeveloped. Of that 10% that is developed, roughly 4% of that is gardens attached to homes and off street parking etc. Something has to give, and to be honest if it means homes are getting built I'm all for it.

source: IEA Report - <http://www.iea.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/files/Abundance%20of%20Land%20Shortage%2>

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Summary here: <http://www.iea.org.uk/publications/research/abundance-of-land-shortage-of-housing>

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[\[-\]](#) [reketrebn](#) 7 points 4 years ago

Does that 90% include land that is implausible to build on (e.g. fells and mountains and what not), or is it "90% of usable land" is undeveloped? Just curious!

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[\[-\]](#) [BobLeeJagger](#) [Essex](#) 4 points 4 years ago

Good question... and one I don't think the report answers.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [CA3080](#) [United Kingdom](#) 3 points 4 years ago

Parking spaces are the last thing we need fewer of

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [BobLeeJagger](#) [Essex](#) 6 points 4 years ago

Ok. But my point was that a lot of the developed land in the UK isn't even houses. It's other things.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [anudeglory](#) [Devon](#) 19 points 4 years ago

NIMBYS and BANANAS. That's why.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\]](#) [G_Morgan](#) [Wales](#) 17 points 4 years ago

It is hilarious in my home town. People agitated against a fucking wind farm. Now that plot is being used to build an incinerator. Got to love NIMBYs.

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[\[-\]](#) [CA3080](#) [United Kingdom](#) 16 points 4 years ago

If anyone else had to look it up:

Build Absolutely Nothing Anywhere Near Anything

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [\[deleted\]](#) 12 points 4 years ago

Yep, absolutely.

One of the attitudes that infuriates me is "wind farms are ugly and spoil the countryside but electricity pylons and phone towers are fine".

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [\[deleted\]](#) 15 points 4 years ago

I recall a few years ago on the news a story about locals protesting against a wind farm on the edge of the lake district and how it would spoil the view.

The camera panned left to show electric pylons and the M6 next to the proposed site...

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[\[-\]](#) [\[deleted\]](#) 5 points 4 years ago*

Yeah it's a shame. They get a lot of them on Look North whinging.

There are problems with wind farms, primarily the noise if you're* close

enough and the shadows. The way they look is absolutely not one of the problems. To paraphrase Stephen Fry: You only think it's ugly because it's new and you don't like it.

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[\[-\] mao_was_right](#) [Wales](#) 2 points 4 years ago

Their concern is that it will bring down property prices in their area, not spoil the view.

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[\[-\] \[deleted\]](#) 1 point 4 years ago

BANANAS?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] BobLeeJagger](#) [Essex](#) 2 points 4 years ago

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NIMBY#BANANA>

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[\[-\] JauntyVictorians](#) [The Potteries](#) 5 points 4 years ago

To be fair, not everyone is some sorta reactionary and a lot of legitimate concerns do get ignored. The Local Council here in Stoke intends to move its offices from the civic centre in Stoke to a new offices elsewhere. The ones they already have are fine and all the intended move is going to do is kill local business (a lot of nearby shops rely on the business of the people working in the civic centre). They want to turn the old centre into a 'science park' but why anyone would want to go to a 'science park' in Stoke-on-Trent is anyone's guess.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\] Xaethon](#) [Briton in Saxony-Anhalt](#) 3 points 4 years ago

Something similar is happening to Shrewsbury. They're closing the prison, doing things with the courts.

Specifically the prison, that provides a lot of support to the economy which is gone, as with many other things.

I walked around Shrewsbury high street and went inside the shopping centres, it was amazing how many empty shops there are from what I remember.

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[\[-\] twogunsalute](#) [Lestah to Cardiff](#) 3 points 4 years ago

I love it when councils think putting some land aside and calling it a "science park" means they're going to have the next Silicon Valley or BioCity on their doorstep. They need to do a bit more than that.

Leicester tried (though I'm not sure the council actually tried) to build a science park and after several years of nothing they're now letting Asda build a supermarket there.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] countlazypenis](#) [Kingdom of Yorkshire](#) 3 points 4 years ago

Yup, we just lost a patch of greenbelt to housing developers. Now my ageing dog has nowhere to go for walks.

The land has been deemed unsuitable to build on before and I doubt the houses will end up being bought.

permalink embed

[\[-\] NervousEnergy](#) [Welshman in Yorkshire](#) 1 point 4 years ago

Poor doggie. . .

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[\[-\] countlazypenis](#) [Kingdom of Yorkshire](#) 1 point 4 years ago

She loved frolicking in the grass. Now there's just our piss poor garden XD

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] Rofosrofos](#) 4 points 4 years ago

This is good news. The housing shortage has been caused by over aggressive planning restrictions that favour keeping rich old people that already have a house happy instead of increasing the housing supply so that first time buyers have a chance of getting on the ladder.

permalink embed

[\[-\] NervousEnergy](#) [Welshman in Yorkshire](#) 3 points 4 years ago

Its been caused by a lot more factors than just planning restrictions, and it will take a lot more to solve it.

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] specofdust](#) 4 points 4 years ago

Thank goodness, just what this country needs!

If you don't own the fuckin' land, then fuck off! This country needs a *lot* more development.

permalink embed

[\[-\] comune](#) 1 point 4 years ago

I thought Sherlock wasn't out yet?

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[\[-\] myndecho](#) 0 points 4 years ago

Good, people complain too much about new housing developments.

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38 Cameron vows to scrap requirement to build affordable homes for rent - PM will promise to tear up planning rules in effort to encourage developers to build more housing for first-time buyers

(theguardian.com) submitted 1 year ago by toomanyairmiles 155 comments share

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[-] toomanyairmiles [S] 55 points 1 year ago*

We need 150,000 new affordable homes a year, this is a plan for 200,000 homes in the next 5 years.

Fiddling while Rome burns.

permalink embed

[-] dystopian_now [England] 36 points 1 year ago

It isn't fiddling while Rome burns, it's a deliberate policy of ensuring that their voters' house prices remain high.

permalink embed parent

[-] dustofnations 7 points 1 year ago

Exactly. The situation has been allowed to get so bad that most people over 40 have the vast amount of their life's earned capital held in their property (with a view to downsizing and unlocking that capital when they get older, or move abroad, etc).

If sensible housing policy is allowed then it will radically depreciate their assets, leaving them in negative equity. There's also an irrational fear of house prices falling even though many folk are just moving within the same relative market.

So many people of my age and

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this post was submitted on 07 Oct 2015

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profession are (or are considering) leaving UK for places like Canada to enable them to live a good life with freedom from UK's distorted housing and rental market.

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[\[-\] jimofwales](#) [Cardiff](#) 5 points 1 year ago

Lol. You're in for the shock of your life when you get to Canada. This is a problem across the developed world anywhere that is worth living.

We have affordable housing in the UK. Come to Merthyr and you can buy a starter home for £40k.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] dustofnations](#) 2 points 1 year ago

We have affordable housing in the UK. Come to Merthyr and you can buy a starter home for £40k.

Wales is an outlier (and in particular places like Merthyr), unfortunately there are a number of compelling reasons people may not want to live there. Lack of job opportunities, language and cultural barriers, infrastructure, weather, etc.

You're in for the shock of your life when you get to Canada.

Actually there are plenty of properties available at what would be considered very reasonable prices in most of UK. A colleague of mine moved to BC and now has a couple of acres of land with a big house for not much more than the price of his semi-detached property, on a fairly busy road, in a reasonable area in North East UK.

an article.

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Needless to say, his quality of life has improved vastly.

Another colleague did similar, but lives in a more suburban area.

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] jimofwales](#) [Cardiff](#) 2 points 1 year ago

I have friends and family in BC and nobody thinks it's reasonable. The average price is \$632,000 (£316,000) vs £204,000 in the UK.

BC is huge too. So if you want somewhere that doesn't have a 2hr commute into Vancouver the prices get silly.

Canada is great, don't get me wrong, I've spent a significant amount of time there. There's a lot more space and if you want the suburban dream, big car, driveway and a bit of land then it's a better choice.

There are significant downsides too, it's no utopia. The winters are long and brutal (except in parts of BC). Huge commutes are the norm for a lot of people. Driving Young St around Toronto is a nightmare during rush hour. My auntie commutes 2-3hrs a day each way on that road. 10 days standard annual leave as well. No thanks from me. Overall I don't like the culture that much either, far too consumer based (and that's saying something from the UK).

I've got three Canadian friends who are desperate to come back to the UK

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and a few still here now. They much prefer it here.

Overall it's different strokes for different folks, but moving purely for house price reasons seems nuts to me.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [dustofnations](#) 1 point 1 year ago

That's not really a fair comparison. You're comparing BC, Canada's most expensive province by far, to the whole of UK.

Also, in my line of work, Canadians are paid significantly more in wages, which contributes to QoL. Thankfully, I can also work remotely, so avoiding traffic isn't a huge issue. I have quite a few data points on this due to colleagues moving out there.

In terms of culture, that's not what I've experienced. Possibly that depends who you know, who you socialise with, and I each province has its own distinct cultural differences. Also, as with all of these things there's a strong element of perception.

| moving purely for house price reasons seems nuts to me.

Again, I didn't say that. I would consider it as one of a mix of factors, which would include quality of life (as mentioned previously), pricing & quality, salary, my hobbies, etc. I actually quite like the look of Alberta.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [jimofwales](#) [Cardiff](#) 1 point 1 year ago

I only used BC because that's where you said your colleague lived. It sounds like you've done your research and that Canada is right for you. I love it there too, but could never make it my home.

I just get a bit tired of the 'grass is greener' attitude. I seem to be hearing a lot of people saying it at the moment and half of them have never actually been to the country their talking about emigrating too. This obviously doesn't apply to you. Plus your comparing Canada to the North East of England. An easier choice. :)

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [dustofnations](#) 1 point 1 year ago

| I just get a bit tired of the 'grass is greener' attitude.

That's fair, but I think the reason amongst my generation (twenty-something professionals) is that, despite working hard and having a job that pays above average, I can't see myself affording my own house for a long while. Even then, the proportion of earnings I'd put into it might not be sensible.

| comparing Canada to the North East of England. An easier choice. :)

Haha. I think the city I live in is pretty nice, but as with most of UK, housing costs are out of whack with earnings.

One colleague is moving to Barcelona after spending a few months there. So, I shouldn't portray CA as the only place to go.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [davmaggs](#) 1 point 1 year ago

Artic circle vs Merthyr. I think I know my choice.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [jimofwales](#) [Cardiff](#) 9 points 1 year ago

Tough choice.

One is a bleak, desolate wasteland. Devoid of intelligent life where hope goes to die. The other has snow and moose and shit.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [fuchsiamatter](#) [European Union](#) 1 point 1 year ago*

Are you sure? This is an honest question btw: I live abroad and have very strong connections to a number of different countries. In none of them is housing treated as the front-page topic it is in the UK. At worst it's treated as a practical problem to be tackled orthologically. For example, Amsterdam (where I currently live) knows it has a housing problem. It's been handling it by pouring a huge amount of investment into better public transport to bring in people from the suburbs more easily, building high rise buildings where available room can be found in the city itself and (because this is the Netherlands after all) creating new islands and extending the shoreline. Yet in the UK we're stuck at debating the question endlessly and doing (as far as I can tell) very little. And I honestly cannot for the life of me see why that is.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [davmaggs](#) 4 points 1 year ago

You are being daft.

Unless you bought the house this morning and 500,000 houses are built today not a single case of negative equity will be caused in or around the M25 by building. Pent up demand is vast.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [dustofnations](#) 3 points 1 year ago

I didn't say (or even imply) they'd be built today.

Building [at the rate required](#) of about 250k per year, would quickly reduce the over-demand - and the negative equity issue would become a serious issue for many people. The current value of many people's houses are overinflated by the undersupply issues rather than other factors (quality, location). There are exceptions in depressed areas.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [davmaggs](#) 5 points 1 year ago

That simply isn't an evidence based fact, its a conspiracy theory assertion for prices in and around the M25.

Legal immigration adds 330,000 a year, UK homes are very old and we have more single households. UK property has gone up well above

inflation so unless you bought today negative equity caused by new building isn't going to happen. Even a 10% drop only puts prices back by a year to 18 months.

It's just a Reddit meme that creates this nonsense.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [ixid](#) 1 point 1 year ago

| There's also an irrational fear of house prices falling

It's a lot less irrational when you've spent years paying mortgage payments on it.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [thisistheslowlane](#) 9 points 1 year ago

Every single mayor of London and leader has promised to build homes. Look at the track record. None of them could do it.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [wtiger46](#) [Greater London](#) 16 points 1 year ago

| None of them could do it.

None of them wanted to do it.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [thisistheslowlane](#) 7 points 1 year ago

A little from column A, a little from column B.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [dystopian_now](#) [England](#) 2 points 1 year ago

Follow the money

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [\[deleted\]](#) 1 point 1 year ago*

You are just getting off on these pithy one liners aren't you?

Care to actually add anything of value to the debate or are you just going to keep adding meaningless soundbites?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [jimofwales](#) [Cardiff](#) 3 points 1 year ago

You mean we can't simplify incredibly complicated problems into 1 line soundbites!?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [bearjuani](#) [Aberystwyth](#) 1 point 1 year ago

the higher the price of housing, the larger the profit margin on building. Shouldn't we be seeing more house building than ever if we followed the money?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [steakforthesun](#) 1 point 1 year ago

Building more houses helps to reduce demand for houses, pushing down prices, which pushes down the profit margin.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [bearjuani](#) [Aberystwyth](#) 1 point 1 year ago

right, but in the time between the profit margin being high and it dropping back down to where it used to be, more houses would be built. You can't seriously be telling me you think higher profits wouldn't motivate businesses to do more business.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [allofthethings](#) 1 point 1 year ago

The regulatory burden on house builders is pretty high, I imagine that keeps a lid on a lot of the potential competition.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [davmaggs](#) -2 points 1 year ago

Don't be daft. Its conspiracy nonsense to think that there's some grand plan to not build in order to prop up prices.

Ineptitude, planning and cautious developers are the likely cause.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [dystopian_now](#) [England](#) 3 points 1 year ago

Its conspiracy nonsense

Yes, it's a complete conspiracy to suggest that political parties deliberately reward the sectors of society which vote for them at the expense of others. Like 9/11 truthers or something.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [davmaggs](#) -1 points 1 year ago

In this context yes it is complete nonsense.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Putinfanboy1000](#) [Hampshurr](#) 2 points 1 year ago*

It's worse than that. We need 250,000 homes per year to house our population. I don't hink we've hit that figure since the late 80s.

So with the deficit in houses not built added to the 250,000 per year figure we probably need about 300,000- 400,000 built to make up the numbers.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [davmaggs](#) 1 point 1 year ago

Those numbers also don't include replacement houses for old stock either.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [NeeNorNeeNorWeehWeeh](#) 5 points 1 year ago

Three words:

Money, resources, labour.

Big problem in all three areas.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Putinfanboy1000](#) [Hampshurr](#) 15 points 1 year ago

It wouldn't be a problem if we hadn't voted in successive governments ideologically opposed to the state building social housing. Post war house building both public and private was around 300,000-350,000 per year. Since thatcher stopped the councils from building and sold off the social housing stock the building of houses has collapsed. The private sector has utterly failed to meet demand with increased supply as promised. If we want enough houses for our

population we have to abandon the idea that the state should not build houses. The state can build houses cheaper than any private building company. Which is a huge problem for greedy builders and Tories.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[[-](#)] [NoOfficialComment](#) [Suffolk](#) 2 points 1 year ago

| The state can build houses cheaper than any private building company.

Not necessarily in my personal experience of a decade designing and building social housing projects in the UK.

The bureaucracy is amazing and the standards required for government funded works exceed those required for market build housing.

Though I will also say the local authority planning system right now also doesn't help matters.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[[-](#)] [NeeNorNeeNorWeehWeeh](#) 1 point 1 year ago*

Let me just add a big problem to this...

A huge number of the social housing estates that were built post-war and particularly some of the 1960s tower blocks are having to be torn down and replaced at great cost. They weren't exactly great quality nor were they well planned. Ultimately a lot of these areas have turned into disrepair because they are structurally failing and don't conform to modern building standards. Add to that the social decay that appears in these estates and we sure got left a great legacy there...

The same thing happened to Russia post-war and particularly East Germany who went crazy building social housing. Sure you can ramp up production, but that doesn't mean you're doing a good job.

They might be able to build houses cheaper but they have no reputation for actually solving the problems that they purport to solve.

Edit: to add, I don't believe the private sector do a great job either. They are interested in cash return only. Perhaps we need construction unions like credit unions in the US.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[[-](#)] [omrog](#) 6 points 1 year ago

A lot of the tower blocks required servicing or renovation but didn't need to be pulled down. Their inner-city location and the fact developers will pay a fortune to throw up luxury apartments in their place is a bigger motivator. The council then displace the tenants.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[[-](#)] [NeeNorNeeNorWeehWeeh](#) 3 points 1 year ago

You can't comply with some fire regs without tearing the entire building down unfortunately. The office I was working in a few years ago had the same problem. They built flats on that (social and shared ownership housing, inner city) so YMMV.

Can you point to an examples of luxury apartments being put up on ex-council property land? Genuine question as I'd be pissed off if someone has been doing this.

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[[-](#)] [omrog](#) 2 points 1 year ago

Here are a couple I just found but neither were the ones I was thinking of. There was recently a big estate of tower blocks in London it was happening to. I think they're quite well known but I can't remember and don't know London very well.

<http://www.theguardian.com/society/2013/dec/01/woman-lambeth-council-home-faces-eviction>

http://www.vice.com/en_uk/read/sweets-way-resists-eviction-674

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[[-](#)] [NeeNorNeeNorWeehWeeh](#) 3 points 1 year ago

Thanks, appreciated. The first one was a housing cooperative and the second was a private estate. They were not ex-council property land. Bad job for the local council to get people into that situation however I will add.

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[[-](#)] [Larakine](#) [Yorkshire](#) 2 points 1 year ago

Isn't lend lease developing a former council estate in Elephant and Castle into luxury apartments? I think they're required to incorporate some affordable housing in their development but the numbers don't add up (compared to what was there before) and their plan is to segregate the affordable away from the luxury. I remember reading about the progression of that agreement and then development plan and feeling kind of queasy. Unfortunately I'm just on my mobile at lunch ATM so I can't source any of this right now, I can probably later though if you'd like.

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[[-](#)] [NeeNorNeeNorWeehWeeh](#) 2 points 1 year ago

That's a good example. Consider me angry now :)

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[[-](#)] [isyourlisteningbroke](#) [Plastic Paddy](#) 2 points 1 year ago

They are. That estate was absolutely huge too.

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[[-](#)] [hiakuryu](#) [London](#) 0 points 1 year ago

It's the Heygate estate and the Aylesbury estate, I was accused by some class war wankers on reddit for supporting their destruction. Trust me. It's worth it. I don't actually know ANYONE who lived/grew up/raised in the area who think these estates were good ideas. I swear to god it's all a bunch of middle class cunts who don't know what the fuck they're talking about and trying to be all "Fight the power man!". Fucking gobshites.

https://www.reddit.com/r/london/comments/31b6m5/carnage_at_the_aylesbury_estate_as_fences_are/
https://www.reddit.com/r/london/comments/31ajb8/carnage_at_the_aylesbury_estate_as_fences_are/cq0fwhg

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[continue this thread](#)

[–] [BenjaminSisko](#) -1 points 1 year ago

The fact they were becoming scum infested shitholes ment it was better dispersing their residents elsewhere.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [omrog](#) 2 points 1 year ago

That's a social care issue. Look at Balfron and Trellick. They were prime examples of bad tower blocks rife with violence and crime and they were turned right around.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [walgman](#) [London](#) 1 point 1 year ago

I'd move to trellick in a heartbeat.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [BenjaminSisko](#) -1 points 1 year ago

It's endemic in the nature of what you are doing in tower blocks.in my home town in northern Ireland we had many. The sad fact is you aren't just housing nice old ladies but unfit single parents who egested a baby to get a free flat. In my town a proliferation of this in several new council builds caused immediate social decay. Place ended up firebombed and destroyed and it was recently torn down. That's about 40 flats gone.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [omrog](#) 1 point 1 year ago

It's a difficult problem to tackle and having an entire street's worth of people in a small vertical space can exacerbate existing problems (like a lack of meaningful things to do). Sadly the short sighted thing to do is shove all the problem tenets together to keep them away from everyone else and that's when things get really nasty (the Dutch have taken this to extreme measures and shove bad tenets into a ghetto of repurposed shipping containers).

It's not impossible though it just needs special attention and accepting that a tower block isn't a street transposed by 90 degrees.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [BenjaminSisko](#) 2 points 1 year ago

It is difficult and there is no way to do it in an efficient fashion without seeming inhumane. Parents should be

docked of any benefits they might receive if their children are involved in anti-social behaviour (i think there were/are places in the uk doing this?).

At least where I live the amount of anti social behaviour from youths has become concerning in the last year.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[continue this thread](#)

[\[-\] hiakuryu](#) [London](#) 1 point 1 year ago

100% agreement, I mean we're still finding asbestos wherever we look into buildings from the 60's or earlier. Suuuuch a pain.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] terahurts](#) [Cleethorpes, definitely not Grimsby](#) 1 point 1 year ago

some of the 1960s tower blocks are having to be torn down and replaced at great cost.

One of the local housing associations is pulling down a group of tower blocks down the road from me as they are getting to the point where a lot of money would need to be spent in order to keep them in a decent state of repair. The plan was to move the residents out, tear them down and build some nice fancy new social apartments for pensioners. Only it turns out that they don't have to the money to actually redevelop the site because [no-one wants to invest](#). So they've spent a fortune over the past year encouraging tenants to move etc, still plan to pull them down but can't do anything with the land once they do.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] dr_barnowl](#) [Southern Poof in Lancashire](#) 1 point 1 year ago

Perhaps we need construction unions like credit unions in the US.

We have Housing Associations, but the government plans to force them to sell their properties at a discount in order to kill them off.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] Putinfanboy1000](#) [Hampshurr](#) 0 points 1 year ago

Yes some tower blocks are pretty atrocious, but the council houses built were usually of good standard built to parker Morris standards.

They are of better quality and size than modern new builds. The social decay came about largely to the mass unemployment that came with de industrialisation.

Obviously any new building program should be of high standard equal or surpassing new build quality and not creating ghettos. We have such pent up demand that there are millions of working class people that would Jump at the chance to live in a decent affordable home and not let it fall into squalor.

The private sector experiment has failed. We're living through it now, it refuses to match supply with demand whilst it grows rich in the process and everybody else pays for it.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] NeeNorNeeNorWeehWeeh](#) 0 points 1 year ago

I think you are slightly jaded. There are, at least in London, standards which social housing conforms to which are far greater than the Parker Morris Committee's standards:

<http://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Interim%20London%20Housing%20Design%20Guide.pdf>

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [isyourlisteningbroke](#) [Plastic Paddy](#) 1 point 1 year ago

How can the state build houses cheaper than any building company?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [dr_barnowl](#) [Southern Poof in Lancashire](#) 3 points 1 year ago

They can't. But given that they won't have to sell for a profit, they can sell them cheaper.

Or even *gasp* retain them, rent them out at reasonable rates, and use the proceeds to expand their property portfolio, just like every other landlord, only benefiting the British public instead of the 1%.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [isyourlisteningbroke](#) [Plastic Paddy](#) 3 points 1 year ago

But... but that would be helping people?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [steakforthesun](#) 1 point 1 year ago

The NHS is able to negotiate better prices with suppliers because of its size, I'd expect that the state would be able to do a similar thing with building materials.

Simplistic, but if one company were to buy enough bricks for 200k houses, those bricks would cost less than if 200 companies each bought enough for 1000 houses each.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [dr_barnowl](#) [Southern Poof in Lancashire](#) 1 point 1 year ago

Yeah, I've even said the same thing about the NHS itself - rather than accept all those PFI debts, screw it, the NHS is the largest employer in Europe, it has a budget larger than the GDP of Hungary or Bangladesh, why can't it set up it's own construction company, issue it's own bonds, own it's own debts?

The government agenda is very much aimed at preventing this kind of large state player emerge though - the whole "devolution" of NHS budget to Manchester will ensure that it's buying power is reduced.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [TakenByVultures](#) [Greater Manchester](#) 1 point 1 year ago

Can you elaborate?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [NeeNorNeeNorWeehWeeh](#) 2 points 1 year ago

Money - needs to come from somewhere and apparently there isn't any. No one is going to build a single house without being paid for the materials, the land or the labour.

Resources - need to be purchased and imported, quarried, processed/manufactured, supply chain set up and transported.

Labour - needs to be imported (there is no skilled labour here at all that isn't already being tapped) or trained and then they will need places to live compounding the problem further.

Then there's the question of what to do with the supply chain and staff once they've built it all.

It's way more complicated than "just build houses" which people are banging their fists on the table. That's plain ignorance.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [namewithnohorse](#) 2 points 1 year ago

There's plenty of money, plenty of resources (is that a joke?) and more labour than you can shake a stick at! The only substance lacking is political will!

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [NeeNorNeeNorWeehWeeh](#) 2 points 1 year ago

There really isn't. There are even shortages of timber and bricks at the moment which are driving costs up.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [hiakuryu](#) [London](#) 1 point 1 year ago*

Hi yoooo I see somewhere for me to chime in!

[/u/NeeNorNeeNorWeehWeeh](#) and [/u/scipolbored](#) are spot the fuck on. Not joking! 3 of our regular contractors are completely fucking snowed under with work, considering 2 of the contractors are guys who we took on with no previous work history and etc we took a massive risk on them and helped them build up their reputation and etc. So we have an amazing relationship with them, nope. They're working as flat out as they can except they can't because sourcing materials right now is a gigantic pain in the ass. This isn't equivalent to where you go down to your local B&Q and grab some cement and shit. We're talking about trying to find enough bricks to build houses and etc. Copper wire/pipes etc (even with the down tick from Chinese use) it's still expensive and bloody hard to find. At certain points in the last year I had to have a lead time of 100 days for certain materials to be delivered to me.

"Lack of political will" AHAHAHAHAHAHAHAH wow.

ok... lets look at my posting history shall we?

See [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).

It flat out isn't lack of political will it's 100% down to just not having enough labour or resources. Also NeeNor is right, construction is a cash heavy industry, unless you've got serious lines of credit most of the stuff needs paying for cash on delivery practically.

EDIT: Also tbh the idea of getting rid of socially rented housing. Oh god. NO!

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [jimofwales](#) [Cardiff](#) 3 points 1 year ago

Reddit and the general public are basically wrong about everything. I'm only really an expert in one topic and when it comes up on [/r/uk](#) I'd say about 99% of the statements made are completely wrong or a gross simplification which could get torn apart by anyone with above average knowledge of the topic.

Your post is an example of someone who knows more than most, proving the topic is far more complicated than the 'easy solutions' thrown about here.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [hiakuryu](#) [London](#) 1 point 1 year ago

Thanks, but I only know about it because it's the family business. My actual areas of "qualified" expertise (HAH! My degree was so worthless) are completely different.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Joeybada33](#) 1 point 1 year ago

Dunning Kruger effect.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [\[deleted\]](#) 2 points 1 year ago

With resources - house builders couldn't even get enough bricks last year as [it takes time for the kilns to be fired up](#). My Dad wanted to build an extension and even working in the building industry couldn't get the materials he needed.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [confusedpublic](#) 1 point 1 year ago

Isn't that just a result of low house building though? If there's no/low building of houses, there will be no no/low demand for materials. Start talking to companies about building houses in a year or two (not like the logistics of building 100k+ homes in a year allow ground to be broken tomorrow), and that will give them time to start producing the materials as they'll know there will be demand for their extra supply.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [\[deleted\]](#) 1 point 1 year ago

Sure, but construction as an industry is still very cash heavy - it still relies a lot on orders being fulfilled and paid for in advance or on delivery. What building company has the capital to go and place huge orders of bricks two years before a project, especially after a 6 year recession that many companies have gone bust or struggled to break even?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [confusedpublic](#) 1 point 1 year ago

It's a bit different when it's the government doing the order right? They can come up with the money/loan/whatever is needed fairly easily.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [\[deleted\]](#) 2 points 1 year ago

Depends on how the procurement is set up really. If they take bids from private companies to actually do the building (which they will do) and sign contracts with break clauses and performance clauses, etc. then it's a lot more complicated, and that also makes it difficult for smaller companies to take on government work if they don't have the cash flow available.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [davmaggs](#) 1 point 1 year ago

You've explained something for me. I've been after some basic concrete blocks and they are sold out at various suppliers. They are so basic I couldn't work out why they aren't available.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [dr_barnowl](#) [Southern Poof in Lancashire](#) 1 point 1 year ago

Some of the advances in using 3D printers to build housing structures are awesome. I've seen robots that lay brick walls as well, but they need a brickie to finish off the mortar.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [\[deleted\]](#) -1 points 1 year ago

This is 200,000 starter homes on top of all the other housing that will be built. Don't let that get in the way of your circlejerk though.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [toomanyairmiles](#) [\[S\]](#) 0 points 1 year ago*

Nope. He's proposing that instead of building low rent social housing he will redefine that requirement in planning laws allowing developers to build starter homes instead.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [\[deleted\]](#) 1 point 1 year ago

Yes but we don't only build social housing do we? It's 200,000 on top of what we are already building.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [toomanyairmiles](#) [\[S\]](#) 0 points 1 year ago

This is building 200,000 starter home INSTEAD of 200,000 social houses - so it isn't more.

Moreover the resulting change in the planning laws will result in the removal of the requirement to build social housing in every development, meaning developers can build a tower block in London, but satisfy their requirements by building cheaper housing elsewhere in the country - which is exactly what used to happen.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [\[deleted\]](#) 3 points 1 year ago

The current situation in London is ridiculous. You can't achieve a stable living situation unless you're poor or rich. The middle is

squeezed beyond belief.

£70k is a very nice salary but it won't buy you a house in London. That's insane.

Anyone making over £50k should be able to comfortably afford to buy. Period. Not at 5x income, at 4 or 3.5. The current situation where we pander to the rich and build rentals for the poor is insanity.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [\[deleted\]](#) -3 points 1 year ago

You're missing my point. You're implying in your first comment that they're only going to build 200,000 homes. That's not the case. They are still going to build those 200,000 just instead of them being for rent they will be 'starter homes'. They are also still going to do regular development of housing on top of those starter homes.

In your first comment you are implying that we are only going to build 200,000 over the course of the parliament. That is not the case.

As an aside they are also building homes at a much faster rate than Labour did in the prior 13.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [toomanyairmiles](#) [\[S\]](#) 2 points 1 year ago*

No, I'm not, you don't have a point, you have misunderstood what is being proposed.

How you get at the idea they're building more houses than Labour did I really don't know at all - you can't have actually looked at the statistics.

- Cameron is planning to build 200,000 starter homes for sale at a 20% discount during this five year parliament in order to meet a manifesto commitment.
- He will do this by altering the definition of affordable housing to include not just properties for rent, but starter homes. Meaning no extra property will be built, and developers can claim existing construction meets their commitment.
- This also means developers will be able to argue that their building a housing estate in Manchester meets their commitment to providing affordable homes in the home counties. In general it means developers get to make more money.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [hogger85](#) 2 points 1 year ago

You said we need 150,000/year (or 750,000 over the parliament) and only 200,000 are being built.

The 150,000/year figure that you mentioned is the total housing needed, even to house trust fund kids. So marchwtiputs is correct in saying that more houses than 200,000 are going to be built to meet that 750,000 figure. But you are correct that this is not 200,000 more houses, it is just 200,000 that was to be social renting is now to buy.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] toomanyairmiles](#) [S] 1 point 1 year ago

The most recent estimate of housing need and demand in England was published by the Town and Country Planning Association in September 2013 and covers the period 2011 to 2031.

That report estimated 240,000 to 245,000 additional homes would be required each year to 2031 to meet the demand in England alone. 150,000 is simply the amount of affordable housing we need to be producing in order to keep up with those being priced out of the rental and purchase markets. All Cameron is doing here is keeping up with a manifesto commitment he made as a repost to Labour's commitment to build 200,000 homes a year, he's doing it by altering a definition and not increasing the housing stock.

A total of 107,820 permanent dwellings were completed England in 2012/13.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] \[deleted\]](#) 0 points 1 year ago

I think you're just deliberately ignoring my comment now. They're going to build significantly more than 200,000 houses over the term of the parliament. I don't even know how to respond anymore.

And yes they did build more than Blair and Brown.

<http://blogs.new.spectator.co.uk/2013/09/labours-claim-of-being-the-party-of-council-housing-is-in-tatters/>

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] Ewannnn](#) 1 point 1 year ago

Nonsense. [Here are the housing figures](#) (total built on the right) from the [DCLG](#). The Conservatives are building the smallest number of houses since modern records began after WW2.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] toomanyairmiles](#) [S] 0 points 1 year ago

I'm really not, you don't understand what is happening.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] eldenv](#) [Greater London](#) 13 points 1 year ago

Urgh, this is such a terrible policy.

The encouragement to build more houses and make use of brownfield land is always welcome, and theoretically simply building more houses **should** help reduce the cost of housing.

Except it won't work like that because of the Tory party's (and tbf British people generally) obsession with home ownership.

These starter homes, capped at £250k/£450k in London are supposed to be for

first-time buyers only, but which first time buyers can really afford to pay that much? Saving up for a £25,000 deposit while being shafted in the private rental sector? Or even if you're living with parents, that's going to take a long time.

The people this will mostly help are the people that don't need help - those who will receive money from their families for a deposit. The vast majority of those who can't afford to buy a house now, still won't be able to buy a house under this scheme.

I think we need to accept that people are increasingly going to have to rent, and we need to see that this isn't an inherently negative thing. It gives you more flexibility to move, it means that the financial burden if something goes wrong isn't on you as a tenant. But there needs to be a better system in place to protect renters from agents and landlords who are out to fleece you. Rent controls aren't the answer but proper regulation and protection in the private rented sector are required as it is just obvious that this is how many more people are going to be living.

Except we'll never get this, as policies that would do that would reduce house prices - which is a sure fire vote loser for any party.

As someone in their mid-20s - help.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\]](#) [hogger85](#) 2 points 1 year ago*

The deposit was not even the big issue for us, we saved for 7 years and lived quite frugally. But requiring a combined income of £54-64k to get a 225,000 mortgage (3.5-4x) even though I have a decent job but my wife can only get minimum wage seemed impossible until I hit management at 32y/o.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [IanCal](#) [Manchester - City of Science](#) 3 points 1 year ago

Saving up for a £25,000 deposit while being shafted in the private rental sector? Or even if you're living with parents, that's going to take a long time.

If 250k puts you at "possible but would take a long time" then it makes sense that roughly that level is the *cap*.

So the *most expensive* ones outside of London are equivalent to a deposit saving of £350/mo each for three years for a couple. That's not a huge amount for a couple who think they can afford a ~£1300 mortgage.

A house at £150,000 and 10% deposit would be a bit under £800/mo mortgage and require a saving of a bit over £200/mo each for 3 years.

The people this will mostly help are the people that don't need help - those who will receive money from their families for a deposit.

People with more money are always going to find it easier to buy things. Unless you're advocating means testing house buying, I'm not really sure what you're proposing.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [hogger85](#) 2 points 1 year ago

you know if that is the cap that is what building firms will price the houses at.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [IanCal](#) [Manchester - City of Science](#) 1 point 1 year ago

Only if there's enough demand, and there are certainly new builds for under £250k, so I'm not sure why you'd think ones sold to a more restricted group

with less money at a higher price.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [hogger85](#) 1 point 1 year ago

These houses are the ones under the scheme wherby a developer **must** build affordable houses in order for their scheme to be approved. If the builder is already building the homes of their own free will I don't think it counts as part of this scheme?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [IanCal](#) [Manchester - City of Science](#) 1 point 1 year ago

I'm not sure how that's really relevant. The point is that there are new build houses built at a lower price than that cap, so why would this scheme *increase* the prices those style of properties are selling for?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [hogger85](#) 1 point 1 year ago

it wouldn't, but in areas where affordable homes are needed there was an old scheme that is being scapped that was better than the new one.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [IanCal](#) [Manchester - City of Science](#) 1 point 1 year ago

it wouldn't

Right, that's why I corrected you when you wrote:

you know if that is the cap that is what building firms will price the houses at.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [hogger85](#) 1 point 1 year ago

I meant building firms building under the rules/schemes where the cap applies I thought that was obvious.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [IanCal](#) [Manchester - City of Science](#) 1 point 1 year ago

So your argument is that the firms building under the scheme (which I think is just a requirement) will inflate their prices to above that set by anyone else building in the area?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Cueball61](#) [Staffordshire](#) 2 points 1 year ago

Even less, I can get a £160k mortgage with a 5% deposit at £700 a month.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [IanCal](#) [Manchester - City of Science](#) 1 point 1 year ago

Yes, though I've put in a 4.75% rate partly to account for potential rises and partly because it's the default setting on the site I used and I'm lazy :)

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [\[deleted\]](#) -2 points 1 year ago

These starter homes, capped at £250k/£450k in London are supposed to be for

first-time buyers only, but which first time buyers can really afford to pay that much?

Most I'd say. That's a very reasonable price for a home in London. What are they supposed to do give them away?

Saving up for a £25,000 deposit while being shafted in the private rental sector? Or even if you're living with parents, that's going to take a long time.

It really shouldn't be that onerous to save that much. A few years at most. Significantly less if you're buying with a partner which most people do.

It's comments like this that just make me think nothing will ever make you guys happy. You want everything to be handed to you on a platter. It's crazy.

Also as everyone in this thread seems not to realise this is 200,000 extra 'starter homes'. It doesn't mean they only want to build 200,000 over the next 5 years.

Except we'll never get this, as policies that would do that would reduce house prices - which is a sure fire vote loser for any party.

Completely ignore all the facts that's fine. They've built more in the past 5 years than Labour did in the previous 13 years. They've also done a huge amount to liberalise the planning process.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [\[deleted\]](#) 2 points 1 year ago

No idea about London, but the 250k for outside London is obscenely expensive for a starter home...

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Breakfapst](#) 2 points 1 year ago

That's not especially high for the south-east, I recently had my small 3 bed mid terrace revalued at £245k. It's stupid amounts of money, but it's not only inside the m25 that's massively over priced. It took my girlfriend and I 3 years of penny pinching to get the 10% deposit and fees together.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [\[deleted\]](#) 2 points 1 year ago

Suddenly I'm really glad I live in Nottingham. £130k for a well done up three bed semi in a nice area. Can't imagine paying double that.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Breakfapst](#) 1 point 1 year ago

I would have loved to move out of the south-east but the boss doesn't want to move too far away from her family so we had to stay local. It was pretty depressing looking at what we could have bought for the same money only an hour or so north.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Piltonbadger](#) 11 points 1 year ago

It has been worked out that a single person would need to be earning around £55,500 a year to borrow the £250,000 needed to mortgage one of these "affordable homes". £55,500 is twice the national average wage which is around £27,500.

However, a person earning minimum wage will need to work around 135 hours a week to afford this mortgage on their own, leaving around 6 hours per week to actually spend time in said house.

permalink embed[-] [toomanyairmiles](#) [S] 6 points 1 year ago

Let alone the £25k deposit, and the other expenses involved.

permalink embed parent[-] [Piltonbadger](#) 3 points 1 year ago

That would be the solicitors fees, having a survey done on the property etc.

permalink embed parent[-] [xenos pork](#) [Hampshire](#) 6 points 1 year ago

Yes, which for a first buy would be around 4k.

permalink embed parent[-] [Piltonbadger](#) 1 point 1 year ago

Perfectly obtainable, according to our PM and his henchmen.

permalink embed parent[-] [Toonshorty](#) [Tyne and Wear](#) 3 points 1 year ago

That sounds about right. I currently earn the national average and am looking to buy a house in a few years time. The most a bank will lend me mortgage wise is £95,000. Even with a £20,000 deposit that only gives you £115,000 - doesn't get you far, even up here in the North East.

permalink embed parent[-] [jimofwales](#) [Cardiff](#) 1 point 1 year ago

That'll get you a flat though right?

permalink embed parent[-] [hogger85](#) 3 points 1 year ago

but if you buy a flat, you can get less mortgage sue to the service charge or fee to freehold (even if as a flat owner you are a member of the company that owns the freehold)

permalink embed parent[-] [Cryptious](#) 15 points 1 year ago

So ... If they aren't building homes affordable enough for rent, how on earth are first time buyers going to afford to buy them?

permalink embed[-] [toomanyairmiles](#) [S] 10 points 1 year ago

Let alone put together a deposit. 20% less isn't really going to help.

permalink embed parent[-] [BenjaminSisko](#) 2 points 1 year ago

A lot of the complaints I this forum were that people on really good wages say £60k can't afford to buy. Perhaps it's aimed at them

permalink embed parent[-] [Ewannnn](#) 1 point 1 year ago

The government has a 5% deposit scheme for first time buyers as I recall.

permalink embed parent[-] [toomanyairmiles](#) [S] 2 points 1 year ago

You need at least a 20% deposit so on the houses Cameron is talking about you'd need £20k or £40k (London) if you use help to buy and £25k or £45k if

not. Impossible is still impossible for average wage earners.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Sir_Bantersaurus](#) 3 points 1 year ago

I am not sure this is a solution or that it will even work to the limited extent the Governments thinks (or claims) it will work. However the idea is that these homes would be sold instead and become affordable enough to buy. I think.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Possiblyreef](#) [Isle of Wight](#) 2 points 1 year ago

Sold and stay with the buyer for a definitive period of time as well which is one of the things that fucked up right to buy properties

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [rocki-i](#) [East Sussex](#) 3 points 1 year ago

How to fix housing crisis:

Build UP. 3/4/5 bedroom apartments in city centres, with service charge for maintenance and security so they won't end up as grotty tower blocks. Less land used.

Restrictions on adding bedrooms or extra floors to houses. A lot of the housing stock meant for ftb has been extended.

Tax land: housing developer just sitting on land? Tax it. Some landlord owning loads of property? Tax it. Tax it so it's not worth the investment. Use revenue to build houses!

disc: I am not an economist or a town planner or anything of any relevance

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Andythrax](#) 3 points 1 year ago

I heard that families will have to earn £50,000 outside of London and £77,000 inside London to afford any of these new builds.

That means young couples or families outside London have to earn 25,000 each partner.

The average wage in this country is just over 26,000. That is largely skewed upwards towards workers who have been in their jobs for at least a few years and largely towards the oldest workers toward end of the careers and down by those in work for less time and younger. Who are these Londoners and the young who can afford a house earning £50,000 a year to buy these homes?????

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\]](#) [WearsOddSocks](#) [Northamptonshire](#) 3 points 1 year ago

Why is it one or the other? Why can't we have both?

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Lanfeix](#) 18 points 1 year ago

Because that would cause house prices to go down.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [IanCal](#) [Manchester - City of Science](#) 4 points 1 year ago

In the key reform, ministers will change the definition of affordable housing to include **not just** properties for rent, but starter homes

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [PoachTWC](#) [Lanarkshire](#) -3 points 1 year ago

Land to build on isn't endless.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] beIIe-and-sebastian](#) [Scotland](#) 11 points 1 year ago

Plenty of brownfield sites or land being sat on for supermarket development which will never happen.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[+\] PoachTWC](#) [Lanarkshire](#) *comment score below threshold (9 children)*

[\[-\] TakenByVultures](#) [Greater Manchester](#) 2 points 1 year ago

99% of the UK's land mass is completely undeveloped - i.e. green. If we're not going to implement population control then something else has to give, probably NIMBYism and/or green belt protection.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] whatmichaelsays](#) [Yorkshire](#) 3 points 1 year ago*

99% of the UK's land mass is completely undeveloped - i.e. green. If we're not going to implement population control then something else has to give, probably NIMBYism and/or green belt protection.

NIMBY-ISM is just part of the problem. Another part of the problem is the infrastructure that has to go with that development.

I constantly see complaints about the cost of rent / property in 'Zone 1' or 'Zone 2'. When the suggestion of moving further is made, the counter is that the commute is too long and/or costly.

Nobody wants to live in a field that doesn't have a decent transport link to the nearest employment centre. Few people also want to live somewhere with few local amenities they want a decent pub, a convenience store, a good school, good internet connectivity etc). You then have the added complication of local government policy that is designed to discourage private car use, which means that road improvements to said new developments become costly and complicated.

Building on green belt is all well and good, but the fact that it is green belt usually means that said infrastructure is not prepared for a mass of development.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] TakenByVultures](#) [Greater Manchester](#) 1 point 1 year ago

Sounds like a self-fulfilling prophecy to be honest.

Nobody lives there, therefore there's no infrastructure there, therefore nobody lives there, therefore there's no infrastructure there etc.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] whatmichaelsays](#) [Yorkshire](#) 1 point 1 year ago

Nobody lives there, therefore there's no infrastructure there, therefore nobody lives there, therefore there's no infrastructure there etc.

Without a doubt.

But that's how a developer will look at it. A developer will want to build where it can sell. Invariably, that is on a plot that is within five minutes of a train station, with good links to the nearest employment centre, in the catchment area of a good school, close to decent

shopping areas and has been properly wired up by BT Openreach. We can all pontificate about how that's a terrible attitude for developers to have, but ultimately that is how we people buy homes. We don't want to buy a house next to terrible road links and a crap school.

It's easy to build on the very fringes of those areas, but that is not going to be enough. We're talking about creating entirely new villages, suburbs and towns - and that requires a hell of a lot of infrastructure.

Until we get to a point where local infrastructure can be delivered at the same pace as private developers, we are going to keep having that problem. But when we have a situation where it takes Leeds City Council nine weeks of construction (never mind the planning, consultation and tendering involved) just to remodel a T-junction to accommodate a cycle lane, I'm not holding my breath on that happening.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [TakenByVultures](#) [Greater Manchester](#) 1 point 1 year ago

Agreed. But I think this only adds weight to the argument that we need a state-sponsored mass house building program (with associated infrastructure), since the private sector simply aren't delivering in the volumes we need. Something similar to what we saw in the decade or two after WW2 would be wonderful..

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [dr_barnowl](#) [Southern Poof in Lancashire](#) 2 points 1 year ago

Not just houses, I think new towns might be worthwhile, designed from the ground up for a mix of light industry, service, and telecommuting. Walkable distances to social and retail centres. Good internet connections. Parkland.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [PoachTWC](#) [Lanarkshire](#) 1 point 1 year ago

The difficulty is, as you mentioned, existing protections for undeveloped land. There's not a lot of it made available for housing development.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [srStargazer](#) 0 points 1 year ago

over 70% of our land is currently in use, most of it taken up by farms.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [TakenByVultures](#) [Greater Manchester](#) 3 points 1 year ago

Yes, undeveloped, as I said.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [davamaggs](#) 1 point 1 year ago

Or flood plain, or in mountainous area or swampy or at risk from tidal erosion or a protected national park or near something dangerous or above geological/mining faults.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Dokky](#) [Yorkshire \(West Riding\)](#) 1 point 1 year ago

The large house builders will simply not build more than they currently do, especially with interest rate rises looming.

They want smaller companies to increase the number of homes they build, to spread the risk.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\]](#) [realvanillaextract](#) 1 point 1 year ago

They could be forced to build by LVT. Or indeed the state could build.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

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34 Planning permission for 'travellers' mobile home site accepted by my local council

(self.unitedkingdom) submitted 3 years ago * by [throw3876](#)

I'm using a throwaway account for obvious reasons - I post on reddit for fun usually, not for political/cultural debates, but I really thought that this needed to be known to UK reddit, any opinions more than welcome.

This isn't a racial jab at travellers, I know that the UK is seen as a culturally tolerant country, however there is a constant feel in Europe in particular that travellers are the one culture that to be a member of means that our government will tolerate your social customs in a way it would not tolerate its other citizens.

I live in a small village called Hambleton in the South, near Portsmouth, and we are part of Winchester Council. A few days ago my father told me that he was attending a meeting at our local pub for some reason he wouldn't divulge.

However on his return he was angry, when I asked him why he told me. In our very picturesque countryside village there is a large field, previously farmland, opposite the pub where the meeting was held. That field was requested by local travellers to use as a permanent location for their travelling homes. Winchester Council have now accepted and have given them planning permission, which means that within the next few months that field will be filled with possibly 100 or more mobile homes.

The locals are really worried, which is why they wanted to meet with a council

search

this post was submitted on 08 Jun 2013

34 points (75% upvoted)

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Tourists - please use [/r/AskUK](#) for questions.

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1140 · 356 comments

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representative at this pub a few days ago. This was not a racially/culturally discriminatory outcry, this came from past experience with travellers. About 4 years ago they set up illegally on a field not too far from me, which resulted in every house being targeted by thieves, including my own, they even stripped the local church (a very humble protestant building) of any belongings, including some of the pews for christ sake! They then destroyed the gravesite there before setting off on the road again, leaving all their trash in that field for locals to clean up. From my experience of this I do NOT want myself, my village or its locals to be subject to this again - to see an old lady crying outside her house to police that her engagement ring was stolen, or to see that someone defecated on my grandfather's grave really pissed me off.

They explained all of these fears to the representative - the crime rate will go up, recent history shows us that generally they have been a nuisance, plus other local residents & businesses in the past have been denied planning permission to build ON THE SAME FIELD, so why provide different rules for travellers? Plus there are NO OTHER AREAS where Winchester Council or any other local councils are providing permission for travellers to stay, so why target our little village?

Essentially the council's response was this - they needed to tick a box which said yes - their local actions supported multi-culturalism & diversity, they hadn't allowed planning permission in the past because of stupid environmental laws (building a new road onto the field would create 'danger to local traffic', the houses wouldn't be in keeping with the surrounding older architecture), yet apparently these laws are being ignored for travellers since it's 'a part of their culture and we should be accepting of their ways'. Plus

an article.

Try to keep a positive attitude.

This is the UK subreddit; posts that seem to come from people coming here only to attack the country in some sort of downvote brigade from another subreddit will be banned. Anyone cross-posting to other subreddits to gain support and upvotes for a certain point of view will be banned. reddit is not your personal army.

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representative was there just to say 'we're going to do it anyway, there's noting you can do, get on with it', another example of politicians & civil servants ignoring their people. Within a few months my village will now include a legal travellers site, and these travellers will reap benefits without paying any costs as usual - they don't pay taxes or help in the local community, yet they expect us to support the education & healthcare of their families, or support their privately run 'businesses', and the police will be hesitant to get involved with any petty theft or local brawls caused by our new neighbours. If we were to not pay tax, start a family-wide fight or rob several houses there would be a legal uproar, but the council will let travellers get away with it because it's their 'culture',. The local's hands are tied here - any reaction from their neighbours and it's them, not the travellers who will be prosecuted, since from now on the travellers are there LEGALLY, and we are all so nervous, particularly the pub opposite - it's been metaphorically condemned by the government for it's primary patrons to be travellers - known to be very aggressive!

So what does reddit think about this? I'm curious to see if anything similar is being allowed in your area, of if you agree/disagree about this being unacceptable behaviour by the local government. Any questions i'll be happy to answer.

EDIT: After going away from the comp for a few minutes I realised I don't want to sound like a posh, intolerant knob from an upper-class village. Hambledon isn't posh in the slightest - residents are very varied in background & I guess what you'd call 'class', houses range from very expensive to council housing, I myself live in a terraced house opposite one of the council estates and the neighbours all get along great. Regardless of this we're all in the same mindset about this.

please contact a mod.

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1140 · 356 comments

[Manchester Attack: Home Secretary Amber Rudd condemns US for leaks of shared British intelligence](#)

[\[-\] \[deleted\]](#) 10 points 3 years ago

A town I used to live in had one built on the outskirts. There wasn't really any problem from the camp and they paid both site fees and council tax. It benefitted the kids as they were able to get a decent education.

The only trouble came from some who would turn up for a fortnight in summer, parking on a sportsfield and destroying the fence to get in/out.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\] terahurts](#) [Cleethorpes, definitely not Grimsby](#) 13 points 3 years ago

Like you the town I used to live in had a permanent site on the outskirts. My wife lived next to it for a few years and never have any problems with the people living there. Her son played with their kids and there were no problems with increased crime.

I grew up on the other side of the town, and on the other hand remember travellers ruining the local beauty spots with fly tipped rubbish, being threatened with a beating for daring to walk our dog and my dad having his garage broken into and all his tools stolen.

Both anecdotal but the only conclusion I can draw from it are that some travellers are nice people who just want to be left alone to live how they want and others are utter cunt's who'll steal the lead off the church roof. Kind of like the rest of the population really.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] throw3876](#) [\[S\]](#) 2 points 3 years ago

It's great to hear stories like this, since my only experience with travellers has been very negative in the past, it's nice to hear of the positive experiences from others! Maybe the main difference this time will be that they won't be staying illegally?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] saggwell](#) 2 points 3 years ago

You've changed your tune hammyman, last week you posted a rant calling travelers "thieving pikey scum" I would link to it but it was removed.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] \[deleted\]](#) 1 point 3 years ago

Some are, some aren't.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[+\] 3 years ago \(3 children\)](#)

[\[-\] MDMA-zing](#) 14 points 3 years ago*

There's no point trying to deny prejudice towards Gypsies. *No one* would be campaigning in favour of setting up a Gypsy camp next door to them. It'd be better to label it some sort of 'culture-ism', or something, to avoid the current attempt to shame people into accepting Gypsies through fear of being labelled racist. The problem isn't anything to do with race.

<p>< > discussions in r/unitedkingdom x</p> <p>1140 · 356 comments</p> <p>Manchester Attack: Home Secretary Amber Rudd condemns US for leaks of shared British intelligence</p>	<p>out 5/6 times, and without fail the site is always a</p> <p>'s so disrespectful.</p> <p>ews because it promotes racism</p> <p>newspapers?</p>
---	--

I think you'll have a hard time campaigning. Because while everyone will sympathise with your situation, they'll just be happy it was your town and not theirs that's been lumped with this - so why would they rock the boat :/

I guess the best thing your town could do would be to come together and hire a lawyer (or something) to see if there's some legal loophole or action you can take?

permalink embed

[\[-\] throw3876](#) [S] 4 points 3 years ago

I'd have a feeling that the newspapers wouldn't want to publicise this for that very reason, the same reason why the police are always very hesitant to get involved - they get very nervous when the offender claims that another is being racist when that isn't the intention at all, but a loaded statement like racism can never be ignored!

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] britishhotter](#) [Lancashire](#) 5 points 3 years ago

It's the mess that I will never understand. I'm no clean-freak by any standards, but I just cannot imagine how anyone can happily live amongst massive piles of rubbish, rusted metal and broken bits and pieces: http://www.echo-news.co.uk/news/local_news/basildon/5198119.__5_000_to_clear_up_traveller_site_mess/?ref=rss

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] \[deleted\]](#) 11 points 3 years ago*

Has it occurred to you that the type of travellers that do things properly with planning permission are likely to be more civilized than those who don't? Of course the people who do ruin land and thief exist, but to group them all together and judge people you haven't met based on an experience with people from the same background is ludicrous.

permalink embed

[\[-\] db1000c](#) [Expat - China](#) 2 points 3 years ago

It's not necessarily the type of people moving in. It's the fact it will probably be a massive eye sore and completely change the complexion of the village.

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] throw3876](#) [S] 1 point 3 years ago

That's a fair comment, I replied with a similar idea to another redditor - hopefully the fact they're living there legally will remove the tension that usually comes with their presence in a community!

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[\[-\] rattleshirt](#) [Northumberland](#) 11 points 3 years ago

What types of "travellers" are they? Roma or Irish? Never had experience with Roma but Irish ones seem like right cunts.

permalink embed

[\[-\] michaelisnotginger](#) [Eboracum](#) 6 points 3 years ago

The Roma ones near me are actually really nice people.

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Irish ones.
points 3 years ago
near my aunts, they've had stuff thrown in their

gardens, peoples laundry going missing from the gardens and a couple of break ins, all starting when they moved in. For context, it's a small village full of older people.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] Djan](#) 2 points 3 years ago

Roma ones near me are massive shop lifters or occasional steer beggers.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] Emphursis](#) [Worcestershire](#) 9 points 3 years ago

the houses wouldn't be in keeping with the surrounding older architecture

That's a good reason to deny planning permission for a house, so it boggles the mind that they feel a field full of caravans will be in keeping with the local architecture!!

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\] throw3876](#) [\[S\]](#) 4 points 3 years ago

That was what my dad and the others were saying - it boggles me how certain laws are waived for them!

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] RassimoFlom](#) [London](#) 1 point 3 years ago

Not really, a trailer isn't a house. It's a temporary structure. It can be moved on.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] \[deleted\]](#) 22 points 3 years ago

I have two authorised travelers permanent pitch locations near me. There's never been any problems at all.

I suppose if you're into denying legal places for travelers to live then you might see it as 'unacceptable'. Unfortunately for the NIMBY folks, the 2004 housing act makes sure that councils can't discriminate against travelers based on utterly unfounded racism.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\] MaLaHa](#) 17 points 3 years ago

Honestly its a mixed bag, some buy there own little plot of land and have their static caravan, it's basically a permanent residence and can be far removed from the "normal" traveler lifestyle.

Others can be a nightmare, they set up where ever they feel like it be it public or private land. They will rip up bollards and dig through earth mounds to do so, they have no plan to stay there long and have no real respect for the local environment of community.

This has happened near me a few times (like 100 meters away), they were being paid to collect and dispose of garbage/waste. But rather than do the legal thing and take it down the local dump/waste recycling place and pay for it do be down properly they would just leave it all in the patch of land next to them.

This went on for a month or two, them collecting and dumping all sorts of household and buissness waste into a small field in the middle of a housing development. There has some trees and bushes in the fields and they took to throwing black bags full of rubbish into them. it was basically fly tipping on a massive and prolonged scale.

ent nearly two weeks trying to clean up the mess like oil, paint and chemicals onto the field so soil along with bushes basically cut down to get to the

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It was an illegal site to it they moved on, but in the OPs case it is a legal site so no idea what could happen and how long it could go on.

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] \[deleted\]](#) 17 points 3 years ago

That's the issue though isn't it.

People force illegal sites through the NIMBY denial of legal sites which is based on the attitude towards illegal sites.

They scream about 'they don't wanna integrate' all the while trying to stop any integration near them.

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] Iwantasheetonmybed](#) 16 points 3 years ago

| utterly unfounded racism

Say that to the residents who lived near Dale Farm, or the thousands of people who are victims of Irish Traveller crime or Roma thievery in Europe.

It's not racism to not want them anywhere near you, it's simple pragmatism.

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] slicksps](#) [Swansea](#) 6 points 3 years ago

It's prejudiced to judge every traveller after experiences of a few. Prejudice on race is therefore racism.

If however you do not want those past people and groups near you however would allow other groups to stay, that isn't racism because you judged them on their specific actions and not on their race.

There are many traveller communities, and most you'll never hear from. They will settle, clean up and move on and you'll never even know they were there. Others will be more present, polite and fine.

What you're saying is "No you can't stay here *because* you're a traveller" - That is racism.

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[\[-\] 34Mbit](#) [Bristol](#) 6 points 3 years ago

Except calling Irish travelers a race is stretching it somewhat.

You'll be calling trade unionists or football fans a race next.

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] bluebottled](#) 7 points 3 years ago

Not much of a stretch at all.

THE first DNA analysis of the Travelling community has proven that it is a distinct ethnic minority who separated from the settled community between 1,000 and 2,000 years ago, experts have claimed.

He said Travellers are a distinct genetic group as different from the settled Irish as Icelanders are from Norwegians.

<http://www.irishexaminer.com/ireland/dna-study-travellers-a-distinct->

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om Norwegians.

You're not helping your case.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [34Mbit](#) [Bristol](#) 5 points 3 years ago

So why aren't the Cornish or Welsh considered a race? Their lineage goes back farther than the recent anglo-saxon visitors.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [kojima100](#) [Cymru](#) 2 points 3 years ago

They are.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Snagprophet](#) [Wiltshire](#) -1 points 3 years ago

Wow, considering there's so few I'm sure they must break all sorts of incest laws.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [slicksps](#) [Swansea](#) 2 points 3 years ago

I recommend you read "The Seven Daughters of Eve" - it's very interesting and uses evidence to suggest that every human being on the planet can be traced back to one of seven women.

Using science (or even religion) as a background, at some point in history, there was just one single creature on Earth which would be classified as a Human, now there are 7 billion... how do you think that happened?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[+\]](#) 3 years ago (1 child)

[\[-\]](#) [slicksps](#) [Swansea](#) 0 points 3 years ago

Race is a classification system used to categorize humans into large and distinct populations or groups by anatomical, cultural, ethnic, genetic, geographical, historical, linguistic, religious, or social affiliation. Ergo Irish travellers and Romany travellers can be classed as race. Race isn't about having a caravan, it's about beliefs, social structures and background.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[+\]](#) [Iwantasheetonmybed](#) *comment score below threshold (2 children)*

[\[+\]](#) [Snagprophet](#) [Wiltshire](#) *comment score below threshold (3 children)*

[\[-\]](#) [PopeTheoskeptik](#) [North of The Wall](#) 6 points 3 years ago

I'm a bit unsure why councils have this thing about grouping travellers into one site. The increase in density seems to cause more problems than smaller sites with one or two caravans/RVs dotted here and there instead of creating some kind of ghetto.

the Winchester Council representative was there just to say 'we're going to do it anyway, there's nothing you can do, get on with it'

This is what planning officers often claim, though not in as many words. But it's not true. you can try and influence events, but you might not have an awful lot of chance of

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with planning officers trying to foist an unpopular view on you to find out which elected representatives lobby them. Proposed traveller sites are often used

as political footballs where one group of councillors will try and use the threat of consent for an unpopular planning app as a means of leverage when trying to get another bunch of councillors to agree to an entirely different matter. Meanwhile, the council officers (the planning officers etc) are just trying to do their jobs in a climate of total fear of the next round of redundancies so they won't do anything to upset their line manager or HoD, and they want to be able to do their job with a minimum of fuss, so the fewer objections the better as far as they're concerned.

The recent relaxation of planning laws mostly seemed to apply to house building, it might be worth you looking through the council's documentation to see if you can find any reference to designated traveller sites, there ought to be some kind of 'core strategy' or overarching document that'll show which sites have been deemed suitable.

Whatever happens with the application, it's not decided until the planning meeting, and then there is still room for appeal. Most nimbyist objection campaigns fail, but not all.

And you know, even if you end up with a bunch of travellers opposite the pub, it might not be as bad as you fear. Some travellers are total arseholes, some travellers are perfectly fine human beings, just like the rest of the population. You got a bad bunch last time from the sound of it.

TLDR:

- Councils use traveller sites as weapons in internal politicking.
- It's always worth trying to have your say no matter what the planning officers might try and convince you.
- Not all travellers are theiving gits.

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[+] 3 years ago (2 children)

[-] **Vasconium** TAPAS FOR EVERYONE! 7 points 3 years ago

Idiots come in all shapes and sizes. I'd say you simply shouldn't be quick to judge them as uncivilized morons.

Besides, just asking for permission to the local council should be enough to distinguish them from the average "traveler" stereotype.

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[-] **MaLaHa** 3 points 3 years ago

It's fucking stupid, went to university at portsmouth and the countryside and little villages in hampshire are normally beautiful and i can't believe the council would think it's fine to allow zoning like that.

I have no idea about the law, but would it be possible for some sort of class action lawsuit against the council for lost house values or the similar. If it had been "public works" there would be reimbursement due to the loss of value in your property.

The village seems fairly affluent (4 bed houses are £400k+), people looking to spend this money on a house in a small rural village are not going to be best pleased by a large, attractive travelers site in the middle of the village. I would go far as to say they would be completely unwilling to move there when there are plenty of other similar

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the house prices are massively reduced.

[me, you lower the price of property, you better](#)

get born in some place else, move along-get along, go! move! shift!"

permalink embed parent

[-] slicksps Swansea 3 points 3 years ago*

First off, everyone has to live somewhere, the world population is still rising. Did you know that in 196x there were 3.5 billion people on the planet, in 2011 there were 7 billion... it doubled all over in just 50ish years! These extra 3.5 billion people have to go somewhere regardless of race, background, colour or ability. This much is fact

Crime rate probably will go up, every sizeable group of people has crime. Your village has existing crime before the travellers arrive, if your village was suddenly moved to Dale Farm, their crime rate would also go up. It doesn't mean that your village on the whole are criminal. I'm sure most of you are hard working individuals with a few bad apples... just like most other cultures.

When you have no say who moves into the house opposite, why do you have a right to say who moves into a field which doesn't belong to you? The UK has a fixed and finite amount of land, and a growing number of people. We need to compromise

Finally regarding social interaction; there is a clash of cultures and beliefs of course. This is unavoidable. But when one group enters another group, they will not integrate and become positive members of the community if the resistance prevents them with pre-judgement and assumptions. If the travellers are welcomed into the community with open arms, they will have no need to defend their right to exist (and vice versa of course, but being the established community, you are the hosts). Put up resistance however, or even force to try pushing them back out, and a group who want to legally exist somewhere are far less likely to integrate pleasantly.

The onus is on both parties to make this relationship work. If either party puts up a fight, the only outcome is the self-fulfilled prophecy of resentment and hatred which will help cement pre-conceived ideas about each other. The first card played in this relationship is the travellers applying to stay legally and going through all the correct procedures to show respect for the village, field and law... now it's your move. Don't use the actions of one bad apple group to judge the new and probably very different group.

tl;dr - They are human beings too with just as much right to live on the planet as any other human being. Does owning a fixed house make someone more important than another? Break down the barriers and show what a pleasant, welcoming village you live in and encourage them to help keep it that way. Share stories in the pub refer gardening/manual labour work back and forth and distance yourself only from the idea of "Them" and "Us" because it's negative attitudes on both sides which cause social conflict.

permalink embed

[-] idratherwalkalone 2 points 3 years ago

I'm inclined to say tough luck. They need to live somewhere.

permalink embed

[-] K-Mo 16 points 3 years ago

Would you say that if they moved in right next to where you live?

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uilt such a site on the outskirts. No problems

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] idratherwalkalone](#) -3 points 3 years ago

I live in a city were there is not room for them. Your big green field sounds perfect.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] britishotter](#) [Lancashire](#) 7 points 3 years ago

That's VERY convenient isn't it !!!

Also, your reply is evasive to the question. If travellers moved in next to where you live, would you enjoy it? The mess, the noise, the anti social behaviour, the stinking shit...

I for one would hate it!

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[+\] idratherwalkalone](#) *comment score below threshold (3 children)*

[\[-\] go_kill_yourself_pls](#) 3 points 3 years ago

yes, ireland

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] Halk](#) [Lanarkshire](#) 2 points 3 years ago

At what point does prejudice stop being prejudice and start being accurate?

If we say that violent criminals aren't nice people is that prejudice? What if we say that politicians are grafters?

All of my experience with travellers/roma etc have been decidedly negative - petty thievery, scams, cons, thuggery, littering, intimidation etc.

I appreciate that I *shouldn't* judge them all that way - but how can that be when 100% of them that I've ever encountered have been criminal?

The only exceptions are the ones that still consider themselves to be travellers, but don't travel. Those people have embraced a normal way of life rather than a criminal one.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\] RassimoFlom](#) [London](#) 1 point 3 years ago

How many have you encountered and what was the nature of their criminality that you witnessed?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] HugoChavezRamboIII](#) [Norwich](#) 0 points 3 years ago*

Your post made interesting reading. I really can't make up my mind about travellers. On the one hand, I was absolutely horrified at the Dale Farm thing, but was my horror inextricably linked to the fact that the travellers owned the land of Dale Farm? I don't know.

On the other hand, I've heard a LOT of anecdotal stories about how travellers behave, mainly the stealing and general thuggery. Also, those insights into gypsy weddings on Channel 4 lead me to think that gypsies are ~~universally~~ thick and very backwards in terms of gender equality.

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ago

Dale farm, they owned the whole land, however half was on a greenbelt and not for building on. The first half they had planning permission for, the second they didn't. The council wanted to flatten the half on greenbelt and so naturally the residents of that half had to be evicted in order to do so. But the whole land is legally owned by the Dale farm travellers.

permalink embed parent

[+] 3 years ago (15 children)

[-] **sevengates** 0 points 3 years ago

I'm sorry about this. I'm just going to come out and say it because I don't believe in political correctness. Individual travellers can be good people, but in a group they wreck the place and I wouldn't wish them on anybody.

We had some move into a field down the road from us a few years back. The place turned into a major shithole and my friend was nearly raped by a young group of them whilst coming home from school. So yeah, my condolences :(

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[-] **[deleted]** 2 points 3 years ago

How can you not believe in a concept that exists? I don't believe that the simple fact of not being prejudice is political correctness in the first place though.

permalink embed parent

[-] **sevengates** -1 points 3 years ago*

By not believing in the word or its apparent meaning. I believe in a basic level of respect for all if reciprocated so we seem to be on the same page.

Political correctness over the last ten years has represented restriction over discussion, and all it has bred is further segregation, isolation and hatred from all sides.

I chose to say that because I just like to warn people who are sensitive, it is tiresome.

permalink embed parent

[-] **Arkonias** [Gloucestershire](#) 0 points 3 years ago

Simples, if they cause a nuisance gather up an angry mob, I can lend a pitchfork.

permalink embed

[-] **mcctaggart** -4 points 3 years ago

Check out [/r/knackers](#) for a taste of what could be in store for your small village. There appears to be a fondness for slash hooks.

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[-] **simon_1980** [Yorkshire hiding in Germany](#) -1 points 3 years ago

What confuses me is they say they are travellers but they want to stay in one location? We have a fair amount where I live and to be fair I have never had any bother with them (they even knock on my door and ask for permission to take scrap metal before taking it) except they seem to leave their horses in any field they find!

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ago* location. It's better if they want to send their to move in days, some like months. Everyone is

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [mcctaggart](#) 1 point 3 years ago*

They are Travellers with a capital T. That's the name they chose for themselves after becoming to regard their previous names like knackers and tinkers as slurs. These used to describe their occupations but as they no longer practice them, they needed another name. They want to be seen as a distinct ethnic minority which the gov.uk does treat them as. In Ireland they remain treated as a social group though they campaign to be recognized as an ethnic minority. There are benefits in being classed as an ethnic minority and when someone treats you badly, you can then play the race card for a larger pay-out. The name 'Traveller' refers only to Irish gypsies and no other. Travellers who stay in the one spot refer to themselves as settled Travellers.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[+\]](#) [\[deleted\]](#) comment score below threshold (3 children)

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23

Councils to lose powers over high street planning under government proposal | Town halls face losing significant powers over the future of their high streets under Whitehall plans to allow shops to be converted into homes without planning permission (theguardian.com)

submitted 3 years ago by [EightRoundsRapid](#)

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[\[-\] notsurewhatdayitis](#) [East Yorkshire](#) 13 points 3 years ago

Might as well convert them into homes. Its infinitely more useful than having them sat empty for years.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\] Guido_Montag](#) 5 points 3 years ago

I thought this government was all for devolving planning down to local levels so that local people had a say on local matters. In fact it seems to be all about removing powers from local government, while making them accountable for bollocks they have no control over.

I'd blame the Tories, but this has been going on for generations, so I'll blame everyone.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\] \[deleted\]](#) 8 points 3 years ago

Time to build some homes most people won't be able to afford.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\] comune](#) 4 points 3 years ago

Don't worry, the people who can afford them 'create jobs'.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] SoyBeanExplosion](#) [York/Cambridgeshire](#) 6 points 3



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years ago

Good. We need more homes.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)[-] [Yellowbenzene](#) [Glasgow](#) 3 points 3 years ago

Better someone's house than a betting shop or pawn shop.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)[-] [jimicus](#) 2 points 3 years ago

This could actually be a damn good idea for a number of reasons:

1. It'll do something about the large number of empty shops.
2. Where you have people living in towns, the remaining shops might take full advantage of this by adjusting opening hours to improve business, bringing an end to the peculiarly British habit of only opening your high-street shop when most of your potential customers are at work then wondering why the Tesco's on the outskirts of town (that is open 24 hours a day and sells pretty much everything most people might need) has taken all your business.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)[-] [Jonalewie](#) 2 points 3 years ago

Number two is incredibly accurate. I *want* to use local shops, I really do. But if they're only going to open 9-5, when I work 8:30 - 5:30, I'm not sure how they expect me to.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)[-] [workingnights](#) 2 points 3 years ago

Brilliant, turn a high street into a home street. This could help preserve some fantastic buildings that are currently going to ruin

[permalink](#) [embed](#)[-] [\[deleted\]](#) 3 points 3 years ago

Local authorities will be asked to decide which shops should be considered "prime retail frontage" while the rest could be scrapped.

Sounds good to me. Like it or not, the fact is high streets are losing business, and housing is short.

an article.

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[\[-\]](#) [\[deleted\]](#) 5 points 3 years ago

Thereby paving the way fir more swathes of crowded residential areas with no local businesses to serve them. Nevermind, we'll just hop in the car and drive to the nearest soul destroying mega multi super mart / retail outlet /moron magnet.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\]](#) [electronicoldmen](#) [Greater Manchester](#) 4 points 3 years ago

Perhaps high street shops should actually open when people are not at work. What use is a local grocers or butchers that closes at 5 on a weekday?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Crydebris](#) [Essex](#) 1 point 3 years ago

That's up to the businesses, my local butchers and grocers are open till 7:30pm in the week and they get a lot of foot traffic being close to the station during evening rush hour.

One problem I see though is a lot of major companies open their stores in small towns then because of their policies have to have strict working hours, this means the high streets get filled with shops that cannot open for longer hours where as home brew shops are more than happy to open longer if it means better business.

This is the situation in my area so probably doesn't reflect other places.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [mejogid](#) [London](#) 2 points 3 years ago

The fact is that you can comfortably get far more online than was possible 10 or 20 years ago, and centralised retail covers many others' needs. It doesn't make a whole lot of sense to try to prop up unprofitable businesses just because that's what the highstreet looked like in some rose-tinted past.

Of course, the reality is that most people can access far more goods and services today, at much better prices, than without these developments.

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[\[-\]](#) [jimicus](#) 1 point 3 years ago

No local businesses to serve them? I don't know how bad the high street in your town is, but mine isn't quite that bad yet.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [87red](#) 2 points 3 years ago

Good idea in my opinion. Came across this ex-Lloyds bank for sale by auction recently, guide price £110k for 6080 sq ft. Would make a great home.

<http://www.rightmove.co.uk/commercial-property-for-sale/property-40956293.html>

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[\[+\]](#) 3 years ago (1 child)

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this post was submitted on 28 Mar 2016
7 points (82% upvoted)
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7 Town planning as a career?

(self.unitedkingdom)
submitted 1 year ago by [muppet4](#)

Hello, forgive me if this is an unsuitable subreddit for this question, but in the unlikely case that those who work in the field of town/urban planning read this, what is the general consensus on prospects? Would it be advisable for a student in a somewhat unrelated subject to pursue a masters in this (assuming the interest is there of course), and additionally is the industry relatively healthy from a perspective of employability? Thank you.

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[\[-\] stalinsnicerbrother](#) 6 points 1 year ago

Simple answers:

Yes - many Planners have their main degree in something other than Planning. Geography is traditional but there are plenty of people knocking around with History degrees or whatever. Bear in mind the core skill set is analytical thought, problem solving and negotiation with a decent chunk of law. If you end up on the Regeneration side though all bets are off - you could end up as a Project Manager for highways schemes or procuring IT packages, all under the broadest remit of Planning.

Also yes - there are plenty of jobs in Planning and Regeneration. In the medium term you'll find plenty of opportunities for a bright graduate. Be warned however that Planning is a soft target and one of the particular whipping boys of the Conservatives -

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traditionally they like to water down and undermine the Planning system (for a good example read some RTPI briefings on the extensions to the GPDO, and the current Housing and Planning Bill which is about to go to the House of Lords). At the moment we're experiencing yet another sustained battering, but it's not yet clear whether the overall institution of Planning will survive unscathed.

Finally, I'd definitely recommend Planning as an interesting and versatile career path with decent pay prospects and, critically, the option to work explicitly for the public benefit, rather than on behalf of some anonymous shareholders. However, be aware that Planning gets blamed for everything and the credit for nothing - planning decisions are often contentious and involve compromise so will often leave somebody dissatisfied. Regeneration initiatives that drive forward growth and create employment are usually regarded by the public as at best boring and at worst a waste of money. Basically don't be a Planner if you can't maintain your self respect in the face of disrespect and unfairness.

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[\[-\] lost_send_berries](#) 2 points 1 year ago

The Bill is being rammed through the Lords now, if you read the last day of Committee they are basically arguing "we can't debate this as the government hasn't given us the information we asked for", vs "screw you, keep debating". Which means the real certain debating will be in Report stage in a few weeks.

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[\[-\] stalinsnicerbrother](#) 1 point 1 year ago

Oh god.

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[\[-\] NoOfficialComment](#) [Suffolk](#) 1 point 1 year ago

At the moment we're experiencing yet another sustained battering, but it's not yet clear whether the overall institution of Planning will survive unscathed.

Architect here: the number of planning officers I deal with right now who are able

an article.

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to respond in a professional and timely manner is minimal. The worst it's been in the decade I've been working in practice.

They simply can't keep up with the caseloads though there also seems to be huge number of planners employed part-time which is even more ridiculous. Generally I'm finding any Capita run planning department to be a total shambles.

Perhaps 1, maybe 2, of the local authorities I deal with are providing what I would deem a good level of service. Other are as bad as clients requiring legal action for non-communication/non-determination.

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[\[-\] stalinsnicerbrother](#) 1 point 1 year ago*

There are indeed some pretty poor Planning departments around the country, but there are also lots of well-run departments which are being tarred with the same brush and the planning process is being compromised as a result. If planning departments perform poorly they should be improved, but I think the Government is instead actively trying to undermine them to justify its ideological approach i.e. reducing LA powers and favouring the development industry at the cost of the public interest. For example, cutting funding to Local Authorities has severely impacted smaller LPAs (sorry, Local Planning Authorities) and this has been exacerbated by daftness such as the deemed-consent debacle whereby significant proposals niw have to be assessed by the LPA without the normal fee being paid.

Interesting that you mention Capita running departments. I've not worked at one, but my experiences with Capita would suggest that they are extremely efficient at generating profit for their shareholders, but the quality of the services they provide (particularly to naive public sector clients) is woeful.

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Edit: for the record, 81% of major applications and 75% of minors were determined within the target time limit during Oct-Dec 2015 nationally. The problem I think is the degree of variance - the worst authority scored 11% and 22% respectively, so there are clearly some abjectly bad departments, but the overall figures show that most LPAs are actually pretty good.

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[\[-\] wwxxyyzz](#) [EU](#) 2 points 1 year ago

My dad is a town planner, if you have any specific questions I can ask him them

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[\[-\] \[deleted\]](#) 3 points 1 year ago

[/r/CitiesSkylines](#) plug.

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[\[-\] stalinsnicerbrother](#) 2 points 1 year ago

I was always more of a Sim City guy. Sadly in the UK we don't start out with a massive pot of money and a blank sheet. Although that's kind of what happened at Milton Keynes and look how that turned out.

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[\[-\] \[deleted\]](#) 2 points 1 year ago

[/r/ukjobs](#) might be a better match.

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18 A question about the Thames Valley floods, from an Antipodean.

(self.unitedkingdom) submitted 3 years ago by RAAFStupot [Australia](#)

Hi /r/unitedkingdomI lurk here (and comment very occasionally) from Australia.

I have a question.

The current floods in the Thames Valley are making the news here in Australia. The footage looks quite similar to flood news footage that appears from time to time in Australia. Houses getting inundated, residents being interviewed, cats being rescued etc etc etc

This is what I don't understand:

Britain has been inhabited by humans for a few thousand years, and there are decent historical records of the last thousand years or so. Surely long enough to have very many flood records on file. And yet, from the footage I'm seeing, the current Thames Valley Floods appear to be a *strange event*.

Surely this has happened several times over the last few hundred years? Why are homes getting flooded now? Is it because modern town planning regulations have been lax? Residential development on floodplains over the last 50 years or so, has been too unregulated, with regard to floor levels etc etc?

In Australia we also are subject to devastating floods from time to time. Many floodprone places now have levee banks as protection from floods. These work some of the time.

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I don't mean to sound patronising, but I ask because to me it is quite astonishing that these problems occur when you've had a thousand years or so to prepare. We haven't had much more than 200 years.

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[\[-\]](#) [stonyStar](#) [London](#) 21 points 3 years ago

Good questions, and I can give you two lay-mans answers:

Firstly, many of these areas **have** experienced flooding before, but not in 30, 50, 100 years etc. That level of frequency is too low for it to act as discouragement from developing and living in these locations, even if there are major implications every generation or two.

But secondly, I think the main point to consider is that even if "we" have been here for thousands of years, the environment (both natural and man-made) is not static.

Over time, be that millennia or months, things change: water courses flow differently, houses are built in know risk areas, urban development everywhere prevents rain water reaching the underground aquifers and so on. Mixed with some unusually wet weather (more rain in January than has been recorded for the month in over 100 years) and problems result!

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[\[-\]](#) [\[deleted\]](#) 14 points 3 years ago

This is really the key point: Periodicity. We term events like floods in terms of 'hundred year' events or 'thousand year' events. That is, it can be reasonably expected that such an event might happen once in a hundred years or so. However, with records only going back a few hundred years in the UK, and modelling only able to predict so much, there is still a great deal of uncertainty.

My wife was involved in a major engineering project to protect a water treatment works near Tewkesbury. It

an article.

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flooded a few years back and left many thousands without water for an extended period of time. The engineering was done to protect it against a 'thousand year event' - that is the worst possible scenario imaginable at the time.

The work was completed, and guess what? This is that thousand year event, just 5 years later. That throws both the periodicity calculations into question (I.e. are we now dealing with a hundred year event? A Decade event? Will this happen every year?) and means that if it floods again, not only were the protections inadequate but that even MORE money will have to be spent to protect (or relocate) it going into the future.

Ultimately, we've had a truly exceptional period of extended rainfall, and that floods things. You can to some extent choose what you allow to flood and what you protect. But you cannot hold back the river. Or you end up with New Orleans.

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[\[-\] minimus_](#) 3 points 3 years ago

This is that thousand year event, just 5 years later.

That's really cool. Has the project done its job?

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[\[-\] \[deleted\]](#) 8 points 3 years ago

So far yes. It was designed to withstand the river being 13.6m, it peaked out at 13m and the remediation worked as designed. River level is now falling.

If it exceeds 13.6m all bets are off, but as my wife put it "That's a shit load more water".

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[\[-\] hybridtheorist](#) [Leeds, YORKSHIRE](#) 1 point 3 years ago

"That's a shit load more water".

Can tell she works in engineering with precision measurements like that.

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[\[-\] RAAfstupot](#) [Australia](#) [\[S\]](#) 1 point 3 years ago

I used to be in property development, in a [flood-prone area](#).

There are several rules used by local authorities.

please contact a mod.

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Some locations are designated a *floodway*, and cannot ever be built upon, because they essentially will be a high speed channel for moving water.

Other locations may get flooded by static water. There's no danger of structures getting washed away, but just inundated instead. In these places, the the minimum floor level of habitable rooms must be at least 500 mm above the 1 in 100 year flood level.

Now the thing is, that with climate change we can expect more extreme weather patterns.

The bell curve of rainfall occurrence gets shifted a bit to the right. So what used to be a 1 in 100 year flood, is now a 1 in 20 year event, and what used to be a 1 in 20 year flood is now an annual event.

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[[-](#)] [RAAFStupot](#) [Australia](#) [S] 1 point 3 years ago

But secondly, I think the main point to consider is that even if "we" have been here for thousands of years, the environment (both natural and man-made) is not static.

Never even considered that!

Great answer in all, thanks.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[[-](#)] [simoncowbell](#) 8 points 3 years ago

http://www.newscientist.com/article/dn25030#.UvoGCPI_uSo

Rainfall in England and Wales in December and January has been the heaviest since records began 240 years ago.

You also have to factor in a degree of complacency - flooding in some of the areas was always a *possibility*, but if it hasn't happened in 100, or 200 years, nobody is going to prioritise spending money on the infra-structure to prevent it.

Also - population density, this is a small island and there is a great demand for land, particularly in the areas around the Thames -again complacency creeps in, so houses are built in areas that *could* flood - but if they havent for the past 100 years, well, people can make money from building there.

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[[-](#)] [Capsulets](#) [United Kingdom](#) 5 points 3 years ago

Its not that anyone is particularly surprised that these areas flooded. The issue is that some people feel that not enough is being done quickly enough to help the people affected. (some people have been flooded since Christmas)

Also, there are a lot of questions over whether or not more could have been done to lessen the damage caused by the floods. Would more dredging have helped? Should there have been more money available to local government for things like this?

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[[-](#)] [\[deleted\]](#) 4 points 3 years ago

I'm gonna take this from a weather points of view instead of a preparation point of view. I'm no scientist, so if I say anything wrong please feel free to correct.

You know the extraordinarily cold weather America had? That's something they're not properly prepared for, as it was a strangely strong polar vortex from the north. The south was getting ice like they'd never seen before.

This polar vortex affected the jet stream, which goes from west to east. A particularly strong polar vortex means a particularly large change in the jet stream, which heavily changes the weather conditions over the atlantic, and slap bang on the british isles. And it's created a very large flood and storm situation, one which isn't what people are normally prepared for.

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[\[-\] nowonmai666](#) [Sunny Southport](#) 6 points 3 years ago

Almost every change that has happened in the country in the last 50 years or so has been building towards this.

- population migration from North to South means that lots of new houses are being built on Southern flood plains.
- All the trees and hedges have been cut down in the upland areas where rain mostly falls: this means rain water gets into rivers much faster that it ever did. Government subsidies (both UK and European) incentivise landowners turning the maximum possible area into ploughed fields, and the greedy buggers have taken every penny on offer.
- there's this misguided idea that you're supposed to dredge rivers to allow them to drain their catchment more quickly. What this actually does is allow downstream areas to be flooded more rapidly. Actual scientists who study this stuff say you should plant more trees, hedges etc, and allow rivers to be closer to their natural state (winding and half-choked with supermarket trollies) to slow down the water.
- levee banks are fugly and the people who can afford houses in picturesque riverside locations don't want them.

Part of the reaction is typical British overreaction to everything. Did you see us lose our shit the other year when it *snowed*? *In winter*?

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[\[-\] womblybat](#) 4 points 3 years ago

The flooding in the uk is usually not on the same scale as Australia, eg. Rockhampton. I'm not trying to trivialise what people are going through in the uk but it's a different style of flooding I would think. I think the volumes of water involved are much higher in Australia, either that or the ground in the uk deals with it better.

In some cases the old infrastructure can actually create problems. In one case, can't remember where exactly, SW I think, the narrow arches on an old stone bridge caused debris to build creating a damn effect. When the damn burst it caused a massively destructive flash flood. Plus many of the rivers are contained by man-made banks through the cities with little room for expansion.

I vaguely remember reading somewhere that the watersheds are also changing and infrastructure hasn't kept up with it. I'm by no means an expert though. This is mainly high school geography classes I'm referencing. Can't comment on the thames situation but continuous rain will saturate the soil so that further rain has nowhere to go. The somerset levels is indeed a very low and flat area and there have been discussions going on for ten years about flood prevention (to dredge, not to dredge). No clear solutions appear to have arisen.

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[\[-\] \[deleted\]](#) 9 points 3 years ago

| it's a different style of flooding I would think.

It very much is. The UK has volume floods in river valleys/flood plains. Just the

normal river breaking it's banks.

Flood events in Australia tend to be more flash floods: they're caused by exceptional rainfall over vast and often flat-ish areas. Since there is very limited established river channels (as rainfall is generally low) and the ground is incredibly dry - meaning rain runs off rather than sinks in, you get huge sheets of water running directly off the land. This creates wide ranging and devastating floods, but they are short lived. They're also highly unpredictable and very hard to engineer/protect against.

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[\[-\] RAAFStupot](#) [Australia](#) [S] 1 point 3 years ago

This is kind of correct.

On the eastern side of the Great Dividing Range, where most people live, floods would be reasonably close in pattern to those in the UK because watercourses have well defined channels. However it's true that they they differ in that they have much greater variability in flow.

Inland in the drier and flatter parts however, it's completely different. Many watercourses don't even have a single well-defined channel. There's no overland flow of water when it's dry, and when it's wet, the watercourse may be 20 or 50 kilometres wide. It's not a flash flood - this water will persist for weeks. It's kind of like a slow moving and shallow inland sea, and after it's dried up it won't appear again for 5 or 10 years.

However this is not really relevant to where most people live in Australia, and where floods affect urban development.

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[\[-\] Larwood](#) [Somerset/London](#) 3 points 3 years ago*

It's a much wider issue than just the Thames Valley. Large parts of the country (outside the South East/London region) have been underwater for weeks and it's a real point of frustration that people are only starting to get really worked up now that somewhere near the capital are starting to get moist.

But, to answer your last point:

it is quite astonishing that these problems occur when you've had a thousand years or so to prepare

Right. But the perception is that the people who are entrusted with preparing for this sort of major situation have done a crap job. This applies to town planners approving unsuitable developments on unsuitable land (such as floodplains) and to the various agencies responsible for mitigating against flooding. This includes not spending the necessary funds on the upkeep of existing prevention systems (drainage, barriers, etc.) and not investing in new and improved defences as requirements have grown or shifted.

permalink embed

[\[+\] 3 years ago* \(7 children\)](#)

[\[-\] WobbleWagon](#) 1 point 3 years ago

[We have emergency safety protocols to deal with this, but it keeps getting up and wandering off.](#)

[May contain Pickles.]

permalink embed

[\[-\] keebyjeeby](#) 1 point 3 years ago

This is the worst rain we have had for 250 years. It is quite astonishing, even as a Brit.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\] LordAnubis12](#) [Brighton](#) 1 point 3 years ago

Biggest issue is population growth - basically if it flooded before hand, people affected would be in the 10s rather than the 1000s like it is now, and it would be mostly local knowledge not to build there and so while it may have been encountered, it would have been rarely and not formally recorded.

Then there's the over abstraction of rivers, lack of sustainable water usage causing extremes in ecosystems, large scale development and increased in water demands that are met without taking into account environmental affects (why would they? No cost for ruining a river, and if shit goes wrong it's not their problem) - as well as all of the other points raised in this thread.

That and climate change is unpredictable in its results, so this January could be the wettest month in a century and repeated in another 100 years, or next year. There's little way to know and until it happens regularly people are reluctant to commit to action.

Imagine the uproar in local papers of councils spending millions on flood defenses after a dry, cool winter. It's not like when it then floods the headlines will be "Look! The Council did something right!". Despite enabling many people to live some of the most comfortable lives in the world, no-one likes the Council.

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this post was submitted on 03 Sep 2016

16 points (77% upvoted)

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16 Councils are granting enough planning permissions – so why aren't we building housing?

(citymetric.com)

submitted 8 months ago by [Joeybada33](#)

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[\[-\] tmstms](#) [West Yorkshire](#) 9 points 8 months ago

Interesting article- enough planning permission is granted, but house building corporations (who build almost all houses that are getting built) only build at the speed that they can sell the houses at market value. They could sell them cheaper, of course, but they've already bought the land at market rate.

If the government wants to get houses built faster, and at the speed the planning permissions are being granted they have to do something they are not so far doing e.g. planning permission is granted contingent on the houses being built within a certain time etc etc.

permalink embed

[\[-\] RainbowLainey](#) [Scotland](#) 3 points 8 months ago

Maybe they could set up some sort of 'unused land' tax, for those companies who have purchased land for the purpose of building housing, but haven't started building yet. The tax could drop by the %age of land which has houses on it, to stop them building just one house and saying they've fulfilled the obligations.

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] ElGuapoBlanco](#) 5 points 8 months ago

Just deploy Land Value Tax nationwide. If owners want to keep land empty that's up to them but they

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can pay the nation for the privilege of their exclusive possession.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] vzzzbux](#) [Cornwall](#) 3 points 8 months ago

They could easily solve that by changing the rules on what constitutes a "start".

There's a bit of land near me that has been for sale for years. They advertise it as having planning permission for a number of flats, and that it is "started" so it won't expire. As far as I can tell, they dug a hole

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] MrMoonUK](#) 9 points 8 months ago

We need a use it or lose it law to stop developers sitting on land with permission. The market needs flooding with housing fast!

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\] tmstms](#) [West Yorkshire](#) 2 points 8 months ago

Article talks about this as "landbanking" - Tesco's used to be a terrible abuser- buy the land on which OTHER supermarkets might be built and just sit on it. Guess they are not so dominant now that they can do it without losing too much money.

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an article.

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this post was submitted on 20 Oct 2016
61 points (80% upvoted)
shortlink: <https://redd.it/58fipj>

61 Do I need planning permission to put a 25-30m tall tower in my back garden? (self.unitedkingdom)
submitted 7 months ago by [Randomd0g](#) [Sussex](#)

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Specifically, one of these - <http://www.britwind.co.uk/our-windmills>
I get lovely coastal wind and it seems like a real shame to not harness it if I'm able to do so.
Personally I don't think that wind turbines are an eyesore, but I know that others disagree.
(to take it to another level, what I really think is that it should be illegal NOT to have *something* that generates renewable power on your property be that solar or wind... But that's a conversation for another day...)

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[\[-\] grogipher](#) [Dùn Dè, Alba](#) 78 points 7 months ago

Yes.

Give your local council a ring.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\] HashPram](#) [Yorkshire](#) 91 points 7 months ago

Only if you bury it in a hole about 23-30m deep.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\] beenman500](#) [United Kingdom](#) 13 points 7 months ago

That will also probably be a problem without talking to the council first

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] windymiller3](#) 2 points 7 months ago

Anything underground doesn't require

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planning consent.

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[\[-\] beenman500](#) [United Kingdom](#) 6 points 7 months ago

That's ridiculous, surely you need planning consent to build some kind of underground complex to prove you aren't using someone else's land

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] windymiller3](#) 6 points 7 months ago

1) Who the sweet chuff downvoted my first comment? It's a sodding fact.

2) While you technically own any land down to the centre of the earth, you only ever own enough upward and downward to allow you to "enjoy" the land.

So, that means a neighbours foundations can be within land you own, a mining company can mine underneath you, and that's why a plane can fly overhead.

Planning consent basically says the council is generally happy with the development. Ownership, rights of way, technical feasibility are rarely considered.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] cqdark](#) 1 point 7 months ago

It's not a downvote, it's an updig.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] 1-05457](#) [Oxford / London](#) 1 point 7 months ago

It turns out you can get planning permission to develop someone else's land anyway.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] dwair](#) [Kernow](#) 30 points 7 months ago

Yes, on the whole anything over 4m high will need planning (I wanted to stick one of those

an article.

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in my garden too)

Go and have a chat/informal meeting with the planning office and discuss what you want to do before submitting an application so you have a rough idea what any objections might be.

permalink embed

[\[-\] fezzuk](#) [Greater London](#) 1 point 7 months ago

Depends how close it is to a boundary I believe.

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] Endkino](#) 20 points 7 months ago

Yes you mental case haha.

I think it's a great idea, and would love one myself, but you still defiantly have to ask and get approval before erecting a 100ft pole!

permalink embed

[\[-\] bacon_cake](#) [Dorset](#) 14 points 7 months ago

I can't believe nobody else here is surprised op thought he could just stick a hundred foot windmill in his garden with no consultation at all lol

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] Morfildur](#) 19 points 7 months ago

I'm quite sure that you do need permission, it would be insane if not.

Either way, you might also want to consider another factor:

Wind turbines are loud. The big ones are never placed closer than 300m to any residential area for a reason and at that distance they still produce ~50 dezibels of noise (around the level of an AC or a fridge). Of course the smaller ones produce far less noise, but if it's in your back garden it will also be much closer - unless your back garden happens to be huge. Even if you are ok with that, if you have neighbors then they won't be happy about it.

Have you considered solar energy instead?

permalink embed

[\[-\] tmstms](#) [West Yorkshire](#) 19 points 7 months ago

I googled "planning permission wind turbine" and there were LOTS of helpful results, e.g:

<http://www.thegreenage.co.uk/tech/planning-permission-for-wind-turbines/>

permalink embed

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[[-](#)] [34Mbit](#) [Bristol](#) 15 points 7 months ago

When working, a windmill of that scale will sound like a vacuum cleaner/small idling motorcycle. Your neighbours will have a slam dunk in getting approval rejected on those grounds alone.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[[-](#)] [boomerxl](#) 19 points 7 months ago

From the title I pictured this: http://vignette2.wikia.nocookie.net/runescape2/images/6/66/Wizards'_Tower_concept_art1.jpg/revision/latest?cb=20140305172619

I'm disappointed.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[[-](#)] [Joshposh70](#) [Portsmouth, UK, EU](#) 7 points 7 months ago

God dammit, Runescape is everywhere.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[[-](#)] [Sonos](#) 7 points 7 months ago

Buying gf

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[[-](#)] [WolfyCat](#) [Expatriate - Bradfordian in USA](#) 2 points 7 months ago

man the tower has changed from what I remember though

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[[-](#)] [aonome](#) 1 point 7 months ago

It's still like [this](#) in OSRS.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[[-](#)] [ProfDongHurtz](#) 3 points 7 months ago

It's even better in the URL for the post - punctuation gets removed, so OP is asking for a 2530m tower.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[[-](#)] [TheAngryGoat](#) [United Kingdom](#) 2 points 7 months ago

| OP is asking for a 2530m tower.

There really are cheaper ways of joining the mile high club though.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[[-](#)] [Korhaka](#) 1 point 7 months ago

Like... A 2529m tower?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[[-](#)] [sim667](#) 8 points 7 months ago

They are really sodding noisy too.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[[-](#)] [frillytotes](#) 1 point 7 months ago

What are you comparing it to? I have measured noise from wind turbines and they are generally pretty quiet, no louder than the wind in the trees for example.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[[-](#)] [sim667](#) 5 points 7 months ago

The ones I've seen at campsite, they're always really noisy.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[-] [DogBotherer](#) 6 points 7 months ago

You could always try putting a flag at the top, that seems to work for most people.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[-] [\[deleted\]](#) 3 points 7 months ago

Just make sure its an EU flag

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[-] [TonyHoyle](#) [Cheshire](#) 2 points 7 months ago

AFAIK that's only true in the USA - some states give you the automatic right to erect a flagpole. Radio hams use that to get around the planning laws by putting a flag on top of their antenna.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[-] [IHeartBrick](#) 6 points 7 months ago

Seriously, why the fuck are you asking Reddit? If Reddit consensus is that you don't need planning permission are you going to put it up then tell anyone who objects "but Reddit said I don't need planning permission"? Go ask whatever entity is responsible for planning permission.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[-] [Heknarf](#) [West Sussex](#) 9 points 7 months ago

Almost certainly, yes. I doubt they ever get the go ahead if you live near other people. Probably restricted to farms and country houses.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[-] [ChicBrit](#) 6 points 7 months ago

I don't know for sure but if you have close neighbours then yes I certainly think so. These things do fall over and if I was your neighbour that would worry me. Plus your home insurer would want to know about it.

<http://www.windaction.org/posts/15618-fallen-turbine-in-germany#.WAhqbOkVDaQ>

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[-] [Rather_Unfortunate](#) [Eborakon](#) 2 points 7 months ago

They can also be quite noisy up close.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[-] [DE_Goya](#) [Yorkshire](#) 17 points 7 months ago

Nope you're fine, crack on and keep us updated.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[-] [BigRedS](#) [London](#) 3 points 7 months ago

Probably; I know there's complexities involved in putting bigger windmills near residential properties, not sure about mini ones like that.

Your local council would be the best people to ask, I'd imagine the manufacturer of the windmills is used to helping people jump through whichever hoops they need to.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[-] [fgalv](#) [Southerner in Exile in Merseyside](#) 3 points 7 months ago

As others have already said - yes you need planning permission.

Out of interest, have you been given a quote for one of those? I assume it's an H15 judging by the height - how much does one of those cost?

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\] Annoyed_Badger](#) 2 points 7 months ago

yes. Wind turbines of that height need permission.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\] Honey-Badger](#) [Bristolian in London](#) 2 points 7 months ago

Yeah there's loads of potential laws that can stop you having a wind turbine. Does it block anyone's sun? Does it break noise regulations? Is your house listed? Does it break local rules on outside modifications or potential eyesore rules? - You can't even put up a washing line or Sky dish in my parents back garden due to such rules

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\] purpleslug](#) [Cambs](#) 2 points 7 months ago

Yes. Plus they're noisy as hell. You'll need planning permissions, which I doubt the local authority will give you.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\] LightningGeek](#) [Wolves](#) 2 points 7 months ago

Something I haven't seen anyone mention yet is chatting with your neighbours.

Unless you really hate them, give them a shout about what you're planning on doing, don't just wait for them to find out when they get a letter about it because it will annoy them.

Me and my parents have been on the other side of this twice in the last 5 years, and it turned a 30 year friendship with our neighbours into neither of us speaking again. Although they were applying to build bungalow's in their back garden, so a much bigger project than the oen you're planning.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\] windymiller3](#) 2 points 7 months ago

Having seen a project a little smaller than this from inception through to completion, I might have some insights.

You can get one up to 11.1m under permitted development, requiring no planning application.

Beware of noise to you and others, and be sceptical of payback figures, although sounds like you're in a good location.

You also want to check out the micro generation certificate website on wind turbines, as you'd need to comply, it has good advice too.

Also, apparently you'll have to get used to utterly ridiculous comments from everyone. Sorry.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\] hesloooooo](#) 1 point 7 months ago

How much power do they generate?

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\] Frap_Gadz](#) [East Sussex](#) 1 point 7 months ago

Will absolutely need planning permission. Also these small wind turbines are not really economically feasible, they require a lot of maintenance compared to other more viable technology like solar. Noise is also a factor with small turbines as they turn at much faster speeds than large turbines.

I know it's a bit dated now but check out the [Warick Wind Trials for some quite](#)

[comprehensive data.](#)

permalink embed

[\[-\] Sonos](#) 1 point 7 months ago

Also, have a look into Tesla Powerwall, you're going to need somewhere to store that wind energy before feeding it into the grid again.

permalink embed

[\[-\] hogger85](#) 1 point 7 months ago*

there was a bloke on grand designs that had all sorts of issues getting planning permission for his wind turbine (yet he could build his teletubby house)

he also when he finally got it said that it probably wouldn't acutally pay him back in electricity over the cost of installing it over its lifetime.

permalink embed

[\[-\] borg88](#) [Buckinghamshire](#) 1 point 7 months ago

[Shenley Lodge](#) in Milton Keynes was a kind of "concept" estate built in the mid 80s, featuring energy efficient house designs from various parts of the world.

One feature, quite novel at the time, was a wind turbine providing free electricity to several nearby homes. The story I heard was that the house owners fairly quickly ask for it to be switched off due to the noise.

permalink embed

[\[-\] major_pants](#) 1 point 7 months ago

Make sure you understand the payback period on the fully installed cost (foundations, cables, annual maintenance etc.). It used to be around 8 years in areas with average wind of 5 m/s for turbines of that scale. But that was before the feed in tariff was taken away - however cost may have come down since then.

8 years is a long time to get your cost back in my opinion which makes it one for enthusiasts.

permalink embed

[\[-\] \[deleted\]](#) 1 point 7 months ago

anything over a certain height needs planning permission, think its like 7-8 foot cos u dont have to declare you're building a shed. unless its massive

permalink embed

[\[-\] Beanieboru](#) [Cornwall](#) 1 point 7 months ago

Yes you do.

permalink embed

[\[-\] poitdews](#) 1 point 7 months ago

Looks like some ones been watching fully charged. [Link for the rest of us](#)

permalink embed

[\[-\] Tech_AllBodies](#) 1 point 7 months ago

You might not want to go for a wind turbine anyway, even if it's only near to your own property. They are actually quite loud when under load, many people don't realise this.

Also Wind turbine's cost per kWh scales inversely with their size (i.e. much bigger is cheaper), so I strongly assume this will work out much more expensive for you than Solar Cells.

I'd strongly suggest checking what kind of cost per kWh you're estimated to get, and

also what the maintenance cycle of these turbines are (it is a big, high stress, moving part after all). I'd be **very** surprised if it turned out to be better than a solar array (which has no moving parts and makes no noise)

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\]](#) [gelectrox](#) -4 points 7 months ago

None whatsoever. Go for it.

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this post was submitted on 11 Apr 2012

39 points (86% upvoted)

shortlink: <https://redd.it/s4mtu>

39 Inverness man spends 12 years building a 100 foot long scale model of The Titanic without planning permission.

(scotsman.com)

submitted 5 years ago by [geekchic](#)

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sorted by: **best**

[\[-\] bobnine](#) 3 points 5 years ago

He should look into turning it into an actual boat, then he probably wouldn't need planning permission since it wouldn't be a permanent structure.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\] Larwood](#) [Somerset/London](#) 3 points 5 years ago

The first visitors also heard a foghorn and saw lights twinkling from the portholes, as they did on the dance floors prior to the Titanic striking an iceberg and sinking.

This sentence hurts my brain.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\] daveime](#) [Lancashire / Philippines](#) 16 points 5 years ago

Planning **permission** being the operative word.

i.e. getting permission *before* spending 12 years building something that could well violate fire, health, safety and building codes, and then looking for sympathy from the general public.

Some laws are there for a reason.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\] \[deleted\]](#) 8 points 5 years ago

Exactly. We are a small, crowded country with ever-shrinking green and pleasant bits. If everyone was allowed to build whatever they wanted it would quickly look like the hideous urban sprawl you

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[\[-\] specofdust](#) 6 points 5 years ago

You ever been to the Highlands mate?
Small and crowded they are not.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] RAAFStupot](#) [Australia](#) 4 points 5 years ago

I'm sure you could drive across
the Highlands in less than a day.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] specofdust](#) 4 points 5 years ago

At 70 miles an hour you could
drive around the entire earth
in under 30 days if there
existed a road running along
the circumference.

Firstly, "across" doesn't really
apply to The Highlands, since
they're not a 2D object, and
secondly, even if you could go
north south or east west in a
day, who cares? Sorry, but
people thinking "hurr durr I
live in Australia/Canada
/America and Europeans called
anything in their continent
big" is just kind of annoying,
douchey, and pointless. We
know there are places which
make the "big" we use "small"
- but when I walk into
someones house and they
proudly tell me about their big
new conservatory I don't go
"meh, that's way smaller than
the field next to my house".

My point was that the
Highland council region alone
could have another 10 million
people added to it and still be
at a lower density than say,
Belgium.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] RAAFStupot](#) [Australia](#) 3 points 5 years ago

I'm sorry for offending

an article.

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If you think your post has been banned,

you, Chief.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] RecQuery](#) [Highlands](#) 2 points 5 years ago

I'm in the Highlands, close to Inverness actually and I can confirm that It's definitely not crowded. Scotland in general, even the big cities aren't that crowded compared to the South.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] specofdust](#) 2 points 5 years ago

Scotland is bloody empty mate. There's 5 million of us in a land which is around 80% of England, and there's 55 million of them.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] Jafit](#) 3 points 5 years ago

Yeah, we may have no jobs or any development going on that would create them and stimulate the economy, and we may have an entire generation of people who may never own a house... but at least we've got all these privately owned green fields that the general public can't use... Woooo.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] fuckingobvious](#) 1 point 5 years ago

Except that they still have wide open natural spaces that in totality cover a much greater area than the entirety of the UK; they have 33 people per km² to our 255 per km².

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] Jafit](#) 5 points 5 years ago

I believe that if you build it and get away with it for long enough you get retrospective consent.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] daveime](#) [Lancashire / Philippines](#) 2 points 5 years ago

Which is kind of messed up. Break the law, but don't get caught for a long enough period, and you didn't break the law ?

It just reinforces the message "never mind the crime, just don't get caught".

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

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1176 · 362 comments

[Manchester Attack: Home Secretary Amber Rudd condemns US for leaks of shared British intelligence](#)

[\[-\] Jafit](#) 7 points 5 years ago

The former (semi-retired) chief planning officer for my borough council works in my office as a consultant, so I hear planning discussions on a daily basis. I'm by no means an expert, but I get the impression that a lot of planning law is pretty dumb. Greenbelt is also really dumb, it was introduced around 70 years ago, is out of touch with the way the world is, and just gets in the way for no good reason.

I'm not saying 'lets all let everyone build 100m long scale models of the titanic' but really, you can't do something useful and profitable with this field that you own because... well just because.

Anyway, planning law is having a much needed overhaul and will hopefully be less shit in a year or two.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] \[deleted\]](#) 4 points 5 years ago

Greenbelt was implemented to combat urban sprawl and it has worked well. God knows what the South East would look like now without it.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] \[deleted\]](#) 3 points 5 years ago

Like Crawley *shudder*

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

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10 Is it the end for millionaire mega-basements? | Art and design

(theguardian.com) submitted 3 years ago by syuk Sark 23 comments share

this post was submitted on 14 Nov 2013 10 points (86% upvoted) shortlink: https://redd.it/1qlufl

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all 23 comments

sorted by: best

[-] EnglishManinDC 9 points 3 years ago

I knew I should have become a millionaire sooner - now I'm going to miss out.

permalink embed

[-] [deleted] 6 points 3 years ago

Nothing against having some regulation in place to stop disruption and/or drainage problems.

Limiting the maximum depth though? Is this just so they can put absolute size limits on the property? I don't have any problem with someone building a mansion underground as long as it complies with building regs and doesn't cause a problem to neighbours.

I think it's quite a cool concept actually!

permalink embed

[-] thisismyivorytower Edinburgh 5 points 3 years ago

On a date, take her back home

'This is my house!' she looks in disgust at the garden shed 'Would you like to come inside!?' silently, she steps into the dark shed, the man follows closing the door. The floor starts to slowly move down, opening up to the main hall of a mansion ...damn, now I want this.

permalink embed parent

[-] [deleted] 1 point 3 years ago

Very cool idea, it sounds a lot like the BatCave/lair down at the port in the latest Batman films.

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permalink embed parent[-] [count_toastcula](#) [Wales](#) 1 point 3 years ago

And then 300 pages of Detective Inspector Rebus trying to find out what happened to her.

permalink embed parent[-] [thisismyivorytower](#) [Edinburgh](#) 1 point 3 years ago

Nothing. It was just the implication!

permalink embed parent[-] **[deleted]** 1 point 3 years ago

I'd guess there's probably a safety argument for making sure they aren't too deep- the deeper the basement, the more surrounding ground fills it if it collapses and the more damage done.

permalink embed parent[-] [elapid](#) [Kernow](#) 1 point 3 years ago

Surely it is more eco-friendly too. The surrounding earth provides insulation and there are no windows to lose heat through.

I'd happy live underground. While a view is nice you take it for granted after a week.

permalink embed parent[-] [ArtistEngineer](#) [Cambridgeshire](#) 4 points 3 years ago

Several of my American friends are quite amazed, considering the [minuscule](#) houses in the UK, that you don't have basements in most houses.

permalink embed[-] [phead](#) 2 points 3 years ago

It's just tradition. Older houses have no foundation so a basement would have collapsed and brought the house down with it. In newer houses it would push up the cost, and the liability for the builder.

In many areas it's a losing battle against the water table. Our London office had a 2 story basement, unless the sump pump failed then it had a basement and an underground pool.

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an article.

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[\[-\] \[deleted\]](#) 0 points 3 years ago

Most of us can't afford them - we're British!

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] wywywywy](#) 2 points 3 years ago

Now I kind of want to see what these basements are like...

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\] EnglishManinDC](#) 2 points 3 years ago

You know this. Three floors underground, including a pool which stretches under the garden must be sweeeeeeeeeeeeeet.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] \[deleted\]](#) 2 points 3 years ago

[example](#)

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] \[deleted\]](#) 3 points 3 years ago

You know, I'm starting to come round to this whole "filthy rich" thing. Might try it out.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] solve-for-x](#) 2 points 3 years ago

<http://imgur.com/x1xgE9D>

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] E-Step](#) [By the sea](#) 1 point 3 years ago

I've seen a few on Grand Designs, they seemed like an absolutely pain to build & the lack of windows would get to me. Some had cool cinema & pool rooms though.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] Uaedaiaen](#) 2 points 3 years ago

This story stinks of a local authority just wanting more regulation and more money.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\] \[deleted\]](#) 2 points 3 years ago*

I know it would be limited to those who can afford it, but if you dig down, you can't build up.

See Paris, which is riddled with tunnels, catacombs, sewers, cellars, and not a building much higher than ~~3 or 4~~ (herp...) 7 to 8 (apparently) floors Aesthetics comes into it, but I'm sure their hands were forced by the instability of the ground.

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I'm not sure what I prefer.

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[\[-\] Burkitt](#) 1 point 3 years ago

Actually most of Paris is around [7-8 stories](#) because of the [rules set by Hausmann when he renovated the city in the 19th century](#). Paris is also the densest capital in Europe, with 21,000 people/sq km, compared with 5200 people/sq km in London.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] \[deleted\]](#) 2 points 3 years ago

I meant to say 30-40 meters, but for some reason my brain interpreted that as 3-4 floors.

Glad I'm not an architect: Most of Paris would be nothing but multi-story gymnasiums.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] ThisIsntEndingWell](#) 2 points 3 years ago*

I don't think those two comparisons are correct. The 21000/km seems to come only from the Paris 'city' of 2.2million where as the 5200/km for London seems to come from the city population of 8,3 million. I'm sure if you included a comparable central part of London the density would be closer.

Edit: Yep, if you include the 'outer ring area' of Paris to make comparable population size with grater London then Paris has a density of 3,400 compared to 5200

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] Burkitt](#) 1 point 3 years ago*

Thanks, I hadn't thought of comparing the density of the greater Paris area with London before to represent more equal populations.

But looking at it the other way around and comparing inner London with inner Paris, the densest of London's inner boroughs (Islington at 14,000/sq km) is less dense than 15 of Paris's 20 arrondissements - and comes nowhere near the 11th arrondissement's 40,000/sq km.

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0 **Extension to my home** (self.unitedkingdom)
submitted 1 year ago by [Ceronepop](#)

I am thinking of having an extension built on the ground floor, knocking a wall down and fitting a new kitchen on my house. I logged my details onto Check a Trade website. A tradesman called me but was not interested in giving me a quote as I have not yet applied for planning permission.
Is this correct? I feel we need to know how much it will cost before applying?

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[\[-\] damesdad](#) 8 points 1 year ago

It might be worth you investigating something called 'permitted development'. It is legislation that allows small extensions or outbuildings to be built without the need to apply for permission.

The idea is that so long as your changes fits to certain, fairly simple, criteria it can be assumed that you already have permission, thereby not blocking up the planning system with hundreds of applications for identical garages/ kitchen extensions.

The best person to advise would be the person who draws up your plans, which you will need anyway for the builder. Be aware also that if you can progress under permitted dev. You still need building regs inspections for the work to be legal.

HTH.

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[\[-\] moonflower](#) [Greater London](#) 6 points 1 year ago

He's not going to waste his time working out

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a quote until you have permission to have it built, and when you know what kind of materials you will need ... you can probably get a rough idea of what it would cost by looking online to see how much people are paying for something similar to what you want

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[\[-\] aha2095](#) [Wythenshawe from Bognor :/](#) 1 point
1 year ago

He shouldn't really be looking at the materials, leave that to the tradesmen, just get a 2-3 tradesmen to price it and take the best one, don't go with any big companies, they're always extortionate.

Get permission then the quotes, remember though, the work is always going to take longer than they say it will so don't expect to be finished when they say. Also, keep on top of them, they'll try to fit other jobs in with yours which is fine but if you politely say something like is there any chance you could do it a bit faster and they'll try their best.

Also please do leave them a kettle, some mugs, a spoon or two with tea and coffee, they'll do the rest.

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[\[-\] DravenRainrix](#) 3 points 1 year ago

I'd imagine you'll need architectural plans first? Submit those to planning permission, then find builders to get quotes? From a builders POV I'd guess it'd be a bit of a waste to quote on a job that could be months away from even starting. Might be wrong though?

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[\[-\] Marlon_Biscuit](#) 3 points 1 year ago

Nobody can really give you a reliable quote until they have seen the approved architectural plans. If they're just 'plans' then they may have to change based on approval / changes.

Unless it's set in stone that this is what you are definitely going to do it would be impossible to quote on it.

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[\[-\] norney](#) 3 points 1 year ago

I would decline to quote. From experience

an article.

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this would have a vanishingly small chance of leading to work, so I won't spend my time on it. Also, don't take this personally, I'm just being honest and providing hopefully useful advice, but by asking me "how long is a piece of string" you've identified yourself to me as a customer who will be a total pain in the arse.

Research online average costs per square m for building in your area. Architects will give you an amount of their time for free to discuss your plans and possible costs, although they will undercook the costs by about 20% by being hopelessly optimistic.

Once you've done that you can decide whether to engage an architect if you need creative input, or if you don't need creative input an architectural engineer might be more cost effective.

When you have all the necessary plans and permissions get at least 3 builders with good feedback ratings to provide quotes.

This bit is important so I'll say it again. Get at least 3 builders with good feedback ratings to provide quotes.

Good luck.

permalink embed

[\[-\] \[deleted\]](#) 2 points 1 year ago

I believe the order is:

1. Architect
2. Planning Permission
3. Builder's quote

You'll be out of pocket after the first 2 before you even know if you can go ahead. Them's the breaks, I'm afraid.

permalink embed

[\[-\] \[deleted\]](#) 1 point 1 year ago

Councils often offer a service to evaluate whether you need to apply for planning permission for a job.

It is a much smaller fee - and probably worth doing if you have any doubts.

permalink embed

[\[-\] Cueball61](#) [Staffordshire](#) 1 point 1 year ago

Wouldn't it be best to find someone who deals with everything for you for something like this? They'd know an architect to do the drawings, the contractors for the building work, doing the planning permission, etc.

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[\[-\] DEADB33F](#) [Nottinghamshire](#) 1 point 1 year ago*

General rule of thumb is £1000 per m² of added space if you do some of the work yourself (lay floors, painting, etc). Expect to pay more if you live in the South, especially near London.

permalink embed

[\[+\]](#) 1 year ago (6 children)

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submitted 8 months ago by [ieya404](#) [Edinburgh](#)
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[\[-\] sos_wtf](#) [Scotland](#) 5 points 8 months ago

I'd swan around with my fat wee stubby in full view, perhaps do a few touch the toes give them a view of my glorious sphincter. Oh and buy large wide screen TV (clearly I can afford it living there) and have it constantly looping lemonparty

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\] \[deleted\]](#) 3 points 8 months ago

Who'd pay £4.5million for a leasehold?

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\] BraveSirRobin](#) 3 points 8 months ago

Wait, you guys are still issuing new leaseholds down south? WTF? I always assumed they'd been grandfathered-in from old contracts.

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[\[-\] isyourlisteningbroke](#) [Plastic Paddy](#) 6 points 8 months ago

You pretty much can't buy a freehold in an apartment block.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] BraveSirRobin](#) 3 points 8 months ago

That's....literally archaic. Any money says that the Old Boys in charge of land ownership law are all extensive land owners themselves.

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[\[-\] \[deleted\]](#) 1 point 8 months ago

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The only time you'll fully own an apartment is if you share the lease costs with the rest of the block which never happens.

I still don't fully know what happens when the lease, usually of 100 years or so, runs out if you don't pay extra to extend it.

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[+] 8 months ago* (2 children)

[-] [ieya404](#) [Edinburgh](#) [S] 2 points 8 months ago

Feels like a particularly clueless bit of phrasing from the Tate; had he suggested they'd work to broker a deal to get privacy film installed on the flats' windows ([this sort of stuff](#)) you'd think this would've been over before it'd begun?

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[-] [ShetlandJames](#) [Shetlander in Glasgow](#) 2 points 8 months ago

I went up there and it's pretty crazy how you can look right into people's homes.

They all looked like serviced lets though, lots of them had identical furniture and layouts.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[-] [Himandheruk](#) 4 points 8 months ago

So you buy or rent a big glass box in the heart of London and are surprised you have no privacy. I agree with Serota.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[-] [zsux](#) [Scotland](#) 1 point 8 months ago

I can see how people living there would be pissed off. To get back at the Tate, I'd invite the most shocking performance art types to come up and do their worst in front of the people watching from the gallery, lol. It'd either shock them or I'd get a call asking how much it would cost to book them.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[-] [Annoyed_Badger](#) 1 point 8 months ago

One way film, easy to apply, cheap. Solves problem.

Non issue.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[-] [Cluckyx](#) [County of Bristol](#) -4 points 8 months ago

an article.

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If you can afford a £4.5 million leasehold on a flat in central London, I quite frankly do not care about any possible problems you could have sans an immediate threat to your life.

permalink embed

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this post was submitted on 03 Aug 2014

520 points (97% upvoted)

shortlink: https://redd.it/2ciko6

520 Man gets around closure of road by building his own – and charges £2 for cars to use it (metro.co.uk)

submitted 2 years ago by simonjp Hemel

170 comments share

username password remember me reset password login

all 170 comments

sorted by: best

[-] pya 81 points 2 years ago*

I wonder if he'll make his money back.

cost: £150,000

time remaining: 5 months

cost per car: £2

cars required: 75,000

cars required per day: 500

I suppose he could sell the land afterwards.

Edit: five months to recoup £300,000, needs 1,250 of est. 7,000 cars to pay source

permalink embed

[-] tyroncs Kent 35 points 2 years ago

500 a day isn't really that many, it says that it will be manned 24/7, so you would only need 20 or so cars an hour or one every 3 minutes to break even which doesn't seem too unrealistic - especially if this road being closed was enough to prompt someone to build their own bypass

permalink embed parent

[-] pya 5 points 2 years ago

There's probably a place we could look up the estimated traffic stats for that road. If anyone knows of one please enlighten me.

permalink embed parent

[-] [deleted] 25 points 2 years ago

According to the telegraph article

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posted below something like 7000 vehicles used the road every day last year so if just a small fraction pay the toll he's pretty well covered.

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] \[deleted\]](#) 3 points 2 years ago

It's a busy road, I imagine he'll make a profit.

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] Burgisio](#) [BANES](#) 2 points 2 years ago

A lot it's always pretty slow driving along the road with traffic.

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] Talithin](#) 43 points 2 years ago

It looks like he's got at least one employee on the toll booth too which is an extra ~10k costs.

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] \[deleted\]](#) 24 points 2 years ago

The Telegraph says he's got 1750 vehicles passing each day so I imagine it'll easily make a profit at that rate.

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] miasmic](#) 7 points 2 years ago

I don't get how a private 365m road with no planning or legal process involved could cost 150k to build, maybe he's inflating how much it cost him to try and get people on his side and allay any suspicions of the road being 'built on the cheap'.

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] chilari](#) [Shropshire](#) 10 points 2 years ago

I work for a construction company. Road building ain't cheap, especially if you don't have the benefit of bulk discounts from material suppliers. A section of proper road of the same length, with tarmac and lines painted on and proper edging and drainage and with services running beneath (gas, water, etc), of the same length, would cost four or five times as much as this guy's temporary road.

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an article.

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[\[-\] milikom](#) [Durham](#) 4 points 2 years ago

It said it will require £150k upkeep costs as well, including staff etc.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] Pastamannffc](#) [Nottinghamshire](#) 14 points 2 years ago

seems possible, but if he's got 150k to spend on this anyway, i doubt he'll be that bothered

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] pya](#) 67 points 2 years ago

i doubt he'll be that bothered

"If this doesn't work out we are going to lose our house, Wendy and I took the decision together that we needed to do this for ourselves and the people we know."

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] Pastamannffc](#) [Nottinghamshire](#) 54 points 2 years ago

Well

That's odd

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] woodengineer](#) [A Welshman exiled to the USA](#) 67 points 2 years ago

This has kind of gone from "good on him" to "he's a bit nuts".

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] Nagers123](#) [Lahn-Dahn Tahn](#) 56 points 2 years ago

Some people have a kid to save their marriage. He built a private bypass toll highway.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] typewritertrew](#) [Australia](#) 22 points 2 years ago

In fairness a kid costs more

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] SexLiesAndExercise](#) [Scotland](#) 6 points 2 years ago

Fuck it, people have taken stupider business risks. Maybe it'll pan out!

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] Choo41](#) [Oxford](#) 3 points 2 years ago

I'm surprised that after a few weeks his bank manager didn't have a

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quiet word.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Esscocia](#) 1 point 2 years ago

Investment is nuts?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Captain_English](#) 4 points 2 years ago

Not really.

He saw a problem, and started a business to solve it, and that business is also set up to help his neighbours.

That he's taking a risk to do that really isn't odd at all...

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [phpadam](#) [United Kingdom; W Yorkshire](#) 9 points 2 years ago

| "If this doesn't work out we are going to lose our house

Its more of a saying; he is suggesting he will be in trouble and be tight. His own employment supports his residential home - or he wont have a mortgage. (especially if he had to re-mortgage to do it).

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [FartingBob](#) [West Sussex](#) 9 points 2 years ago

So he'll lose his house and no doubt his wife if it goes tits up. The guy may end up making money on it, but he's a huge idiot to risk everything he has on something that is only going to make money for 6 months.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Borax](#) 14 points 2 years ago

I think it has a great potential as a business idea, especially if it's a busy road

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [\[deleted\]](#) 12 points 2 years ago

It's a very busy road.

Source: times spent stuck on it.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Esscocia](#) 5 points 2 years ago

Thank god not everyone thinks like you.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [GavinZac](#) [Tutorial Island](#) 2 points 2 years ago

And no doubt his wife?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [pmwap](#) 1 point 2 years ago

FartingBob obviously knows the couple personally.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [strolls](#) 2 points 2 years ago

| Wendy and I took the decision together

I doubt he'll lose his wife if it goes wrong.

Entrepreneurship is inherently risky, and you probably should be a little

scared about it.

If you meet an entrepreneur who genuinely doesn't have any concerns about failure (although obviously it can be hard to tell, because people front it) then they probably have no idea what they're doing.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [\[deleted\]](#) 1 point 2 years ago

Nutter!

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [bmlcgy](#) [Lancashire](#) 6 points 2 years ago

It could have easily been a loan.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [metalbox69](#) 1 point 2 years ago

I suppose he'll get a few more after all the publicity.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[+\]](#) [ivix](#) *comment score below threshold (3 children)*

[\[-\]](#) [scoutisimba](#) [London](#) 2 points 2 years ago

He will have to pay VAT too. At 20% that's about 33p for each £2 journey.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [pmwap](#) 3 points 2 years ago

Most of the money will be in cash. If I were him I'd be buying things with £1 coins for some time.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [port53](#) [Expat in US](#) 7 points 2 years ago

With a little money and a few words (£s) in the right ear he can probably get the main road repair delayed a little while longer.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [splenetic](#) 62 points 2 years ago

Most local councils can do that all by themselves.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [port53](#) [Expat in US](#) 14 points 2 years ago

They'll probably go looking for him to ask his "opinion" on fixing the main road.

"In light of alternative options the council has decided to postpone work on the main road until FY 2015. We do this because our citizens have an alternative choice available."

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [\[deleted\]](#) 1 point 2 years ago

No matter what he's gonna make money, because he can resell the land, and pocket the difference.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [stevemegson](#) 1 point 2 years ago

He doesn't own the land, it looks like he's put up the capital to build the road and is splitting the profits 50/50 with the farmer who owns the land.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [milikom](#) [Durham](#) 44 points 2 years ago

A far better article here: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/road-and-rail-transport/11008835/Entrepreneur-builds-private-toll-road-after-landslip.html>

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[–] [cptzaprowsdower](#) [Darlington](#) 15 points 2 years ago

That is a much better article.

So if the local authority condemn his road as a public hazard this guy could be in a whole world of shit. I doubt they're going to be cool with him charging money for a service that has had no safety certification. And in consideration of this, how can he be so optimistic about getting retrospective planning permission? His argument seems to be "I've already done it, so there". That's weak. If they gave him the legal smack down there would be a mini public outcry but realistically I doubt he would have much recourse.

Also, it's not totally infeasible that the North East Somerset council could accelerate their roadworks after this bad publicity. It's a timetable but it's not set in stone. This would take a chunk out of the wafer thin profit margins he's desperate to maintain

All in all it looks like this man is going to lose his house.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [Notmyrealname08](#) 10 points 2 years ago

It is really disappointing that the local authority are being so 'dog in a manger' about this. It has pretty much universal support locally and it's only for a temporary period. It is unlikely that officers will suggest enforcement action in these circumstances and even if they did serve a Planning Enforcement Notice the procedure would take longer than 5 months (if he appealed against the Notice).

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [Captain_English](#) 1 point 2 years ago

That'll still destroy any revenue he makes from the road, even if he just holds up the process as a delaying action.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [Notmyrealname08](#) 1 point 2 years ago

Highly unlikely. Even if the LA consider it expedient to take Enforcement action, he will have factored in the cost of removing the road and reinstating the land. Defending the Enforcement action (he only needs to delay, not to win) will cost only a few thousand.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [Thyrotoxic](#) [Wales](#) 1 point 2 years ago

Because it's arguably dangerous as fuck for people to be building random large scale structures without any kind of safety procedures.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [Notmyrealname08](#) 2 points 2 years ago

You assume that the road has not been designed by professionals and that he doesn't have insurances in place. Why would he want it to be unsafe? It's not hard to get it designed and checked by engineers.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Thyrotoxic](#) [Wales](#) 1 point 2 years ago

I'm sure it's actually perfectly safe. Problem is it hasn't been checked by the actual body responsible for making roads safe. You can't trust every random strangers claim that their large structure won't cause injury or be destroyed.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [ieya404](#) [Edinburgh](#) 2 points 2 years ago

From their twitter feed,

NEWS Retrospective Planning Application underway & PL Insurance arranged

If insurance has been arranged, I think I'd be pretty confident on the safety aspect - insurers are not ones who like risking their money after all.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [bluescrn](#) 2 points 2 years ago

A short section of road through a field is hardly a 'large scale structure'. It's more like a long private driveway, really.

It's not going to fall over or burn down, and there's no electricity, gas, or plumbing involved.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [_Madison_](#) [Stratford-Upon-Avon](#) 5 points 2 years ago

The thing is it will take the council months to actually go through the planning application and following appeals. By then the road will be repaired and so even if planning was not granted who cares the money has already been made.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [milikom](#) [Durham](#) 1 point 2 years ago

Depends if there's a fine to pay. Can't say I'm well informed but I can't imagine that they would just let him get away with it.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [RobinTheBrave](#) 3 points 2 years ago

Planning disputes can usually be escalated to a council meeting, where the public can attend. While the planning officers might want to close it down, the councilors would find it hard to ignore a room full of irate voters.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [splenetic](#) 2 points 2 years ago

They often do in planning matters; councillors can't ignore the law.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [severon78](#) [York](#) 2 points 2 years ago

[Public support is in no way any indication of how the councillors would vote](#)

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [eairy](#) 1 point 2 years ago

Why would you put so much time and effort into building something that would probably get bulldozed??

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[+] 2 years ago* (3 children)

[-] [scottwalker88](#) 4 points 2 years ago

Could there be a loophole where he says it's a car park with one space and the entrance is here and the exit is however many miles away?

Or better yet, call it a race track (rally track more likely looking at the conditions) and not have any speed limits?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[-] [stevemegson](#) 1 point 2 years ago

Not really, the council would also object to someone building a car park on farmland without planning permission for the change of use. Operating a toll road on private land isn't really a problem, building the road is.

Calling it a race track would also invalidate most people's insurance when driving on it, which would be more of a legal issue than planning permission.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[-] [milikom](#) [Durham](#) 2 points 2 years ago

Yeah, I'm not optimistic for him. Hopefully enough cars will go through so that he can at least make the money back, even with legal fees.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[-] [\[deleted\]](#) 2 points 2 years ago

The local Tories support him AFAIK and most of the public either don't care or think it's a good idea from what I've seen. This is all entirely from what I've seen though, so don't take it as fact.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[-] [\[deleted\]](#) 1 point 2 years ago

Yeah, it definitely explains how he managed to do it so quickly.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[-] [EpicFishFingers](#) [Suffolk County](#) 1 point 2 years ago

I think the local authority are annoyed because they might have to buy the road off the guy when all is said and done, just because it's so much quicker. That's if the farmer is alright with it

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[-] [stevemegson](#) 5 points 2 years ago

Not really, he's essentially built a gravel track which will do the job fine for five months but isn't a long-term alternative to repairing the original road. I suspect that they quietly think it takes the pressure off them and don't want to stop him. Publicly they have to point out the issues and advise people not to use it because they don't want to somehow appear liable if something does happen, and they can't publicly condone people ignoring the planning law that they're supposed to enforce. I imagine that they'll drag the planning process out until after the road is repaired (if it wouldn't take that long anyway) and finally tell him to stop when he's already stopped.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] EpicFishFingers](#) [Suffolk County](#) 1 point 2 years ago

Yeah I can see this going in their favour if he packs it in once the new road gets finished, which he'll probably have to do as he won't make much more money.

I wonder how long until it's full of potholes though

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] Meldrew](#) 37 points 2 years ago

It isn't a bad thing especially in case of the need for emergency service.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\] Mackem101](#) [Houghton-Le-Spring](#) 38 points 2 years ago

I think he'd let the emergency services though for nowt, and even in he tried to refuse they'd use it anyway as trespass is a civil matter and a judge is never going to find against the fire brigade/ambulance service.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] Quis_Custodiet](#) 42 points 2 years ago

And obstruction of an emergency vehicle en route to the scene of a call is a criminal offence.

Though having said that, ambulances and fire engines are almost uniformly heavier than the limit of the road.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] FartingBob](#) [West Sussex](#) 34 points 2 years ago

If there is no alternative they'll use it anyway even if it ruins the road. He'd then have to close it to do repairs and some enterprising guy will build a bypass to bypass the bypass.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] PeaSouper](#) [Suffolk County](#) 15 points 2 years ago

Surely if a fire brigade or ambulance goes over private land during the course of an emergency, and damages the owner's property while doing so, they compensate the owner afterwards?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] gomez12](#) 2 points 2 years ago

I don't know. As far as I'm aware the police don't pay to repair your shit if they trash it during a search. I can only imagine fire engines and ambulances are the same.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] rosscatherall](#) [Zoocastle](#) 6 points 2 years ago

Nah, you can claim money back for broken doors and such after police raids if no contraband was found, they leave contact details after the raid has been conducted for such things.

Same goes for damages to vehicles caused by pursuits and the likes.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] thedingoismybaby](#) 1 point 2 years ago

Actually they tend not to pay even if nothing was found

providing the original search was lawful. Also fire service can take any actions they deem necessary when fighting fire, including entering property, damaging property, etc.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [sigma914](#) [Belfast](#) 1 point 2 years ago

<http://i.imgur.com/16wPApE.jpg>

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [Quis_Custodiet](#) 6 points 2 years ago

Depends where we were going. Cardiac arrest, major trauma, chest pain or breathing trouble maybe, depending on the difference in time. If it's not likely to be a hyperacute emergency, probably not.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [Rhaegarion](#) [South Yorkshire](#) 1 point 2 years ago

There is no doubt a way to recover the toll after the fact from their admin department rather than making them pay at the time. That way he gets paid for use of his private property and the emergency services don't get delayed at all.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [Deeside420](#) [CH5](#) 1 point 2 years ago

If you're parked causing an obstruction, the fire brigade can ram your car out of the way and potentially sue you for the cost of damage to their vehicle.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [stevemegson](#) 1 point 2 years ago

He will, and he's also been talking to the local bus company about giving them free access so that they can restart affected routes.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [scottwalker88](#) 114 points 2 years ago

Good for him.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[–] [\[deleted\]](#) 28 points 2 years ago

I think it illustrates something of the difference regulation and inefficiency of local government makes when he's able to build a road so quickly by himself (or with his own hired help) and yet the council takes months to fix anything.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [YourLizardOverlord](#) [Sussex](#) 67 points 2 years ago

You're not comparing like with like. Mike Watts's road has a 3.5 tonne weight limit. It's much easier, quicker and cheaper to build a road that doesn't have to take 44 tonne HGVs.

And bear in mind that the existing road is probably being repaired by a private contractor.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [Burgisio](#) [BANES](#) 1 point 2 years ago

its also on a hillside that's got springs running underneath so its not a simple fix

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] childofmalcav](#) 18 points 2 years ago

Priorities and available money. The council have got other worries and responsibilities that outweigh the road for now. Same with a pot hole in the road, it's not great, but might be far less important than another job elsewhere. I would imagine there would be a hell of a stink if the council tried to build a toll road like that

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] sanbikinoraion](#) 5 points 2 years ago

He's also able to recoup his costs by charging for it - if the local council tried that they'd be crucified.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] G_Morgan](#) [Wales](#) 6 points 2 years ago

At the same time the road network was completely disastrous when it was dominated by turnpikes.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] TheQuietestOne](#) 7 points 2 years ago*

Edit: Removed some tangential argument.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] \[deleted\]](#) 10 points 2 years ago

You're right it's not totally comparable to fixing the road the landslide destroyed, and I'm sure the official 'permanent' road is up to higher standards. I just thought it was funny how a single pothole takes months to be reported and fixed, and yet this guy buys some land, builds a road, sets up a booth, and charges a toll for it in (presumably) a few weeks/months!

Clearly the nationalisation of the roads is a practical decision, as seen by the fact that no country in the world still has the majority of its roads privately owned, but I do wonder if we encouraged more entrepreneurship and private development in the infrastructure sector, we could probably get a lot more done. There's no reason why the council couldn't, say, buy the road off this guy at a fair price, thereby serving its residents and thanking the chap for his service.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] TheQuietestOne](#) 7 points 2 years ago

I just thought it was funny how a single pothole takes months to be reported and fixed, and yet this guy buys some land, builds a road, sets up a booth, and charges a toll for it in (presumably) a few weeks/months!

Oops sorry Cimeas, I've butchered your argument a little and people cursorily glancing over the content (like me) miss your actual point.

Apologies, I'll edit my comment.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] \[deleted\]](#) 4 points 2 years ago

Ahh don't worry about it, you don't have to delete anything :) I didn't think it was irrelevant.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] **walgman** London 5 points 2 years ago

I remember Top Gear fixing a road in a day which would have taken the council weeks.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] **ieya404** Edinburgh 1 point 2 years ago

Despite having no planning permission the road opened for business on Friday.

Source: <http://www.bristolpost.co.uk/Toll-road-field-gets-drivers-A431-closure/story-22064579-detail/story.html>

Have to imagine that anything the council did would've had to go through the red tape of planning permission for starters...

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] **Borax** 1 point 2 years ago

Such is the motivation of profit. The daily mail would be in outrage if the council, did this.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] **phpadam** United Kingdom; W Yorkshire -2 points 2 years ago

Councils are Slow; its in there DNA and contractors "have to" charge more because of perceived bureaucracy.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] **BritishPetroleum** -4 points 2 years ago

Governments are never as efficient as private business. There's a reason communism couldn't keep up in the 20th century.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] **ithika** Edinburgh 1 point 2 years ago

LOL.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] **[deleted]** 5 points 2 years ago

He's not wrong. A big reason why Communism couldn't keep up with the West was because the centrally-planned Soviet economy was significantly less efficient than the privately owned Western one.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] **ithika** Edinburgh 2 points 2 years ago

So why is it every privatised business becomes less effective, more expensive and *still* requires Government handouts to hobble along?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] **[deleted]** 3 points 2 years ago

If you're looking at Telecoms, then phone pricing is (relatively) cheaper, more available, and significantly more widespread than when BT was the only provider. You may be too young to remember this but back in the day when the government ran phone service, you had to wait MONTHS to receive a mobile phone. Yes, literally. There was an official waiting list.

As for other sectors like electricity or rail, those are more public-

private partnerships than actually privatised sectors. They're also mired in so much regulatory control that it's practically impossible to run them without some degree of government assistance, the only question is whether it would cost *even more* to fully nationalise them than it does to have them semi-privatised today. The jury is still out on that one.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [BritishPetroleum](#) 0 points 2 years ago

Because when you privatize you create a monopoly in the market. A monopoly is no different than a government in terms of efficiency. You just don't have to subsidize it anymore.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [hakilac](#) 16 points 2 years ago

I wish I had the money to do that, the roads in the east are shocking.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\]](#) [TheresanotherJoswell](#) [Northumberland](#) 8 points 2 years ago

Come to Northumberland: Where the roads are basically dust.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Ryannnnnn](#) [Northumberland](#) 6 points 2 years ago

That's insulting to dust.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [TheresanotherJoswell](#) [Northumberland](#) 1 point 2 years ago

Once I was on the x18, and literally all four tires burst near Seahouses. We had to wait two hours for a replacement bus.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Ryannnnnn](#) [Northumberland](#) 2 points 2 years ago

Can't think of anything worse than being stranded in Beadnell.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [TheresanotherJoswell](#) [Northumberland](#) 2 points 2 years ago

Hell isn't even worse than Beadnell.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [rainator](#) [Cardiff](#) 2 points 2 years ago

you should see the roads in the west

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Boredofborg](#) 15 points 2 years ago

Come to Sheffield, you could drop a body in some of our potholes.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [bmlecg](#) [Lancashire](#) 7 points 2 years ago

Come to Manchester. You could hide herds of elephants in ours, and some of them have been there for at least the 2 years I've been living there. I've started giving some of them names.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [evenstevens280](#) [A Yorkshireman in Gloucestershire](#) 7 points 2 years ago

Come to Gloucestershire - the place where the council draw white lines around all the potholes to highlight them for fixing but don't actually do anything about them.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [da__](#) 11 points 2 years ago

Come to Scotland... Actually, our roads tend to be OK.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [evenstevens280](#) [A Yorkshireman in Gloucestershire](#) 6 points 2 years ago

There's only 5 million of you. They don't get fucked quite as easily

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [TheScarletPimpernel](#) 3 points 2 years ago

And Glasgow would have had a lot of roads resurfaced for the Games. Lucky fuckers.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [docmuppet](#) [Exeter](#) 3 points 2 years ago

Yet none of the ones for the road cycling for some reason.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [TheScarletPimpernel](#) 2 points 2 years ago

That would be too obvious.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [fact_hunt](#) 1 point 2 years ago

For the 2012 Olympics Tower Hamlets council ripped up the brick road surface of Brick Lane, and rather sloppily replaced it with tarmac. Cheers guys!

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [CptES](#) [Scotland](#) 4 points 2 years ago

Drive through North Lanarkshire and tell me that. There's a running joke that you know when you get to Glasgow and it's not by the sign, but by the fact the car stops trying to cave in your spine.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [waydee](#) 2 points 2 years ago

Aberdeen's fucked. The effects of routing all the HGV traffic necessary to support the UK oil and gas industry through the middle of a city with a council that can't seem to work out how to bring in any money from said industry.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [michaelisnotginger](#) [Eboracum](#) 1 point 2 years ago

uh, lol

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [UnderCTRLD](#) 2 points 2 years ago

Gloucestershire councils have been known to do the same for [dog turds](#). It seems like the response to any problem at the council is to spray paint it.

permalink embed parent[-] [evenstevens280](#) [A Yorkshireman in Gloucestershire](#) 1 point 2 years ago

To be fair, paint is cheaper than tarmac.

permalink embed parent[-] [CornishPaddy](#) [Fowydh - Follow me down cousin Jack](#) 2 points 2 years ago

Cornwall's roads are one big pothole. It's actually more hole than road at this point.

permalink embed parent[-] [bmlecg](#) [Lancashire](#) 1 point 2 years ago

Basically, go anywhere in the country. I wish I were Ron Swanson. I'd just fill them myself in a nonchalant manner.

permalink embed parent[-] [prof_hobart](#) 4 points 2 years ago

Two years?

I've been living on my road for over a decade and all that's happened in that time is that the potholes that were already there are now bigger and have been joined by a bunch of new ones. I think the council's plan is to just wait until they all join up and make a new slightly lower road than the one we currently have.

permalink embed parent[-] [Plasmaman](#) [Bristol/Sheffield](#) 2 points 2 years ago

After getting through numerous bike wheels, I've decided to stick to walking around Sheffield. Awful roads.

permalink embed parent[-] [FartingBob](#) [West Sussex](#) 2 points 2 years ago

The roads to the south are terrible!

permalink embed parent[-] [gudgeon_fancier](#) [Somerset](#) 14 points 2 years ago

I know him fairly well. I eat at his cafe a couple of times a week and he was a friend of my fathers.

I was surprised when I saw that the council's roadworks would be complete by christmas, I doubt it It'll probably take longer and that'll give him time to make his money back.

permalink embed[-] [arcedup](#) 12 points 2 years ago

I looked the road up on [Google Maps](#), which has the closed-off section highlighted. Detours take up to 23 minutes and are 11 miles (18km) long.

permalink embed[-] [maspiers](#) 25 points 2 years ago

- no planning permission
- people using the road will be uninsured

Could get legally interesting

permalink embed[-] [Marmalain](#) [Fife](#) 11 points 2 years ago

How exactly are people using the road uninsured? Is my car uninsured on my driveway which is my property?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [maspiers](#) 14 points 2 years ago*

I believe most insurance policies do not cover use on private roads. I may be wrong about this.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [turncoat_ewok](#) [Lancashire](#) 11 points 2 years ago

What about use on Toll roads like the M6, which is essentially private and operated by Midland Expressway Limited?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[+\]](#) 2 years ago (1 child)

[\[-\]](#) [carr87](#) [France](#) 8 points 2 years ago

TIL that in the UK you are not insured while driving in car parks.

On the other hand you *may* be wrong about this.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [stevemegson](#) 4 points 2 years ago

This road will be different from a car park because the toll means that the land isn't accessible to the general public in the way that a car park is, and doesn't count as a highway. However, this affects whether you need insurance rather than whether any insurance you do have covers you there. I think that you could legally drive on this road without insurance, which you can't do in a car park.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [wedontlikespaces](#) [Tyne & Wear](#) 2 points 2 years ago

The land is accessible to the general public, assuming that joe public has £2 (which he does, I've asked).

On a serious note, car park is a vague term, a car park my be public or it may be private, if you pay to park in the car park does that mean you are not insured to be there? And what about when you have to park in a field that is private land but has been opened up to be used as car park.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [stevemegson](#) 2 points 2 years ago

The land is accessible to the general public, assuming that joe public has £2 (which he does, I've asked).

There's a large grey area where we must decide whether the landowner has placed a restriction on who can access the land. A toll seems like a pretty clear example of a restriction, though I don't plan to actually go and do some uninsured driving on the road to test the theory.

If charging for access doesn't stop a private toll road from being a highway where insurance is required, then Silverstone must also be a highway since it's accessible to the general public if they pay the fee for a track day. But then my policy couldn't exclude use on

any race track, which it does.

if you pay to park in the car park does that mean you are not insured to be there?

No, as I said, *this affects whether you need insurance rather than whether any insurance you do have covers you there*. If you don't legally require insurance then your insurance policy *could* legally exclude cover there, as with use on race tracks, but it won't in general.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Elemetrix](#) [Wales](#) 1 point 2 years ago

Correct. I've worked on private roads for years and my car wouldn't be covered by my insurance.

When I had a crash entering work I had to be very specific on the insurance report so they wouldn't wriggle out of it.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [maspiers](#) 1 point 2 years ago

Thanks. I was beginning to doubt myself.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Rhaegarion](#) [South Yorkshire](#) 10 points 2 years ago*

Check your policy documents for private road cover.

EDIT: The road is said in an article to have not been given safety certificates so insurers will always be able to wriggle out of coughing up.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/road-and-rail-transport/11008835/Entrepreneur-builds-private-toll-road-after-landslip.html>

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [AnalyticContinuation](#) 6 points 2 years ago

They've got their own twitter here <https://twitter.com/KelstonTollRoad>

If you read through the image section on there you get a good history via various paper cuttings of how it all came about.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\]](#) [\[deleted\]](#) 6 points 2 years ago

What security measures does he have in place to prevent people simply not paying?

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\]](#) [hpsauceman](#) [Somerset → London](#) 2 points 2 years ago

Manners? Politeness?

Even if 1% of people drove straight past the booth it would cost more to police it than they'd lose in revenue.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [\[deleted\]](#) 2 points 2 years ago

True, very true, but not everyone is well-mannered, polite, or more importantly, honest.

I'd like to think it'll be ok but can't help wondering if this will be more of a headache than the guy ever imagined.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [tipodecinta](#) 9 points 2 years ago

Brilliant. Now all the local criminals know where, at a certain time of day, there's one guy alone in a remote field with up to £1,000 in cash on him.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[–] [Syko22](#) 2 points 2 years ago

You sir, have a criminal mind

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [not_shakey_byrne](#) 4 points 2 years ago

Given its a private road can he set his own speed limit. Is he liable for crashes due to road surface etc?

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[–] [Jaekman](#) 8 points 2 years ago

They finally know who will build the roads

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[–] [thedeadseagull](#) 2 points 2 years ago

Reference.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[–] [\[deleted\]](#) 2 points 2 years ago

Now that's entrepreneurship.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[–] [GBHsl](#) [Wiltshire](#) 2 points 2 years ago

Funnily enough this story has just been covered on radio. The only difference is they said it cost him £300,000. Who's telling the truth here?

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[–] [DingDongHelloWhoIsIt](#) [New Forest](#) 1 point 2 years ago

£150k to build and £150k to maintain

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [hpsauceman](#) [Somerset → London](#) 0 points 2 years ago

150k to build. 150k to maintain. See the telegraph article.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [\[deleted\]](#) 3 points 2 years ago

Damn it, now we can't say 'but who would build the roads????' to win any argument with an anarcho-capitalist

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[–] [RassimoFlom](#) [London](#) 1 point 2 years ago

It's the Tory dream..

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[–] [istillfeelyou](#) 1 point 2 years ago

To use that old cliché I'm not even mad, that's amazing.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[–] [BigBadCockraoch](#) [England](#) 1 point 2 years ago

Smart bastard

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[-] [OutsideTheAsylum](#) 1 point 2 years ago

It is marked on google maps .

<https://www.google.co.uk/maps/place/Kelston+Toll+Rd,+Bath,+Bath+and+North+East+Somerset+BA1/@51.3960739,-2.4197604,17z/data=!3m1!4m2!3m1!1s0x48718698186f0ce1:0xc2b4a2db6be4e11d>

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[-] [GarageMc](#) 1 point 2 years ago

He should add free wifi.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[+] 2 years ago (5 children)

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238

Britain has enough land to solve the housing crisis â it's just being hoarded | Cities

(theguardian.com)

submitted 3 months ago by [shish-mish](#)

[Scottish Highlands](#)

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sorted by: **best**

[\[-\] s1ravarice](#) [Hertfordshire](#) 142 points 3 months ago

As someone who can't afford to buy and pays a lot in rent; fuck every single one of the people that have anything to do with keeping land prices high, and in turn, house building to a minimum to keep house prices high.

Edit: grammar

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\] ShadowOfTheWasp](#) 40 points 3 months ago

iirc Tesco is the largest holder of undeveloped land in the UK, they retain sites for new supermarkets but the net result is they lay dormant.

Tesco already have enough supermarkets imo, so this isn't acceptable. Maybe by shopping less at Tesco they will need to sell land to balance the books?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] kirky1148](#) [Scotland](#) 72 points 3 months ago

It's not actually about wanting to build new Tesco supermarkets as much as stopping competitors opening up new stores on them

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] otterdam](#) [Lahndahn](#) 33 points 3 months ago

Sounds like the textbook case in favour of a land value tax

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] pepe_le_shoe](#) [Greater London](#) 2 points 3 months ago

They could build apartment blocks on the land, that would prevent

search

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competitors from being there. They could put a tesco metro at the street level.

In korea, there are branded apartments, and it works really well. Imagine the commercial possibility of marketing homes under the tesco brand. There's deeper issues in this country somehow, we seem to have just become allergic to building homes, all of us.

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] BaronSpaffalot](#) 14 points 3 months ago

They used to be but started selling off all their undeveloped land in 2015.

<https://www.ft.com/content/31f4ff9c-735b-11e5-a129-3fcc4f641d98>

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] LlamasAreLlamasToo](#) European Union 4 points 3 months ago

Given the rise of Aldi, maybe it's not too far-fetched to see Tesco sell some land.

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] Craftbeersocialist2](#) 18 points 3 months ago

They also keep the sites undeveloped to prevent competitors from opening stores there.

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] Big_Chief_Wah_Wah](#) 4 points 3 months ago

It doesn't really work against Aldi or Lidl though, hence they are starting to sell it off.

In most British towns of 50k-250k, given the age of our infrastructure, there's only a handful of places you can even get permission to build something as car dependent as a Tesco/Sainsbury etc. Cost and intricacy of buying up pre existing brownfield sites even nearly big enough is hard (case study: the Old Showground in Scunthorpe

an article.

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If you think your post has been banned,

1988-2005).

But Aldi and Lidl use a model with a much, much smaller footprint. They can put a store on the site of an old warehouse no problem at all, and theres plenty of them floating about. They can and do branch out into the high street, using the store size which is now in abundance thanks to the demise of many of the mid to large high st retailers going under in the last decade.

What Tescos will do is follow this trend and open many, many smaller stores just a little larger than Aldi/Lidl and with far more locally targeted ranges.

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] Dearth_Ib](#) 7 points 3 months ago

Or just come up with shit like Tesco Home. Houses 'on budget' in which you can hear Mrs Doe on the ground floor berating her husband about his manhood size on the fifth floor.

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] hlycia](#) [Gloucestershire](#) 12 points 3 months ago

I'd complain about the size of his manhood if he was on the ground floor and his manhood was on the fifth! The poor woman.

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] Petrolsniff](#) [Nottinghamshire](#) 2 points 3 months ago

Actually I think it would be a good idea for large employers to offer housing a modern day mill houses type thing.

Tesco for example build a small 'Tesco street/estate' for employee's at a break even mortgage rate or atleast low interest put clauses in leave tesco=lose the house or you have to move so another

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employee can live there creates tes loyalty and housing for lower the lower paid

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] UltimateGammer](#) 1 point 3 months ago

hhhmmm...

I think losing my job and my home in one fell swoop is pretty bad.

Your employer controls your life. Next they'll be taking money from your wages without your consent to 'cover the house', followed by taking your money and providing food.

Yeah i'm not keen to fly into corporate feudalism.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] Slanderous](#) [Lancashire](#) 4 points 3 months ago

They will probably sack people first.

Making land near to their stores available to competitors will go baldy for them in the long run.

If they could be made to sell directly to housing developers perhaps, that's good for them and other local businesses all round- people get houses and they get customers moving into the area.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] s1ravarice](#) [Hertfordshire](#) 2 points 3 months ago

Fuck. I shop at Tescos too.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] methmobile](#) 1 point 3 months ago

Fuck I know what Tesco is too.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] MissingCreativity](#) [Wiltshire](#) 1 point 3 months ago

Doesn't that kind of behaviour counter productivity for Tesco? I mean more people in houses shop more, buy more of things. Build houses and a supermarket.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] Annoyed_Badger](#) 3 points 3 months ago

its called the Tory party.

Look at their policies over the last few years since the coalition came to power.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] Upright__Man](#) 69 points 3 months ago

Land Value tax. Make it higher for unused land and empty houses.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\] scurlogue_champ](#) 15 points 3 months ago

I own a patch of land that you could fit 3 houses on. I inherited it and it's gen in the family for decades. It's right in the middle of a residential area. I really want to do something with it because at the moment it's just wasteland.

It's just not cost effective though. It would cost too much to develop. Not talking a few thousand, more like tens of thousands. It fits all the guidance for housing from the local council, i could stick 3 decent houses on with decent gardens. Its not even

a case of thing to maximise profit. Even if i thought i could break even on the sale price i would build and rent out but the area just to cheap house prices wise and doesn't cover the cost of building.

In my case how would taxing new in that land would be totally unfair.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] Upright__Man](#) 28 points 3 months ago*

why don't you just sell it?

If I didn't want to develop it that is what I would do...

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] scurlogue_champ](#) 9 points 3 months ago

It's not worth anything though. So id just sell it for pittance. At the moment i couldn't even get a loan to build the houses.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] ElGuapoBlanco](#) 46 points 3 months ago

If the land is worth nothing you would owe no LVT.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] scurlogue_champ](#) 15 points 3 months ago

Good point, well raised.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] stalinsnicerbrother](#) 1 point 3 months ago

Have you considered making it available for self build?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] BaronSpaffalot](#) 7 points 3 months ago

Look into getting planning permission for those houses and then sell the land.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] scurlogue_champ](#) 3 points 3 months ago

A house in the area is worth about 60grand and it takes the best part of a 100 thousand too build a house of any size, within reason of course.

No one would buy it. For anything other than pennies. So i might a week keep it

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] BaronSpaffalot](#) 8 points 3 months ago

By planning permission, I mean *only* planning. Have a look on rightmove and you'll see plenty of land plots for sale with planning to build homes. Land with planning granted sells for far more than just land.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] zero_iq](#) [Oxon](#) 8 points 3 months ago

In other words, you're hoarding it until it's worth more...

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] scurlogue_champ](#) 6 points 3 months ago

Well you say hoarding. I say not giving my stuff away.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] woadgrrl](#) [Inverness](#) 12 points 3 months ago

What is it actually worth to you, right now? Nothing. It generates no income. It didn't cost you anything, so whatever you sell it for is profit. Unless you're using it for some recreational purpose, it is literally useless.

The only reason not to sell it now, and use whatever money you get for it on something that's actually of value to you, is if you think you'll make more money on it later on.

So, yeah, that's kind of hoarding.

More to the point, it doesn't seem like a particularly wise investment. If you're unwilling or unable to improve the land in any way, about the only way it will increase significantly in value, is if that particular area becomes in-demand for development. But given the size and location, it's an awful long shot.

On the other hand, if you got even £5K for it, there are probably ways you could invest that money that would give you a larger return.

It's your decision, obviously, but people tend to get so hung up on the idea of land as this golden ticket, as well as the sentimental attachment, that it can be hard to see it in rational, financial terms.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] scurlogue_champ](#) 1 point 3 months ago

I would love to develop it myself. Partially just because i think i would find the project rewarding.

I mean to be honest it is hoarding but the land is worthless to anyone. I have family in the building trade and they wernt even interested in going halves.

If i sell it then it will only go to someone else to hold on to for better times so i feel i it might s well be me.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] woadgrrl](#) [Inverness](#) 3 points 3 months ago

Seems like the best, win-win thing you could do, is what's already been suggested. Split it up into 2-3 parcels, get planning permission granted, then sell them on to people who actually plan to build on them.

Sure, in a slow market area, they could take quite a while to sell. But in the mean time, you're not really any worse off.

And, once they did sell, you'd get a nice little payoff, and somebody else gets an opportunity to build a home (whether for themselves or someone else).

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[+\] 3 months ago*](#) (1 child)

[\[-\] Annoyed_Badger](#) 2 points 3 months ago

just get outline, you dont need anything else, it established the principle of housing on the land, and thats all you need. no need to go into detailed

plans, and such, just get an outline consent, and then flog it.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [zero_iq](#) [Oxon](#) 9 points 3 months ago

So sell it to someone who can develop it.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [mata_dan](#) [Scotland](#) 3 points 3 months ago

If it's not cost effective then there must not be demand for housing in the area (and hence it's outside the scope of the housing problem, and wouldn't be taxed much or at all either), or is there something funky going in with the market there?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [_MicroWave_](#) [United Kingdom](#) 1 point 3 months ago

| just to cheap house prices wise

Where is this?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [scurlogue_champ](#) 2 points 3 months ago

Ex industrial town in the north.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [MDMA-zing](#) 1 point 3 months ago

| It's just not cost effective though. It would cost too much to develop. Not talking a few thousand, more like tens of thousands.

I'm unsure: Are you saying it would cost tens of thousands to plan and build three houses? Isn't that kinda obvious from the get-go? Or do you mean to purely get planning permission and then sell it on (with the houses unbuilt)?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [MissingCreativity](#) [Wiltshire](#) 1 point 3 months ago

Start a small garden business on it for now. Include honey bees. If you can serve fresh simple fare "al fresco" during the summer months with the produce from the garden. I have a neighbour who sells fresh produce and we all buy it! Have you looked for partners?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [stickyjam](#) 1 point 3 months ago

What about a large block of flats? Gives the youth of your area somewhere to buy

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [syntax](#) [Stravaigin](#) 24 points 3 months ago

| Make it higher for unused land

That's the fastest way to destroy the wild spaces, by directly punishing people for having land in a natural state.

I know that's not what you are intending; but it would be a consequence of it.

Like all simple ideas that attempt to fix a complicated problem, I think it needs to be a bit more involved than that in order to prevent unintended consequences.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[[-](#)] [tilman2015](#) [United Kingdom](#) 41 points 3 months ago

This is why a "Land Value Tax" makes sense.

Rural land which is only good for sheep grazing has a value of peanuts so a tax as a % of peanuts is crumbs a year.

However, prime city centre land that could be developed is worth a lot in a developed state and so a % of millions is still a nice chunk of tax.

Lower council tax for others and it encourages development of land.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[[-](#)] [ElGuapoBlanco](#) 16 points 3 months ago

Exactly. The difference between agricultural land value and city centre land value is astronomical.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[[-](#)] [Sell200AprilAt142](#) [SW London - Liverpool](#) 1 point 3 months ago

As the city encroaches on to the green land around it, those keeping it in its natural state are punished.. The land value increases because now it's on the edge of town and the prime place to build new housing. Wild spaces are destroyed because over time, as there's less of it, it becomes worth more and more and harder for any individual to own and pay land tax on.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[[-](#)] [tilman2015](#) [United Kingdom](#) 1 point 3 months ago

The more the land becomes worth then you're right, the more tax there is to pay.

If however, as a society, we decide that we want to keep green spaces then there is nothing stopping us providing a 'green space guardian' subsidy similar to the EU CAP.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[[-](#)] [Formatted](#) [Farmer](#) 1 point 3 months ago

Rural land which is only good for sheep grazing has a value of peanuts so a tax as a % of peanuts is crumbs a year.

If only that was true, its still £10,000 an acre.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[[-](#)] [tilman2015](#) [United Kingdom](#) 10 points 3 months ago

And is therefore only worth £10k when developed (as it can't be developed and is fully "developed" already)

Fully developed land in central London is likely worth more like £10m+ an acre.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[[-](#)] [Sell200AprilAt142](#) [SW London - Liverpool](#) 1 point 3 months ago

£10m+ an acre

I'd venture 10 to 100 times that...

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[[-](#)] [freexe](#) [Berkshire](#) 7 points 3 months ago

Target land you want people in build on and tax that land :).

A "High potential land tax" if you will.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [syntax](#) [Stravaigin](#) 6 points 3 months ago

Other than the obvious problems with corruption (no where else in the UK tax system does the decision of the government affect an *individuals* tax bill), that's exactly the opposite of the current system.

For example, suppose that such an area of land is targeted; the owner puts an application for planning permission in, and it's rejected.

What then?

If the government are insisting that the owner develops the land, but only in exactly the way that they want, that's what a Compulsary Purchase Order is for, and I'm not sure that back door system that has that effect would be desirable.

Unless, of course, the initial designation means planning permission is not required or otherwise waved through - at which point the system is defanged to the point where it's meaningless. So you'd have to have all the various arguments usually had at planning to be thrashed out before the land could be designated.

Only without any specific plans before the committee. Which is a bit of an issue, and can only make the process *more* laborious.

Given that many people complain that they cannot develop land because of the hurdles of planning consent, anything that makes it worse is unlikely to have the net desired outcome (of more houses being built).

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [mejogid](#) [London](#) 4 points 3 months ago

Wait, surely council tax banding affects an individual's tax bill?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [syntax](#) [Stravaigin](#) 1 point 3 months ago

No, that affects a group of people; not a specific individual.

Whilst there might be aberrant cases were the group consists of a single person, that's very clearly not the intention, and an exceptional case.

Therefore that's not a situation where a ruling could be used to specifically target a single person (and that's where the ability to be used for corrupt practices arises).

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [freexe](#) [Berkshire](#) 1 point 3 months ago

You could charge a tax on land with planning permission but not being developed.

So by being granted planning permission you trigger the tax yourself. It would give you 1-2 years to finish the work, then the tax would kick in relative to the footprint of the project. And building control signs off once it is complete.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[[-](#)] [mejogid](#) [London](#) 3 points 3 months ago

That would encourage land banking and discourage efforts to develop, if anything.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[[-](#)] [tilman2015](#) [United Kingdom](#) 1 point 3 months ago

no where else in the UK tax system does the decision of the government affect an individuals tax bill

Other than business rates and council tax you mean?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[[-](#)] [stalinsnicerbrother](#) 1 point 3 months ago

Just as an aside, Planning can definitely be difficult but it is the issue (successfully) used as a scapegoat by developers and particularly housebuilders in discussions with the Government. In light of recent changes it has never been easier or cheaper to get planning permission for housing, but it hasn't done much (if anything) to increase housing completions. The flip side is that repeated watering down of the Planning system has greatly reduced the ability of local authorities to secure affordable housing contributions towards discounted rent/price homes, shared ownership etc. As a result house building is more profitable than it's ever been but less benefit is coming back to society, and particularly the communities accepting new homes in their areas.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[[-](#)] [TheSolidState](#) [Cambridge](#) 3 points 3 months ago

Massive protected national parks/wild spaces, and also the land value tax?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[[-](#)] [CWM_93](#) 2 points 3 months ago

There are many ways to make it work. You could specifically exempt green sites that are for the public good. If it's owned by a local council or a charitable organisation, it would be pretty much exempt from taxes anyway.

However, Land Value Tax would incentivise infill building on vacant brownfield land in towns and cities rather than low density greenfield suburban developments and over-provision of parking. It would promote the kind of land use that can best support walkability and a good public transport system.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[[-](#)] [syntax](#) [Stravaigin](#) 2 points 3 months ago

However, it would *also* mean that all the people that own land in the highlands would end up paying extra. You're only considering the 'in town' effects of an additional 'undeveloped' premium on land value tax; but my point is that there are other situations that need considered.

There's precious little of the native forest left, and punishing people for trying maintain that is exactly wrong, in my opinion.

And I know that this is far removed from the situation you are trying to assist with; but that's the crux of things with politics - there are no simple solutions, because there are no simple problems.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [ElGuapoBlanco](#) 3 points 3 months ago

However, it would also mean that all the people that own land in the highlands would end up paying extra

How much? Relatively speaking their land is worth peanuts compared to land in towns. So they would pay some percentage of peanuts. And LVT proponents often suggest abolishing other taxes if deploying LVT, so the poor Highlander may be net better off.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [syntax](#) [Stravaigin](#) 1 point 3 months ago

Note that the idea I'm opposing here is to have a higher rate for 'undeveloped land' within a LVT. Your argument is valid, but not relevant as it's about a different situation.

(There is a related problem with LVT for such land - if the land has never been sold for a few hundred years, how do you put a 'fair' market value on it, which is needed for an LVT to function? This is tricky at the best of times, but when talking about large areas of very varied terrain, the cost of doing it becomes prohibitive. LVT works well in urban settings; works for well understood farm land, but I am yet to be convinced that it's better for the extreme rural land that's left mostly alone.

For example: do the trees on the land count as part of the Land Value? If so, then you need to adjust the land value every year if it's being used for wood production, and after felling. However, note that there are restrictions on felling, and requirements for replanting in order to secure felling licences. This amounts to one part of the government levying taxes, based on the decisions of a different part; where one side intends to keep the land as it is, and the other aims to have it developed.

That's not an easy situation to resolve, and I've not even started on things like animal populations and seasonal migrations...)

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [ElGuapoBlanco](#) 4 points 3 months ago

LVT is usually discussed in terms of the land-only rental value, site premium or unimproved value of the land. What's on the given plot doesn't matter.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [CWM_93](#) 2 points 3 months ago

I'll admit that I'm no expert, and haven't worked out any numbers for myself.

With native forests, I'd have no problem with charities or the state owning them to exempt them from tax, or granting specific exemptions for the public good. I absolutely agree that people or organisations shouldn't be taxed extra for maintaining national park land or areas of outstanding natural beauty.

I think that as part of any transition to LVT, custodians of these important pieces of land should be offered assistance in setting up tax-exempt

public charities - or the state could offer to buy the land if it's in the public, natural or historic interest - like a national park.

There might be a case to be made that because LVT primarily incentivises development of urban land first, it would decrease greenfield development overall and that may actually decrease encroachment of development on areas of outstanding natural beauty.

With much of this rural land, its raw monetary value is pretty low, so I'm not sure LVT would be as much of a problem as you say. But if you have numbers and things for me to read, I'm open to having my mind changed on this. (Not being facetious - really, I want to know more!)

I think it's worth mentioning that LVT is often proposed as an alternative to certain other taxes, whether it be VAT, council tax or inheritance taxes, rather than an additional tax.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] Upright_Man](#) 1 point 3 months ago

I meant of course building sites, within areas where you can build already. Yes, will need to be discussed with people who know more than I, but this is the simplest way to fix issue.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] Milky1985](#) 1 point 3 months ago

That's the fastest way to destroy the wild spaces, by directly punishing people for having land in a natural state.

Simple solution, if you have land AND planning permission then the land value tax is higher, just the land keep it as it is.

Also means if its sold on the person who buys it is less likely to without building as it will have a large monthly cost associated with it.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] syntax](#) [Stravaigin](#) 5 points 3 months ago

Simple solution, if you have land AND planning permission

Most of the land that people complain about *doesn't* have planning permission. It's up to the owner to apply for it, so that measure would not have any major impact. It would still be possible to buy up and mothball land in the middle of cities.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] ElGuapoBlanco](#) 2 points 3 months ago

City centre land has value even without planning permission. Under LVT the owner can mothball it but would have to pay society for the privilege.

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[\[+\] 3 months ago* \(1 child\)](#)

[\[-\] Pomab](#) [Londoner in California](#) 9 points 3 months ago

Why did we stop building "new cities"? I know places like Milton Keynes are always the butt of jokes but they're honestly not terrible places to live. Stuck a couple on the HS2 route and we'll be looking at the first steps to solving the housing crisis.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\] \[deleted\]](#) 11 points 3 months ago

I don't think there's much wrong with new towns/cities. In fact, they are often more practical places to live and work, with good transport links, well planned access to work and residential areas, etc.

I agree that this would probably be the easiest solution - plan 5-10 new cities, at locations where good transport links could be provided to key infrastructure and where housing is in relatively short supply.

There are two major risks that could arise from poor planning, however. One is that they become dormitory towns if you don't get inward business investment. This would result in a poor local economy, high transport costs, high pollution and congestion, etc. You could probably call this "crap town" syndrome which you see in the new towns near London, like Stevenage. At the same time, if you provide too much incentive for inward investment, you risk killing nearby established towns. A good cautionary tale of this is Glasgow. When the new towns of Cumbernauld, Glenrothes, Livingston, East Kilbride and Irvine were built, businesses were incentivised to move there - they did, and so did the jobs. So, the employees followed, leaving the unemployable behind in Glasgow itself, and this legacy has resulted in long-term severe deprivation in Glasgow, with all the problems that such a high concentration of deprivation brings.

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[\[-\] IgamOg](#) 1 point 3 months ago*

When the new towns of Cumbernauld, Glenrothes, Livingston, East Kilbride and Irvine were built, businesses were incentivised to move there - they did, and so did the jobs. So, the employees followed, leaving the unemployable behind in Glasgow itself, and this legacy has resulted in long-term severe deprivation in Glasgow

That's an odd theory. There are few businesses parks dotted around, but the vast majority of people travel from the suburbs into the city every morning causing massive traffic delays.

Glasgow deprivation has long and tangled roots, mainly in industrial era exploitation and later in shipyard closures. The only problem I see with satellite towns is that the council housing provision in them is voefully inadequate. That has turned them into affluent enclaves in contrast to Glasgow.

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[\[-\] \[deleted\]](#) 2 points 3 months ago

It's a very abridged, and oversimplified explanation. However, it's taken from here: http://senscot.net/view_art.php?viewid=21358

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[\[-\] IgamOg](#) 1 point 3 months ago

Thanks for the link. It's a very interesting subject. Reading the source between the lines, as no one wants to say it out loud, the problem is the extreme social segregation in Glasgow. Affluent people escaped to suburbs leaving Glasgow estates with little hope of social advancement.

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[\[-\] PublicSealedClass](#) 0 points 3 months ago

A good cautionary tale of this is Glasgow. When the new towns of Cumbernauld, Glenrothes, Livingston, East Kilbride and Irvine were built,

businesses were incentivised to move there - they did, and so did the jobs. So, the employees followed, leaving the unemployable behind in Glasgow itself, and this legacy has resulted in long-term severe deprivation in Glasgow

Interesting, I remember well a documentary we were shown in high school (can't remember what year, might have been 2nd or 3rd) - it was about East Kilbride (I think), and how it was a new town, planned from the ground up etc., made mostly by the local kids.

They were all super proud of it, and it was lauded as generally a really good idea (and it still is) - and I've always remembered that documentary but I didn't give the first thing as to what it did to the Glasgow economy.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[[-](#)] [jared2007](#) 25 points 3 months ago*

At the moment we seem to be obsessed with either high-rise luxury or suburban mediocrity, in cities I think its obvious we should be building up but it doesn't need to be a skyscraper nor luxury, if we want to solve the housing crisis we need to make flats more attractive not find more room for houses.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[[-](#)] [Doomslicer](#) [Norwich](#) 30 points 3 months ago

Ding ding ding, this is the real answer. Properly planned, well-designed, well-built and well-maintained apartment blocks with lots of attendant green and public spaces - this is what we need, and somehow dispel the stigma of 'tower blocks' that hangs around like a bad stench from the days of 60's brutalism.

High-density living would solve the housing crisis *and* massively reduce pollution - public transport between a few dense areas is far more efficient and easy than public or private transport over massive sprawl. Shops can be close by, so can your friends.

I mean, yes, having a semi-detached house in the suburbs means you have twelve square feet of garden for the kids/dogs to play in - but is that really worth the surrounding thousand miles of built-on environmental desolation? I'd rather live in a skyscraper with ten thousand other people and a two minute walk to the unspoiled countryside, than have my fenced-off overlooked twelve feet in midst of the asphalt desert.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[[-](#)] [jared2007](#) 10 points 3 months ago*

Yes, well built with good insulation, communal heating, restaurants / shops at the bottom, no more than 5 stories above, central communal garden, private balconies etc... Something desirable like a modern version of the horseshoe....

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hufeisensiedlung>

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[[-](#)] [Muffinzz](#) [European Union](#) 1 point 3 months ago

Huh, there's one like this in Leeds <http://www.rightmove.co.uk/property-for-sale/property-36759051.html>

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[[-](#)] [jared2007](#) 1 point 3 months ago

Yeah there are quite a lot of nice developments, I happen to be lucky enough to live in one myself, but there are not enough of them, I have

friends who have bought flats in large new-builds that are terribly built, have no shops near them, awful communal areas etc...

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[[-](#)] [_MicroWave_](#) [United Kingdom](#) 3 points 3 months ago

Well put. People are very scared to make the same costly mistakes with regards to tower blocks.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[[-](#)] [Roddy0608](#) [The Vale of Glamorgan](#) 1 point 3 months ago

I'd rather live in a skyscraper with ten thousand other people and a two minute walk to the unspoiled countryside, than have my fenced-off overlooked twelve feet in midst of the asphalt desert.

A two minute walk but how long a lift ride or stair climb?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[[-](#)] [Doomslicer](#) [Norwich](#) 3 points 3 months ago

Well the lifts I experienced in hotels in America did 30 floors in about 10 secs so.. depends how high you go I suppose. This is one reason I made sure to mention maintenance in my list of musts - the lifts must work, and work well, for this to work.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[[-](#)] [artgecko](#) [Singapore](#) 1 point 3 months ago

It was 40 seconds from my L28 landing to the lobby and a 3-minute walk to the station.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[[-](#)] [Annoyed_Badger](#) 1 point 3 months ago

single access point lobby buildings, not decked access like the old tower blocks is the way to go.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[[-](#)] [r3loaded2013](#) [Manc in Cambridge](#) 2 points 3 months ago

if we want to solve the housing crisis we need to make flats more attractive not find more room for houses.

Absolutely. It seems to be impossible to buy an apartment that is a) larger than 100 sq m, b) not in a shitty area, c) not a £500k+ luxury penthouse, and d) not an off-plan investment development that's already been snapped up by Asian investors who pay in cash.

Fuck the last lot in particular, and the developers who sell to them.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[[-](#)] [jared2007](#) 1 point 3 months ago

Fuck the last lot in particular, and the developers who sell to them.

Exactly, what is the point in having affordable housing if the developers are not under any obligation to sell them to locals.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[[-](#)] [r3loaded2013](#) [Manc in Cambridge](#) 1 point 3 months ago

What pisses me off the most is that *I can afford them*. If they were a finished property, I could walk into my bank, get a mortgage and buy it right now,

even with a 25% deposit and all.

But because they're off-plan, getting a mortgage is tricky and I can only really apply for one if the apartments will be completed within six months. By that time, they'll have all been sold off to the foreign investors who can stump up the 25% within 30 days and another 25% in 3-4 months. Those apartments then immediately get let out, or flipped for 30-50% above their initial price, out of reach.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [jared2007](#) 1 point 3 months ago

Going through the housing associations, getting part-rent / part-buy, waiting a year then buying the rest is the only way for many people to get on the ladder at the moment.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [_MicroWave_](#) [United Kingdom](#) 12 points 3 months ago

I've said it before but one problem which must be solved is the Nimby attitude. This can only be solved by building nicer houses. Local's will always object to housing they can never imagine buying. Lets not concentrate on 'low cost' housing but simply volume. Once demand is satisfied prices will drop. I'm not necessarily suggesting lots of big houses but certainly no more soulless ugly estates.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\]](#) [freexe](#) [Berkshire](#) 7 points 3 months ago

Nicer housing is a start, but the real reason for the nimby attitude (IMHO) is the total lack of improvements to infrastructure.

If you build 300 more houses but don't increase the local school size, improve the roads, or increase the amount of greenspace then of course I'm not going to support the plans.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Sandyen](#) 4 points 3 months ago

I don't think the real reason for the nimby attitude is a lack of infrastructure, although it's definitely part of it. A lot of nimby-ism is down to people wanting to preserve the area where they live.

I have a great view from where I live and sure enough I would be kind of pissed if someone placed ugly houses on the green hills that are there now, the view is a huge part of why I *chose* to live where I live.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [_MicroWave_](#) [United Kingdom](#) 1 point 3 months ago

I agree, since people can never imagine living in the new houses, they envisage the new houses being occupied by 'different' people which, of course, will destroy the feeling of their area.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [stickyjam](#) 1 point 3 months ago

People can come round to idea you need more house though, they can't come round to the idea that the populations grows beyond the infrastructure of the area.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] freexe](#) [Berkshire](#) 1 point 3 months ago

Yes, I don't want to have to knock down ten nice houses, and screw over hundreds of people in an area so a road can be widened for the 300 new houses down the road.

I also don't want that nature reserve to be tar-maced over because people don't want to live in Liverpool.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] redteddy23](#) [Oxford](#) 2 points 3 months ago

I've known people magically transform from talking about new affordable housing for all the people doing the difficult jobs keeping everything going to suddenly worrying about green spaces and enough school places. What happened? They bought a house.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] freexe](#) [Berkshire](#) 1 point 3 months ago

I've been fairly consistent in my views for a long time. Since before I bought my house.

I do believe that higher house prices are good for two reasons:

- They encourage home owners to extend their existing properties to allow for a larger families
- They discourage people from buying in high price areas and to look at other areas of the country that aren't as stretched.

The first point means that communities grow at a more organic pace and councils can keep up with demand changes more easily.

The second point means that people might look away from London and the South East and consider Nottingham, Hull etc... And I firmly believe that where people go, jobs go with them. I truly believe that the government should be encouraging businesses and people to move North with incentives.

I was born in London so I knew I wouldn't be able to afford a house where I grew up without making bigger sacrifices than I was prepared to take.

Saying all that, I also believe that we should target buy-to-let landlords to discourage them buying as they have really screwed over so many people for profit and we should increase the quality of life for renters via much better renter rights.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] yhorian](#) [Wales](#) 6 points 3 months ago

Interesting insight into how the bottleneck seems to extend all the way back to the land owners.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\] Dokky](#) [Yorkshire \(West Riding\)](#) 5 points 3 months ago

Nothing new here sadly, one house builder I deal with has enough to build on at their current rate for easily 30 years.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\] Formatted](#) [Farmer](#) 4 points 3 months ago

To put £21,000 a hectare into perspective, it would take 120 years to pay off the mortgage on agricultural output. Average agricultural land and price have risen by

1400% since 2004. [Source Savills](#)

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\]](#) [moc_tidder_www](#) 1 point 3 months ago

Nobody buys agricultural land for actual farming now. It's mostly either the Mormon Church, or because agri land is free from IHT.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Beorma](#) [Brum](#) 1 point 3 months ago

What?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [moc_tidder_www](#) 1 point 3 months ago

Coming from a farming family I can tell you that at those prices nobody is making money.

In Cambridgeshire (I don't know other areas) the Mormon Church is bidding on most land that comes up, and can bid much higher than farmers as it doesn't pay tax and also has a much longer term (multi-generational) approach to land buying.

Another buyer that can pay more than actual farmers are people who are using it to avoid IHT - therefore they can afford to pay way more than farmers because they're effectively saving 40%...

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [stefantalpalaru](#) [European Union](#) 3 points 3 months ago

Don't forget about the empty homes: <http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-34930602>

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\]](#) [YottaPiggy](#) [North East](#) 15 points 3 months ago

Building a million new houses, including lots of social housing in one term is one of my favourites of Corbyn's pledges.

Hopefully it can happen.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\]](#) [pajamakitten](#) 15 points 3 months ago

Plenty of governments have pledged this recent years, even the Tories. Just because Cornyn has pledged the same, doesn't mean that it will happen.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [YottaPiggy](#) [North East](#) 7 points 3 months ago

The Tories pledged to build a million homes in 5 years, with at least half of them being council housing?

Neat, I'll have a link, please.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Rekyht](#) [Hampshire](#) 7 points 3 months ago

<https://www.architectsjournal.co.uk/news/housing-minister-targets-1-million-new-homes-by-2020/8689157.article>

Not sure about the half being council housing, but Corbyn has only pledged 10% as council housing, I thought?

As other posters are saying in this thread, we currently build 195,000 houses a year, do you really think an extra 5,000 will solve this?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [YottaPiggy](#) [North East](#) 2 points 3 months ago

"We will build a million new homes in five years, with at *least half a million council homes*" - taken from Corbyn's pledges page that another user linked to.

No, I don't think it will just "solve" the housing crisis. But I do think it will make a difference and will put the big issue that is housing back in the limelight.

I think it's a good pledge and a good starting point.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Rekyht](#) [Hampshire](#) 1 point 3 months ago

I think we'll just have to disagree then. 5000 more homes won't even start to cover the ridiculous deficit we have, so it's barely even a pledge. If anything, it's the type of pledge that will win over Tory voters because it'll keep the status quo.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [YottaPiggy](#) [North East](#) 1 point 3 months ago

So in your eyes a bump up is worthless over the same as we have now? Perfect is the enemy of good, as the saying goes.

Plus, the current figures may be 195,000 (which I'm not sure about), but social housing certainly doesn't make up anywhere near half of it.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [SynthD](#) 1 point 3 months ago

Where did you get the 5k figure from? It's 200k a year from both parties.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [pajamakitten](#) 1 point 3 months ago

They may not have pledged exactly the same thing as Cornyn but they have failed to hit their house building target, as well as their council housing target.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [YottaPiggy](#) [North East](#) 2 points 3 months ago

Plenty of governments have pledged this recent years, even the Tories.

They may not have pledged exactly the same thing

Make your mind up, mate...

Just because Tories have failed to hit targets doesn't mean it's impossible. They're failing the NHS, but that doesn't mean that the NHS is impossible to run, for example.

Tories hate social housing, so it's entirely unsurprising they didn't hit their council housing target.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [pajamakitten](#) 1 point 3 months ago

By 'this' I was referring to building houses and increasing

affordable/council housing. I am fully aware that different parties will promise different details such as numbers.

It's definitely not impossible and the Tories have not put their full effort into achieving their housing promises. However, pledging something and delivering on that promises is something that all governments struggle to do and housing is one key area of weaknesses for many governments. As flawed as Corbyn is, I don't doubt that he would be an improvement on the Tories but I also don't believe that he will deliver as much as he is promising.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] whatmichaelsays](#) [Yorkshire](#) 2 points 3 months ago

Corbyn has pledged to address the enormous skills gap that will prevent even close to that 1m homes being built?

Neat. I'll have a link please.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] Osgood_Schlatter](#) [London](#) 1 point 3 months ago

A million in five years is nothing. Net immigration is more than that.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] YottaPiggy](#) [North East](#) 2 points 3 months ago

Yet conservatives still don't do it.

So how is Labour stating that they would do it a bad thing?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] walgman](#) [London](#) 1 point 3 months ago

That's not going to do much with net migration above 300k.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] YottaPiggy](#) [North East](#) 1 point 3 months ago

1 million new houses is more than people are building now. So what you're saying is since it wouldn't immediately solve the housing crisis it's not worth doing?

Perfect is the enemy of good.

Plus, you seem to be assuming that this migration is all single adults all looking for a house each, which isn't the case.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] walgman](#) [London](#) 1 point 3 months ago

Good points. Of course I agree with everything you've said.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] DnBDeafNBlind](#) [Dumfries and Galloway](#) 3 points 3 months ago

There is too much land doing nothing.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\] moc_tidder_www](#) 3 points 3 months ago

Nothing? Supporting nature and food production is nothing?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] ruizscar](#) [Barcelona on the Mediterranean](#) 10 points 3 months ago

Can I interest you all in

<http://www.jeremyforlabour.com/housing>

“We will build a million new homes in five years, with at least half a million council homes, through our public investment strategy. We will end insecurity for private renters by introducing rent controls, secure tenancies and a charter of private tenants’ rights, and increase access to affordable home ownership”

permalink embed

[–] [mejogid](#) [London](#) 49 points 3 months ago

Cool, an empty promise from someone who will never get close to running the country. Not to mention rent controls are widely seen as a terrible idea that exacerbate the problem. Or that we actually need 300,000 per year and 1 million in five is the same as the current government's 200,000 per year target ...

permalink embed parent

[–] [2times21](#) [Tyne and Wear](#) 12 points 3 months ago

The whole social housing sector has rent controls, and it works fine there. To pretend it can't work is just blinkered thinking

permalink embed parent

[–] [mejogid](#) [London](#) 7 points 3 months ago

It works on the basis of waiting lists and needs assessment, and provides a consistent (low) cost/quality of dwelling. That works because it's considered a minimum standard (much like the state can set the minimum wage but it would be mad to set all salaries).

How on earth would that (realistically) translate to the private sector? The more probable outcome is a distorted market with reduced investment in construction/renovation, very restricted ability to move (waiting lists), a black market of subletting at a profit and God knows what else.

permalink embed parent

[–] [alex182](#) 3 points 3 months ago

The same way it did in New York?

permalink embed parent

[–] [ElGuapoBlanco](#) 1 point 3 months ago

Badly, then.

permalink embed parent

[–] [2times21](#) [Tyne and Wear](#) 5 points 3 months ago

The creation/exacerbation of waiting list/needs assessments came about due to Thatcher gutting the housing sector with RTB (a terrible deal for the tax payer) and then stopping LAs building homes. When you reduce supply, you have to have systems in place to manage need.

Also, what makes you think Social Housing is poor quality? Social Housing is normally some of the best quality you can find. It's biggest problem has always been chronic under investment. New Labour throw money at the problem and I imagine most Council houses are in better repair than most private ones.

Do you ever stop and wonder why Europe doesn't seem to have the same housing problems as we do and has much lower home ownership?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [ElGuapoBlanco](#) 1 point 3 months ago

Short supply is a predicted outcome of rent controls.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [mejogid](#) [London](#) 4 points 3 months ago*

Yes, and once again, the fix to that is improving supply. If there isn't enough supply, you will inevitably rely on high prices or waiting lists to restrict demand.

Social housing is excellent value for money and generally of good construction quality. However the finish, size, and features are generally not the best. It is not the case that social housing (or, increasingly, ex-social housing) is seen as the most desirable housing. That's why it can function well like a minimum wage - it's a competent and sufficient standard, but it functions as a baseline rather than a holy grail.

There are a huge number of differences between our rental market and most of Europe's. However as of 2015 only Germany, Austria, Denmark and Switzerland have lower ownership than us so I don't really know where your figures are coming from.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [ElGuapoBlanco](#) 2 points 3 months ago

It's one of the few things about which economists tend to agree.

"economists have been notoriously thorough in convincing themselves of the destructive effects of rent control and notoriously inept at convincing anyone else" - Hazlett

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [JamDunc](#) [Then - Yorkshire, Now - Sweden, Soon - back to Yorkshire!](#) 1 point 3 months ago

Go visit Sweden and see how well rent controls work. I think the waiting list is like 19 years in Stockholm and 6 in Gothenburg.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Roflcopter_Rego](#) 1 point 3 months ago

| and it works fine there

I assume you've never had the pleasure of living in council assisted housing? Single mothers might get something reasonably close to where they need to be within a year or so, anyone else is pretty much out of luck - live somewhere really shit or wait literally decades.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [ruizscar](#) [Barcelona on the Mediterranean](#) 4 points 3 months ago

OK you heard it folks, let's continue with the state of affairs we currently enjoy

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Miserygut](#) [Greater London](#) 22 points 3 months ago

We've tried nothing and we're all out of ideas!

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [pajamakitten](#) 3 points 3 months ago

It's not that people disagree with house building or improving renters' rights, it's that we have heard the same thing before and nothing changed.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [mejogid](#) [London](#) 3 points 3 months ago

Or let's not celebrate poorly thought through ideas from a politician who will never implement them. The real (and only) answer is to build more, which isn't even reflected in Corbyn's pledge (we currently build 195,000 a year - I doubt the extra 5,000 will fix everything).

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [ruizscar](#) [Barcelona on the Mediterranean](#) 6 points 3 months ago

The current builds include unaffordable flats and flimsy tiny houses that nobody in their right mind would ever buy.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [s1ravarice](#) [Hertfordshire](#) 4 points 3 months ago

Also all in the wrong places. Build them in the right place so people can get to work ok, then they will buy them.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [mejogid](#) [London](#) 2 points 3 months ago

Improving building code standards does not feature in Corbyn's pledge, and those houses are selling for pretty high prices last I checked.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [IratuTaurus](#) 1 point 3 months ago

Not only will he never implement them, he has no intention of even trying to win the power necessary to implement them.

Fortunately he's so principled that he can't even bring himself to lie about his lack of ambition, so we know he can't be relied upon.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [ruizscar](#) [Barcelona on the Mediterranean](#) 1 point 3 months ago

You should be celebrating that if it's true, because you'd hate every one of his policies.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [IratuTaurus](#) 1 point 3 months ago

I'm not quite sure where you got that idea from, there are a few (including this one) that while not perfect, they address real issues in a way that would help somewhat.

I just have no confidence in him personally.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [theother64](#) 10 points 3 months ago

This does not address any of the problems highlighted in the article.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Mista_Wong](#) [Staffordshire](#) 12 points 3 months ago

Or <http://www.libdems.org.uk/housing>

Liberal Democrats have set a bold and ambitious target to increase the amount of

homes we build in the UK to 300,000 every year, more than any other mainstream party. These homes will be greener than the current housing stock because they will be built to a "zero carbon standard" meaning they will be better insulated and heated.

We will also also create a "Rent to Own" programme, where young people will be able to buy their own home without needing a deposit. Rent to Own will see first-time buyers steadily build up a share in their home through monthly payments equivalent to rent until they own the property outright after 30 years, just like a normal mortgage.

And it's a party competent enough to run the country in their current state.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [TheDevils10thMan](#) 2 points 3 months ago

I don't know man, i voted for them before and ended up watching as my kids had their right to a university education removed and placed behind a paywall.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Mazo](#) 10 points 3 months ago

Opposed to the Tories that wanted no cap, and are now looking at making it 20k?

Lib Dems got outplayed as a minor coalition partner. It sucks, but the alternative (pure Tory) would have been worse.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [TheDevils10thMan](#) -2 points 3 months ago

I don't know, I guess i'm just still bitter at voting LibDem and getting Tory.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Mazo](#) 3 points 3 months ago

Well, the alternative to that is a rerun of the general election, with a likely Tory majority.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [TheDevils10thMan](#) 0 points 3 months ago

I'm in no position to predict the outcome of a hypothetical election myself.

If you have some ability/insight that allows you to feel confident about that, then fair dues.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Mazo](#) 2 points 3 months ago

Well, it's the most likely outcome. Tories were close to a majority with 36.1% and Labour had 29%. Highly unlikely that it would result in anything other than Tory majority (excluding another hung parliament)

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [TheDevils10thMan](#) 2 points 3 months ago

At the end of the day what do we get either way in the long term? Tory majority, Tory media, complicit electorate.

I had expected the LibDems to take my vote and hopefully

find some like-minded coalition partners, perhaps address the crisis of democracy the hung parliament caused. Rather than hold the door open to the neoliberal extremists.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [Mazo](#) 1 point 3 months ago

I had expected the LibDems to take my vote and hopefully find some like-minded coalition partners, perhaps address the crisis of democracy the hung parliament caused

And they tried, but as mentioned they were a minor coalition partner and they got shafted and outplayed. They were pushing for a PR referendum, which got watered down to AV by the Tories, then the "No to AV" propaganda did the same thing that happened in the EU Referendum.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [Roflicopter_Rego](#) 1 point 3 months ago

I mean, so am I, but that's democracy, eh? The Tories got the most votes and the most seats. Usually, that means they get all policy. But for those 5 years we actually had the good fortune to have a tempered Tory government, rather than the disastrous pure Tory mess we're stuck with now.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [PooPooMcShit](#) 8 points 3 months ago

You can blame Labour for that. They're the ones that introduced tuition fees in the first place ;)

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [TheDevils10thMan](#) 2 points 3 months ago

I don't consider Blair, or Brown to be "Labour" in the slightest.

I've never voted for them but feel Crobyn has captured real Labour values and will absolutely vote for him.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [PooPooMcShit](#) 1 point 3 months ago

Well, I'm afraid they are Labour. In fact after this embarrassing Corbyn experiment fucks off, we'll be back to those sorts anyway.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [Slanderous](#) [Lancashire](#) 6 points 3 months ago

Clegg was ratehr foolish to promise that, but look how much worse off we are without a coalition putting a handbrake on the Tories.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [TheDevils10thMan](#) 0 points 3 months ago

That's purely hypothetical though, plus, the coalition ended the Tory-Free Britain that resulted from Thatcher and Major.

We were rid of them for a generation, and Clegg helped them slide back in.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)[-] [Tech_AllBodies](#) 8 points 3 months ago

Yeah but he's unelectable/mad/a terrible leader/incompetent/etc. so let's just keep voting Tory and hope it get's better!

/s

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)[-] [G_Morgan](#) [Wales](#) 1 point 3 months ago

TBH that is a bit tame. That still takes us to below the New Labour years in terms of house building. It is a little better than the Tory years but not by enough.

Numbers aren't really at issue though. What I'd like to see is a plan to move towards tying residential land ownership to usage for construction corporations. Any newly bought plots then have to actually be built upon or forfeited back to the state for resale. Make it illegal to buy land simply to deny it to the market.

It probably isn't possible to make this retroactive but at least any future land freed for housing is then going to be built on. The likely result is companies will want to clear their back stock of land before it becomes worthless.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)[-] [Mazo](#) 7 points 3 months ago

10 seconds on Google Maps with satellite view turned on will show you exactly how much space we have left.

The answer is [absolutely loads](#)

[permalink](#) [embed](#)[-] [whatmichaelsays](#) [Yorkshire](#) 10 points 3 months ago

Whilst that may be the case, much of that is neither suitable nor desirable for housing.

A common stat trotted out is "building on 1% of green belt would give us xx,000 homes", but it's not just about building homes - its all of the associated infrastructure that is associated with developing land that isn't already developed. You then aren't just dealing with housing NIMBYs, you're dealing with all sorts of objectors and all sorts of logistical issues.

The reality is that for most homebuyers, what is important is having the right property, close to the right railway station, next to the right bars, near enough to the right doctors surgery and within the catchment of the right school.

Mention the idea of living in Zone 3 on [/r/UK](#) and some will look at you as if you've beamed down from Jupiter.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)[-] [DeadeyeDuncan](#) [European Union](#) 1 point 3 months ago

People made the Fens a viable place for habitation 400 years ago...

I don't buy the whole 'unsuitable for housing' argument.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[+] 3 months ago* (1 child)

[-] [Gellert](#) [Wales](#) 6 points 3 months ago

[~8% is built land, housing and factories \(there was a stat of 3% but that didnt include things like roads\)](#)

~15% is national parkland with some crossover to unbuildable land about 10% of that is unbuildable; cliffs, mountains, beaches and so on.

~70% is farmland.

This is why public schools have been selling their football fields for housing development.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Cueball61](#) [Staffordshire](#) 1 point 3 months ago

70% being farmland seems crazy. Like, insane amounts of farm animals, crops, etc. Is it all actually utilised?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Gellert](#) [Wales](#) 1 point 3 months ago

Difficult question, define unused. Not all land is suitable for modern crop rotation techniques so has to be allowed to lie fallow to recover nutrients and there's always a question of efficiency.

We still import 40% of our food, some of that is offset by cash crops for export. As of 2014 we were ~75% self-sufficient.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [UrkWurly](#) 5 points 3 months ago

Availability of Infrastructure is the biggest hurdle to building. You can't just throw a new town into the middle of that big old patch of green space - you need to consider how people are going to access that area: roads, rail, buses, tubes etc. Not to mention how to dispose of all their waste.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [mata_dan](#) [Scotland](#) 2 points 3 months ago

We managed to do that no problem in previous decades (you know, before Thatcherism)... with less tech and efficiency than we have access to today.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Gellert](#) [Wales](#) 2 points 3 months ago

Yeah, badly. We ended up building bypasses for the bypasses, tearing up railways to replace with roads and buying out houses to build motorways.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [_MicroWave_](#) [United Kingdom](#) 2 points 3 months ago

I always think its interesting to compare to Japan. Our island can definitly be described as sparse when next to Japan.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Organised__Chaos](#) 4 points 3 months ago

I keep thinking about UK vs Japan. Places in Tokyo are tiny and very high cost but people have better transport links to commute in if they prefer. Starting to think nationalised affordable very high speed transport between cities and towns will greatly help the issue.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [mata_dan](#) [Scotland](#) 1 point 3 months ago

It's not even nationalised transport in Japan is it? They just actually regulate them properly and the overall attitude to business there respects the

customer at all stages by default (well except when they have unsafe nuclear power plants...), whereas it's a race to the bottom here by restricting consumer choices and too many people are willing to pay too much for shit, so why compete with that by offering something that's actually good?

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[[-](#)] [Roflicopter_Rego](#) 2 points 3 months ago*

Like ours, it was privatised in the late 20th century. Japan Rail became the Japan Rail Group, which is composed of 6 private companies.

The JRG members all exclusively control the old JR lines, but compete with each other for rights over lines and routes, with contracts primarily based around efficiency and punctuality. New lines have been laid by several private companies since privatisation, including the famous maglev lines, whilst urban transit and subways are owned by a mix of public (like TFL) and private companies. Private lines are not subject to any price controls at all, and rail regulation in Japan has been criticised as being bad for safety. All this is very different to the UK system, where contracts are really a race to the bottom with any and all bidders and ticket prices are the main factor in contract handling, whilst getting permission to build and operate a private line is pretty much impossible.

Personally, I feel it's the latter which is the real problem. Can you imagine if a private company was seriously proposing a new line for the London Underground? Or make their own subway in somewhere like Manchester? They'd never get permission to build it, or it would be some public-private partnership whose real goal would be to screw the Treasury out of cash.

permalink embed parent

[[-](#)] [LazyGit](#) 3 points 3 months ago

Japan is huge. It's 50% bigger than the UK and 3 times bigger than England alone.

permalink embed parent

[[-](#)] [_MicroWave_](#) [United Kingdom](#) 3 points 3 months ago

Double the population though

permalink embed parent

[[-](#)] [Gellert](#) [Wales](#) 1 point 3 months ago

Thats in decline.

permalink embed parent

[[-](#)] [LazyGit](#) 0 points 3 months ago

Double the population in effectively 3 times the area (most of Scotland is uninhabitable).

permalink embed parent

[[-](#)] [_MicroWave_](#) [United Kingdom](#) 2 points 3 months ago

Are you kidding? Japan is much more mountainous than the UK!

Terrain: mostly rugged and mountainous, can easily be compared to Norway, both having about 70% of their land in the mountains.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geography_of_Japan

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [LazyGit](#) 3 points 3 months ago

Fair enough.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [nidrach](#) 1 point 3 months ago

Yeah but if you have an economic policy that favours one place above all the others you increase demand at one location above all others. Unless you invent personal teleportation devices an empty valley in Wales contributes nothing to the solution.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [pajamakitten](#) 8 points 3 months ago

Or you have NIMBYs who complain about development that might spoil their view, because homelessness is the fault of the person and Generation Rent just need to work harder.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Miserygut](#) [Greater London](#) 12 points 3 months ago

On one hand NIMBYs are a problem, on the other, developers are fucking cheapskate scumbags.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [pajamakitten](#) 6 points 3 months ago

True. I lived in a new build house in second and third year of uni and I came back in September of my third year to a room that was literally uninhabitable due to mould caused by damp.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [_MicroWave_](#) [United Kingdom](#) 4 points 3 months ago

Wow that is bad. Damp was terrible in my uni days but that is because the houses were old - designed to have open fires in most rooms which were now boarded up and generally not aired properly.

I'm always stunned when new buildings don't have dedicated clothes drying space. In rains a lot in the UK and when you work full time getting the clothes outside to dry, especially in the winter, is impossible.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [pajamakitten](#) 1 point 3 months ago

It was pooling between my wall and the wall of the house we were attached to, so the student on the other side of the wall had the same problem. 'Thankfully', I'm from Bournemouth and was studying at Southampton so commuting for a week wasn't too bad; what was annoying is that my landlord refused to deal with it so my mum and I cleaned it up ourselves for free.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [\[deleted\]](#) 2 points 3 months ago

Part of this is due to changes in construction techniques driven by energy efficiency legislation.

A popular technique for new builds has been to use external wall insulation with rockwool. The problem is that unless this is extremely well weathersealed and regularly maintained, water can permeate the rockwool

and cause damp in the building.

There is no fix to this, except to strip the walls and rebuild with an alternative insulation material - these days, most new builds are using closed-cell polyurethane foam, which is resistant to damp.

A similar problem occurs with cavity wall insulation. Cavity walls are there to prevent damp - by providing a gap, across which water from the outer skin cannot travel. Wall-ties which hold the inner and outer skins together are specially shaped specifically to prevent water ingress.

If you fill the cavity with insulating material, then you provide a path for water to progress, and this is an increasingly common cause of damp, and there is nothing you can do except demolish. This technique only works well, if you can inject a closed-cell foam forming resin and ensure complete filling of the cavity - and gaps, can allow water to track across any bridges formed by foam.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Miserygut](#) [Greater London](#) 1 point 3 months ago

So why wouldn't they use these non-damp causing construction techniques as standard? Surely these are solved problems by now?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [MrBeardyMan](#) [Middlesex](#) 2 points 3 months ago

it comes back around to "developers are fucking cheapskate scumbags".

My parents have a nice big 4-bed house built in the 60s, the developers were so cheap they skipped cladding the pipes they ran through the foundation/floor slab; everything is fine for X years until the pipes corrode through and you end up with a leak "somewhere" under a concrete floor that makes a whole floor soaking wet in one go. Then you get to run massive dehumidifiers for weeks to dry the building ... for a few years until the next one pops.

They cut corners to save time & money *everywhere* and most of the things they did last long enough to avoid liability claims but are shit in the properly long term.

My parents are in the position where anything that goes wrong will have gone wrong in many other houses in the street already (the rest to inevitably follow) so at least they can ask around for recommendations on tradesmen to come and fix it.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [reopye_Fe](#) 2 points 3 months ago

I used to live in Southwest London and would regularly go cycling out in the Surrey Hills. You can go through little villages where every house has a sign outside the front saying "Say no to new buildings here".

I bet if you stopped one of these fuckers and asked them how they would solve the housing crisis in London they wouldn't have any alternatives.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [redteddy23](#) [Oxford](#) 1 point 3 months ago

People suddenly start worrying about over development the microsecond they sign a

mortgage agreement.

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] pajamakitten](#) 1 point 3 months ago

Houses are seen as an investment these days, so many people are using them as their pensions that I can understand their fear. However, we *need* more houses and chronic underdevelopment should not be because of a few people who are afraid of losing out on their risky investments.

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] Milky1985](#) 4 points 3 months ago

Not really a land development person but wouldn't a relatively simple option to be to make planning permission nontransferable?

Its' granted to X company for Y land, company changes hands then need to reapply, it happens too often permission gets denied (kinda like what happens if you get your pin on your phone wrong too many times, the lockout time increases each time)

Would force them to just sit on it (reducing the gains to the point where building might be more profitable) or sell it on to someone who might build.

permalink embed

[\[-\] CWM_93](#) 6 points 3 months ago

It's an interesting thought, but I'm not sure that it would help us get more housing where it's needed. I think that the land value tax would help to solve this problem, as it would disincentivise long term land speculation. I don't have a problem with companies specialising in getting the planning permissions - the problem is with them, and developers, and other speculators, sitting on the land for years longer than is necessary in order to drive up the cost of housing.

The land value tax would charge these companies for sitting on land and not moving forward with the development process in areas where there's great demand for housing. Currently, derelict urban land isn't taxed at anywhere near its value.

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] s1ravarice](#) [Hertfordshire](#) 1 point 3 months ago

Fuck off with your common sense and logic. It has no place on Reddit.

Edit: Spelling

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] SealCub-ClubbingClub](#) [London / Surrey](#) 3 points 3 months ago

It's not logical really, essentially this acts to make planning permission harder to obtain / retain - I don't see the behavioural changes offsetting that. You've just reduced the number of people with the means and will to build by adding further regulation, reducing supply.

Unless you made planning permission much more attainable in the first place to mitigate the above the net result would almost certainly be inflationary pressure on house prices.

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] s1ravarice](#) [Hertfordshire](#) 2 points 3 months ago

I don't know, apparently it's already pretty easy to get planning permission. Maybe apply an expiry date on planning permission?

permalink embed parent

[+] 3 months ago (4 children)

[-] [anowcalledjosh](#) [Cambridgeshire](#) 2 points 3 months ago

[/r/titlegore](#)

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[-] [Ascythian](#) 2 points 3 months ago

Instead of building student flats, build residential homes in their place unless we somehow have a glut of universities that need filling?

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[-] [LinuxMage](#) [Luffbra](#) 2 points 3 months ago

You should come look at Loughborough in Leicestershire sometime. Everytime a derelict/unused building is removed, its replaced with Student Flats. Lots of them. By the thousand. Yet, Loughbrough on its own has a housing problem of significant proportions, its just the developers refusing to build social housing or affordable housing of any colour.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[-] [PublicSealedClass](#) 1 point 3 months ago

Same up the road in Nottingham, too.

Great if you're a student. The new flats around Lenton are pretty decent (especially if you had to suffer the shiteholes of the private rented terraces half a mile toward the city centre).

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[-] [_MicroWave_](#) [United Kingdom](#) 1 point 3 months ago

Cardiff has soo many student flats going up... I think the demand is mainly from international students.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[-] [Shockingandawesome](#) 2 points 3 months ago

There are some good ideas commented such as empty land taxes and planning permission changes. I'd like to see councils have the right to buy unused land at a fixed rate of compensation to build houses where they need to.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[-] [stalinsnicerbrother](#) 2 points 3 months ago

Councils can compulsorily purchase land under the Housing Act or Planning Act. It's just really, really expensive and takes a couple of years so it's not done routinely.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[-] [Shockingandawesome](#) 1 point 3 months ago

TIL. Interesting, thanks. I'll have to read up on that.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[-] [stalinsnicerbrother](#) 2 points 3 months ago

[This](#) is a starting point.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[-] [Cybercommie](#) [Royal Tunbridge Wells](#) 2 points 3 months ago

I have heard that there is some sort of land register (not the one that has just been privatised) that has existed for centuries and details all land owned by everyone. But it has not been updated since 1880ish and is controlled by some very powerful land

owning people, especially in Scotland.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\]](#) [stevyk](#) [Essex](#) 1 point 3 months ago

FYI the Land Registry was not privatised

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [sim667](#) 2 points 3 months ago

Because people haven't been hoarding land for centuries? This is nothing new, now it just has a corporate face.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Slanderous](#) [Lancashire](#) 3 points 3 months ago

It's not just that- now our need for that land is greater than ever. Right-to-buy council homes have not been replaced and the population has increased faster than available housing.

So it's an issue compounded because we don't have enough housing, and a much lesser proportion is attainable by those on low incomes than in previous decades.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [moshbeard](#) 2 points 3 months ago

There doesn't seem to be an end to the building of new houses around here, every bit of land seems to be getting built on. The roads and other infrastructure can't cope at all however.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\]](#) [PublicSealedClass](#) 2 points 3 months ago

I love when my old local newspaper posts on their Facebook page about some new housing being planned. The comments get filled with either:

- 1) Complaints about infrastructure
- 2) "How much will be social housing?"
- 3) "Lol, affordable"
- 4) "This place is turning into one huge conurbation!!!"

They neglect to realise that yes, the houses will be expensive, but they will sell. And the people that are able to afford them pay council tax, which increases local authority revenues. More people in the area means better footfall for local businesses, too.

Some infrastructure complaints are valid though, and there's no easy way around that, even if you do redevelop derelict urban land.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[+\]](#) 3 months ago (1 child)

[\[+\]](#) [dayofthegecko](#) comment score below threshold (0 children)

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191

[Revealed the enormous profits of the development industry. New research shows huge margins at the UK's major house builders, casting doubt over developers' claims that building affordable housing not financially viable](#) (ourcity.london)

submitted 6 months ago by [georgenturner](#)

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[\[-\] OneArmJack](#) 88 points 6 months ago

I don't want developers to build affordable housing, I want them to build enough houses that the average becomes affordable again.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[+\] 6 months ago*](#) (13 children)

[\[-\] TheAngryGoat](#) [United Kingdom](#) 19 points 6 months ago

Especially since "affordable housing" seems to be another way of saying "if you stretch out your arms, you can touch opposing walls in the 'bedroom'".

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] \[deleted\]](#) 13 points 6 months ago*

Actually, that's often not the case. Affordable housing tends to be built to housing association or council specifications which call for good sized bedrooms and bathrooms. Typically, the specification also includes an upgraded finish, such as improved central heating, etc.

This is not the case for private housing where the specifications for size of room are bare minimums.

This is one of the problems with the concept of affordable housing in

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general. For every 10 houses that a developer builds for private sale, they must build 4 to council spec which are then donated to the council or housing association as "affordable housing".

Because in effect, the construction of 1 private house requires land for 1.4 houses (possibly more as the affordable housing tends to be larger), there is a necessary downward pressure on the size of private housing, as well as a strong upward pressure on price.

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] yonthickie](#) 3 points 6 months ago

I live in a new housing association house with 2 good sized bedrooms large enough for double beds and furniture with a living room large enough to accommodate sitting and dining space for a family. The tiny new developer houses I looked at before moving here had I small bedroom and a boxroom with a kitchen/living room where if anyone put their feet up nobody else could move.

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] 113243211557911](#) 2 points 6 months ago

IS it a newer house, or one of those amazing 'bomb proof' older council houses?

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] yonthickie](#) 2 points 6 months ago

No - under 10 years old. Mind you -the builders didn't exactly go over board on the details but the size and insulation is good.

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] 113243211557911](#) 1 point 6 months ago

How is the sound insulation? can you still hear someone take a piss in literally every

an article.

Try to keep a positive attitude.

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If you think your post has been banned,

other room in the house?
Or has the build quality
got better?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [yonthickie](#) 1 point 6 months ago

The sound insulation is quite good actually. The baby next door was 9 months old before I knew it was there. Not exactly a close community, but good sound insulation.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [1132432115579](#) 1 point 6 months ago

That's good to know.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [vzzzbux](#) [Cornwall](#) 1 point 6 months ago

The housing association near me must be doing a shit job, then, because their houses are not much bigger than my shed. And my shed is far better built.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Annoyed_Badger](#) 9 points 6 months ago
they never will. Its not in their interests to ever do so.

We need a massive program of public sector housebuilding, buying land at agricultural values because it would otherwise not be allowed to be developed, then controlling priced via legal agreement.

Do enough of this, and house prices will fall, eventually. The market cannot and lets be honest here, has no interest in building enough houses to lower prices.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Miserygut](#) [Greater London](#) 5 points 6 months ago

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They have never, ever, ever done that and there's no incentive for private housebuilders to do it either.

Houses were cheap because of post-war government housebuilding and relatively high wages. Neither of those are making a comeback any time soon.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [byjimini](#) [North Yorkshire](#) 1 point 6 months ago

Definitely. It's only affordable the first time round before the owner, understandably, sells for a massive profit.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [ruizscar](#) [Barcelona on the Mediterranean](#) 29 points 6 months ago

Just as we near the pinnacle of for-profit housebuilding: the smallest acceptable dimensions with the poorest quality materials and fastest construction. I even read about leasehold houses for the first time recently. That's leasehold *houses*.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\]](#) [chinese-newspaper](#) 6 points 6 months ago

leasehold houses have been common for decades, they aren't something to be aghast about if they are a long term lease

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Madshibentist](#) [Greater London](#) 19 points 6 months ago

Why? Why on earth would they be leasehold? It sucks that flats are leasehold, but I sort of understand the practicality of it, but what on earth reason is there for houses to be leasehold except to screw the buyer?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [\[deleted\]](#) 7 points 6 months ago*

I was recently house shopping and found a lot of new leasehold houses. I looked into this and there was always some sort of reason for it.

The usual one was because the development had a lot of paved areas (roads, drive ways, etc.) Due to the risk of flooding from water runoff, developers are now legally required to install and maintain surface water mitigation systems when building houses/driveways/etc.

In most of the developments I saw, the development was a cul-de-sac, but in order to provide adequate parking on the small development area, most of the land was paved - there were no front gardens, just paved driveways merging with the road. To mitigate this, it is necessary to install large underground water storage tanks, and a pumping system which will slowly pump the water out once the rain has stopped. This avoids the water just disappearing into surface water drains and running into rivers.

These mitigation systems are a legal requirement, are very expensive and require regular maintenance. They are the legal responsibility of the freeholder and it is an offence to allow them to fall into disrepair. By making the land leasehold and ensuring there is a management company to maintain the equipment, the developer has fulfilled their legal obligation, and the occupants of the land must pay for the continued upkeep.

Other reason was because there was a development of "mews" houses, and there was a shared paved carpark - so there was a leasehold to ensure

adequate maintenance of the car park/security gate, etc.

Of course, this doesn't stop the developer from taking the opportunity to raise some cash by financialising the ground rents.

The leasehold system has problems, but it at least provides a legal framework for essential maintenance to be performed. A friend of mine manages the residents association for a private road. The road was never built to proper standards, so the council won't take over maintenance. This means the maintenance and repairs have to be funded by the residents. As this is not leasehold, there is no legal way to ensure payment - if a resident doesn't want to pay, everyone else needs to; either that, or the road will fall apart. The council will only agree to take over maintenance if the road has been fully upgraded to their specification and is in a good state of repair - the quote to bring it up to spec was about £1 million - shared between about 40 houses; so not remotely realistic.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Wombletrap](#) [Londoner in Paris](#) 5 points 6 months ago

These are really interesting examples, and seem pretty reasonable. But couldn't a shared freehold (jointly owned by all the residents) accomplish the same thing?

Given the recent stories of exploitative abuse of leaseholds, I wouldn't be willing to buy a property that left me with any obligations to a developer.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [\[deleted\]](#) 5 points 6 months ago

Yes. A shared freehold would do the same thing. However, it's difficult to set this up on a new development because the developer may own the properties.

In practice, once the properties are sold, the developer will usually try to offload the freehold. The leaseholders legally get first refusal of the purchase, and this is their opportunity to set it up as a share of freehold.

Even if a 3rd party purchases the freehold, the leaseholders have a right to buy the freehold and create a share of freehold system by making a fair financial offer to the current holder.

The thing to watch for is the value of the ground rent. The price of a freehold is typically around 15-30x the total of the annual ground rents. If ground rents are a typical £200 per year, then that works out at less than £6k per property.

Some developers are using very high ground rents or inflation linked ground rents as a stealth method of increasing the sales value of a development. A £400 per year inflation linked ground rent could cost £50-60k per property to buy out. In a development, it may be difficult to convince every single resident to cough up £60k cash to buy the freehold. However, for professional investors, they'll be happy to pony up the cash, and the developer walks away with an extra £60k per flat.

However, you don't need to buy the freehold to effectively take

control. The residents have the right to take over management by forming a new management company, who are responsible for the day to day running of the development. The freeholder is then left with very little role other than collection of the ground rent.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [chinese-newspaper](#) 1 point 6 months ago

They can add terms that keep the area nice

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [00DEADBEEF](#) [The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland](#) 5 points 6 months ago

Owners have to pay a yearly fee for their house and have to ask permission to make changes. It's ridiculous and on the rise. I can understand in flats which share a structure and communal areas that need upkeep.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [georgeturner](#) [\[S\]](#) 3 points 6 months ago

The guardian did a big expose of this recently. The house builders are writing in clauses which see huge rises in ground rents 10 of 20 years down the line and then they sell the freehold to investors. It is outrageous

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [chinese-newspaper](#) 1 point 6 months ago

I don't need permission to make changes (except for large antenna) but I assume not all leaseholds are the same

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [DogBotherer](#) 1 point 6 months ago

You need planning permission for a large antenna anyway.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [butwhatisit](#) [Cumberland](#) 2 points 6 months ago

Aye but it is getting ridiculous, and that's talking as someone who lives in one. The so called [ground rent scandal](#) is leaving some houses worthless after only a few years.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [chinese-newspaper](#) 1 point 6 months ago

Aha those are ridiculous terms why are people agreeing to them, my ground rent is fixed for 10000 years

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [butwhatisit](#) [Cumberland](#) 2 points 6 months ago

I think because people aren't told - there's now talk of people suing solicitors for not informing them.

It can be quite confusing as well - because at the beginning, when signing, your ground rent is reasonable but then the developer sells the freehold to a shark and suddenly the ground rent can be anything.

At least, that's what I'm reading.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [smashing3000](#) [United Kingdom](#) 12 points 6 months ago

Modern homes are shit, flimsy walls, lack of insulation, not expected to last as long as

older houses, developers throw them up cheap and cream a fortune.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\]](#) [ArtistEngineer](#) [Cambridgeshire](#) 7 points 6 months ago

There's a whole new village going up near me.

The first few houses just hit Rightmove. They are over priced and tiny. In fact, they are actually more expensive and smaller than the houses in the village that it's being built next to. I have no idea why anyone would buy them.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [smashing3000](#) [United Kingdom](#) 7 points 6 months ago

You can hear people fart in the house next to my brothers, I hate it.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [ArtistEngineer](#) [Cambridgeshire](#) 7 points 6 months ago

The first thing I do when I check out a new house is knock on the walls.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Gellert](#) [Wales](#) 1 point 6 months ago

50s/60s era electric and plumbing. I speak from experience.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Code-Void](#) [Essex](#) 1 point 6 months ago

From what I've heard and read is that the new builds have a warranty of 10 years or so where its only expected to stay up for 10 years.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [QuentinHapsberg](#) 27 points 6 months ago

We have a housing shortage because the Government stopped building houses in the 1960's. The private sector has never built over 150k houses per year. The government used to build a further 150k. Private sector developers do not build homes. They future trade with their land bank.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\]](#) [hu6Bi5To](#) 15 points 6 months ago

Private sector developers do not build homes. They future trade with their land bank.

Which is one of the many problems that could be solved with a land-value tax.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [ananioperim](#) 12 points 6 months ago

This. UBI funded by LVT would solve so many problems.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [CyberGnat](#) 5 points 6 months ago

Automation will wipe out income tax receipts, even if it doesn't replace every job. If you shift the burden of paying for a UBI onto the minority of the population who will still be working, the marginal tax rate would have to be high enough that these people will either stop working, or will just find some other means by which they won't pay. All those workers replaced by automation are the ones who don't have the means or the need to avoid tax on an industrial scale. Consumption taxes won't work because the economy would be even more reliant upon information, but information is not scarce

and cannot be controlled or adequately taxed. In the very long term, when you could have a 3D food printer powered by your own solar panels and using waste or bio-mass for the input materials, how could you tax this?

As such, it seems pretty much inevitable that land value tax will have to be implemented.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [byjimini](#) [North Yorkshire](#) 2 points 6 months ago

It really is time we stop giving land owners subsidies and instead tax them for it.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Annoyed_Badger](#) 9 points 6 months ago

No fucking shit. Everyone in the industry knows this, the big developers donate to the Tory party, and shockingly the policies favour them making massive profits for doing less.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\]](#) [vzzzbux](#) [Cornwall](#) 3 points 6 months ago

Presumably they change their donations to Labour when they're in power, given how little the last Labour government did to solve the problem.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [algo](#) 5 points 6 months ago

[/u/georgeturner](#) did you see that Channel 4 report where property developers offered to buy 550 acres of farm land near Gatwick (no planning permission) for £257 million? To one farmer??

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\]](#) [georgeturner](#) [\[S\]](#) 1 point 6 months ago

No - thanks for flagging it up. I'll take a look!

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Code-Void](#) [Essex](#) 1 point 6 months ago

The farmer in the village that I live in wants to sell a field for houses.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [butwhatisit](#) [Cumberland](#) 6 points 6 months ago

Why doesn't someone crowdfund a co-operative developer. Huge profits to be given out as dividends to investors, to such a point until there are enough houses built that all housing is now affordable, at which point dividends dry up and mission accomplished.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\]](#) [lefedoraarmy](#) 1 point 6 months ago

Kind of happens all the time on peer to peer lending sites

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [butwhatisit](#) [Cumberland](#) 2 points 6 months ago

I guess I'm just sick of seeing blame on **them** because **they** won't build more houses.

Well if it's that possible, and apparently lucrative, why not do it ourselves? God knows it's one industry that can better serve its customers.

If there is already a movement in this area I'd love to hear!

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[-] [lefedoraarmy](#) 1 point 6 months ago

It doesn't really happen as a collective group.

I've had a lot of property development loans on peer to peer lending, most have done well. But I don't feel I'm contributing to solving the housing problem this way.

Normally my money goes to a developer who might me back with 8% interest, but that's nothing compared to how much they would make

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[-] [butwhatisit](#) [Cumberland](#) 1 point 6 months ago

So these loans on peer to peer sites are for normal developers?

To be honest if I make 10% return on money I'm very happy.

I think I'm thinking something far larger.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[-] [bod1988](#) [Northamptonshire](#) 5 points 6 months ago

If we're to become the house owning state that the government claim they want us to be, one thing has to happen; houses have to become cheaper in relation to wages.

Wages have been in stagnation for many, many years now. And given that banking holds so much influence with those in power, and banking benefits from high house prices, I can't see any push to lower house prices anytime soon.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[-] [hc84](#) 4 points 6 months ago

The fact of the matter is large corporations are not satisfied with making enough money. They want to continually make more, and more, even if it hurts other people.

Now, I'm not against the pursuit of profits, but I wish there was a point where they would say, "I've gotten my fair share. From now on, I'm going to be doing this because I care, and I want to contribute to society."

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[-] [georgeturner](#) [S] 2 points 6 months ago

Completely agree, but sadly what counts so enough is wildly different for many people!

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[-] [hu6Bi5To](#) 12 points 6 months ago

The whole concept of "affordable housing" as a separate class of housing from every other type of housing is such a backwards concept for many reasons.

But the biggest from a practical point-of-view is that we expect house builders to donate 20% of every development at cost, for the privilege of being allowed to build anything at all. The scheme was obviously imagined by someone trying to restrict the supply of housing.

Why on earth have we decided that developers are to blame for massively high-house prices? They don't set interest rates, they didn't create laws that give landlords all the power in an tenancy agreement. Why should they be punished?

And why do we think extra red-tape, extra costs, and the delays both add on to the development process is in anyway helpful when it comes to reaching house-building targets.

It's the worst kind of "being seen to do something" sham that has counter-productive effects.

If you want affordable housing: let builders build what they think the market will support, subject to minimum building codes regarding plumbing and electrics (obviously); and let them build anywhere (subject to basic town-planning and limited conservation - not just rejecting planning applications because of the effect it'll have on the view from a 1950s semi where the mayor's golfing partner lives...).

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[\[-\] georgeturner](#) [\[S\]](#) 16 points 6 months ago

I am afraid there is a fundamental flaw in your argument. No one is expecting a donation. Affordable housing is purchased off the developer at a profit for the developer. It is a much lower profit than can be gained by building the crazy high rise luxury towers being flogged off to the offshore pound, but it is a profit.

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[\[-\] hu6Bi5To](#) -2 points 6 months ago

I am afraid there is a fundamental flaw in your argument. No one is expecting a donation.

There's no flaw, not even a non-fundamental one. This is a semantic argument, "expecting a donation" == "much lower profit" for all intents and purposes!

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[\[-\] gyroda](#) [Bristol](#) 1 point 6 months ago

To be fair, the way you worded it implied that it was given to the council rather than undersold.

At least that's how I (someone who doesn't know much about this) read it.

I get your point though.

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[\[-\] georgeturner](#) [\[S\]](#) 2 points 6 months ago

Exactly - what does 'at cost' mean - no profit!

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[\[-\] RoadHouseSwayzeTrain](#) 0 points 6 months ago

It means you have the privilege of working for comrade corbyn

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] Annoyed_Badger](#) 1 point 6 months ago

actually you could solve the whole housing problem in the Uk by separating out market housing and social/affordable housing in the use classes order. Perhaps with a category for self build also to encourage that.

Then you could designate areas a AH, but keep land values down as it could not be used for market housing.

You can then build decent cheap houses (preferably NOT bricks and fucking mortar...) and limit resale value via a s.106, and on a preferential basis to local people, graduating out if no buyers.

btw, planning gain is important, and part of the social contract of society. land has no real value beyond its agricultural value until Planning permission is granted (or at least policies allocate it as being a site for development), but the public grant permission. The idea is that by granting permission and therefore massive profits,

despite no action on the land owners part, some of that uplift should be returned to the public. From your post I'm not sure you understand the basics of land use, values and the history of UK planning or housing markets.

Developers stopped building cheap housing when we brought in building regs (An early form, basically ceiling heights and a few other bits)...because we decided it was bad for the poor to live in shit accommodation, with associated health problems (and costs to society). Unless you are advocating a return to C18th conditions in a totally unregulated market.....I don't think you understand the implications of your points.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] crzylgs](#) 3 points 6 months ago

If the government / local authorities would pick up the ball and actually release more land for self build, first time builders like they've been talking about. Then I could build myself a nice little offsite constructed build. So many benefits over traditional housing. Energy efficiency. Less environmental impact. Cheaper. Thanks.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\] borg88](#) [Buckinghamshire](#) 1 point 6 months ago

Milton Keynes used to reserve plots on each housing estate for self build, which individuals could buy for the price of the land.

I think most of them tended to remain unsold, and were sold to the big builders who built the rest of the estate. I think they had to build something different unique there as part of the deal.

I hope you get the opportunity to build your own place if that is what you want to do. It isn't for everybody though.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] crzylgs](#) 1 point 6 months ago

That's really interesting. I live pretty close to Milton Keynes and did not know that. I've registered myself as 'interested' in self-building with my local council... Not really sure how much use that'll be. But if they end up with 1000's of people on the list then it may help expedite the situation. Realistically I probably need to privately purchase some land - and anything private with a chance of planning permission is priced at the higher end of the market due to such a shortage of supply.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] |||X|||||X|||||X|||||](#) 2 points 6 months ago

We'll no doubt find out it's a big cartel, they're all in cahoots with each other to build the least amount of houses for the biggest margins.

The government needs to spank the industry's arse hard over hitting targets on private and affordable housing.

Pisses me off that housing is so expensive.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\] mulborough](#) 4 points 6 months ago

The British are perhaps overly attached to ownership as a principle.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\] algo](#) 15 points 6 months ago

Catch 22. You can't rent because renters don't get treated well enough. You can't fix

renters rights because landlords are a powerful lobby.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [PJS2](#) 3 points 6 months ago

How did other countries in Europe manage to enshrine high quality renters' rights?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [algo](#) 6 points 6 months ago

Well we thought for a while that New Labour might get us that but then we saw how many properties the Blairs own so gave up.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Joeybada33](#) 3 points 6 months ago*

Cherie was the lawyer for disingenuous "axe the tenant tax" group. They lost and were told they havent got a hope in hell of getting it over turned through the courts and so theyre resorting to lobbying mps and pushing their dirty agenda through the telegraph.

We are also seeing lots of attempts to get the stamp duty tax on second homes removed. utter disgrace if it gets removed, if anything it should be the basic should be upped to 5% to stop speculators and rent seekers.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [landaaan](#) 1 point 6 months ago

A well armed proletariat should solve the problem.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Code-Void](#) [Essex](#) 1 point 6 months ago

not to mention wages are not high enough to rent on your own.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Wombletrap](#) [Londoner in Paris](#) 11 points 6 months ago

True. But this is because renting in the UK is horrible. I've rented in the UK and France. In the UK I had to move or renegotiate every 12 months, with major rent increases and/or losing half my deposit each time. in France I have security of tenure (an open-ended lease which is automatically renewable) and inflation-linked controls on the annual increase. And I deal with a "professional" landlord who has more than one property and knows what he's doing, rather than an intrusive and incompetent amateur.

If the UK made renting less awful, like every other country in Europe, then ownership wouldn't be such an obsession. But right now, owning your house or flat is the only way to avoid being screwed by landlords.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [gyroda](#) [Bristol](#) 4 points 6 months ago

Even with a great landlord we were pretty much priced out of our flat due to 10% annual rent increases (or at least we would have been, except when he gave us that final offer we knew we were all moving away). This was a student place and my maintenance grants and loans definitely didn't rise by nearly that much.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [ArtistEngineer](#) [Cambridgeshire](#) 2 points 6 months ago

Lifelong renting would be desirable if renters weren't ripped off by real estate agents via extortionate and arbitrary fees, and there was more protection for long term renting.

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[\[-\] Joeybada33](#) 2 points 6 months ago

Not at all. this is a complete myth and its all because germany has a really low ownership rate a complete outlier. If it wasnt for right to buy UK would probably be at the bottom as well.

<https://www.statista.com/statistics/246355/home-ownership-rate-in-europe/>

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[\[-\] Roddy0608](#) [The Vale of Glamorgan](#) 1 point 6 months ago

[Rents to rise faster than house prices.](#)

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[\[-\] snarky-](#) [England](#) 1 point 6 months ago

Over the long-term, rent costs way more. (And makes me sad because it's really hard to find a rented place that allows pets).

Good luck anyone who reaches pension age, and doesn't own a house. How are pensioners supposed to afford rent?!

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[\[-\] galenwolf](#) 1 point 6 months ago

There needs to be a law that if a developer buys/owns land that can have houses built on it they need to build on it within a certain number of years or be forced to give the land to the government for council housing.

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[\[-\] boyced](#) 1 point 6 months ago

the are also building them slower to keep prices high, 500 million profit from one company is crazy.

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223

A house used to be somewhere to make a home. For too many it's now just a cramped, overpriced box. We need to build a housing market that focuses on buyers rather than sellers, that sees houses as places to live rather than as assets to make money (independent.co.uk)

submitted 3 years ago by A-MacLeod

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sorted by: **best**

[-] **Halk** Lanarkshire 43 points 3 years ago

Problem : Housing shortage

Solution : Build more houses

Every other problem has a root in the housing shortage. If there were a sufficient number of new houses being built people would turn their noses up at ridiculously undersized rooms.

That said it would help if we had regulations over what could be described as a bedroom. However it won't solve anything in itself.

Laws to penalise empty dwellings won't help much either, they'll cause a one time reduction in the average number of empty dwellings, and a small one off increase to the housing supply but nothing afterwards. The burden of the legislation will carry on afterwards.

Sadly the governments help to buy scheme makes things worse rather than better. It supports demand. The problem isn't that people can't afford houses - think about it. What would happen if we could all easily afford houses? We'd all pay more and instantly house prices would rise to the point where we couldn't all afford houses. It's a

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game of musical chairs and if we all get faster there's no more chairs to go around.

There's two main ways houses can enter the market. Either the government works out why house builders are so bad at building houses - are there any real barriers? I have to admit my knowledges doesn't stretch to an in-depth understanding of the house building market.

The other is that the government mandate local government to build social housing which will revolve into private ownership over time.

If the housing supply problem is solved, everything else is solved.

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[\[-\] bobalot](#) [Morecambe](#) 45 points 3 years ago

Real problem: The shortage is intentional.

Mass immigration, limited new builds and strict regulations all lead to a shortage.

It's intentional, politicians and banks want you spending more of your wages on rent/mortgage because it keeps the public subdued in debt and the banks in the green.

Why else would the government be running a help to buy scheme? The entire economic recovery is based on a property bubble.

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[\[-\] therationalparent](#) 17 points 3 years ago

I don't understand why so few people get this. The government *wants* high house prices. That is clear from their actions.

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[\[-\] B23vital](#) -1 points 3 years ago

High houses prices are a problem, Ill explain it as simple as possible. You keep house prices high its like a balloon. You fill a balloon up and its starts to rise, but at some point that balloon 'pops,' Falling back to earth. Houses are the same, you rise the prices people buy them, your rise them more, so people continue to buy. But after a while you have millions owning houses they cant ever

an article.

Try to keep a positive attitude.

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If you think your post has been banned,

afford and the people that want to buy houses cant afford to buy them, causing a 'pop' in the market. With no or little demand due to price, people dont buy so prices must drop, but this means all the people with current mortgages now have negative equity. Their property has also 'popped,' so their house is worth nothing compared to when they bought it. The best solution for all parties, Govt, Banks, US, a market in which houses are affordable, and rising slightly below the wage increase, meaning banks are guaranteed their money, the govt gets its tax, and we get housing. Do some research into the USA property market, you'll soon understand that high house prices arnt the solution that parties want. Do some more research into the irish property market and you'll see why building LOADS of housing is also a major problem. Its a fine line that is in desperate need of support.

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[\[-\] therationalparent](#) 15 points 3 years ago*

Thank you for explaining it to me so simply! I'll do the same for you.

UK has lots of home owners. House prices go up, home owners have more money! This makes home owner happy, votes for government! Also, more money, more spend spend spend! Good for economy, good for government!

House prices go down, lots of people unhappy. Also, less money about - bad for economy. People don't vote for government. Oh dear!

High house prices bad for poor and young people? Yes. Oh

please contact a mod.

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dear! Never mind!

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/economics/10425912/House-price-rises-to-fuel-UK-growth-next-year-says-NIESR.html>

[EDIT: Thanks for the Gold!]

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[–] **B23vital** 1 point 3 years ago

house prices rising in a market like this is good, in short term, its all artificial. The government are helping keep house prices high, but what happens when this help to buy scheme is over? The demand will naturally drop, this artificial pricing of houses will always eventually drop, so yes your right, but keeping house prices high isnt beneficial to the house owner if he/she is to buy now. If you buy a house today you will at some point loose value on the house, these artificial prices are completely misleading, and by not building more housing your just ignoring the demand. They can keep prices high for as long as they like, but at some point they will need to address the housing issue eg, build more houses. This will then bring prices right down. Just because people own houses they think are worth 150k, doesnt mean it is.

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[–] **B23vital** 1 point 3 years ago

on a quick side not, if house prices go 'up up up' and "home owners" are happy. What happens to those that arnt home owners? Those with low income and unemployment, which currently stands close to an all time high. A high market in a poor working economy is bad for business, simple, unless your a landlord building your monopoly.

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[–] **unwind-protect** Cambridgeshire 2 points 3 years ago

| What happens to those that arnt home owners?

Thankfully (/s) neither of the main political parties support a platform of reducing house prices... therefore politically they have no voice and can be ignored...

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[–] **[deleted]** 5 points 3 years ago

He's right though, look at how much the government has meddled in the housing market, and continues to meddle.

For example, presently lots of first time buyers cannot afford housing. If lots of people can't afford to buy something, then it's price should drop until they can afford it. Instead, the government has decided to do this help to buy scheme, which gives money to people who can't afford to buy housing, thereby artificially keeping the cost of housing high. The government have also been pumping money into banks through the funding for lending scheme. This has kept mortgage rates artificially low, which also helps people who couldn't otherwise afford a mortgage get one. This, again, is keeping prices artificially high, because people who otherwise couldn't afford to buy a thing are now buying it.

It's pretty much a non-argument that government policy is directly aimed at keeping house prices high. They've hugely distorted the market.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [TakenByVultures](#) [Greater Manchester](#) 2 points 3 years ago

help to buy scheme, which gives money to people who can't afford to buy housing,

This isn't true. They pay the same price for the house, they simply put down a smaller deposit. The government don't give either the buyer or the bank any money, simply guarantee a small percentage in the event of a default. Buyers also need to pass the same affordability check re monthly payments as regular house buyers.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [\[deleted\]](#) 9 points 3 years ago

So they end up getting a mortgage which they couldn't afford, since they don't have a sufficient deposit. It's encouraging people to buy things which they otherwise couldn't afford, which is keeping the price artificially high. It's a market manipulation which is basically expressly designed to help keep prices high.

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[\[-\]](#) [TakenByVultures](#) [Greater Manchester](#) 0 points 3 years ago

Can't afford 10% deposit does NOT equal can't afford mortgage. The monthly repayments are generally no more (or in many cases less) than monthly rent on an equivalent property. It's worth mentioning that 95% LTV mortgages were available long before the help to buy schemes were introduced (but were withdrawn during the credit crunch).

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[\[-\]](#) [\[deleted\]](#) 2 points 3 years ago

But it does mean that you'd represent a bigger risk to the bank, and they would treat you accordingly, probably by giving you a higher rate than you would've got without the government's guarantee. Saving for a deposit is supposed to prove that you've got the financial stability long term to pay off the loan, and that you've got surplus income which you can save meaning you can withstand potential rate increases, but if you can't manage that then maybe you're not a suitable candidate to buy in the first place. There's a reason that firms aren't really offering 95% LTV at the moment.

And once you've got all these people on these mortgages, what the hell happens to them in a few years time if interest rates go back to normal and all of a sudden monthly repayments jump up. It's going to be messy.

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[\[-\]](#) [TakenByVultures](#) [Greater Manchester](#) 1 point 3 years ago

Please be aware I was only disputing your initial point

that the HTB scheme 'gives money to people who can't afford housing', which as I have stated is not true. That said, I'll address your other points.

I'm 'one of those people' - we have a joint household income of £40k+, have been in steady employment for almost 10 years now, savings of approx £15k and just bought a house under HTB Phase 2. The monthly repayments on the property are £200 LESS per month than we've been paying in rent for the past few years. The only thing that was stopping us was a sizable deposit and HTB helped us past this.

And once you've got all these people on these mortgages, what the hell happens to them in a few years time if interest rates go back to normal and all of a sudden monthly repayments jump up. It's going to be messy.

You are correct in stating that interest rates are higher for 95% LTV - but this is the case with all mortgages, not just HTB. There are fixed deals available (i.e. we went with a five year fix at 4.19%). When the five years is up we can either move onto another fix or look elsewhere for a better deal as we will have built equity and reduced the LTV amount with five years worth of repayments.

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[continue this thread](#)

[[-](#)] [w0ss4g3](#) [Cardiff](#) 2 points 3 years ago*

Right, so they can't afford it - mortgages require a deposit. If the amount of people with a deposit decreases then the amount of people able to buy houses decreases, so the demand decreases and finally house prices decrease.

By handing over the deposit, the government artificially increase demand which keeps house prices high.

You might say that it is to help young people who can't save for a deposit because of high rents. However, the rents are so high because house prices are high (and increasing) - the renters are there to pay off the "investor's" mortgage (which is large because house prices are high). The problems are all down to the house prices being too high. Giving people (practically) interest-free money is not the way to fix it.

The other thing is that with the view of houses as an asset (and the belief that prices will continue to increase), if you find yourself with £50-100k to invest, it makes sense to buy a property with the cash as a deposit and then cover the mortgage by renting it out.. thus continuing the cycle.

The real winners with the increasing prices are the mortgage lenders, who are taking a nice compounded percentage of those prices every year for ~25 years.

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[\[-\]](#) [TakenByVultures](#) [Greater Manchester](#) 1 point 3 years ago*

Oh, I agree house prices are too high. I was just correcting some misinformation regarding the help to buy scheme.

By handing over the deposit, the government artificially increase demand which keeps house prices high.

I just said this - the government don't hand anything over, EXCEPT in the event of a default by the buyer. All the help to buy scheme does is allow a buyer to put down a 5 - 10% deposit rather than 10%+. They still pay the same price overall for the property (in fact interest rates are higher for those on the HTB scheme, so they probably pay more overall).

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[\[-\]](#) [w0ss4g3](#) [Cardiff](#) 2 points 3 years ago

Reading the documentation, it's closer to a buyer with a current 5% deposit being given a loan for another 20% (i.e. total of 25%, which brings the mortgage payments down by a good chunk).

The loan is also interest-free for 5 years and is then incredibly low interest for the remainder. In fact, at a glance, it looks like it's the cheapest loan you can possibly get - even better than a student loan. As an example my student loan rates are so low that it makes more sense to just pay the monthly payment than to pay it off in full - I'm actually making profit on the money I owe to them by putting it in a bond.

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[\[-\]](#) [TakenByVultures](#) [Greater Manchester](#) 1 point 3 years ago

That was the 'Phase 1' pilot scheme. The second, and much bigger, part of the scheme does not advance any sort of loan (or otherwise) to the buyer or bank. As I said, it's simply a guarantee against default on a minor percentage of the loan.

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[\[-\]](#) [B23vital](#) 1 point 3 years ago

ye i completely agree, the problem isnt solely down to the government, but in the end their the ones that can resolve the issue and to be honest its them alone that can resolve it. Like i said there are more factors that attribute to high housing costs, the demand is there, and so is the supply, but its getting bought up by other people wanting to make quick easy money. As for the help to buy, why help first time buyers up to 600k??? thats just ridiculous, if you can afford that type of mortgage you shouldnt need help. Ive been told i can loan only around 90k, well that dont buy shit these days, and the best thing is me and my SO are on the same income as my parents who's house is 140k in value. Its madness.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] jazimov](#) [Nottingham](#) 3 points 3 years ago*

You phrase it like a grand conspiracy when its just how capitalism works. The objective of any capitalist is to extract as much surplus from labour as possible; the people using and using the property have jobs or sell things. The capitalist system, without any serious conscious intention, will find locally optimal ways of extracting surplus production.

There is no configuration of the property market that will benefit everyone. Think of the "right to buy" council houses, the number of people that bought into the pyramid is astronomical. Combine this with the worst pension schemes you've ever seen and we have a pretty good configuration for extracting surplus production from the population.

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[\[-\] bobalot](#) [Morecambe](#) 1 point 3 years ago

Not a grand conspiracy, but when governments are funding bank bailouts, help to buy schemes and housing benefit, capitalism has gone out the window and kleptocracy has settled in.

People are now convinced that their house is worth hundreds of thousands of pounds and we're encouraging more people into massive amounts of debt in order to "get on the housing ladder".

There isn't a configuration that will help everyone, but we currently have a system that is by design profitable to the rich and makes the poor more indebted, all paid for with taxpayer money.

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[\[-\] jazimov](#) [Nottingham](#) 2 points 3 years ago

I think this is just naivety about capitalism that you think there is a situation that it can be fairer in the long term. As long as the system is a capitalist (i.e. a small percentage of the population owns and controls that which is required to produce) there will always be groups that try and screw the system in their favour. The only time in history when capitalists were really kept under control is when the welfare state was set up, the wealthy were taxed at about 90%; this was because of a powerful unified movement willing to fight that, basically, no longer exists.

we currently have a system that is by design profitable to the rich and makes the poor more indebted

This *is* capitalism. Have no illusions. If you want to be a successful capitalist you cannot think that the objective is a fairer configuration, you *have* to think "How can I maximize my own utility" constantly, this doesn't mean you're evil it is just the onl strategy that works in the long term. You want the game to be anything else, then you don't want capitalism. It isn't nice, it isn't fair but it isn't supposed to be.

There is no grand conspiracy, the game is the game. Extract the maximum amount surplus from workers that you physically can; anything else is brushed off instantly.

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[\[-\] Joomes](#) [London](#) 6 points 3 years ago

politicians and banks want you spending more of your wages on rent/mortgage because it keeps the public subdued in debt and the banks in the green.

I don't understand why this sentiment is so popular. This is incredibly BAD for banks, politicians, and the economy in general in the long run (and not even the long long run, this could turn out very badly over a period as short as 5-ish years) if it's really what they're aiming for.

My default reaction is never that there's some conspiracy, but that the people in charge are just too stupid/short-sighted to see how bad their decisions actually are. I mean, think about people you know: only a very tiny minority of real people would actually act in a way that is going to be truly detrimental to everyone in the long run in order to maintain a marginal current benefit. The majority of people might end up making decisions that they think are the right ones, but are actually bad because they just aren't smart or well-informed enough to know the difference.

Politicians are elected because they're good at winning elections, not because they're good at their job.

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[\[-\]](#) [Joker1980](#) 7 points 3 years ago

This is incredibly BAD for banks, politicians, and the economy in general in the long run.

Isn't that the point though, while it's incredibly damaging in the long term it's incredibly profitable in the short term and that's all that matters.

It's the same way shareholders can/will destroy a company in the long term because they got theirs and got out in the short term.

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[\[-\]](#) [Halk](#) [Lanarkshire](#) 4 points 3 years ago

Banks don't want people spending more money of their salary in proportion on mortgages. In fact banks boomed when more and more people were taking mortgages, if anything house ownership in the UK has meant banks making lots of money at the expense of land lords.

They do want security in house prices - not a rise, but no decrease/correction.

The government, I think, wants to prop up house prices because that gets votes. Sadly I think that's a large part of the problem, if they do something that causes a house price correction then there will be economic uncertainty.

Previously when I've explained a solution I've explained one that keeps house prices rising along with inflation, but importantly it must be below average wage increases. This will ensure no real money depreciation of house prices (which is terminal for the economy) but it also makes sure that over time housing costs become a less significant part of wages.

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[\[-\]](#) [YourLizardOverlord](#) [Sussex](#) 4 points 3 years ago

I've explained one that keeps house prices rising along with inflation
Why is that more desirable than flat prices that gradually erode with inflation?

permalink embed parent[-] **sionnach** [Filthy foreigner](#) 3 points 3 years ago

Because that is effective deflation, which would mean you would have significantly fewer people willing to buy a property, knowing it will be cheaper in the future. That means people who want to sell will be locked-in to where they are and in general it would stagnate the property market desperately.

permalink embed parent[-] **Halk** [Lanarkshire](#) 4 points 3 years ago

It means a drop in house prices in real terms which causes uncertainty and might cause a higher premium for high LTV borrowers. Certainty in house prices means banks don't need to price for it.

It probably in the grand scheme of things isn't that bad, I think the ideal is for them to drop relative to wages, but not drop relative to inflation.

I've obviously not done in depth research to see what it would look like in a generation's time, but it may not be enough to fix the crisis, in which case flat prices might be the better option.

permalink embed parent[-] **[deleted]** 4 points 3 years ago

Previously when I've explained a solution I've explained one that keeps house prices rising along with inflation, but importantly it must be below average wage increases.

But surely that's a bit of an oxymoron, when wage rises are below inflation right now?

permalink embed parent[-] **Halk** [Lanarkshire](#) 2 points 3 years ago

Right now yes, but typically no.

Any measure would have to be over the long term, and any adjustment to what was built would have to be gradual as well.

A QUANGO would need to be created to make sure that all the needs are balanced, or it would need to fall under Bank of England jurisdiction.

permalink embed parent[-] **[deleted]** 1 point 3 years ago

I think you have a problem with hyperbole and balance.

They do want strong houses prices in the short term / medium term because it makes people feel richer (which is what is desired by them on the way into an election). Not because of your imagined 'subdue the public' nonsense.

But apart from that effect it doesn't do anyone any good and diverts money that would otherwise be productively used, and reduces public well being.

| The entire economic recovery is based on a property bubble.

This is complete nonsense - its based upon a range of industries - the service sector as much as any other.

permalink embed parent[-] **YourLizardOverlord** [Sussex](#) 3 points 3 years ago

Yep, agree with all of this.

Either the government works out why house builders are so bad at building houses - are there any real barriers?

Interest rates are low, good investment opportunities are few and far between, house prices are rising, and property developers make most of their money on planning decisions. They make little or no profit on actually building and selling houses.

As long as house prices are rising, it makes more sense for a property developer to hang on to his land bank. It's an appreciating asset, and he's getting a better return than if he invested elsewhere or put his money in the bank.

It takes about two years to build a housing estate, so the ideal time to cash out is two years before house prices peak.

"Help to buy" de-risks this process. It's a signal that the government intend house prices to keep rising, so the property developers can hang on to their land banks without risk of them losing money.

Planning minister Nick Boles has proposed that planning permission should expire if the landowner doesn't actually build something. This would be useful, but the usual vested interests will try to derail it.

There needs to be a way for the profit from a planning conversion to accrue to the local authority or even the house buyer, rather than to the property developers. This would be a quite radical reform so I don't expect it to happen any time soon.

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[\[-\] Halk](#) [Lanarkshire](#) 1 point 3 years ago

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I do support those changes, I think they would help.

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[\[-\] madjimmy](#) 3 points 3 years ago

Problem: Government keeps screwing around with pensions

Solution: Invest in a house as a safer investment

Remove the need for people to buy houses as a pension scheme, and I'm sure plenty of housing would be sold off. Isn't it a good thing to be fiscally responsible and save for one's future?

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[\[-\] davmaggs](#) 3 points 3 years ago

Pensions could also be reformed.

At the moment if I pay in 10% of my salary for a few decades a chancellor can come along and seize bits of it at will. I'm locked in and cannot flee his raid (see Gordon Brown). Then when I finally get to retirement I have to give all my money to a City firm and lock myself into an annuity. If I die early then the firm takes all that money and my children get none.

BTL as a pension works because it is freedom from the chancellor and from investment firms using the law to take percentages of the savers cash. The landlord can ultimately sell the house, or pass it on to his family.

In many ways pensions and the regulations have become a subsidy to the City.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [WillyPete](#) 5 points 3 years ago

Either the government works out why house builders are so bad at building houses - are there any real barriers?

Tip: do a google search for "Land for sale"

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [YourLizardOverlord](#) [Sussex](#) 19 points 3 years ago

[House builders are sitting on 400,000 undeveloped plots of land with planning permission.](#)

Nick Boles has suggested a "use it or lose it" approach to planning permission, which would help sort this out.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [mushroomgodmat](#) 9 points 3 years ago

Someone suggested abolishing council tax and replacing it with a land tax.

Idea being those with houses would still pay more or less the same, and those with unused land would have to pay for the privilege to keep it unused.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [\[deleted\]](#) 2 points 3 years ago

I guess that would only work for non-Greenbelt land though. Maybe only for where planning permission has been granted too/would be likely to be approved?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [YourLizardOverlord](#) [Sussex](#) 1 point 3 years ago

Land without planning permission is worth much less. Round our way in the SE it's about £8K/acre. With planning permission it would cost around £1.5M/acre. So landowners without planning permission would pay a much smaller land value tax.

This might still be a bridge too far for some small farmers who operate on the margins of profitability, but these could be treated as a special case.

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[–] [vzzzbux](#) [Cornwall](#) 1 point 3 years ago

Why don't we start loosening the planning process? Get the prices of land down by removing the artificial scarcity created by local authorities everywhere.

(with controls to avoid total disaster and no building on flood plains)

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[–] [B23vital](#) 2 points 3 years ago

I think the problem is the councils are selling school fields, parks ect

which is extremely displeasing for most. While derelict land is held by land owners. We should be fighting to keep open areas that are used, while taking away those that are not. But people are also scared of change, telling someone you want to build 40 homes opposite their house in a empty field is a hard task. It disrupts lives and is unsightly, plus why look at houses when your bought the property to look at grass. People want this change, but not on their doorstep!

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [YourLizardOverlord](#) [Sussex](#) 2 points 3 years ago

I'm very much in favour of a land value tax, and it would certainly help a lot. A tax on the unimproved value to the land would be fairer and easier to administer than council tax, so I'd certainly be up for replacing council tax with LVT.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [WillyPete](#) 1 point 3 years ago

Definitely so. Wasn't aware of the hoarding.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [sgst](#) [Hampshire](#) 1 point 3 years ago

It's really the developers who are keeping prices artificially inflated by restricting supply. It's time to add some regulation to that market, and/or for the government to subsidise the building of houses. I'm sure the developers would say it's a cashflow issue for why they aren't developing more plots at once. The government should subsidise the building of houses, rather than the buying of them as with the help to buy scheme.

That and relax regulations preventing building on the green belt. I know environmental protection is important, but there is a housing crisis that's more important. They could also impose some compulsory purchase orders on some of the large estates who I know from personal experience stand in the way of development on their land.

The problem that increasing housing supply throws up is that if supply goes up, the price will go down. This is great for first time buyers, but a) will cause huge financial problems for existing homeowners who's savings are tied up with their house's equity. And don't forget these people are voters, and people won't vote for what will make them poorer, while politicians won't implement policies that will piss off droves of voters. And b) if housing prices fall due to increased supply, there's nothing stopping buy to let investors swooping in and snapping up large chunks of that extra supply, which wouldn't fix the problem at all. The buy to let market needs regulation as well (off the top of my head, say only a percentage of any new development may be bought buy to let)

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[\[-\]](#) [\[deleted\]](#) -1 points 3 years ago

And if that land was bought for more than the profit that building a house would bring, those developers would be very stupid indeed to decide to build just because you want them to.

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[\[-\] LazyGit](#) 8 points 3 years ago

If your point is that there isn't land for sale, the reason there isn't much land for sale is because the house building companies bought loads of it in the early 2000s. They've been sitting on it for years, waiting for the prices to back up so that it becomes profitable.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] AnneRat](#) 4 points 3 years ago

Yes! it's called land banking - <http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/davehillblog/2014/mar/02/london-housing-crisis-landbanking>

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] WillyPete](#) 1 point 3 years ago

Did not know. Thanks.

Bastards.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] \[deleted\]](#) 6 points 3 years ago

| Tip: do a google search for "Land for sale"

Funnily enough, it's now easier to buy land, get planning and build your own damn house. Significantly cheaper as well.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[+\] 3 years ago \(7 children\)](#)

[\[-\] G_Morgan](#) [Wales](#) 2 points 3 years ago*

Empty dwellings can only exist at all because of the green belt. There are two compelling reasons for empty dwellings:

1. Just in a worthless location. Kept around because there is a housing shortage.
2. Intentionally kept empty by building companies/banks to keep the housing market prices up. This is possible because state regulation stops people from competing with them.

Loosening green belt legislation means there is no housing shortage. The first group of empty dwellings just get demolished. The second set quickly go onto the market as banks and building companies try not to lose out as the easy era comes to a close.

The truth is politicians are too invested in the whole scam to let this reverse. Both on a personal and political level. It is only when large blocks of people start voting specifically on fixing this scam that changes will happen.

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[\[-\] fatfook](#) [Surrey](#) 3 points 3 years ago

| Solution : Build more houses

Have you seen the state of the roads/hospitals/GP surgeries/schools/utilities etc. Building houses is great but let's at least also build everything else that goes with it or we just overload what we have and it makes life even more miserable than an overpriced house in negative equity. Traditionally, I only see houses being built. In my village for example in the last 20 years I've seen house numbers grow by close to a 50%, most of these where they have knocked down large houses and in some instances built 30 in the space where just one stood. Now the village is gridlocked several times a week. The trains are full to capacity before they even get to the

station (this is 30 miles out of London too) There has been no extra capacity at the doctors, schools and the sewage system is under threat. I see this throughout the county where you can throw up a jerry built rabbit hutch and grab £200k per bedroom for it. Some new build places up the road from me want £60k extra to have access to a garage!

When the social housing was sold, this country was fucked. It's forced so many into debt and made us a nation of landlords, swanning about collecting rent and bleating when someone can't pay their exorbitant rates. The only alternative is private accommodation, 'leased' to the council which we in turn are funding as tax payers. When there was social housing stock, this was bought and paid for property available to those less well off, rented extremely cheaply. Now you max out your housing benefit and have to find another grand a month just to keep a roof over your family's head, whilst keeping the landlord away from a proper job. It's fucking scandalous, particularly when you discover how many of the aristocracy and political cronies have a raft of ex-local authority properties on their 'portfolio'.

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[\[-\] vzzzbux](#) [Cornwall](#) 3 points 3 years ago

It is very similar in the village I live in, the council lets developers shit their rabbit hutches all over the place but without making them pay for the necessary infrastructure improvements. In one development in particular, they put on an education levy to pay for expanding the already full school, but exempted "affordable homes" (read: shodder houses), so the developers got out of that one.

Corruption? Probably.

Completely agree on the utter con that is "landlord benefit".

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[\[-\] davmaggs](#) 1 point 3 years ago

There never was a golden age of social housing, its just a myth people like to drag up as a means to say that the old days were better.

Council estates were at one time full of working people with aspiration, but they were heavily regulated. Inspectors would come around to check that gardens were maintained and then enter the house to ensure it was being cleaned etc. It was recognised at the time, that a percentage of the people who'd been moved from the slums would allow their homes to decline and destroy the area. How many of the rose-tinted brigade would sign up to that?

Then social housing moved to be assigned purely on need. This meant that bit by bit estates replaced working people with those with social problems of one kind or another, and a cycle of decline began to the point that people who could, got away.

When Mrs T let people buy council houses, many saw it as liberation from a form of serfdom. That is forgotten now, but lots of those early buyers were fleeing from being told what to do, from not being allowed to even paint their front door, or undertake repairs etc.

So, which era of social housing would you say we return to?

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[\[-\] fatfook](#) [Surrey](#) 1 point 3 years ago

I'm not referring to an era as such. more of a time when there was such a thing as social housing; when things such as this were being built for those less fortunate in this world we find ourselves born into. It shouldn't be as it is now with housing associations building houses with rent costs the same as those in the private sector and every aspect of it now devolved from the council and run for as much profit as can be had without a scandal developing.

The Tories knew that those trapped on council estates would be flocking to buy 'their' homes - as a means of escape, despite them being funded by tax payers and the entire initiative being to help people in the long term. They did so in their droves but when they moved out they were snapped up by canny developers and the rich I referred to above and are rented back via the local authority for far more rent than equivalent social housing stock still retained by the council. I'll give you an example. In my village there is a road which is full of council housing. Now about 80% is privately owned, maybe more. A council tenant will pay about £340 a month whilst the privately owned ones can go for £1200. (2 bed houses) About £300 or so is met by housing benefit for those in receipt of it, the rest the tenant has to find, yet look at the 2 differences in price. If you're lucky enough to get genuine council stock you're fine but if the council say 'just go and find a place that will accept council payment' you'll be in for a much bigger bill, for what could be a house in the same street and I know 2 people who live in that street in that exact scenario.

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[\[-\]](#) [bluescrn](#) 1 point 3 years ago

Have you seen the state of the roads/hospitals/GP surgeries/schools/utilities etc. Building houses is great but let's at least also build everything else that goes with it or we just overload what we have and it makes life even more miserable than an overpriced house in negative equity.

Building houses doesn't magically create more people.

Yes, more people will relocate if housing is more readily available, but there's still the same funding-per-head going into transport, education, and healthcare.

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[\[-\]](#) [fatfook](#) [Surrey](#) 1 point 3 years ago

Only if they move within the local authority or PCT. Where did the 212k people who came to the UK in the last 12 months go?

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[\[-\]](#) [fameistheproduct](#) 3 points 3 years ago

It's actually quite easy if you follow a few simple rules. However, these rules also explain why the housing crisis won't get better until it's too late.

1- Before you start thinking about how to fix it, realise that there's no money in fixing the housing crisis.

Housing is expensive/overpriced and the only way to fix it is lower prices. no one who has property, works in the industry, or works to facilitate mortgages wants this. Anything done to fix the housing crisis will lead to lower prices (real or nominal). So most the ideas put forward by politicians and the industry are as best lip service or worse more of the same that got us into this crisis.

When I say there's no money, I mean that we can either have good value housing, or a property bubble. The problem is that the property bubble benefits everyone who has property and more importantly those that facilitate it (Banks).

And yes, I know people will say that "it's because we're not building houses, it's the immigrants, it's foreign buyers etc.." But I would like to point out the last time property inflation slowed (and dropped in some parts) was in 2008/2009. Did we see a massive drop in immigrants? - no the system that lets us borrow insane amounts of money came to a grinding halt.

2- Politicians need to do what is right, before they do what is in their self interest. They own property themselves, some of them own a lot, some of them think that they own a lot but are in fact over indebted to the banking industry.

3- People who buy a house to rent it out shouldn't get a tax advantage over people who buy a house to live in it. In 1997 when Tony Blair and Gordon Brown introduced tax relief on mortgage interest they put the idea of speculators before savers. This has caused a lot of problems in other industries (ask anyone who works for Boots, or the RAC) but none so detrimental to our society as it has in housing. The problem now is that you cannot go back as thousands of people had the idea of buying a house so that the mortgage payment is covered by the rental income. Problem is that people buy houses with money they borrow and rent with money they earn. It works on the way up, but breaks on the way down.

Fixing housing in the UK is like getting turkeys to vote for Christmas.

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[\[-\] Halk](#) [Lanarkshire](#) 6 points 3 years ago

Let me get something out of the way, which I've not hidden in the past but I don't want to be accused of hiding now. I work for a financial institution in a regulated job related to mortgages and rate pricing. I'm a professional authorised by the FCA. I am being honest here, and not speaking for the benefit of my own pocket or my company.

Something you may not be taking into account is the possibility of keeping house prices static, by explicit government policy in terms of inflation, but allowing the value to fall when compared to the average wage.

This would cause a relative fall in house prices over a long period of time, without any negative equity problems.

I have explained in the past why a correction or fall in house prices is not desirable, I'll briefly do it here...

At the moment people pay a significant premium for a mortgage over 60 to 65% LTV. This is because above this LTV there is a tangible risk that the bank may not be able to repossess and sell and get all of their money back. It's also there because at low LTVs a downsize is possible, but at higher LTVs it is not. The more uncertainty there is about house prices the more that premium is. Remove the uncertainty and the premium goes and it greatly helps first time buyers. It also makes mortgage credit policy looser, which makes mortgages easier to obtain - although at the moment mortgages are easy to obtain for anyone with a credit history that isn't ruined, and can afford it and can evidence affordability for a few years.

Banks don't like housing bubbles at all. Banks prefer stability. For the health of

our mortgage books we want to see properties that will increase in equity over time, but most importantly we cannot entertain the idea of a correction, and we price to compensate for it, hurting first time buyers.

A sudden correction in house prices would see a generation of people trapped in negative equity - and the ones who are already trapped, trapped further. I've seen it argued that this doesn't affect anyone who doesn't view their house as an asset but that's bollocks. Some areas of the UK already have 15% of borrowers in negative equity already. It means they struggle to move (the FCA has let it be known it expects lenders to try to assist here but without the ability to switch lender that's moot) and more importantly they get the worst of mortgage rates paying in many cases far, far more than 90% LTV rates.

So I think with a correction ruled out, and a continued increase ruled out then the only thing left is for static house prices - essentially for them to grow no less than inflation, but no more than average wages.

Before doing anything the government should take steps to fix what it can in the market - this means for example if any sensible rules about empty properties can be created, and also rules about how long land can be held for speculation before properties are built on it.

Once this is done the government can then create a scheme to keep house prices between these two points, and they can do that by paying for houses to be built. It can be done in areas where house prices are rising too fast, and scaled back in areas where house prices are not. This will add to the stock of social housing in the UK and will continue to increase the amount of private ownership of houses.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [centipod](#) 5 points 3 years ago

That's a nice microeconomic thought experiment but it assumes that the rise in average wages outstrips inflation.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Halk](#) [Lanarkshire](#) 1 point 3 years ago

It always has in the long term...

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [centipod](#) 1 point 3 years ago

In the long term we're all dead.

What you're essentially proposing is that the government should step in now and freeze the housing bubble in place. The suggestion that the government should give an explicit guarantee that house prices will *never* fall relative to inflation disturbs me greatly.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Halk](#) [Lanarkshire](#) 3 points 3 years ago

But if they couple that by saying they will build so many houses that it will never rise - then isn't that a good thing?

As for never being in italics, I guess it would be a scheme that would be reviewed, but don't you think that we've proven now that the government needs to build social housing, and we've proven that poverty is greatly worsened by the costs of owning a home spiralling?

Why wouldn't you want a solution that both avoids a crash and avoids inflating the prices further?

As for calling it a bubble... I don't think it is. The reason for high prices is high demand, the population is increasing but there's not the same level of increase in houses, that to me suggests normal supply and demand.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [centipod](#) 3 points 3 years ago

What happens when all the money in the world comes looking for a return of CPI + however many points into the Goldilocks zone the government of the day has decided on?

I'd love a solution which avoids both a crash and house price inflation, but government underwriting private investments in the way you suggest is a bold conceptual leap.

The implicit basis of all this discussion is that the web of mortgage backed securities and credit default swaps related to the British housing stock is so labyrinthine that any shock to large financial institutions could cause something approximating the collapse of Western Civilisation.

I genuinely don't know whether that's true or not, but since 2008 the idea that private banks should be regarded almost as an arm of the state seems to have entered the popular political consciousness without many people raising their voice in objection.

If all this is just normal supply and demand as you say, then what moral imperative is there for a price floor anyway? Anyone in negative equity under 'normal' conditions of supply and demand simply made a poor investment.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Halk](#) [Lanarkshire](#) 2 points 3 years ago

If buying a house was purely speculation then there would be no need to protect investors.

As for underwriting private investments, I don't know about that. All I'm suggesting the government do is start building social housing, but make sure not to build so much it causes a housing crash.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [fameistheproduct](#) 3 points 3 years ago

"Banks don't like housing bubbles at all. Banks prefer stability."

I think that the history would disagree with you. The problem is that banks don't have any skin in the game. The contract of debt people take on is secured on the property, but if the property is repossessed and sold on at a loss the bank is able to chase the borrower for the shortfall.

If banks didn't like bubbles then they would have stopped lending on over priced property long ago, but they don't. Not because of regulation of the property market, but lack of regulation in the banking market.

furthermore banks made more and more money from facilitating the debt.

Sure a sudden drop in property prices would see those that buy houses to live in them keep living in them (costing them more than they expected), those that buy to speculate on property would get burned. I know there would be some people caught up in the market correction, but that's kind of what a market does. If people and banks liked it on the way up, then they shouldn't complain on the way down.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Halk](#) [Lanarkshire](#) 0 points 3 years ago

The contract of debt people take on is secured on the property, but if the property is repossessed and sold on at a loss the bank is able to chase the borrower for the shortfall.

We price this amount at exactly £0. If it goes all the way to repossession there is no other money to get. My institution doesn't do much repossession at all, it's the very last step we would take and we can almost always find a way around it. We lose a fortune on repossession as it is, plus it's just not good business. The FCA mandates that lenders lend on affordability not equity, so the idea that banks just lend because they can repossess and get their money back is gone, that was 10 years ago with self-cert mortgages and dodgy brokers.

If banks didn't like bubbles then they would have stopped lending on over priced property long ago, but they don't. Not because of regulation of the property market, but lack of regulation in the banking market.

We introduced LTV brackets for exactly that reason. There's no lack of regulation in the mortgage market, you wouldn't believe the amount that goes on!

If people and banks liked it on the way up, then they shouldn't complain on the way down.

Banks don't lose on the way down. We price the risk into the cost of the mortgage. That 2% fixed rate becomes a 4% fixed rate if there's a risk involved.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [92JMFL](#) 1 point 3 years ago

I deal with some customers who have an LTV value of over 125% due to negative equity already.. The idea of that increasing more really concerns me.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [\[deleted\]](#) 1 point 3 years ago

How long can direct government intervention (as we're seeing now) stop a correction from happening, though? It seems to me that most properties are still way overpriced relative to wages, and keeping things this way will end up costing the government a lot of money.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [B23vital](#) 1 point 3 years ago

lol your first two sentences are so miss leading, No there is not a 'massive' house

shortage as people think. There are multiple reasons as too why the housing market is so badly going wrong.

Ill give one example, my old road used to be full of families living in 'affordable housing.' These houses are 2 ups 2 downs, decent sized, for around 100k, plus they are very central to Birmingham but still quiet enough for families. In recent years these houses have just been bought up by landlords, currently on one road of around 40-50 houses, im 100% certain, that a minimum of 30-50% are owned by landlords (i know of at least 15 myself.) The landlords are lapping up these properties due to the space, accessibility and high yield return (15% in some cases, THATS HUGE!!) ,Not only is this ruining the area its also stopping affordable housing being affordable. This is just one experience, i could go on for days with different examples of why the housing market is so poor and yours is one example, but this problem is 'small' in the govt eyes, but in my eyes will become out of control before they can react. People are using properties for many things, even PENSIONS are affected our housing market. People are using housing as a way to protect them in retirement, the problems go on and on.

permalink embed parent

[+] 3 years ago* (1 child)

[-] **[deleted]** 1 point 3 years ago

Sorry but that just leaves another problem: What do we do when house prices fall and people get caught in negative equity and/or suddenly realise they cannot sell their house to fund their retirement?

People make out the problem is as simple as under supply of housing but conveniently ignore the twin problem of falling house prices being unacceptable to the majority.

permalink embed parent

[-] **[deleted]** 1 point 3 years ago*

Agreed with all the above BUT,

Problem: Renting = second class citizen or 'chump'/cash cow for borderline Rachmanites...

Solution: No idea, sorry. I've paid on both sides of the 'buy to let' fence over the last few years and it is my considered option that both sides need to wind their necks in.

Best I can think of is; Longer term lower yield rents should be exchanged for higher tenant responsibility (i.e. decor, gardens, non structural stuff) for more assured long term tenancy and a tenant's 'return' on superficial alterations.

'* me grammar and speel not gud...

permalink embed parent

[-] **YourLizardOverlord** Sussex 4 points 3 years ago

Solution: build social housing.

People on low incomes or JSA who would currently get housing benefit get a free/cheap housing association house instead, saving the taxpayer a fortune in housing benefit.

This means that lessors would need to offer quality accommodation in order to compete. They couldn't take the piss any more.

It would also mean less people renting privately, causing some of the low end lessors to sell up, which would help make housing more affordable for 1st time

buyers.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) **[deleted]** 2 points 3 years ago

Aye, I agree. There is nothing wrong with 'social' housing in the European sense. As many people have said we need more houses.

However, 'social' in the UK has now become a synonym for 'workshy layabouts' and 'council' the same for low quality second class goods.

Its all about dat social standing, yo. Up 'till the late 70s living in a council house was par for course in the North West for example, now its seen as a front row seat in the ghetto.

So, what's the solution a new adjective? Community Housing? Sounds like some kind of mental health cost cutting scheme.

Also, what's a 'low end lessor'? Look at the shits who own the 'emergency housing' stock the government are using to house the people they deem as loafers (teenage single mothers, evil wankers who have the balls to have one room more than people in the house).

It's appalling bare minimum accommodation fit for survival not living but there are sizeable private landlords who take the punt because they see a return >> standard leasing.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) **YourLizardOverlord** [Sussex](#) 1 point 3 years ago

It's a far cry from Nye Bevan's vision of new estates where "the working man, the doctor and the clergyman will live in close proximity to each other".

I see two solutions.

First, don't build giant estates of social housing. Build some houses, use some for social housing, rent some out, and sell some. Incidentally these sales would cover the cost of building the housing. This will create nice small mixed tenure estates of good quality housing where people can't tell at first glance which are social housing and which are owner occupied. Our local housing association is buying up properties in random locations around the town, and they don't have the stigma of being in <shithole estate>.

Secondly, once we build enough of it, there won't be a stigma any more, because too many people will be using it.

I would expect the low end "emergency housing" to disappear as social housing becomes available.

One political problem we'd need to overcome is the all too common attitude of "why should a social tenant get a nice house when I've had to work for mine". There's a strand of British culture which would like to see "scroungers" given a bad deal *even if this costs the taxpayer more*. The real politics of envy...

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) **[deleted]** 1 point 3 years ago

Yeah that sounds sensible. Wherever I've rented I've felt no obligation to keep

the place in superb nick or generally do much to make it look nice, because the rental contracts are so short term and generally most landlords don't like you decorating or anything. Not to mention the ease with which you can be kicked out. I'd happily take on more maintenance stuff in exchange for being able to change the paint a bit and more security. There's a similar rental model in place in Holland (only place I've got first hand knowledge) and it seems to work well.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [Lolworth](#) 11 points 3 years ago

I sincerely hope at least one of the main parties puts something like this in their manifesto. And not some bullshit about "hard working families" - ALL people of home buying age should benefit.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[–] [fatfook](#) [Surrey](#) 5 points 3 years ago

They can put what they like in any manifesto, they never stick to their word.

Source: UK Politics since the 1960's.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [Lolworth](#) 3 points 3 years ago

I think manifestos are best seen as plans and rough ways forward rather than copper-bottomed promises you could hang your hat on. After all, companies are allowed to set stretch goals and such so why shouldn't governments or contending parties?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[–] [\[deleted\]](#) 32 points 3 years ago

George Osborne literally got the economy "moving" by inflating the housing market. The torys got to keep face by saying they did something with the economy - knowing their ratings are so low Labour are almost certainly going to win in a landslide. And they got to stick labour with a housing bubble which will hopefully (to a tory) burst under labour.

Timeline:

1) May 2013: George Osborne's property bubble will lead to disaster The Chancellor is pouring billions into sub-prime debt. What could possibly go wrong?

<http://www.spectator.co.uk/features/8915781/osbornes-bubble/>

2) Oct 2013, the IMF warns the UK is creating a housing bubble

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/newsbysector/banksandfinance/10367864/Help-to-Buy-risks-housing-bubble-says-IMF.html>

3) 03 Dec, 2013: We are in housing bubble, claims economic professor

<http://www.bbc.com/news/business-25318129>

4) 28 Dec, Britain's rapid growth is built on a housing bubble, showing the economy remains "fundamentally flawed", IPPR warns

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/10539945/Recovery-built-on-housing-bubble-and-consumer-debt.html>

5) 4 Feb, 2014 Housing bubble forming in London, warns Ernst and Young

<http://www.bbc.com/news/business-26006214>

6) 24 Feb, This is no recovery, this is a bubble – and it will burst

<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/feb/24/recovery-bubble-crash-uk-us-investors>

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[–] **Halk** [Lanarkshire](#) 16 points 3 years ago

Remember that economists have successfully predicted 7 out of the last 3 crashes.

permalink embed parent

[–] **wOIfLisK** 1 point 3 years ago

Wait, what?

permalink embed parent

[–] **bhrgunatha** [Expathogen](#) 2 points 3 years ago

Not sure if trolling or not, but...

Halk is saying that economists predict bubbles more than they actually happen.

Either that or economists don't use numbers properly.

Or both.

permalink embed parent

[–] **[deleted]** 5 points 3 years ago

Hah, my best macroeconomic indicator i saw was that 6 months after the help to buy was announced the property speculators (sorry Buy to Let Entrepreneurs) and estate agents that live in my town all had 63 reg Range Rovers and Porsches.

Viva La Market Liquiditié!

permalink embed parent

[–] **vzzzbux** [Cornwall](#) 3 points 3 years ago

The housing bubble has been going on for far longer than this government, prices started skyrocketing in the labour era.

The conservatives are just doing their bit to keep it from bursting with schemes like the braindead help to buy. Labour will do the same if they get into power.

This is one issue where they are singing from the same sheet - that of property speculators, buy to let scum and developers. The gospel of ever increasing house prices.

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[–] **[deleted]** 2 points 3 years ago*

Do you really think a landslide is likely? The opposition are usually more popular than this at this point in the cycle, and though I'm sure the Tories will be out I highly doubt it will be a massive majority like 1997.

permalink embed parent

[–] **k-dude** [Cornwall](#) 5 points 3 years ago

Yeah, at present polling Labour will win a majority of 84 seats, and historically the closer to the election it gets the less people are inclined to vote in a new government, so although I think Labour will win, it won't be overwhelmingly.

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[+] 3 years ago* (4 children)

[–] **[deleted]** 12 points 3 years ago

Never going to happen. The inflated housing market is one of the few remaining drivers for our economy. Plus waaaaay too many people are benefitting short term to give a flying fuck about the long game.

permalink embed

[\[-\] anna-belle](#) [Sunny Nunny](#) 2 points 3 years ago

I completely agree. Existing homeowners have zero interest in increasing the supply of housing. They've already bought into the idea of owning a dream crushing money pit, sorry I mean a house, so why would they want their investment to decrease... The government, and not just Conservative but Labour as well, like to see rising house prices as a sign of a booming economy... And housebuilders limit supply so that they can sell at higher prices... You're 100% right!

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] G_Morgan](#) [Wales](#) 2 points 3 years ago

It isn't a driver for the economy in real terms. Quality of life doesn't go up as the housing market increases. Mainly because that just comes straight out of the pay check of every person in the country.

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[\[-\] napoleon_wilson](#) 1 point 3 years ago

Not if you bought a new build a few years ago. It's difficult to find equity in a lot of cases.

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[\[-\] \[deleted\]](#) 6 points 3 years ago

I don't believe in focusing on a landlord. Landlords look for easy ways to make money, we all do. It's the system that ENCOURAGES LANDLORDS, which is the problem.

An that problem is a simple one. There isn't enough housing in the country, or in the areas it needs to be.

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[\[-\] chemical_whizzbang](#) [Merseyside](#) 6 points 3 years ago

I always thought it was funny when journalists ask "But what about people TRAPPED in negative equity?! What are they to do?"

"Well they could always live in it? It's a house."

permalink embed

[\[-\] Critical_Faculty](#) 4 points 3 years ago

No government can survive letting house prices fall and that is likely what they would be doing in the north east and other 'less desirable' areas outside the south east if it weren't for the loosening of credit to FTB's.

When it comes to Tory policy you need to look beyond the obvious to see what the intended consequences are. When it comes to labour you need to look beyond the obvious to see what the *unintended* consequences are.

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[\[-\] CNash85](#) [Greater London](#) 1 point 3 years ago

I'd rather have a chance to fix Labour's mistakes than have to live with the results of Conservative ulterior motives.

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] DaveChild](#) [UK](#) 2 points 3 years ago

I'd rather have a chance to fix Conservative's mistakes than have to live with the results of Labour ulterior motives.

Wow, it does sound just as stupid when you reverse the parties.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [CNash85](#) [Greater London](#) 0 points 3 years ago

Cheers for your constructive input! :)

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [DaveChild](#) [UK](#) 2 points 3 years ago

I wish you'd posted something to constructively criticize. The only thing you can do with a vapid, paranoid comment like your original one is mock it.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Tusse](#) 2 points 3 years ago

Good luck in convincing the lucky mortgage debtors to give up their lottery win.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[+\]](#) 3 years ago* (7 children)

[\[-\]](#) [92JMFL](#) 3 points 3 years ago

People are too stupid, I work with second charge lending and the amount of morons who have no idea how interest only mortgages work is unbelievable! They get an interest free mortgage and then attempt to borrow on the equity they've "paid off" and wonder why we turn them down. The general public need social housing to be built, pay a fixed sum a month to live in and that's that my opinion because they are retarded borrowing upon the equity that's been created from thin air in the bubble which will result in a lot of very poor people when either the bubble collapses or their final payment is due.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\]](#) [\[deleted\]](#) 4 points 3 years ago

It's almost as if when they are born they don't have an intrinsic and exhaustive understanding of interest only mortgages.

Weird!

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Eddie_Hitler](#) [sore elbow go for a bath](#) 3 points 3 years ago

I blame mortgages. Up until the 1960s or so, they barely existed. You rented, or you bought outright.

People are now expecting to be helped to live beyond their means.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Snoron](#) [Bradford](#) 9 points 3 years ago

That is also part of the problem now though - that buying a house is apparently living beyond means for the majority of the population!

It's crazy that today you can have a couple who are both full time employed at decent jobs and still can't afford to do this.

Mortgage is the only sensible option because renting forever is just throwing a better future away for a lot of people.

If houses were still as affordable as they were in the 60s then we clearly wouldn't have a problem!

permalink embed parent

[+] 3 years ago* (1 child)

[-] **DrFriedGold** 4 points 3 years ago

I upvoted you because I love Bottom.

I just realised what I just wrote there... i mean the comedy series

permalink embed parent[-] **Stormphoenix82** [Sutton](#) 1 point 3 years ago

Just wanted to add that this has been one of the most civilised and thoughtful debates I've ever seen on this subreddit. Excellent reading! *pats everyone on the back*

permalink embed[-] **Martipar** [From Warwickshire living in Staffordshire](#) 1 point 3 years ago

How about prefabs? Cheap and quick to build and could quickly regenerate areas and reduce house prices.

permalink embed[-] **organisation** 1 point 3 years ago

I think Nick Boles said that houses were not pensions and shouldn't be treated as such. And he's the housing minister ffs. Article is just repeating what's been said a billion times without any proper examination of WHY it's not happening. I think Patrick Wintour a while back tweeted some very, very interesting reports that basically showed it's down to the horrendous way housing benefit was used by councils to discharge their responsibilities in the 2000s.

permalink embed[-] **[deleted]** 2 points 3 years ago

This post makes little to no sense to me, would you mind elaborating?

permalink embed parent[-] **organisation** 1 point 3 years ago

It's a long, boring and tedious report. Are you up for the challenge? Y/N

permalink embed parent[-] **fart-in-the-yard** 0 points 3 years ago*

So what you're (he is) saying is, you'd rather have the market favor you, than the other guy? Well, that's a novel approach.

permalink embed[-] **[deleted]** 2 points 3 years ago

I think the ideal situation is one where market failures are repaired or corrected for. We *do* have a housing shortage, demand does massively outstrip supply and its only getting worse. The market should compensate by building more houses, but it does not.

The fact that someone is profiting off the market failure is probably the worst reason to avoid correcting for it. There's still room for healthy profit in a system that has market failures corrected for.

permalink embed parent[-] **jimfixeditforme** -1 points 3 years ago

New builds suck. Buy older houses and you'll get bigger rooms.

Also, leave the south east of England. 2 bed terraced house in Cardiff? £95k.

permalink embed

[\[-\] vzzzbux](#) [Cornwall](#) 8 points 3 years ago

Yeah, I will live in Cardiff and commute to my job in the South East. Housing problem sorted everyone, get buying in Aberdeen!

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] \[deleted\]](#) 1 point 3 years ago

If the market was not failing to undersupply the market, then houses of different size and quality would allow buyers and sellers choices. Smaller house, cheaper market.

There are regional variations and the South East is the worst hit, but affordability metrics are bad across most of the UK - average incomes in places like Cardiff are nothing compared to London.

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] DrFriedGold](#) -2 points 3 years ago

Sorry for being so pedantic but that comma is annoying me. Can the grammar nazis tell me if it needn't be there.

Not blaming OP

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18 Man who lives in a house made of clay told to leave makeshift shelter by Woodland Trust

(watfordobserver.co.uk) submitted 1 year ago by Bell_Whiff London

32 comments share

this post was submitted on 18 Mar 2016

18 points (80% upvoted)

shortlink: https://redd.it/4axm35

all 32 comments

sorted by: best

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BelligerentPlumage 6 points 1 year ago

What a structure!

permalink embed

Charlie_Mouse 3 points 1 year ago

Allegedly the Woodland Trust have threatened to "huff and puff and blow his house down"

permalink embed

TurbulentSocks 3 points 1 year ago

"No one knows I'm here."

They do now.

Poor guy. He doesn't own the land, so he'll be forced to move on. I can't imagine he'll be okay - he had a nervous breakdown after being made homeless last time.

permalink embed

Zerosix_K United Kingdom 9 points 1 year ago

I'm impressed. He managed to build solar panels and electric lights. By only using materials that he found in the forest!

But he doesn't have permission to build or live there so he should bugger off.

permalink embed

Bell_Whiff London [S] 22 points 1 year ago

I do find it quite sad that every inch of land is owned by someone. Impossible to be free from society.

permalink embed parent

apple_kicks 13 points 1 year ago*

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admit this is woodland trust. so protected forest, damming stream and cutting tree for wood fires (having fires) without rangers approval might not go down well.

If he had a nervous breakdown, living alone in the woods might only help for short bit of time. Though he seems skilled enough to be a good ranger if they hired him.

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] \[deleted\]](#) 8 points 1 year ago

Though he seems skilled enough to be a good ranger if they hired him.

might be a nice resolution

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] miraoister](#) 8 points 1 year ago

"you shall protect this forest. and all the creatures which dwell within."

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] jaym5s](#) [United Kingdom](#) 7 points 1 year ago*

[deleted]

[What is this?](#)

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[\[-\] Bell_Whiff](#) [London](#) [S] 16 points 1 year ago

Quite a pricey endeavour, buying land. Just had a quick google and generally speaking you need around £20k - £30 in cash.

It would just be nice if there was a patch of forest somewhere that this fella could live out his life without being moved on.

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] ArtistEngineer](#) [Cambridgeshire](#) 2 points 1 year ago

Add an extra £100K on those prices. You can get small plots of resident land near towns for £100K+ but you can get woodland and rural land for a lot less.

an article.

Try to keep a positive attitude.

This is the UK subreddit; posts that seem to come from people coming here only to attack the country in some sort of downvote brigade from another subreddit will be banned. Anyone cross-posting to other subreddits to gain support and upvotes for a certain point of view will be banned. reddit is not your personal army.

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If you think your post has been banned,

But ... you're not allowed to build a dwelling or live on the non-residential land.

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] jonnytechno](#) 2 points 1 year ago

Pitching a tent is one thing but if people started following suit we'd end up with large communities there chopping and burning trees that are supposed to be protected

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] miraoister](#) 1 point 1 year ago

there was an old bloke near Stanstead airport who lived by the side of the road near a layby and he had loads of dogs... right mess though, Im sure this lad could find another location which doesnt do anyone any harm.

everyone we knew from that village would trumpet about how "at christmas we offer him some clean clothes and a bath... then forget about him for another year"

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] \[deleted\]](#) 1 point 1 year ago

I don't think it needs to be in cash.

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] ArtistEngineer](#) [Cambridgeshire](#) 4 points 1 year ago

Farmland is cheap but buying land with permission for residential development is in the £100K+ range.

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] DeadeyeDuncan](#) [European Union](#) 1 point 1 year ago

If you buy forest in the UK, you're legally barred from building any permanent structures on it.

Which is fucking stupid, but hey oh.

permalink embed parent

[\[-\] unwind-protect](#) [Cambridgeshire](#) 4 points 1 year ago

every inch of land is owned by someone

please contact a mod.

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Worse than that, it is generally impossible to find out who owns it.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [beIte-and-sebastian](#) [Scotland](#) 1 point 1 year ago

Scotland is creating a land registry which will try and alleviate that. It's meant to be finished in 2024 but that's a little optimistic.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [miraioister](#) 2 points 1 year ago

about 20 years ago in Dagenham on my grans street an african lady built a mud-hut in her back garden.

sadly the local council didnt approve it was knocked down.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\]](#) [ArtistEngineer](#) [Cambridgeshire](#) 2 points 1 year ago*

I'm impressed with his building and landscaping skills. Amazing job.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\]](#) [CMCyantist](#) 5 points 1 year ago

What a bloke! Seriously impressing stuff, I've seen this type of structural building on youtube, but never by a person from the UK, and his structure is quite a bit more complex than the ones I've seen too.

Just a shame he seems to be tired with modern society - I don't like the idea that anybody is that isolated, and without pointing fingers; this is how the unabomber started.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\]](#) [MeepMoopPing](#) 7 points 1 year ago

I suspect that he doesn't really want to be isolated from modern society, but modern concerns, most of which require constant competition and servitude. I certainly find this stressful and depressing at times and do my best to avoid it where possible.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [DogBotherer](#) 2 points 1 year ago

It's not so much where the unabomber started, as where he ended up.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [HashPram](#) [Yorkshire](#) 1 point 1 year ago

Clearly this chap has mental health issues and I have some sympathy with his point of view, but I don't think he's doing himself any favours with nonsense like:

"We belong to the land, the land doesn't belong to us. I don't think I'm squatting."

Mind you I don't have much sympathy with the disingenuous PR-speak of:

| "We are working with him to seek a resolution."

= "We have asked him to leave and this is the resolution we are seeking".

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\]](#) [miraioister](#) 3 points 1 year ago

a good resolution would be to monitor the situation but not to do anything drastic, why waste resources on knocking down his mud hut and evicting him?

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [EwanWhoseArmy](#) [Lancashire](#) 3 points 1 year ago

If its not harming anyone I don't see what the problem is to be honest.

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[-\] terahurts](#) [Cleethorpes, definitely not Grimsby](#) 13 points 1 year ago

It's probably a combination of:

1. If the Woodland Trust allow him to stay they are giving approval for anyone else to do the same thing.
2. Insurance liability/Health and Safety. If he injures himself or someone else and they've given him permission to stay they may be liable.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] Beorma](#) [Brum](#) 4 points 1 year ago

1. He's fucking up their woodland so he can live in it.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] miraoister](#) 1 point 1 year ago

How do you protect the clay from the shitty english weather? I am assuming it wattle & daub, but surely he should size it?

[permalink](#) [embed](#)

[\[+\] sim667](#) *comment score below threshold (2 children)*

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this post was submitted on 23 May 2016

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62 Anyone living in a kit-house?

(self.unitedkingdom)
submitted 1 year ago by [deleted]

My wife and I are looking to buy some land up in the Leeds/York/Huddersfield area and stick a kit house on it (planning permission aside) and I'd really like to just talk to someone who has done this - it appears that each of these vendor websites have nothing but glowing reviews, but I don't actually SEE any of these houses anywhere.

I'm looking at Danwood (budget) and Huf (expensive) - my wife feels that the mod cons afforded by Huf don't sum up to the price difference between them and their nearest competitor. On the other hand, if I'm going to live in a self-built house possibly for the rest of my life, I want to make bloody sure that it's as good as it can be.

We are trying to find an acre or so of land, house probably in a bungalow format - and with as much self sufficient tech as is possible at this point: solar PV, solar heating (lol), under floor heating, zero heat loss - all that good stuff.

Cheers!

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CREATE AN ACCOUNT

[-] My_favorite_things 27 points 1 year ago

Here is a grand designs episode featuring a Huf Haus. Worth a watch, if you are considering buying one.

<http://www.channel4.com/programmes/grand-designs/on-demand/41975-009>

permalink embed save

[-] jackwebs 19 points 1 year ago

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wv3gRbSJFQQ>

If you don't want to deal with having to sign in and disable ad-blockers.

permalink embed save parent

[-] Biscuits0 Wales 10 points 1 year ago

Lords work etc, cheers.

permalink embed save parent

[+] 1 year ago* (2 children)

[-] phead 4 points 1 year ago

Of all the grand designs kit houses I think I preferred the "Finnish log cabin" episode build using <http://www.erlund-house.com/> .

It was like big lego :)

permalink embed save parent

[-] [deleted] 2 points 1 year ago

That budget is a little out of my range, ha! but the actual build is really nice to watch. I'm reassured, if only my wallet was big enough!

permalink embed save parent

[-] rockongently Yorkshire 1 point 1 year ago

I saw that one, it really is awesome.

permalink embed save parent

[-] [deleted] 1 point 1 year ago

They have a show haus in Weybridge, it's huge and awesome.

permalink embed save parent

[-] jamiroq 1 point 1 year ago

That was really interesting to watch,

Try to keep a positive attitude.

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thanks

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[\[-\] J-No](#) 12 points 1 year ago

I don't know when it is this year, but we went to Grand Designs Live a few years back and there were many companies there from Germany and Scandinavia with all sorts of information. Many of them looked really good and even gave a build timeline down to the day with contracts that it would not go a day over without monetary compensation. Best of luck, we are thinking of that next time around.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [save](#)

[\[-\] LazyGit](#) 7 points 1 year ago

What struck me about the HufHaus episode of Grand Designs, besides the house itself, was the professionalism and efficiency of the builders. I've often thought about how I would like to get my own house built, a la OP, but finding reliable builders is what gives me major pause for thought. At least with these operations, you are guaranteed a good level of service.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [save](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] \[deleted\]](#) 5 points 1 year ago

Watching now :)

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [save](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\] \[deleted\]](#) 10 points 1 year ago

Good luck! Me and my partner really want to self build, but finding affordable land and getting planning permission just seems like an insurmountable hurdle at the moment.

You could email the kit house companies and ask if they have any customers who are willing to speak to you.

Every council is meant to have a self-build register now, so be sure to check the ones near you and sign up. In my experience some councils are more on-board with the idea than others.

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[\[-\] JackXDark](#) 7 points 1 year ago

I live in a pine cabin I built, which was not quite a kit house, but has some similarities.

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409 · 236 comments

[We're not the National Hangover Service, NHS boss warns revellers](#)

Most of the wood came pre-cut and was shipped from Norway, with tongue and groove already cut in so it was easy to assemble together. This way of doing it left a lot of things for me to do, but the upside of that is that I could make it however I wanted. It's actually fairly warm and nice. The one downside is that some of the corners and seams need waterproofing regularly as heat/cold expansion causes gaps to form, but I've taken to just whacking in big globs of silicone rather than anything especially delicate, as a solution.

I'm considering a more traditional build, from salvaged materials, but am in no hurry. I do have the land, and technically my cabin is a 'moveable structure' as it's not actually anchored to the ground, just sitting on top of blocks, so will have to go through the planning process first.

Building the place you live in is a very satisfying thing to do, but not an easy or quick option.

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[\[-\]](#) [JoeDaStudd](#) 2 points 1 year ago

Don't suppose you have an outline of the process?

Preping the area; driveway, foundations, hooking up sewage, water, electricity, etc. Then the wiring, plumbing and any other inside work on the cabin.

Also how do you get along with the council and utility companies?

Sorry for the bunch of questions, but it's something I've been looking at on/off for the last 5+ years and the movable structure aspect is something I'd heard of, but never actually heard of anyone doing it.

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[\[-\]](#) [JackXDark](#) 4 points 1 year ago

Okay, when I say it's a cabin, it's literally that. No plumbing or water at all. Electricity comes from a buried cable that goes over to a house a few hundred yards away. I also get powerline internet through this. I use the bathroom over at the house, and well... there are a lot of trees around. There are no neighbours, and the cabin can't really be seen from the house either, so I'm quite happy to walk outside naked in the night for a wee, but a dodgy curry might present problems so I have to leg it to the house in that event.

Inside the cabin the power goes to a handful of outlet sockets. I've got Lix bulbs and Wemo switches that operate a fridge and one electric heater, so that it's controllable from my phone, or on timers. It's very well insulated so that heating is rarely a problem. That or I've just stopped noticing the cold anyway. I've thought about a wood burner, but to be honest I'm not ever cold enough that the risk involved is worth it. For insulation in my bedroom, I attached fibre board to the walls, then literally just stapled duvets over that, then hung fabric wall hangings. The roof is insulated with foam and silvered bubble insulation, and then more fabric wall hangings stapled on.

I can bung bottles of water in the fridge, for drinks, but also store food and cook in the house. A kettle is a bit too much draw for the power setup I've got, as I've been very careful with circuit breakers for obvious reasons, so if I want a coffee or tea I'll go to the house and make a flask up.

Technically, as a 'moveable structure' no planning permission is required. Well, that's the interpretation I came to anyway, but it's been there more than four years now, so I think that means it doesn't need it anyway. So no interaction with the council at all. Or utility companies, as electricity comes from another

house.

I've looked at solar and wind power, but I'm saving those for the potential future build.

There are no foundations as such, but heavy concrete paving slabs. Getting those level was a bit of a pain in the arse, but once I got a laser level thingy it was easier, it just took time and was a bit fiddly.

The build I'm thinking of would be either a straw bale house or just block and brick if I can get hold of enough material, but essentially doing the same thing, just making it a bit bigger and putting plumbing in. There's no mains drainage where I live anyway, so foulwater would go to the septic tank that the houses have and greywater to the field ditch drainage.

There's a driveway with garages a few hundred yards away anyway, where my car lives, so no need to sort that out. I'd just lay out another path there.

What I'm looking at for power is solar plus a large storage unit like the Tesla battery. I know there's a spring nearby, so I'm looking at a borehole well for water, and a reverse osmosis filtration system. Which all means that ideally I'm not going to have to deal with utility companies at all.

I am fortunate in that I've got the land, and there are houses and some infrastructure there already, so it isn't a green field new build, which is what it sounds like you may be looking at, but I have a feeling that the gradual build approach on previously developed sites, may be the best way to go for a lot of people. Avoiding utility companies by generating power and using wells and septic tanks or cesspits might also be easier as well as being more sustainable.

Planning permission is always going to be an arseache though. When I build the bigger, solider place, I'm going to take the line that I live there already and am not going to take up any more resources than I already do, and potentially fewer. I'm half tempted to just build it anyway and see if I can get away with having it there, as it wouldn't be visible from anywhere or cause any impact on the local area at all, but that is slightly risky.

I'm not sure that's especially helpful to you, but it might be a way of getting halfway there.

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[\[-\] JoeDaStudd](#) 4 points 1 year ago

Ah so you've got a setup which is more of a extra room as opposed to a whole other dwelling.

I was looking at buying a small property then buying a log cabin for a similar setup albeit almost entirely independent (allowing me to fix up then rent the main property). It had everything I wanted, but unfortunately it fell through.

I was hoping you'd found a way to put a moveable structure on a random bit of land without incurring the councils wrath.

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[\[-\] JackXDark](#) 1 point 1 year ago

Well, it's actually got five rooms and a mezzanine, and is big enough to use as a rehearsal studio for my band as well, so it's not small by any means, just a bit basic.

You *could* put it on a random bit of land if you were happy to do without

power or plumbing, and personally I'd be okay with that, and without all the creature comforts those come with, and it certainly would also be possible to put in a bathroom and kitchen, but as I didn't *need* to, I figured I'd leave that for the next build.

Where I live, I don't think the council give a shit, as I'm not setting it up as a new address. If you did that and got bins collected etc then they might want some council tax. But by keeping it all pretty much off-grid then it may well not even be noticed.

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[\[-\]](#) [JoeDaStudd](#) 1 point 1 year ago

Wow that's full size, sorry I just assumed that having no running water it was 2 or 3 rooms at most.

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[\[-\]](#) [JackXDark](#) 1 point 1 year ago

Ha, no worries. I've had mates who've heard about it call it my 'Wendy House' or say that I live in a shed, but when they see it, they're like 'whoah, this is actually like a proper house...'

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[\[-\]](#) [technicalthrowaway](#) 4 points 1 year ago

My wife and I are looking to buy some land up in the Leeds/York/Huddersfield area and stick a kit house on it (planning permission aside)

We are trying to find an acre or so of land, house probably in a bungalow format - and with as much self sufficient tech as is possible at this point: solar PV, solar heating (lol), under floor heating, zero heat loss - all that good stuff.

Out of interest, how much are you budgetting for a 1 acre plot of land in that area that has decent connections (E.g. internet) and planning permission?

I looked into kit homes, but I suspect the reason why they're not so big round here is because they're seen/intended as a more cost efficient option to get the house you want. However, when you take into account cost of land and planning permission in the UK compared to the sort of countries this approach originated from, it's not anywhere near as appealing of a deal.

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[\[-\]](#) [\[deleted\]](#) 1 point 1 year ago

Not OP, but I got an email recently about a nearby plot of land in a town in Gloucestershire. 51 x 26m, with full planning for one house, and outline planning for three more. £275,000 +tax.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [save](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [JoeDaStudd](#) 6 points 1 year ago

I've been looking at this one and off for a while.

General conclusion I found is you'll have next to no chance getting land at a reasonable price which even has a chance of getting planning permission.

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[\[-\]](#) [smellsliketeenferret](#) 3 points 1 year ago

There was a Grand Designs episode where Huf was used, so it might be worth having a look on 4OD to see if it's still there. Kevin McCloud was very positive about it and they

visited the production line as a part of the show, so that may give you a better idea of why it's more expensive

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[\[-\]](#) [Sonos](#) 3 points 1 year ago

These budget self builds are freaking awesome.

The difficult thing is finding the land cheap enough to make it viable for me.

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[\[-\]](#) [arabidopsis](#) [Saffek](#) 3 points 1 year ago

Same.

£140,000 for land for a bungalow..

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [save](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Sonos](#) 2 points 1 year ago

Where I live, (IoW) the land is alot cheaper, but its still like 90k.

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[\[-\]](#) [arabidopsis](#) [Saffek](#) 2 points 1 year ago

That's good.

A good kit house from Scanhaus is 120k... with project manager.

Bank will let you use land as collateral as well.

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[\[-\]](#) [\[deleted\]](#) 1 point 1 year ago

Where are you looking? TBH I'm thinking about the arse end of nowhere and my wife seems to think there's a decent amount out there if you don't mind being off the beaten track.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [save](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Sonos](#) 1 point 1 year ago

Isle of Wight, there are cheap bits of land out there, even here.

But desirable areas, land is hovering around the 100k mark.

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[\[-\]](#) [\[deleted\]](#) 1 point 1 year ago

That's what I'm thinking - 15k for a house-only lot seems really, really cheap. Or in Bradford.

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[\[-\]](#) [JimmerUK](#) 1 point 1 year ago

I literally drove back from IoW this afternoon, having spent a week there, and all I've been thinking is what a nice place to live it must be. I might have a look into this.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [save](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [Sonos](#) 1 point 1 year ago

It is, have a nice time? What did you see and do. Its a bit behind the times, but we are getting there.

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[\[-\]](#) [JimmerUK](#) 1 point 1 year ago

I have a three and a half year old, so we did all the attractions,

Blackgang Chine, Needles, Robin Hill, Monkey Haven, Dinosaur Isle etc. I expected it to be your stereotypical dreary English holiday, but she had the time of her life, and I genuinely enjoyed it all because of that.

She's absolutely mad about dinosaurs, so it was a perfect place to go. She knows more about them than I ever did, I don't know how she retains so much information in her tiny little head.

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[\[-\]](#) [Sonos](#) 1 point 1 year ago

Nice. Blackgang must've been heaven on earth then!

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[\[-\]](#) [JimmerUK](#) 1 point 1 year ago

Oh absolutely. I wish I'd taken a photo of her face as we walked into the Dinosaur area, she just stopped with her mouth hanging open, before she ran up and started naming them.

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [save](#) [parent](#)

[\[+\]](#) 1 year ago (3 children)

[\[-\]](#) [dwair](#) [Kernow](#) 3 points 1 year ago

Personally I would get in touch with the vendors and see if you can view some of their build products and see what you think about them in the flesh.

Having self built before, personally I would get your plot sorted before you look at anything and then talk to some architects about what you are likely to get planning for. You may find old fashioned brick turns out to be the best option due to local constraints or access or something.

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[\[-\]](#) [arabidopsis](#) [Saffek](#) 1 point 1 year ago

Is it ever possible to get a plot without permission and then get permission for it?

Plenty of farm land for sale, but I am not sure if planning permission would be easy if it's in the middle of nowhere..

[permalink](#) [embed](#) [save](#) [parent](#)

[\[-\]](#) [dwair](#) [Kernow](#) 1 point 1 year ago

Yeah you can buy a bit of land from anyone who will sell it to you, but you run a massive risk of not getting planning - rendering your plot useless. The value of the land directly relates to what you can do with it.

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[\[-\]](#) [arabidopsis](#) [Saffek](#) 1 point 1 year ago

Is it that hard to get planning permission?

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[\[-\]](#) [dwair](#) [Kernow](#) 2 points 1 year ago

Sorry was on my phone before.

In a nutshell - yes.

If the plot is an infill, you "should" be OK bar objections from other neighboring properties but it's far from certain and might take a few goes to get through. However if it is a bit of virgin land or a change of use -

you might have a fight on your hands if it is outside a permitted development zone - ie the middle of nowhere or even on a field adjoining a village or something.

Think of it this way. A plot in a bit of field might be worth £2-5k. With outline planning, which costs £385 for a house; the vendor might well ask £150k+. If I was selling bits of my field off, I'd take a punt on getting planning first before I sold it.

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[[-](#)] [spacecrustaceans](#) [Yorkshire](#) 2 points 1 year ago

I'm high, and read this as kit-kat house.

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[[-](#)] [manhattan4](#) 2 points 1 year ago

Not worked on any kit houses but I would expect them to be a fair bit more expensive than going down a traditional or semi-prefabricated route, albeit for less time on-site. If you're looking for quick build at a cost effective rate then you could look for prefabricated solutions such as timber frame or SIPS and then contract out subsequent first & second fix works, or just get a main contractor to project manage everything after the structure is up.

In regards to eco-tech, if you're serious about it then you should be looking at passivhaus certification. The high levels of insulation & air tightness obviously result in a higher build cost but the end solution can achieve zero running costs, or even turn a profit.

<http://www.passivhaustrust.org.uk/>

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[[-](#)] [87red](#) 2 points 1 year ago

Heb Homes is another one to consider, their pre-designed homes look nice:

http://www.hebrideanhomes.com/our_houses.html

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[[-](#)] [psbfc](#) 1 point 1 year ago

You should check out 'My Flat Pack Home' (<http://really.uktv.co.uk/shows/my-flat-pack-home/>)

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[[-](#)] [arabidopsis](#) [Saffek](#) 1 point 1 year ago

We should just all organise a [r/UKBuildaHouse](#)

If we get enough people, we can form groups, buy land, apply for permission etc.

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[[-](#)] [ignatiusorlly](#) [Scotland](#) 1 point 1 year ago

Your problem will be with planning permission and having a house 'in-keeping' with the local area but being built as a kit. Ideally you're looking for a site that isn't easily overlooked.

Good reference material is Mark Brinkley's Housebuilder's Bible and the UK Homebuilder & Renovation magazine.

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[[-](#)] [double-happiness](#) [Scotland](#) 1 point 1 year ago

Huddersfield

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2_FmADVggCk

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Gransnet forums

House and home

Extending a bungalow. (7 Posts)

supermum48 Fri 07-Dec-12 23:23:33

We are considering buying a bungalow and adding a large L shaped extension. Does anybody have any idea of the cost per square metre of building work? Obviously it would all be single storey. Does it need planning permission beyond a certain size?

We have always lived in a house before. Do gransnetters enjoy bungalow life?

I would be interested to hear from anybody who has extended a bungalow or moved from a house to a bungalow. Thanks.

Anne58 Fri 07-Dec-12 23:33:07

I'm sure it will need planning permission if it is going to be (as you say) a large extension. It will also need to meet building regulation standards.

I suggest you go to the website of your Local Authority, most have an A to Z section, so you should be able to find some answers there.

harrigran Fri 07-Dec-12 23:36:59

We have had a lot of building work done on our house and found that the building regulations are very strict now. Problems can arise if your extension extends over sewers and so on, we had to pay hundreds of pounds to have pipes checked to ensure they would withstand building over them. Get your plans drawn up and submitted as quickly as you can, it took about 16 months before we were given planning permission. I can't comment about extensions on bungalows because ours was two storey. Cost-wise whatever the builder says I would ensure you have extra funds, it has a way of escalating.

Anne58 Fri 07-Dec-12 23:42:56

supermum, not sure if this is your first post, but tell us a bit about yourself and how you came to Gransnet.

FlicketyB Sat 08-Dec-12 06:45:04

If it is a large extension it may be sensible to employ an architect, not just for any design input but he will know and understand all the planning and building regulations you need to meet and what will be acceptable to the Local Authority on your plot, which may not be the same as what you want.

DD did a very small extension, approximately 6ft by 8ft for a utility room. It was small enough not to need planning consent but even then getting building regs consent was difficult, she had to redo her drawings three times to get the detail in that the building control officers required. Throughout the build the progress has to be inspected at fixed stages by the Building Inspectors.

If you have no background knowledge and experience in undertaking a project like this, you really need to employ professional help

Barrow Sat 08-Dec-12 10:46:05

if it is a large extension it is definitely worth getting a local architect. He will be able to make the planning application for you and will also have a list of preferred builders. However, I would also suggest you ask around and get the names of builders other people have used and get at least 3 quotes. Don't necessarily go for the cheapest quote. Also allow a certain amount for contingencies, once work starts there must be something in the budget to allow for any unforeseen problems which may arise. If you want to change anything from the original drawing discuss it with your builder and ask him to put in writing what the additional cost will be.

tiggercat Sat 08-Dec-12 13:00:23

Visit

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk>

We found this really useful when we were planning our extension on a bungalow. Had the plans drawn up for us by an architect (they know what the local authority wants and how to deal with the officials etc.)

Cannot help with builders - our son is one and has nearly finished our extension, however it helped that he

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knew exactly what was required by the local authority, how to speak to and discuss with the building inspectors.

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Gransnet forums

House and home

A Granny Annexe in the Garden (18 Posts)

merlotgran Sun 23-Mar-14 17:58:52

Does anyone on here live in a granny annexe? We're thinking of converting a small industrial unit which sits at the end of our large garden into a dwelling for DH and me to move into so that DD1 and the two DGSs can move into our cottage. We thought about building an extension on our home but this would be very expensive to build and would create a large five bedroomed house therefore expensive to run. The building we are going to convert has suitable block and beam foundations (essential in the fens) and meets current building regs.

My question is, does anyone know of any pitfalls regarding the amount of accommodation allowed? I've heard some horror stories mentioning 'kitchenettes' and bedsits and the fact that some planning departments expect the 'oldies' to be so ancient that they're incapable of doing anything for themselves. We're also on green belt land which gives them the screaming abdabs. We know all the rules about not creating two dwellings that can be sold separately. I think I'm just scared of a battle with the planners.

We're looking at one bedroom, shower room, lounge/diner and kitchen.

Mamie Sun 23-Mar-14 18:06:56

Have you looked at pods, Merlotgran? You will find quite a lot of examples if you google. They look fab to me.

merlotgran Sun 23-Mar-14 18:19:42

I have, **Mamie** and I agree they look great but we will probably be better off converting the existing building which already has a kitchen, cloakroom (which can be changed into a shower room) and enough interior space for a lounge and bedroom. We've done our sums and it shouldn't cost a lot although we will have to add two more windows and replace the existing ones.

I've been wondering about the permitted distance from the existing dwelling.

J52 Sun 23-Mar-14 18:37:44

I would get an Architect on board. They will do all the negotiation with the planners and often know them from previous jobs. There are lots of rules and regulations for domestic dwellings and this conversion would probably be classed as a new build, requiring definite new standards for insulation etc. A local Architect would probably give you advice and works for a fixed price and save you money in the long run. Sounds a lovely project, good luck. x

JessM Sun 23-Mar-14 18:41:35

Good idea re architect and I have found planners very pleasant. Go to your town hall with your list of questions and maybe a photo or two and ask to see the "duty planner". They will answer your questions I am sure.

janeainsworth Sun 23-Mar-14 18:43:47

Merlotwww.planningportal.gov.uk/general/news/stories/2013/Jan13/31012013/31012013_1 This says that for 3 years you can convert an office into a house without the need for planning permission.

But you would still have to comply with building regs as far as internal alterations went, I think, but in my experience the building regs people are not quite so intransigent as planners sometimes appear to be 😊

merlotgran Sun 23-Mar-14 19:17:03

Thanks **Jess**, **jane**, and **J52**. We will definitely get an architect.

The reason we're doing this is an eye to the future for us and also to help DD who has just had her rent increased again and is sick and tired of trying to get her landlady to sort out the damp/mould/dodgy boiler etc., etc. Her health is suffering and we have more than we need here. The smallholding is hard work although we love it so two strapping grandsons will be more than useful 😊 They help out most weekends for pocket money so they might as well live here!!

DD has always said she wants to support us in the event of us needing help so we're hoping this is the right

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way forward. Funny how daunting these ideas become when you finally have to bite the bullet and get on with it. We've already downsized once so I'm not looking forward to the big 'declutter' again but it's got to be done. At least we've got the summer ahead of us.

Divawithattitude Sun 23-Mar-14 19:39:16

We are just looking to move to a cottage with a grandad annexe for my father

merlotgran Sun 23-Mar-14 19:48:10

I'm only 66. I can't believe I'm even thinking about it but DH will need help if I become ill (or worse). We will make it as big as we are allowed and as I'm not really an indoor kind of person unless I'm in my beloved kitchen, I will think of a quirky name for it. NOT Granny Annexe.

We had to move my mother three times in as many years so at the moment the building is jam packed full with all her STUFF that we've been too ~~lazy~~ busy to sort out.

Anne58 Sun 23-Mar-14 19:51:53

My parents were going to convert an existing outbuilding for my step-grandmother. They got the necessary planning etc, the only restriction (other than building regs) was that there was some sort of "order" or covenant type thing that said it could only be used for family members.

I think this is for 2 reasons, obviously so it can't be sold separately and also so that it shouldn't be used as a holiday let.

rosesared Sun 23-Mar-14 20:13:22

What a good idea **merlot** this will be so nice for your family. I hope that you will be allowed a large space by the planners.

merlotgran Sun 23-Mar-14 21:14:20

That's right, **phoenix**. It has to be one or t'other. We had sketch plans drawn about twelve years ago for a holiday cottage because people were being urged to provide accommodation in this area but then two women contacted us wanting to rent it as a catering kitchen for their fledgling business. As it had been designed and built for my own catering business, which I had just sold, we snatched their hand off. They stayed for ten years and were lovely tenants. Time to do something else with it now. It's too good to be just used as a store room.

Anne58 Sun 23-Mar-14 23:16:49

How about "Wits End" ?

Charleygirl Mon 24-Mar-14 09:28:04

merlotgran what happens to the annexe when you and your DH are no longer around?

jinglbellsfrocks Mon 24-Mar-14 09:45:49

It sounds a really nice idea. So long as you don't mind too much handing over your "beloved kitchen" to another woman, even if it is to your daughter. 😊

I think it would be lovely to have them close.

Nonnie Mon 24-Mar-14 09:53:33

I read something yesterday in the Sunday Times about rule changes to some of the costs involved in building on to existing homes and also new builds. It is going to change for the better and you will no longer have to pay the section 106 charge so you might want to look into this and time it right.

A friend of ours bought a large house and converted it into two dwellings although it does have a door between the two both upstairs and down so that it is still officially one house. She and her husband have 2 bedrooms and her DD and family have 5. It works very well for all concerned and the original suggestion came from her SiL.

Two houses will incur 2 council tax, water etc but one would not.

merlotgran Mon 24-Mar-14 10:04:12

I like 'Wits End', **phoenix** 🍷

jingl I suppose the advantage of handing over my beloved kitchen will be that DD can cook the ~~seeding~~ lovely Sunday lunches that I've been doing for years.

merlotgran Mon 24-Mar-14 10:10:20

Charleygirl, When we're yanking up nettles in the great fen garden in the sky, DD can get 'change of use' permission for various options. It's already been a catering kitchen and we were told that a holiday cottage would not be a problem *provided* there's a need.

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Gransnet forums

Legal & money

boundary wall/fence (27 Posts)

Goose Thu 16-May-13 09:02:49

I remember seeing a thread on GN which led to a helpful discussion about my forthcoming question, but looking at past posts I can't find it, so I apologise for a repeat question 😊

My friend has lived in her property for 30 years, with no problems regarding neighbours, until now. The new neighbour (of c2 years) is challenging the position of the bordering fence, which has followed the same boundary line over the last 100+ years! She has also told my friend that she wants the fence replaced as she doesn't like larch lap (the fence is in good condition - not broken/falling down).

I seem to remember (from a previous thread on GN) that there's a time limit on (a) how long either a person has been living in the property, or (b) how long the fence has been in its present place, that would override the complaint???

I'd appreciate any advice..

Aka Thu 16-May-13 09:26:55

Depends who 'owns' the fence. If your friend owns it then the neighbour can't demand any change to the type of fence, unless its too high. As to the position, we had this problem once. I smiled politely, acted the dizzy blonde, and suggested it was all beyond me and why didn't they chase it up and I'd fall in with their wishes. Of course they couldn't be bothered.

Found this a useful tactic in management too (not the dizzy blonde!) but saying 'good idea, put in it writing would you and cost it out' very few did.

Rather than get into a dispute why doesn't your friend smile vaguely (and sweetly if she can manage that too), look confused and suggest they dig up their deeds, measuring tape, etc and look into it. She might also suggest if they want to alter the fence perhaps they go halves as she's on a pension/budget, etc.

glammanana Thu 16-May-13 09:45:51

Although I do not know the legal side of things I would believe that the fact the boundary line has been followed for 100yrs+ leaves little to be discussed.

Movedalot Thu 16-May-13 09:58:54

I am also of the opinion that if she can prove the boundary line has been there for 20 years then it is now correct.

If she owns the fence it cannot be removed without her approval but if she likes the new fence they want to put up she can give permission for them to replace her fence. If it is their fence they can do what they like. If it is her fence and she wants it to stay they are at liberty to put their own fence on their side next to hers.

I would be very careful and watch if the work is carried out to make sure it is put in the same position.

gillybob Thu 16-May-13 10:43:11

My daughter has finally managed to secure an "equity buy out" of the small house she shared with her ex partner. To the left of the property is a small piece of land which sweeps around a corner and had over time just become a bit of waste land and often a "dogs toilet". To our absolute astonishment when the new deeds came through (just two weeks ago) we noticed that the red line outlining her property also took in this small piece of waste land. My first thought was to double check with the land registry who confirmed that yes the land does belong to my daughter. We then set about tidying it up, cutting the "shrubs" back into some decent order and cutting the ~~weeds~~ grass. The land now looks quite presentable and tidy. The problem has now arose that certain neighbours do not accept that this land belongs to my daughter and locals still appear to be using to "exercise" their dogs (if you know what I mean). My daughter cannot afford to fence off the land at this stage as it has taken all she has to secure the ownership.

Does anyone have any ideas on what we can do?

Elegran Thu 16-May-13 11:01:11

One idea might be to put up a notice to say what you have told us here - that she has discovered that the "waste" land has belonged to her for many years, and she is now incorporating it into her garden. As it is now known to be private land, could dog-owners please respect her property and exercise their dogs elsewhere. If she can find a bylaw about not allowing dogs to foul people's gardens she could quote that.

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It might not work, of course!

Making a border at the pavement edge and planting some bedding in it might mark the edge and make it obvious that it is a garden and not a dog loo.

FlicketyB Thu 16-May-13 11:10:46

How about a row of low post and plastic chain or rope between them, or posts and pig wire. All these could be done for well under £100.

Aka Thu 16-May-13 11:17:56

[suggested signage](#)

harrigran Thu 16-May-13 11:38:08

Dog fouling is frowned upon in every town. Inform the powers that be that your property is being used as a dog toilet and/or photograph the guilty parties. I have a garden with no fences but do not have a problem because we have CCTV.

Elegran Thu 16-May-13 13:31:50

Goose I have just reread your original post.

Excuse me? This woman bought a house, presumably with a full survey and report, and knowledge of what was in the deeds. Now, two years later, she decides that a) she does not like where the boundary is set, although it has been there for 100 years, and b) that she does not like the fence which *you* built, at *your* expense, on *your* land, and wants it replaced!

Has she offered to pay for this replacement, or does she expect you to pay for it yourself?

Has she been eyeing up your choice of plants, with a view to getting you to change them for ones which match her planting scheme?

Should you be repainting your front door to suit her? Are your curtains up to scratch?

One of my neighbours came home from work one day to find that the people in the semi next door has erected a solid 6ft wooden fence from their front gate to their front door. The doors are about 3 ft from one another, so are the gates. So she painted her side lilac and planted climbers up it.

Your daughter's neighbour has many options if she does not like what she sees.

Elegran Thu 16-May-13 13:33:19

Sorry, **goose** for the confusion in my previous post about the people in your story and the other one on the thread.

Movedalot Thu 16-May-13 13:53:52

Gilly I would create a border around the lawn and if affordable some scratchy plants. Perhaps photocopying the boundary document and putting it in a plastic wallet on a post in the garden might convince the dog walkers that they have no rights?

Goose Thu 16-May-13 13:55:25

Thanks all for helpful responses 😊. My question wasn't written very clearly, but the fence in question belongs to a friend of mine, who is totally stressed out by her neighbour (who is incidentally, a woman of 74yrs). I think there's a time limit that overrides such an issue, as **Movedalot** mentions but I can't find out anything online about this, so wonder if 20yrs is an actuality or assumption?

bluebell Thu 16-May-13 14:02:15

www.boundary-problems.co.uk/boundary-problems/fences.html - this looks helpful maybe and sounds sensible

gillybob Thu 16-May-13 15:33:48

Thank you for all your suggestions, I knew I could count on Gransnet for some common sense!

I have just ran some ideas past my daughter and she loves the idea of putting a sign up warning the "dog poopers" that there could be mines underneath the grass ! so thanks for that **Aka** 🤔

Quick update I have just spoken to the planning office and environmental health at the Town Hall who tell me that they are going to pop round and have a look at the land with a view to putting a **No Dog Fouling** notice on the lamp post outside, they also say that she may need planning permission to put a fence or wall around the land (which she is not in the financial position to do yet anyway) but could not see the problem with some "scratchy bushes" (thanks **Movedalot**).

Why are people so disrespectful allowing their dogs to foul someone's garden?

It is quite clear that the land is now being looked after (grass cut, shrubs trimmed etc) and still it is covered in dog poop. 🤔

Movedalot Thu 16-May-13 16:05:20

Is this any help? www.dailymail.co.uk/property/article-1348664/HOME-TRUTHS-How-long-I-claim-land-own.html not quite the same but probably covers it?

Or this: www.justanswer.com/uk-law/1de6e-long-use-diused-land-becomes-prop.html

HildaW Thu 16-May-13 16:20:32

Husband (es RICS surveyor) shudders at mention of boundary disputes - they are dreadful and no one ever wins (except lawyers). I'd be inclined to smile sweetly at everything she says, act all vague and sort of promise to think about things, get advise etc etc and just let things ride. The Japanese have a lovely seemly vague attitude about things they don't agree with. They smile, nod but do nothing. Its part of a their lovely culture of not wanting to offend. Perhaps it might work. The other way is the check with solicitor re deeds and get him to write a letter stating calmly and politely the facts as they are known to the home owners. Might be enough to scare her off.

Aka Thu 16-May-13 17:27:30

Hilda that's exactly what I suggested!! great minds????

HildaW Thu 16-May-13 18:38:47

OOOer Aka.....teach me not to read all the posts!

Enviousamerican Thu 16-May-13 18:54:32

look up dog deterrent on utube.Its called the scarecrow.Id give you the link but I use a iPad and don't know how. 😊

Galen Thu 16-May-13 19:06:26

That explains something that's happened up the road from me. A man has cut down a tree and then used the branches to "fence" round a bit of grass at the side of his property and goes round the corner. To my mind it looks vert strange and untidy., but---

FlicketyB Thu 16-May-13 19:54:52

A friend of mine was driven into court by a neighbour who turned nasty after living next door for over 50 years (that's another story). Neighbours who had lived in the street since the house was built confirmed that the boundary of her property was where it had been since the house was built. She won.

Goose Thu 16-May-13 20:29:13

Thank you all for your suggestions/advice, you've been very helpful and I'll pass messages onto my friend 😊.

wobblelegs Tue 11-Jun-13 11:04:47

I,m new to this ,but have a similar problem with boundary.

Our neighbours are ageist and since my son left home have harrassed us in one way or another .I have written to our MP etc , and nothing changes.

Now he has covered our boundary wall with soil and built water features on it attaching things to our property.

We are not well off so cannot go down the route of legal matters ,but he just laughs and says its his now .

We do not know what to do as they are very intimidateing.

Police won,t do anything !!!!!

FlicketyB Tue 11-Jun-13 11:36:17

Speak to the Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB). They will give you help and support. His ageist behaviour is known as 'elder abuse' and is a prosecutable offence, the police should be responding to this but as they are not, again sopeak to the CAB and also to Age Concern should be able to help you and, more importantly give you the support you need.

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Gransnet forums

Legal & money

boundary wall & putting a shed there (12 Posts)

earlybird9 Thu 03-Oct-13 19:27:45

Hi,

My neighbour has a badly built kitchen extension. one of the walls is up the the boundary she shares with me. She has actually built right up to the boundary. she drilled a large hole in this wall earlier this year & asked me if she could come into my garden to put a vent cover over it. This wall backs onto my decked area outside my kitchen. I now want to build on this area in future so have asked her to relocate it. She has said she will not & that if I build on this area I will have to take her vent into consideration. I don't want to build for another 2 years but do want to put a shed there in the meantime. Do I have to put it a certain distance from her vent? I would like it backed up to the wall as much as possible as there will only be dead space behind it. If it backed up to the wall it would only leave a very small gap for the vent & it may not be operational.

Who has the right here?

Hope someone can help. this neighbour is now being very aggressive.

earlybird9 Thu 03-Oct-13 19:28:54

Hi,

My neighbour has a badly built kitchen extension. one of the walls is up the the boundary she shares with me. She has actually built right up to the boundary. she drilled a large hole in this wall earlier this year & asked me if she could come into my garden to put a vent cover over it. This wall backs onto my decked area outside my kitchen. I now want to build on this area in future so have asked her to relocate it. She has said she will not & that if I build on this area I will have to take her vent into consideration. I don't want to build for another 2 years but do want to put a shed there in the meantime. Do I have to put it a certain distance from her vent? I would like it backed up to the wall as much as possible as there will only be dead space behind it. If it backed up to the wall it would only leave a very small gap for the vent & it may not be operational.

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earlybird9 Thu 03-Oct-13 19:29:09

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Who has the right here?

Hope someone can help. this neighbour is now being very aggressive.

annodomini Thu 03-Oct-13 20:11:37

Have you spoken to your local planning department?

FlicketyB Thu 03-Oct-13 21:39:20

Go and speak to your local Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB) they will be able to give you free help and advice.

Jendurham Thu 03-Oct-13 21:53:08

You can put what you want in your garden. If it blocks the vent the neighbour will have to move it. It isn't a party wall as such.

However, if it comes to selling you have to be honest about disputes with the neighbours these days.

Another problem is that you should leave a gap big enough to be able to sweep behind the shed. I know of houses that are said to be detached but nobody can get in between them.

Elegran Thu 03-Oct-13 22:08:25

I think you will find that your neighbour is in the wrong, so you have the moral high ground. They should not have put the vent onto your property. Whether you can get that over to an aggressive neighbour is another matter - it is possible, of course, that she is being aggressive because she knows that she is in the wrong. I think you need an expert opinion, and perhaps a lawyer's letter.

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Jendurham Thu 03-Oct-13 22:21:33

Did your neighbour get planning permission to build up to the boundary, or building regulation approval? I know the rules are changing now, but I'm sure she will still need building regs for putting foundations in next to your boundary.

susieb755 Thu 03-Oct-13 22:23:42

Check the online planning portal - it will tell you everything you need to know

ninathenana Thu 03-Oct-13 22:48:01

Who owns the wall? If it forms a boundary I would assume the rules are the same as fencing. My right hand boundary belongs to my neighbour the left hand is ours. If it's your wall then she has no right to the vent surely.

jeanie99 Sat 05-Oct-13 18:16:49

Move carefully on this one, if you sell in the future any disputes with neighbours have to be documented on legal forms and this could put buyers off.

Firstly get along to your planing department and have a look at the plans for this extension.

I can't think that you would not have been informed by planning if your neighbour was building up to the boundary. Ask the planning department about vents being installed on boundary walls.

NfkDumpling Sat 05-Oct-13 18:35:02

I think she may already be in the wrong for building the wall right on the boundary as this means the footings must be on your land. (We have a six inch gap where we built as near as possible to our boundary, planning wouldn't allow it nearer.) You need to check with your local planning department but may mean you can use this as gentle leverage to persuade her to put the vent elsewhere.

And of course you need to advise her (very nicely of course) that you will be asking a planing inspector to call to give you advise on your proposed extension.

As **jeanie** says you need to tread carefully.

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Gransnet forums

Legal & money

Playing football in the street (25 Posts)

DatDat Tue 17-Apr-12 20:02:25

I live on what was previously a very quiet cul-de-sac until the local council decided to build 10 new local authority houses across the Close from me. In one of the properties across the Close from me the lads who live there are frequently playing football in the front garden, but because the fences to the properties have a large gap in the middle of them to accommodate a driveway, the football is inevitably kicked out into the road on the Close, and occasionally onto our gardens across the Close, and the lads concerned think nothing of coming onto our land or trampling all over our gardens to retrieve their football. With this in mind, although the football is primarily taking place in their front garden, as the football is frequently being kicked out onto the road and onto other residents properties across the Close, I was wondering if I had a case under section 161 of the public highways act 1980, to have a word with the local police and the local council who own the properties about this?

Carol Tue 17-Apr-12 20:17:18

What about making friends with your new neighbours and asking them if their lads would mind keeping the ball off your front garden as you're gardens will suffer from being trampled on?

grannyactivist Tue 17-Apr-12 20:27:10

DatDat, perhaps a more conciliatory approach might be a better place to start. Could you call and invite the lads to come over for a coke and a biscuit and explain the problem and ask them to help think of a solution? It seems as if they're needing a nudge to think of how their behaviour impacts you and most youngsters don't deliberately go out of their way to antagonise people (although I do know there are some that do). Involving the police and council seems a combative first step and one that I would be loath to take before trying to get the lads onside.

DatDat Tue 17-Apr-12 20:49:55

Not a chance! I've lived in my house for 25 years now and when we purchased the house all those years ago the Close was 100% owner occupancy. The land across the Close owned by the local authority used to be an office building for the local social services department and a large adjoining garden, if I'd have known that the local authority were going to knock this down and build a row of 15 council houses across the Close from me 25 years later, then I wouldn't have bought the property in the first place. The whole community on our Close campaigned against the building of these local authority houses, however we were defeated at the subsequent planning panel meeting by just one vote because the chairman's vote apparently counted as 2 votes, so on account of the value of our houses being reduced by around £25,000 because of the close proximity of these local authority houses, there is definitely no love lost between the owner occupancy on the Close and our new tenants across the Close, and we have no intention of making friends with neighbours who have been forced upon us against the will of the whole of the existing community on the Close because of the all powerful local authority whose members on the planning panel rigged the planning panel meeting so they could not lose.

Carol Tue 17-Apr-12 21:11:15

Oh dear! When my children were growing up, I left my husband and bought a pretty cottage in a conservation area with beautiful views across to the Pennines. We had a lovely wide pathway, the width of a road, up to the old church, where my children could play safely and use their skateboard with no-one to bother them. Then across the road, some houses were built that obscured the beautiful view. We were anxious about some of the people who were moving in as they didn't seem too bothered about the nature of this tiny lane with its history. The children played football in the park area that had been built for the community and had seats for us to enjoy the view. But, they soon integrated, we had a couple of street parties, the children all went to the same primary school and when I visited a couple of those neighbours, I found they were houseproud and industrious, and saw some of the elderly people nearby as quite prejudiced against them as 'newcomers' They didn't make the planning laws, or choose to be offered a house on that lane - they were just happy that they had their new accommodation. I would say give the neighbours a chance - they might just be helpful to you one day, and you to them.

tanith Tue 17-Apr-12 21:47:54

Sorry DatDat but for goodness sake its hardly the tenants fault that the houses they now occupy were built and spoilt your 'Garden of Eden'.. its no wonder the children have scant respect for your land if you and your neighbours have so obviously set against them. What a terrible shame that you all can't get on and make a

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community of your Close instead of making them feel so unwelcome..

DatDat Tue 17-Apr-12 22:07:42

Tanith: Let me ask you a question, apart from having kids running over your land, would you be happy to lose £25,000 from the value of your house? I myself was brought up living in a council house as a child, but whatever anyone has to say on the issue of community cohesion, this is simply not the scenario that our community bought into all those years ago when we purchased our properties.

granjura Tue 17-Apr-12 22:17:04

Again DatDat, this is hardly those kids fault, is it? I'd rather they played football, then went around doing less savoury stuff. Blaming the kids is a recipe for disaster, sorry to say. If they get a whiff of the fact you despise and resent them, it could get much worse rather than better (sorry to say again).

nanaej Tue 17-Apr-12 22:24:23

Tanith how old are the 'kids' ? is there an alternative space for them to get to easily to play footie? If they are old enough to go to a rec /park and play and there is one to go to then maybe you have a point. If however they are too young to play unsupervised in a rec or there is not a proper facility nearby then they are just doing what kids do? I agree with other posts sugessting an appeasement approach. I have lived next door to two teenage boys , both at private school and who went on to Oxford, who frequently hit cricket balls & kicked footballs over our fence including when home from uni! Don't always think it is to do with the type of housing so much as the nature of boys of a certain age!! They also practised drumming in the garden shed!

nanaej Tue 17-Apr-12 22:26:03

Sorry..getting tired should have addressed message to datdat... better go to bed!

tanith Tue 17-Apr-12 22:27:24

DatDat no of course I wouldn't be happy but the point I'm making is its not their fault your houses value has fallen , its the planners and the council. I wouldn't take it out on the children I'd rather try the friendly approach after all the houses are built now and nothing is going to change that fact.

Carol Wed 18-Apr-12 07:51:53

Many houses that were bought privately now have tenants in them instead of a house owner. Prices have fallen, so some of the drop in value might not be to do with the arrival of council houses in the community. I have some young relatives who have 'house-hopped' because they can't sell without going into negative equity. One nephew lives in the house owned by his brother, the flat he vacated went to the other brother, and meanwhile the house-owning nephew has to move into another rented house because the one he is in is at last being sold and he can't buy it because he has a mortgage on the other house! Complicated, but it demonstrates that private owners are having to make big compromises because of the drop in house prices and the slow down in house sales due to their drop in value.

nelliedeane Wed 18-Apr-12 09:30:57

Datdat I rarely get angry but your whole tone is insulting to those of us that are in social housing. I appreciate it may not have been your choice to have people from a different background to yourself living there, but have you spoken nicely to the children, and you havent said what sort of age they are, not all of us that live in social housing have little regard for our neighbours, I wonder if you where to fall ill or have an accident in your street and some one from the other side of the road came to your aid would you refuse their help, and vice versa would you refuse to give it, if you treat these other HUMAN BEINGS not just council tenants with respect and courtesy you may find it is recciprocated.angry

Greatnan Wed 18-Apr-12 09:40:58

Well said, nellie, I have refrained from posting a reply because I am not sure I could remain within forum etiquette. I thought we had gone up in the world when we moved from a slum house in Salford to a shiny new council house. My sister lives in a former council house, which has been taken over by a Housing Association. Many of the surrounding houses have been bought under the Right to Buy scheme, and she says there is no difference in the way the houses and gardens are kept. When anyone is ill, everybody rallies round and nobody asks if they are owner or tenant..

It seems that councils in England would rather give building consent to Tesco than provide some playing space for children. If there were more skateparks and football pitches there would be less bored and disaffected children.

I expect the parents of the children playing football are afraid to let them roam too far from home.

Greatnan Wed 18-Apr-12 09:45:24

I suspect that the drop in value is caused because potential buyers have the same attitude to council tenants as the OP.

gangy5 Wed 18-Apr-12 12:43:44

This is a really sticky one. I'm not that keen to, but I do live in an area dominated by pensioners - and I am one myself!! My road consists of a really good mix of oldies and young families. I love to hear the children playing and they do play in the street. I'm not sure how I would feel if they trampled over my precious garden though!!

Would it help to somehow close your driveway and extend the height of your front boundary?

You would then be in a position to say that if any balls were kicked over you would return them - in your own time!

Greatnan Wed 18-Apr-12 12:56:49

Gangy5 - you are very tactful and kind. I suspect most of us were outraged by the attitude of the OP to the council house tenants, rather than her wanting to protect her garden.

DatDat Wed 18-Apr-12 14:03:56

Wow! This was meant to be about a point of law in relation to section 161 of the Public Highways Act not about local authority housing v owner occupancy or community cohesion etc. I myself was brought up on a council estate as a young boy so I'm not some kind of snob having a go at local authority tenants far from it. And quite frankly I don't give a monkeys about what anyone has got to say on this matter that has no bearing on my original question which was purely in relation to section 161 of the public highways act 1980 and whether these boys were in direct contravention of this act by their actions and therefore breaking the law.

Carol Wed 18-Apr-12 14:19:05

Then, 'DatDat' it seems you are an imposter and came on here merely to be provocative. Genuine posters are most welcome, no matter how contentious, but simply baiting people in order to have a go at them is pathetic.

Greatnan Wed 18-Apr-12 14:24:52

Simple solution - google the Act and find out for yourself. Why should members here be able to advise you. Your second post was fairly obviously meant to be provocative. You must have a pretty boring life!

gangy5 Wed 18-Apr-12 15:37:15

I think that we're all trying to react kindly to your post DatDat but if you want us to keep strictly to the point I think you're extremely unwise to go down the legal route, using section 161 of the Public Highways Act. There is nothing more confrontational than taking legal action. The antagonism that will arise from your neighbours will undoubtedly cause a very hostile environment with you and your neighbours. Resolve it amicably if you can and you should at least approach them first on the subject before taking it further.

nelliideane Wed 18-Apr-12 15:59:00

DATDAT wether that was your intention or not you have managed on here to offend people by your attitude AND I quote your words " have no intention of making friends with them"if you do not give a monkeys about the opinions expressed again your words on here then do not ask for them, as a council tenant I would hate to live next door to some one as arrogant and offensive as you are,why dont you pay a solicitor if you are hell bent on legal proceedings ,how self righteous you are did you never play football in the street,and in direct contravention to any laws are YOU totally sin free JUMPING UP AND DOWN WITH ANGER [angry] angry

Annika Wed 18-Apr-12 16:52:51

As my dear old dad once said when someone complained to him about the noise children were making while playing near the houses they were living in at the time, "it would be a sad world if we never heard children playing. It would mean one of two things, we have all gone deaf or god forbid there were no more children in the world" !!!!

Live and let live.

If the children playing football are only young then they need to be within sight of their parents, if they are older they will soon get fed up and move on .

If all I had to do all day was to worry about children playing football near my house I would count myself very lucky indeed

Ariadne Wed 18-Apr-12 16:59:08

And your dear old dad was SO right, **Annika!**

Annika Wed 18-Apr-12 18:06:32

Ariadne smile

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Gransnet forums

House and home

If invited, would you live in a log cabin - in your son's garden...? (82 Posts)

DeeTales Sat 03-Sep-16 18:37:06

It's not a very big garden either. Long under discussion. Currently, I'm single, reasonably healthy with a busy lifestyle - and have a brave daughter-in-law! And 7 grandchildren not all in the same garden...The cabin build begins on Monday. My new Blog is also under construction. This will feature day to day, week to week, my thoughts and feelings at this (radical) move plus the occasional reference on Twitter (DeesKDiary) My 30th, and final, house move is but a few weeks away. Please, gransnetters, your support and encouragement would be appreciated.

Ana Sat 03-Sep-16 18:38:51



jinglbellsfrocks Sat 03-Sep-16 18:43:01

Bloody hell - no!

Haven't read the thread, but a nice brick, fully insulated, granny annexe for me thank you.

J52 Sat 03-Sep-16 18:44:32

Sounds a bit restricting for me, is it like a mobile home? Anyway good luck and enjoy it.

aggie Sat 03-Sep-16 18:44:40

I am with you in this one Jingle !

jinglbellsfrocks Sat 03-Sep-16 18:45:17

Oh sorry. 😞

It's advertising a blog, or something, isn't it. Sure it will be lovely. Blog and cabin. Good luck. Perhaps don't have an open fire.

Riverwalk Sat 03-Sep-16 19:07:11

jings 🤔

30th move? 😞 It might not be your last.

No cosy hut at the end of the garden for me the big house or nothing.

tanith Sat 03-Sep-16 19:13:36

No hut for me either thanks , good luck

kittylester Sat 03-Sep-16 19:17:51

Do **GNHQ** now about the advertising? I'm staying put anyway!

merlotgran Sat 03-Sep-16 19:21:08

Some log cabins are really nice but having spent most of last year converting a building into a low maintenance, fully insulated granny pad at the end of our very large garden...I'm with **jingl**.

Ilrina Sat 03-Sep-16 19:25:39

sounds like a great adventure to me but with a built in safety net.
Go for it!!

Maranta Sat 03-Sep-16 19:30:50

Which country are you in **DeeTales**?. If you are in USA or Canada, yes I would love it. If in the UK, no thanks. Why? - space.

MamaCaz Sat 03-Sep-16 19:50:56

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It depends on so many things, such as how big will the log cabin be, how well insulated is it, will there be any rent to pay on it, are there any strings attached, would son's family respect my independence, how open / isolated is the garden?

I am coming at this from the angle of someone who lived for many years on a narrowboat and could cope with a smaller living space, but who would struggle to adapt to the confines of an enclosed garden that precluded regular contact with passers-by.

I sorely miss my past life now, and often say that I could live in a tiny home as long as it was in the right location and had the right sort of outside space (think American-style porch on two or three sides, and ideally on a canal towpath!!!).

Wobblybits Sat 03-Sep-16 20:04:09

Co-incidently our son is trying to buy a farmhouse with barns etc at this very moment. He is hoping to convert one of the barns into an annex for us when we (or any of their friends) visit.

A well built and insulated log cabin would be just as comfortable as a brick building. Go for it.

Jalima Sat 03-Sep-16 20:13:17

How big is big? A tiny suburban garden or an acre?

It is all relevant to where you are, if Australia or Canada perhaps yes, as a 'small back yard' could be five acres 🙄

willsmadnan Sat 03-Sep-16 20:41:17

I would love it... but then conventional bricks and mortar seem like a prison to me right now. I would love to live in a log cabin...always have done, even from a child. Seems to me like the ultimate comfort blanket..... I'd happily settle for a houseboat but don't think I could afford it. Just don't want to be confined by what's considered to be suburban living. Even our house in France is/was a bit too 'ordinaire' for me tho' DOH loved it. I guess I'm a frustrated homeowner. If I won the lotto (well, I'd have to buy a ticket first) I'd buy one of those eco houses built into a hillside. My dream house!! Away from the madding crowd.

Jalima Sat 03-Sep-16 20:52:36

No, because the only place would be next to the trampoline.

DeeTales Sat 03-Sep-16 20:57:31

Interesting comments !!! Thanks. Very well built cedar wood, insulated etc, heated, wood burner. Cosy. My design. No, UK garden (relatively) small. I shall be totally independent, bathing, cooking. Very used to small space living. Planning Ok. NO council tax. What am I advertising? The Blog is not active but I would hope to offer it to this site eventually.

Auntieflo Sat 03-Sep-16 21:10:43

Now you've gone and spoiled my day dream. 😞 When DD and SIL moved to their house they had a summer house erected. 🏠 I earmarked it for me when they had central heating and a jacuzzi installed. Then, when I shuffle off this mortal coil they can wrap me in a black sack and throw me over the fence into the Church graveyard. This was 16/17 years ago, and I am still awaiting the summer house upgrade. 😞

morethan2 Sat 03-Sep-16 21:13:14

Why? To free up capital? For an experiment? To be on hand for for brave DiL. I have a very brave sick DiL but I'm not sure I'd want to live in their log cabin. Yes it's next to the trampoline popular with their three little ones and all their friends, I don't think I'd have a moments peace. why would you? there must be a reason. I could understand a blog if your going to live somewhere out of the ordinary. The answer is a big fat no unless there was a very very good reason I won't be moving into my sons log cabin.

DeeTales Sat 03-Sep-16 21:33:41

My purchase. Their suggestion. Children older. Trampoline and swings have gone!! Been a tenant for some years. We live in same town anyway. Tolerance on both sides, methinks. Usually find plenty to write about...

morethan2 Sat 03-Sep-16 21:46:55

Ah I get it now. I suppose if it makes economic sense and means you have family near in case of an

emergency it's much the same as downsizing to a granny annex.

jingbellsfrocks Sat 03-Sep-16 22:45:15

I wouldn't like all that wood around me. ~~It would be like being dead~~ I think it would be claustrophobic.

merlotgran Sat 03-Sep-16 22:49:46

We stayed in a log cabin once on holiday. It was so lovely I reckoned I wouldn't mind living in one.

Synonymous Sat 03-Sep-16 23:33:49

This is not a simple question as there are too many unknowns.

It would depend where it was. On a busy road - no! A fantastic view - perhaps. More economical - possibly.

How long is a piece of string? 🙄

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Gransnet forums

Legal & money

Any Planning or Highway Officers able to advise? (4 Posts)

Tallulah57 Mon 22-May-17 16:29:53

We live on a turning circle and requested permission to extend our access to our driveway from the Highways department which was granted. Difficulty was a water stop tap which advised by the water company would restrict the kerb being dropped. We took out the hedge which was about 12 feet high and an old broken wooden fence that served as a 'boundary wall'. We built a new wall (below one metre) with eight pillars, the tallest being 1.59metres, with the intention of having short railings in between. We also, (stupidly not realising we needing further permission) left an opening of 4 metres as a new access point. We contacted Highways to let them know we had changed the access only to be told we were not allowed an in out drive and they were reporting us for not getting planning permission for the wall. We stopped all building work immediately. The Highways objection was the amount of visibility available which was ludicrous because both us and neighbours have a much better view of the road than when the hedge was there. We have applied for planning permission for the wall only to be advised to take down the pillars which will cost a fortune as the wall will have to be rebuilt. My difficulty is this, there are seven in out drives in our small road which is unclassified and every house apart from 2 have walls higher than one metre, none have applied for and been granted planning permission. We have a half built wall with a garden that looks like a building site. We really believe this guy from Highways department took umbrage with us because we requested a site visit to discuss our options (which he failed to do). Can anyone make any suggestions or advise on how we could progress without taking this wall down. Many thanks for taking the time to read this.

grannysyb Mon 22-May-17 16:32:31

Speak to your MP, they'll be wanting your vote!

Tallulah57 Mon 22-May-17 16:32:44

Forgot to say our neighbours and the local councillor have sent in letters of support of our application.

Tallulah57 Mon 22-May-17 16:42:45

Hi **Grannysyb** I went onto his website and this was posted

He has no authority over Housing Associations or, in general, over local planning.

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Gransnet forums

Chat

Fiona Bruce... (27 Posts)

jingbellsfrocks Fri 11-Sep-15 16:49:13

what do we think of [this](#)?

I've got mixed feelings. I mostly want to say, "welcome to the real world", but also partly feel sorry for her.

Alea Fri 11-Sep-15 17:05:20

Diddums!

Presumably with the squillions her house is worth she could up sticks and find an even leafier suburb?

Can't say my heart is bleeding too much, as it's a far cry from GN members who are stuck with the neighbours from hell. **AlieOxon** * to name just one.

I imagine these will be ritzy flats, the owners will probably be away at the weekend at their cottage in the Cotswolds/ gite or manoir in France/villa in Tuscany/yacht (delete what does not apply). So sorry, Fiona you may have to live with it!!

Ana Fri 11-Sep-15 17:05:59

From the plan, it doesn't look as though the flats will impinge much upon the end of her garden, although I agree that four storeys is a bit much and all the properties on her bit of road will be overlooked.

janerowena Fri 11-Sep-15 17:08:41

I feel for her too, and for the neighbourhood in general. We had something similar happen to us in Winchester - so sold up and moved here. As our buyers had been living with a development that was even taller and closer than the proposals they didn't mind too much, but I knew that I wouldn't cope with all that building going on at the bottom of my garden for two years.

The first thing the builders did was cut down all the big trees that could have given us privacy and noise protection.

Elegran Fri 11-Sep-15 17:10:00

I am sorry for her, but she can only hope that the worst features don't get past the planning stage, and I am sure she is not the only one pointing out unacceptable things about it.

There are planning restrictions on noise, height relative to nearby buildings, flood danger, and a lot of other things, so if she concentrates on those she will have more leverage on the planning department. Comments about her own enjoyment of the lovely place she is in now won't hold much weight with them - in fact they are likely to make them regard her as a "nimby objector".

Near me an application is in for a four-storey care home on a site in the middle of one and two-storey homes. The proposed edifice is far too big for the plot it would be on, not just in height but in its footprint on the site - no space left round it for the sensory garden, participatory garden etc etc that are described, or for the residents to sit out in the sun - there is not nearly enough parking provided for staff and visitors, and the sewage system is already almost at capacity, so where the effluent will go for another 50 loos and the washing of fifty sets of bedding a day heaven alone knows.

These are the things that the neighbours are mentioning in the objections, because these are the things that the planning committee will judge it on. It will be re-submitted, of course, with bits altered here and there, until it gets past. The hope is that it will be trimmed down to a better size.

Incidentally, I am not sure how her letter reached the papers, because objections to planning consent here are not made public. She must have copied it to the press.

Atqui Fri 11-Sep-15 17:18:24

I have read letters of objection and support on the Dartmoor panning website, I'm sure they must be in the public domain in London.

I feel sorry for her, as I would for anyone in that situation irrespective of the monetary value of the home.

Luckygirl Fri 11-Sep-15 17:46:02

Most people would be unhappy about this. If they were affordable housing rather than luxury flats at least

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they would have moral credibility.

I would be sad if such a block were proposed right by my garden - I think that most of us would.

Incidentally it has been interesting to see her out in Lebanon reporting on the refugee situation when we have become more used to her on home soil in less serious roles.

Alea Fri 11-Sep-15 20:53:55

Looking at the plan, it overlaps her garden by a relatively small bit, not exactly looking in her bedroom windows.

People need to realise that even when their property is worth millions they have **only** paid for their own land, not a buffer zone of miles in every direction.

It's not likely to be "affordable" housing, unfortunately, and I am afraid I don't think she really has a leg to stand on.

Elegran Fri 11-Sep-15 21:31:07

It sounds as though there is a 'large condenser plant' planned for the the bit near her - well away from the owners of the luxury flats. she might get somewhere objecting to noise from that.

rosequartz Fri 11-Sep-15 22:27:31

Diddums ? 😏 is that a bit harsh?

Presumably the Planning Authority wrote to all those in the neighbourhood asking for their comments on the proposed development and any comments, letters of objection etc will be on the council's website for all to see.

It doesn't really matter what her house is worth or where it is - or indeed who she is; it is her **home** and she is as entitled as anyone to object to what would be a complete change of building on an adjacent plot.

The plans will probably be passed anyway, (lack of available building space?) but at least she has registered her objections, and I expect other neighbours who may be affected will do so too.

janerowena Fri 11-Sep-15 22:31:46

Anyone who buys a home that they like, in an area that they like, with views and privacy that they like, is going to be upset when planning that isn't sympathetic to the area goes ahead. The poor woman is going to feel unable to go out in her garden without being spied on.

Deedaa Fri 11-Sep-15 22:35:01

Some of these developments do cause enormous noise and disruption. I'm not sure that it's fair to say your feelings don't matter if you're rich and famous.

Eloethan Sat 12-Sep-15 01:14:55

I can't say I would be overjoyed at plans for a block of flats to be built at the bottom of, and overlooking, my back garden or the increasing likelihood of a permanently waterlogged lawn. I would oppose it.

That doesn't mean that I agree with the NIMBY attitude of people who object to houses/flats being built some distance from them but which they feel might spoil the rather exclusive nature of the area.

Having said that, I think that people living in much more modest homes should have as much right as those living in expensive homes to have their objections seriously considered when similarly obtrusive developments are being proposed.

Eloethan Sat 12-Sep-15 01:18:03

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That doesn't mean that I agree with the NIMBY attitude of people who object to houses/flats being built some distance from them but which they feel might spoil the rather exclusive nature of the area.

Having said that, I think that people living in much more modest homes should have as much right as those living in expensive homes to have their objections properly listened to when similarly obtrusive developments are being proposed.

rosequartz Sat 12-Sep-15 10:23:26

Something similar happened along from us - county council planners and committee opposed two schemes, but they were passed on appeal by one man in each case. I don't think one person should have that much authority, to override the views of locals, planners, councillors, conservation experts etc. etc. One apartment's windows are just a few feet away from a neighbour's windows.

durhamjen Sat 12-Sep-15 11:33:07

We had planning permission turned down for an estate in a field on the edge of this village because of the flooding problem.

She will not be able to object because of the view, but increased flooding is a good reason.

When we lived in Hull, we lived in a house opposite a private school. I noticed in the local paper last week that the school has permission to build a two storey library overlooking the houses, with just the street in between.

There were objections because the pupils will be able to look into the rooms of the houses opposite.

Planning permission was granted despite this.

One of the houses up for sale now belongs to a teacher at the school, who does not want pupils to be able to look into the bedroom and living room of his house.

Alea Sat 12-Sep-15 11:42:30

And yet vast swathes of housing are still being passed by the planners/built on/ and bought on known flood plains 😞

durhamjen Sat 12-Sep-15 11:59:07

Where, Alea?

Lots of housing has been built on flood plains previously, but I do not know that they still are being given planning permission. Do you know of any in particular?

Alea Sat 12-Sep-15 12:16:20

Winnersh floodplain housing development dubbed madness - BBC ...

www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-berkshire-31147252

Winnersh floodplain housing development dubbed madness. 5 February 2015. From the section Berkshire. Hatch Farm Dairies, Wokingham Image copyright ...

Has this worked?

Alea Sat 12-Sep-15 12:18:35

Granted this is dated 2014, but still **after** the disastrous floods of the winter of 2013/14

Flood debate: Should we build on floodplains? | News | Architects ...

www.architectsjournal.co.uk/news/daily...floodplains/8659040.article

17 Feb 2014 - Yet plans have emerged for hundreds of houses in flood-hit areas such ... or at the very least has not discouraged, development in flood plains.

rosesarered Sat 12-Sep-15 14:02:23

There are tons of houses still being built on floodplains! the Thames Valley area is more or less one giant floodplain.

janerowena Sat 12-Sep-15 14:37:09

I know of one - near Nassington. Not permanentbrickbuilt housing, but nevertheless new buildings, caf?? etc and facilities and a large permanent site for static caravans. Those caravans will still be homes, so there has been a huge outcry amongst the villagers who see how often that area floods. My friend who lives there has often posted photos of the floods, so I think it's nothing short of criminal.

durhamjen Sat 12-Sep-15 16:22:09

I read your BBC link, but it does not say it has been passed.

Bovis put in for planning permission. Has it been granted?

The architects journal link does not work.

The whole of Hull is completely below sea level. That's why they built the Humber Barrage, and why they have now built another one to stop Hull flooding. It does not mean that houses cannot be built there. There's still flooding, though, because there always has been.

Alea Sat 12-Sep-15 21:47:10

Sorry about the Architects Journal link, maybe too old/expired, but I think my point is nevertheless a valid one.

To get back to Fiona Bruce, however, would the opposition to this development have made the national press if a "celebrity" had not been involved? I think not

janerowena Sat 12-Sep-15 22:28:50

No, probably not. My pet hate is people selling off their back gardens, selling their own house as well, and moving somewhere away from the havoc they have wrought. I know a few who have done that.

[Mobile site](#)



Gransnet forums

AIBU

Travellers (113 Posts)

riclorian Fri 02-Sep-11 18:30:43

What are other members views on Travellers ? I become quite incensed when I hear of them taking over private land and even building on it without the necessary planning permission !! A close family member has had this happen to him – it was a very costly and dangerous business ,getting rid of them (court orders etc.)their rubbish and needles etc ..Why is it that nowadays if you flout the law you can seemingly get away with it while we law abiding citizens are penalised for erecting even a shed without permission?! I would be pleased to hear other's views on this subject .

susiecb Fri 02-Sep-11 18:37:14

How can you be a traveller and insist on a permanent site isnt that a contradiction in terms? And what has it got to do with Vanessa Redgrave perhaps she could have them in her back garden in Hampstead!

greenmossgiel Fri 02-Sep-11 18:53:32

Hmm, perhaps she could, **susiecb**!.....they could leave their faeces and other stuff they no longer want to keep for themselves in the middle of her garden, like some 'travellers' do in the middle of open grassy areas local to where we live. Our own council seem to bow to their every wish, doing nothing but pay lip service with regards to deterring them (boulders in roadways etc, which the travellers move easily with their own vehicles). angry

Jacey Fri 02-Sep-11 19:02:55

Yes ...I believe that all ethnic groups should have the ability to live their lives according to their particular set of beliefs ...**but** ...with that goes their respect for other people's way of life.

Yes ...fixed 'temporary' sites ...where they can stay for short periods ... before continuing on their 'travels' ...**but** ...they need to leave these sites clean and tidy.

No one has the right to encamp on private property ...let alone build on it ...the council should be held accountable for that ...turning a blind eye is no solution. The council should have acted immediately ...not just 'hope' that they would move on. Curious ...were the children allowed to enrol in the local schools?

I think we might be back to the Human Rights Act ...where are the **responsibilities**?

gma Fri 02-Sep-11 19:33:40

Yes Yes Yes I agree entirely with Jacey,greenmossgiel,susiecb and riclorian !!!

What will happen now that 'rent a rabble' have moved in and set up 'Camp Constant' I dread to think. How do these 'travellers' finance their lavish caravans full of sparkly tat, satellite tvs and brand new vehicles. Do they pay council tax, nat.ins. etc. do they qualify for NHS treatment.I know that they own part of the land but it should not be built on without planning permission. The council concerned have been turning a blind eye for years and hoping it would all go away. WRONG.

Everybody has a right to live as they choose, but within the boundaries of the law of the land. Come on Vanessa Redgrave show how much you are on the 'travellers' side and let them move into your garden!! Time for a wine

creamtea Fri 02-Sep-11 19:48:23

Hi everyone I so agree with you all - how can you be a traveller when you dont go anyware !! the 'travelors' who seem to be most vocal all seem to have very strong irish accents so why are they not 'traveling' in Ireland. and why do they think the laws of the land don't apply to them !

Hattie64 Fri 02-Sep-11 20:01:02

The problem here is they floated the Planning Laws, even though they had bought the land, they didn't have planning permission to build on it. I gather, the local Council, as now directed by the UN, now has to find them other places to stay? I think I am correct in saying this. In various interviews and a tv programme, it is only the women who show their faces, the men do not wish to be seen

FlicketyB Fri 02-Sep-11 21:20:32

I couldnt care less who the 'Travellers' are or where they come from but there are planning laws in this

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country and if anybody ignores them, whether from a special 'community' or just an ordinary resident, they should all be subject to the same penalties.

Every year there are cases in the paper where non-traveller chancers have either got planning permission for one building and built something three times as large or have built a house without planning permission and attempted to 'hide' the house from the planners for four years to get round the law that way. In all but the most exceptional cases those houses have been demolished, in many cases by the local council itself. These people built homes without getting planning permission, why should they be treated any differently than anybody else.

harrigran Fri 02-Sep-11 21:57:40

Yes they should be subject to planning regulations, all the rest of us have to jump through hoops to get what we want. It has taken me 15 months to get the permission for my extension and it has to be done by the book, every time the building inspector comes to check a stage of work he has to be paid, by us. I don't see why one group of people should do as they wish and get away with it.

Granny23 Fri 02-Sep-11 22:29:34

So much misinformation here. Have people been swallowing the Daily Mail whole? e.g. *'No one has the right to encamp on private property ...let alone build on it ...the council should be held accountable for that ...turning a blind eye is no solution. The council should have acted immediately ...not just 'hope' that they would move on.*

I understand that the 'travellers' actually own the land but were refused planning permission to build homes on it.

Curious ...were the children allowed to enrol in the local schools?'

Not only allowed but in fact required. Travellers children MUST attend school, or be properly home educated, under the same rules as apply to all children. Hence why travellers need permanent or semi permanent places to stay. Many families have a large caravan which mainly stays on site with school age children/mums/grannies and a smaller tourer which travels to wherever the others are working/visiting /touring. We have a council run site nearby and the children from there attend the local primary school where my DGS goes. They wear the school uniform and the only way you can identify them as travellers is if you see them walking the mile from the school to the Travellers site.

'have very strong irish accents (sic) so why are they not 'traveling' in Ireland'

There are five native nationalities in the British Isles. Four - Scottish, English, Welsh and Irish are geographically/politically based but the fifth counts the whole of the British Isles as their homeland and feel free, indeed sometimes it is a compulsion, to move from corner to corner, north to south, to Ireland and back. Their accent may sound Irish to the English but does not sound Irish to the Irish IYKWIM!

I am a little shock to see some of the views here on Gransnet. I am sure that people would be much more circumspect if commenting on any other minority.

harrigran Fri 02-Sep-11 22:35:05

hmm

jangly Fri 02-Sep-11 22:39:36

What's that supposed to mean **harrigran**?

Perfectly good post, I would say.

glassortwo Fri 02-Sep-11 22:44:17

Welcome back **jangly** hope you enjoyed your holiday.

Joan Fri 02-Sep-11 22:45:36

I don't live in England, but I grew up in Yorkshire and remember being scared of Gypsies, as we called them then, and I was terrified of their dogs. When they camped near my friend's house, a railway house in an isolated location, I never ever dared go past their site, as their dogs were vicious and would bite. So everyone kept away from them and they kept away from the locals. I don't remember any trouble - it was just a sort of separation, which both sides preferred.

The travellers of today have a right to their lifestyle, as have the residents of the areas where they live. I don't think the locals are lying when they say they've been harassed. I don't think it is a lie that the travellers have bought land and built on it without permission. And I do think councils tend to do little and hope for the best.

It is up to the authorities to act sooner rather than later - obviously demolishing illegal dwellings is going to cause bother. Ignoring problems does NOT make the problems go away. A bit of early common sense by the authorities would have prevented all this, and the Daily mail would have had to find some other right wing cause.

jangly Fri 02-Sep-11 22:47:10

Hello **Glass**. Yes, did thank you. smile

Twobabes Fri 02-Sep-11 23:45:21

Well said, **Granny23** and **Joan**. Thank you for your considered comments.

Baggy Sat 03-Sep-11 07:59:00

People should be allowed to live a nomadic sort of life if they want. It's a very ancient way of living, which we should respect. Mutual respect might then be forthcoming.

I object to litter too, but just looking around some of the lochs in Scotland and thinking about all the junk that's supposed to be floating around in the Atlantic, I think "the rest of us" need to sort our own trashy lifestyles before criticising others.

Plus, it was the Daily Mail!!!!!! Written to provoke negativity.

Zephrine Sat 03-Sep-11 08:30:26

That's the point **Baggy**, the people on this site are not nomadic, they have been there for years and Essex county council have been trying to move them on for years. The ECC have tried to resolve this problem in many ways over the years without much success. They are next to a council provided, legally run site and you can see that the unofficial site is overcrowded. Yes they have the right not to live in houses and travel but how did they acquire the right not to live by the rules the rest of us have to? I am not a Daily mail reader. I used to live in Essex.

Baggy Sat 03-Sep-11 09:42:37

I haven't read the article, but it has been mentioned that the travellers own the land they illegally built on. Does anyone know why they aren't allowed to build on their own land? Just asking.

Also, it's not clear to me why the council wants to move the travellers on, if they're on their own land.

Puzzled.

creamtea Sat 03-Sep-11 10:46:30

The reason they haven't got planning permission to build on 'their own land' is because it is Green Belt Land - countryside - any of us can own green belt land but we would never get planning permission to build. It is usually land that separates towns and villages and stops areas turning into sprawling areas of houses with no definition between different towns or villages. So as they have not got planning permission to build they are in effect breaking the law by living on their green belt land.

Zephrine Sat 03-Sep-11 10:48:21

They do own the land and they can't build on it for the same reasons as you or I can't just build on land we own. They have to apply for planning permission and any building has to conform to all planning regulations. This problem has been ongoing for at least 10 years and ECC has tried to resolve it. How would you feel if someone bought land next to you and set up a motor bike track, or a caravan site, or built a mansion and held all night raves. The planning laws are there for a reason, although they seem in danger of being eroded any time now.

Jangran Sat 03-Sep-11 12:26:06

Well, I am all in favour of the rule of the law, of course. We are all equal under the law, aren't we? Or are we? I was a member of a borough council for over 25 years, and I found out a lot about planning law during that time.

To summarise - anyone who wanted a small improvement had to jump through various hoops when applying

for planning permission, and it took ages, and was quite often turned down. However, builders usually gained permission to erect houses, even if their request did not fit in with the local borough plan. The reason, I found out, eventually, was that HM government had (I think it was in Planning Guidance Note 3) decided that it should be assumed that businesses should be granted permission unless there was very good reason not to. This decision was taken a lot more seriously by planning officers than was any views expressed by mere elected members.

In other words, whilst domestic applicants for planning permission had to prove that they would cause no inconvenience to anyone, people that opposed business applicants had to prove that the application would make life more or less impossible. If they did that, successfully, so that the council turned down an application, the businesses would appeal to the Secretary of State, who would then grant the permission. And the council would have to pay costs.

I found out a bit about travellers when I was on the Council too. It seemed that no-one objected to travellers, but no-one wanted them anywhere near to them. There is (or was then) a legal duty on councils to provide sites for travellers, but it was a duty that was impossible to carry out because no-one wanted travellers near them, and whoever was the councillor for the areas with a proposed site took care to ensure that the site was found unsuitable.

The result, of course, was that travellers really did have to travel in my borough, and could only stay in one place long enough to be evicted (although that sometimes took quite a while).

The trouble with the rule of law is that the laws are all written by and for the "haves", not the "have nots"

Baggy Sat 03-Sep-11 12:54:53

Thank you for the explanation, **cream** and **jan**. I fully approve of green belt laws. Funny how councils sometimes flout them for their own ends, but that's another issue.

If the travellers lived on their green belt land in a more traditional 'traveller' way, in movable caravans, which did move periodically to other sites, I suppose that would (technically if not aesthetically) be within the law, wouldn't it?

It rather sounds as if they aren't travellers at all but 'permies' like most of us.

Baggy Sat 03-Sep-11 12:56:59

Have now read your last post, **jangran**. Thank you for that and your great good sense. Power corrupts indeed.

gma Sat 03-Sep-11 13:39:35

I am very interested in everybodys point of view. Yes I do understand about green belt land and what our countryside would be like without it, BUT nobody has told me why we do not see any traveller men at these confrontations. Where are they all, sitting inside the caravans drinking tea and watching TV? Out at work? or maybe travelling. The traveller women all appear to be very strong and vocal so maybe the men leave them all to it. Or is there another reason.....do you know?confused

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Gransnet forums

House and home

what sort of extension (22 Posts)

joolz1954 Sun 01-Dec-13 06:36:10

Hi

We are about to buy a new house and are undecided about how to make more space. The living room and kitchen back onto a private, south facing garden. The kitchen is a bit small so we are looking to extending into the garden, while doing that, we might as well extend the living room as well. Our dilemma is, do we build a proper extension i.e. bricks/tiled roof or do we go for a large conservatory style extension to make the most of the garden. What are the pros and cons of a mainly glass extension.

tanith Sun 01-Dec-13 09:31:30

I know people with both and the ones who have conservatories don't seem to use them as much as those with brick built ones. I would think if you are having one with all the bells and whistles, heating, double glazing, blinds etc then it would be fine otherwise I'd go for brick built extension.

tanith Sun 01-Dec-13 09:33:44

Sorry I meant to add that those with conservatories seem to have temperature control problems ,too hot or too cold .

Aka Sun 01-Dec-13 09:43:17

Go for a brick build but with patio doors opening into the garden. I don't use my conservatory much during the colder months.

Aka Sun 01-Dec-13 09:44:07

Or perhaps an orangery!

Charleygirl Sun 01-Dec-13 09:45:42

I agree with **Tanith**. I personally would go for a brick built extension because of the temperature control problem with conservatories. When they work well they are great but it is difficult to get the correct temperature control whereas with a brick built extension it will have double glazing, central heating etc.

An extension will add a band to council tax, I am not sure if a conservatory will.

Ariadne Sun 01-Dec-13 09:48:08

Brick but with lots of glass (is that an orangery, **Aka**? I have always liked the look of conservatories I have had, but we honestly have never used them much. They just came with each house!

The best thing we did was to extend the kitchen and add a big, light filled dining area, with patio doors and big windows, and room for an armchair. Loved it.

Eloethan Sun 01-Dec-13 12:29:07

Brick built with patio or bi-folding doors. Conservatories are OK if the space isn't intended to be used all the time but, from what I've seen, at certain times of the year they seem to be either too hot or too cold to be comfortable or energy-efficient.

Grannyknot Sun 01-Dec-13 12:33:21

Brick built with big patio doors any day over a conservatory; I've never had one, but they just seem like a real schlep to me (as appealing as they may look); I've always thought about the hassle of keeping all that glass clean. And the temperature control must be a problem, I hadn't thought of that.

joolz1954 Sun 01-Dec-13 13:54:32

thanks ladies. some great answers there. food for thought indeed

kittylester Sun 01-Dec-13 14:10:09

Aka 🙄

Agus Sun 01-Dec-13 14:20:00

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Remember to add in the cost of blinds as any glass construction facing South will be extremely hot in summer. My preference would be brick built possibly with a roof lantern.

J52 Sun 01-Dec-13 17:49:30

Hi Joolz1954, an architect would be able to advise, without huge cost. Every year the RIBA have a charity scheme where individuals can have an architect visit them and give an hour of professional advice, in return for a £40 donation to Shelter. If you go onto the RIBA website you will find more info. The project is called "Architect in the House". X

merlotgran Sun 01-Dec-13 17:57:13

You could even go for a timber framed kit extension which will be built to your design. I wouldn't go for a south facing conservatory. We made that mistake years ago and had to change the roof to a solid one.

harrigran Sun 01-Dec-13 23:29:22

Brick built extension, guarantees you have a useable room all year round.

Bez Mon 02-Dec-13 00:00:02

I would agree with the brick built one but also have as many windows as practical - if you feel more light would be needed roof windows are good. Will you retain two rooms or have part of the construction open plan?

Eloethan Mon 02-Dec-13 00:00:09

J52 Thanks for that information - very useful to know.

rpuleo Wed 05-Nov-14 15:21:15

Message deleted by Gransnet for breaking our [forum guidelines](#). Replies may also be deleted.

rpuleo Wed 05-Aug-15 16:53:51

Hi

Here you can find some examples of glass extensions. It might give some inspiration...

[www.iqglassuk.com/h/home/residential-projects/777/#/Glazed Extensions](http://www.iqglassuk.com/h/home/residential-projects/777/#/Glazed%20Extensions)

rpuleo Wed 05-Aug-15 16:57:37

hi I also found here some more

uk.pinterest.com/north6/glass-extension/

tanith Wed 05-Aug-15 16:58:55

This thread is nearly 2yrs old for goodness sake.

rosesarered Wed 05-Aug-15 21:02:18

You can't blame them for trying!

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Gransnet forums

House and home

Conservatory v Orangery: the difference? (38 Posts)

goldengirl Wed 09-Oct-13 15:27:46

Please can someone tell me the difference between a Conservatory and an Orangery? 'Orangery' seems to feature a lot these days in house programmes and magazines and yet they look like glorified conservatories to me. In spite of the fact I'm longing to downsize, DH, bless him, would love to add a 'conservatory / orangery' on to the back of our house.

Anne58 Wed 09-Oct-13 15:35:15

There was an article about this in the Telegraph recently, I think it was written by Christopher Middleton.

Ana Wed 09-Oct-13 15:53:02

www.jewelwindows.co.uk/blog/the-difference-between-an-orangery-and-a-conservatory/

annsixty Wed 09-Oct-13 16:23:37

I had always thought an orangery belonged to a Stately home type of place but I do know of people who have Garden rooms although I have never seen one, so don't actually know how these differ from conservatories.

Ana Wed 09-Oct-13 16:38:30

If you read the link you will see that it's mainly structural.

kittylester Wed 09-Oct-13 16:39:27

Presumably, an orangery faces the perfect way for growing oranges while a conservatory doesn't. 😊

annodomini Wed 09-Oct-13 16:39:52

I bet the people who have orangeries don't grow oranges in them. 😊

Ana Wed 09-Oct-13 16:41:16

I think an Orangery was originally used for over-wintering orange trees etc., much as a conservatory can be used to over-winter less than hardy shrubs.

kittylester Wed 09-Oct-13 16:41:58

Unless of course one is being pretentious, then 'orangery' sounds much posher than a 'conservatory'. My mother would have had an orangery! 🤔

kittylester Wed 09-Oct-13 16:43:28

A garden room, on the other hand, would seem to have trugs, twine, seed packets etc. 🤔

Ana Wed 09-Oct-13 16:44:47

And a pile of old, muddy wellies... 🤔

(or possibly shiny new ones, just for show!)

merlotgran Wed 09-Oct-13 16:47:17

Orangeries are also used like greenhouses and have plants permanently growing in them like grape vines and figs.

annsixty Wed 09-Oct-13 16:49:40

Oh but my friend who is always pretentious on her son's behalf describes his garden room as being an extension to the "huge" kitchen -diner, so no messy things in that I think.

LizG Wed 09-Oct-13 16:58:52

We had a consevatory on our old Victorian property and sold the house for £125,000 the new owners rebuilt and enlarged the conservatory, called it an orangery and sold the house for half a million. Too be honest

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they did make other changes too 😊

Jendurham Wed 09-Oct-13 17:02:27

There's an orangery at Gibside. It was originally called the Green House, but in 1774 7 large tubs for orange trees were bought and it was subsequently called the Orangery. Mary Eleanor Bowes was well known for her passion for botany at the time. She also built a hot house which no longer exists, but the glassless orangery is still there.

FlicketyB Wed 09-Oct-13 17:18:30

What others are calling a garden room we call a boot room or utility room. I would describe an orangery as a garden room. In a big house we hired for a big family gathering there was a second sitting room opening onto the garden which was described as a garden room.

Sel Wed 09-Oct-13 17:51:47

I thought an orangery had three half brick walls, the rest and roof glass, the fourth being the house. Conservatories are glass. Carson will know 🙄

JessM Wed 09-Oct-13 17:56:42

Orangeries are much bigger! Big enough to grow full sized orange trees for goodness sake - and wheel them outside in the summer. Calling a conservatory an orangery is a bit like referring to your car as a JCB.

Look at the gallery on here:

www.english-heritage.org.uk/daysout/properties/wrest-park/

or there is one in Margam Park

Penstemmon Wed 09-Oct-13 18:03:04

Haha! The extension we have put on our house was referred to by a visitor as an orangery. It has a wall of windows/ glass doors and rooflights not a solid ceiling!

Where we moved from had a conservatory as it had an all glass roof and low brick walls on two sides with glass above!

I called them both 'the extension'!

Anne58 Wed 09-Oct-13 18:04:01

Found it!

www.telegraph.co.uk/property/10350356/The-Cambridge-conservatory-needs-some-blue-sky-thinking.html

absent Wed 09-Oct-13 18:42:23

I used to work in an eighteenth century house, obviously converted to offices, that still had an orangery along one side of the building and still had orange trees there. It was an extremely elegant construction and a glorious place to sit and each lunch.

annsixty Wed 09-Oct-13 19:20:44

Lyme Park (think Colin Firth in a wet t-shirt) which is very close to me has a lovely orangery which would be very ostentatious on a modern house.

annodomini Wed 09-Oct-13 19:32:02

It would dwarf most modern houses, **annsixty!**

annsixty Wed 09-Oct-13 19:41:32

I like to imagine you **anno** just a few miles away with your "trigger finger" working just like mine when there is absolutely nothing on the telly!!!

Jendurham Wed 09-Oct-13 22:12:49

Interesting Phoenix. Gibside, with its orangery, once belonged to the Bowes-Lyon family, but they let it go to

ruin because it was in the North East. Mind not as bad as the castle near Barnard Castle that they stripped then let the army practice on.

Tegan Wed 09-Oct-13 23:11:27

Have they done more work on Gibside? We were there last summer and I think there were plans afoot. I loved the way they had horse drawn carriages for disabled people to take round the park. Going off at tangent [as I'm prone to do] I hadn't realised till tonight that the guy who owned Kedlestone Hall [our local stately pile] saved the Taj Mahal when he was Viceroy of India. In fact, he saved lots of important buildings in India and did the same when he moved back here.

Jendurham Thu 10-Oct-13 00:14:25

When Ken was 65, we went to Derbyshire to look at all the stately homes in the area. We went to Kedlestone, where there was a very observant woman who noticed that Ken was having trouble with his eyesight as well as his balance. He'd had one cataract removed but not the other so his glasses were not working properly. She gave him a special sheet to go around with and permission to touch the columns and the doorways, etc.

You can imagine what a privilege that was to an architect. She gave her name so that if anyone challenged him we could send them to her.

When we took the sheet back to her, she admitted that it was the first time she had been able to do that, and wanted to know what would happen!

We went to Sudbury as well. In the school room there were reminiscences about your school days and one of them was from someone who went to the same primary as me in Hull.

I think they are supposed to be restoring the orangery and some of the house, but I have not been there since I was in hospital at Easter.

I am supposed to be related to Mary Milner, John Bowes mother, the commoner who married the tenth Earl of Strathmore. She is buried in the mausoleum there, another interesting building.

Tegan Thu 10-Oct-13 11:20:47

Oh we went in the mausoleum [I like places like that]. At Kedlestone Lord wotsit was married to the beautiful lady whose dress is on display but she died quite young and has a whole part of the church dedicated to her. He then remarried a rich American [which is what they tended to do in those days] who lived to a ripe old age. When I asked the attendant in the church where she was buried and did it bother her that the first wife was so prominent, he pointed to a small grave on the periphery of the churchyard which is where she'd asked to be buried. So I went and paid my respects to her and said 'good on you'. Strange how, when somewhere is on your doorstep you never visit it; I've lived here for 40 plus years and this year was the first time I'd been there. We love all the stately homes in Northumberland because they're all so different, although Chillingham Castle is my favourite.

kittylester Thu 10-Oct-13 11:47:53

We love Kedleston too **Tegan** and, as it's only ten minute drive from DD1's house, we go often in the summer. They have good antique's fairs there to! The grotto is good at c*****s with lots of extras and really good presents.

Jendurham Thu 10-Oct-13 11:50:41

Lord Curzon. I've got a book about him somewhere, about what he was like when he was Viceroy.

Gibside is only 15 minutes drive for me, and with the supposed connection, we tend to go there most often.

Ken preferred Craggside. It has a minibus going round permanently for disabled. It needs it!

The white cattle at Chillingham are unbelievable aren't they?

Tegan Thu 10-Oct-13 12:08:39

We couldn't find Kedlestone at first, and complained bitterly. Supposedly the National Trust don't like signposting their properties and we were also told the sat nav wouldn't work either. We almost gave up and went to Ashbourne for the day instead! But backtracked on ourselves and approached from a different direction only to find we'd been within spitting distance of the place but there was no signpost. Don't think they pointed out how amazing Lord Curzon had been; it was only when I was watching the programme about heritage last night and saw some footage of India that I sat down and took notice, because I recognised it as something that was being shown at Kedlestone when we were there. That dress on display is beautiful isn't it. I didn't think I'd like the place because I'm not keen on Adams style things, but I loved it. It has links with another house in Northumberland [but I can't remember which one]. I love Craggside which has links with Bamburgh Castle [I like the Owl room; makes me think of Gormenghast!]. My worst nightmare would be to be locked in Chillingham Castle overnight [although I believe people pay to do so 😊]. Seeing the cattle was the closest I've ever been to being on safari.

annodomini Thu 10-Oct-13 12:15:13

I went with friends many years ago to Kedleston. Three or four years ago, I took a friend who was visiting

from Scotland, found the suspiciously empty car park and a volunteer came to tell us that it was closed on Fridays. I hadn't looked it up on the NT web site. Silly me! So we went on to Sudbury Hall which was also impressive - I love ceilings and fireplaces; and sorry to have digressed from the OP. 🙄

Jendurham Thu 10-Oct-13 12:44:08

I think Kedlestone has links with Wallington, the Trevelyans. Or is that Sudbury?
My husband went to Charles Trevelyan College in Newcastle, which is now part of Northumbria University.

goldengirl Fri 11-Oct-13 08:36:26

Thanks ever so much for all your comments and suggestions on this. I'd forgotten 'Garden Room'. I don't think our house warrants an 'orangery' although from the front it looks bigger than it actually is. I'll stick with a 'conservatory' if we get one at all. In my view it's just another room for spiders to enjoy their get togethers and for me to clean 🙄 although it could be useful for our family gatherings. Hmm lots of food for thought.

annsixty Fri 11-Oct-13 08:50:27

I had lunch yesterday with my friend whose son has a garden room and she told me it is so called as it has a solid roof as opposed to a conservatory which usually has a clear glass or "perspex type" .

Jendurham Fri 11-Oct-13 09:37:53

I think there are actual building regulations to do with the difference. A conservatory did not need planning or BR approval if there was no heating in it. A room with a solid roof did need BR and possibly planning depending on the size and position even if you did call it a conservatory.

This government is changing many of the rules to reduce red tape so I do not know what the rules are now.

JessM Fri 11-Oct-13 10:38:28

Makes sense **jen** if an orangery was a room with proper foundations, some solid pillars etc. But if heated it would play merry hell with the EPC whatever the glass used. The rest of the house would have to be extremely energy efficient if it was to compensate.

Always worries me when they say they are going to reduce red tape. Sounds good but regulations have usually been introduced for very good reasons after much thought and deliberation.

Jendurham Fri 11-Oct-13 23:30:12

That's true, Jess. The orangery at Gibside does not have any glass in. In fact it was quite derelict the last time I saw it. However, there are fantastic views of the Derwent Valley from near there. UKcoal wanted to do opencast in the valley, so the National Trust bought the land so they could not. Ironic really, because the Bowes family wealth was based on coal. Mary Eleanor was the richest woman in Europe at one time, which is why the Lyon family married into the Bowes family.

I have been in a proper orangery somewhere, but I cannot remember where. It was joined to the main house, and had orange, lemon and grapefruit trees. I was with my husband and grandchildren, so it could have been in Cornwall or Devon, or Yorkshire or Northumberland but not in the Midlands. Can anyone help?

[Mobile site](#)



Gransnet forums

House and home

should two become one? (26 Posts)

bitbot Tue 24-May-16 10:15:19

Admit to being an enthusiastic lurker rather than a poster but hoping you can help. We are moving to a Victorian terrace. The standard shape - front reception, smaller rear reception and then kitchen at the back. Most of the houses we have looked at have the two receptions knocked together to create a big through room. Our one still has two separate rooms. I can see pros and cons to both but would love your thoughts on whether we are better off keeping as is or knocking through. Not so worried about the actual building work as we have other things to do in the house but for the long term is it nicer to have a big airy room (albeit one with two distinct halves) or two completely separate rooms that you can use for different things. Appreciate your ideas and experiences

kittylester Tue 24-May-16 11:59:50

Can you knock kitchen and back room together - that would be my choice.

Tegan Tue 24-May-16 12:04:40

I agree with Kitty...kitchen/diners seem to be what people want these days. Our little seaside house has one and we spend most of the day in the kitchen/diner then move to the front room at night to watch TV.

Charleygirl Tue 24-May-16 12:06:43

I agree with **kittylester** but if you cannot or do not want to do that I would keep them separate.

3 houses ago I had a very large lounge/diner which was difficult to heat. I think that I would prefer separate rooms because one could watch TV and the other maybe read a book or whatever in the other room.

Friends of mine have deliberately kept the two rooms separate because the DH is a sports fanatic whereas she is not. It works fine for them and is also easier to heat.

Synonymous Tue 24-May-16 12:12:42

Perhaps you could have the best of both worlds and knock it through and have doors which open fully between them. The latest fashion does seem to be for a kitchen diner but then fashions do change. It is fun working it all out though! 😊

Teetime Tue 24-May-16 12:21:29

Kitchen diners are very useful but it also depends if you always want to be sharing or need your own space at times. Nice to have snug where you can be alone at times.

annsixty Tue 24-May-16 12:27:48

Our last house was one large through room. We put in pine louvred doors, floor to ceiling which folded back against the walls and we and most people loved it. We kept the smaller one purely as a dining room but it was great for entertaining (which we did in another life!!) . It was very light and very successful . It sold the house when we moved but trends change quickly.

bitbot Tue 24-May-16 13:00:28

didn't explain myself properly! so the two reception rooms are adjoining and the rear one has door to the garden in the back wall (well into the side return)

The kitchen is in the side return and has already been knocked through so it is a kitchen diner so that bit is fine

So the question is one big airy living room or two separate - so many reasons for both I can't decide

bitbot Tue 24-May-16 13:01:19

Obviously the kitchen isn't IN the side return - the side return runs down the side (obviously) of the kitchen so knocking it into the receptions doesn't work - will try and find a similar floor plan to show you

bitbot Tue 24-May-16 13:03:06

ok here you go

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www.google.co.uk/search?q=victorian+terrace+floor+plan&tbm=isch&imgil=kBA9tnW9kaxItM%253A%253Bh-UMFgWFNBC7ZM%253Bhttp%25253A%25252F%25252Fwww.v-aline.com%25252Fvictorian-houses-floor-plans%25252F19%25252Fvictorian-house-floor-plans%25252F&source=iu&pf=m&fir=kBA9tnW9kaxItM%253A%252Ch-UMFgWFNBC7ZM%252C_&usg=__bx76fWap0S_u7DTvTaBXuYJRROA%3D&biw=1131&bih=544&ved=0ahUKEwit3JCJ1fLMAhVBXBoKHbNNDeoQyjclKg&ei=mEJEV62wAcG4abObtdAO#imgrc=kBA9tnW9kaxItM%3A

in this floor plan the two downstairs rooms are knocked into one. In ours they aren't (yet?) Either way I wouldn't use the rear one as a dining room as we would have the table in the kitchen and don't need two dining tables so I guess we either have a living room and a snug (it's not that big) or one big room

annodomini Tue 24-May-16 13:13:56

Your terrace looks not unlike mine, built in 1891. I kept the two reception rooms separate and sometimes regret it. However, the front room is quite close to the road and I prefer to sit and watch TV (or surf the net) in the back room which is quieter. The kitchen was originally built as an extension and doesn't go the whole width of the house so it's not really practical to have a kitchen/diner without substantial structural alterations.

obieone Tue 24-May-16 13:19:35

how many people going to be living there?
do you have hobbies?
what are you used to?
noise considerations?

MiniMouse Tue 24-May-16 13:21:26

We lived in an identical house when the DCs were young and kept the two rooms separate. If we hadn't moved, I think I would have gone for the option of opening the rooms up into one, but having foldback doors so that we could have still had separate rooms at times. Our present house has internal French doors dividing the two rooms and that works really well - computer's in back room and tv is in front room and it's useful to be able to separate the two from each other!

bitbot Tue 24-May-16 13:23:19

used to separate rooms but the ones we have now are bigger so the need to knock through never arose

quietish road so noise not a major issue

hobby is reading and cooking - cooking in the kitchen naturally - thought the back room could be a library reading room and the front room the main living room with the TV.

we could knock through but have doors to separate I suppose though the doors won't insulate noise from TV/conversations as a wall would.

the kitchen in the one we are buying is long and thin about 20 x 10 feet so easy enough to have a table at one end and units at the other without knocking it about too much. It was originally two rooms that have been knocked into one big kitchen diner

kittylester Tue 24-May-16 13:47:08

I'd leave it then!

bitbot Tue 24-May-16 13:51:54

only thing about leaving it is if we ever have all the family over (doesn't happen more than once a year but we love it when it happens - about 16 people) fitting them in the living room would be hard unless it was knocked through. I can see many benefits for leaving as is though not to mention the cost

ninathenana Tue 24-May-16 14:03:40

I agree with **kitty**. That's what I'd do.

Ours was a through lounge with double doors dividing the two halves when we moved in. We took the doors off when the children were young so they had more room to play.

When they were older the doors were replaced so we had a separate lounge. This room stays tidy less messy and it's nice to retire to in the evening.

I would in hindsight have knocked the kitchen and back half into one when we reverbed the kitchen a few years ago.

ninathenana Tue 24-May-16 14:08:03

Sorry I've just read more of the thread. Have you thought about putting doors between? That way you get the best of both worlds. Especially if you have a large opening with bi-fold doors.

bitbot Tue 24-May-16 14:23:43

yes I know people who have knocked out the wall to form an archway and put in wooden doors that can be open or closed. I'm not averse to that but it's quite a lot to spend so I need to be sure first. The other thing is that the doors would be quite big so when open restrict space in whichever room they opened into

chelseababy Tue 24-May-16 16:16:18

I prefer separate rooms so OH can listen to radio 2 while I watch tv etc. Also good to be able to have won space. When we had an extension lots of people suggested a kitchen diner but we have kitchen/breakfast room, dining room with sofa at one end and separate sitting room. Suits us.

numberplease Wed 25-May-16 00:33:13

That layout is very similar to our house, with the difference being that we don't have a hallway. When we moved in over 30 years ago, we were thinking of knocking the 2 rooms into one, but then our daughter became unable to get upstairs, so the front room became her bedroom, so we now only have the one living room, and even after 20 years, I still miss my front room, it was hardly used, but was always a nice clean, tidy place to usher unexpected visitors into!

ninathenana Wed 25-May-16 00:45:52

bitbot Our big old doors fold flat against the wall when opened, so take up no room at all.

ninathenana Wed 25-May-16 00:46:43

Stupid auto correct.
bi-fold doors

J52 Wed 25-May-16 17:46:32

We have lived in houses with both options and have just gone back to one with separate rooms. Not only does it allow us to both to do different things without disturbing each other, but both rooms can be furnished in different styles. Plus it's warmer!

x

mikedurant Thu 26-May-16 13:41:43

The layout you described is similar to mine, but the only thing is we don't have highway on roadside.

rosesarered Thu 26-May-16 16:12:45

I would knock through to create a larger living space, a lounge/diner, can't stand poky rooms.

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Gransnet forums

Legal & money

Has anyone sold off part of their garden for building? (48 Posts)

AlieOxon Thu 21-Apr-16 18:55:23

I've just had an offer for the far end of my garden - which is a fairly long one.

Those who've followed my house saga will be glad to hear that the house next door, the other half of my semi, is now being refurbished from the derelict place it has been for more than a year, since the reclusive neighbours had a kitchen fire and moved out (or were moved out). The roof is done and the garden flattened completely.

Now the idea is to use the bottom of that garden with part of mine and build a bungalow (I'm told.). There is already access by the side of that house.

So far it's a rather low offer but a lot of added perks.

I have said I cannot answer for several weeks - the next month for me is a testing time with the anniversary of my daughter's death last year and several doctor's appointments for heart tests. Not to mention the necessity to support someone in court at the end of next week!

Does anyone have positive or negative experience?

wot Thu 21-Apr-16 18:56:50

Yes, I sold a piece of garden. I wish I hadn't now.

AlieOxon Thu 21-Apr-16 19:05:57

Could you say why?

wot Thu 21-Apr-16 19:15:12

Because it was a piece of garden which ran in front of the middle cottage and the end cottage which a property developer had restored. He led me to believe that he might buy my cottage and or provide vehicular access for us. In the end, the cottage has been left empty for nearly two years while he waits for prices to go up! I only got 2 thousand pound for it. My middle neighbour refused to sell him the front garden as he feels it gives him bargaining power. I've still got a good sized garden left though. If it was the end of a garden I probably would sell but mine is farm fields at the end! I would make sure it was a good offer though.

wot Thu 21-Apr-16 19:16:49

Also, any buyers would prefer not to be overlooked by anyone.

AlieOxon Thu 21-Apr-16 19:24:49

Full of promises, were they?

Yes, I got a lot today. I will have to be cynical, but I have owned houses since I was 21 and enjoy bargaining!and I would have to make sure somehow that I wasn't overlooked, ie that this bungalow doesn't grow another story.....

wot Thu 21-Apr-16 19:32:29

yes, that's all true. First of all, he offered 3 thousand so I said yes but when I was all keen, he dropped the price! This could be why he's a millionaire!

granjura Thu 21-Apr-16 19:41:53

All our neighbours sold- we were the only ones to refuse- glad we did. House is now a Childrens' nursery and the garden is well used and loved.

Jalima Thu 21-Apr-16 20:41:45

It depends on how far the dwelling will be from your house, whether there is the possibility of double storey, how large the garden will be, the access and whether it will impinge on your privacy and whether or not they could plant trees on the border restricting your access to light - and the price!

Also whether you would be glad to be rid of part of the garden if it becomes too much to cope with in the future.

It would have to be a great deal more than £2,000 for us to sell. Why is the offer low? Stand firm on price if

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you decide you want to go ahead. (As DS says - always get three valuations.)

Ana Thu 21-Apr-16 20:45:04

I agree that £2,000 was a very low price, but that was **wot**.

We don't know what **Alie's** being offered but I agree that an independent value of the land should be sought.

rosesarered Thu 21-Apr-16 20:50:44

A part of our present garden was sold by the former owner of this house, to a house next door who wanted more land (this was about 18 years ago) and the price was £2,500(it's in our deeds.) So **Alie** make sure you get a good price!

Ana Thu 21-Apr-16 20:54:23

Yes, it's one thing wanting a bit more land to make your own garden bigger, but entirely different if the object is to make a huge profit by building on it.

AlieOxon Thu 21-Apr-16 21:02:30

Yes, as soon as they get planning permission the value doubles.

However they are offering considerably more than that, and I have discovered that there is very little land available here (via google) so I may be in a good position.

To be honest this garden is getting a bit too much for me lately - and I could definitely use some extra cash!

wot Thu 21-Apr-16 21:32:02

My garden is too much for me to keep properly but I do love the privacy it offers and as it was my dad's garden, I wouldn't want to have any more of it chopped off. I know I've said I don't like living in the countryside but the garden is the plus point. (Space enough for four sheds and one greenhouse 😊)

wot Fri 22-Apr-16 09:22:39

My house is very small so sheds are for stuff I can't fit indoors
(bit of a hoarder)

Neversaydie Fri 22-Apr-16 09:57:04

5 years ago out neighbour bought the ends of two other gardens and built a house at the end of his They got £30,000 each .They aren't overly overlooked and it a big three storey 5 bed so unlikely to get bigger .His garden is v small in proportion to the house and we think he has an inflated view of its value

floorflock Fri 22-Apr-16 09:57:58

A neighbour of ours has sold a large piece of ground and the rest of us are very unhappy about it! He's then moving too - all profit for him. We are left with the building mess etc. It was a beautiful field.

floorflock Fri 22-Apr-16 09:59:43

And the view has disappeared too...

EmilyHarburn Fri 22-Apr-16 10:36:06

AliOxon Would this be an opportunity for you to move into the proposed bungalow? Would the builder build it to your specifications etc.?

Lilyflower Fri 22-Apr-16 10:36:45

Don't forget that if you sell off your own garden it will significantly lower the overall value of your house and another building in close proximity will be off-putting to potential buyers. You might not have any ideas of moving now but it could prove difficult in years to come.

On the other side of the fence, my sister was down the bottom of her garden one day when the neighbour adjoining the end said, 'Do you want some extra garden?' Cut a long one short she bought an extension to her plot of about a half again for a mere ten grand. Great for her but foolish of the other chaps, we thought.

Elsie10 Fri 22-Apr-16 11:13:19

Yep - in the midst of divorcing my first husband, (20odd years ago) several houses in our road were approached to sell off part of our rear gardens which were very long. We accepted the offer and hurriedly erected a fence to divide the garden before putting the family home on the market. The deal was very protracted - but eventually we were paid - half to my ex and half to me. My half bought me a red Mazda MX3 coupe - oh how I loved that car. Newly divorced and driving a car that made heads turn was just what I needed to boost my self confidence. I haven't owned anything so dashing since - more practical modes of transport. But it was such fun at the time.

There is now a new road and a row of houses backing onto the original homes - but over time it has mellowed and they look as tho they have always been there.

Craftycat Fri 22-Apr-16 11:27:49

As I sit here I am deafened by the constant WHINE of a large crane thing which I presume is drilling & it situated at the end of my garden where a neighbour sold off his house & 2 others sold the ends of their garden & they are building 14 new houses. It has only just started & will take 18 months. The noise, dust, inconsiderate parking by workmen & mess on roads not to mention heavy lorries trundling past all day is driving me mad already.

If you value your own & your neighbours sanity please don't do it!

They start at 8am & are supposed to finish at 6pm but rarely do! They also work Saturdays & we noticed something going on on a Sunday too so you can imagine how much we are looking forward to peaceful times in our garden this summer!

When it is over we will have the noise (& parking problems- they have only allowed the bare minimum of legal car spaces)of 14 families where there was once a quiet garden.

You buy your property for it's ambience & we have lived here in a quiet road happily for over 25 years. There was nothing we could do to prevent this & believe me- we tried!!

Craftycat Fri 22-Apr-16 11:30:04

Oh yes & 2 of my neighbours have been unable to sell their houses in a very popular cul de sac due to the plans for this development being discovered by solicitors of prospective purchasers - which of course is what you employ them for.

wot Fri 22-Apr-16 11:33:28

the good thing about living here is that nobody can build on the farm land that surrounds me. (I hope I'm correct in thinking that)it must be ghastly for you craftycat

Tessa101 Fri 22-Apr-16 12:10:53

My mum sold her piece of land for £50,000 they built a 4 bed executive home on the land valued at £700,000,if I were you I would get some legal advise because like someone has already said you have been offered a very low price and the price goes up considerably once planning permission is given.Have a Google also see what you can find out about prices and your rights.

Dillonsgranma Fri 22-Apr-16 13:00:42

Get the land valued as a building site by 3 different estate agents. That's what I did to get the best price. Good luck ! X

grandmac Fri 22-Apr-16 13:00:54

craftycat You have my sympathy. On another thread I have moaned about my neighbour who has demolished the bungalow she bought and built a house with one and a half storeys. The noise and mess and parking has been a nightmare, so with 14 houses going up I can't imagine how intrusive it must be for you.

I now have a window directly opposite my bathroom which is 'permitted as it's on the ground floor and doesn't overlook my property'. The fact I live in a bungalow has apparently escaped the council's notice! And the shadow of the taller building blocks the sun in my garden in the afternoon. I hope that at least doesn't happen to you.

Craftycat Fri 22-Apr-16 14:06:15

Green belt land all round us- makes no difference & now some has been taken OUT of GB so it is open for building on. We could do nothing about it.Apparently WE have to provide more properties for people who want to move out of central London as it is getting too over crowded there. Too expensive as well of course. As most of the properties being built are in £500000-£800000 price bracket I personally doubt this.

AlieOxon Fri 22-Apr-16 14:59:02

I am getting the message that once I have sold it, I have no control at all as to what is put on it?

annsixty Fri 22-Apr-16 15:18:09

That is at it should be **Alie** if you buy a pice of beef the butcher has no input in how you cook it. That is precisely why you must take the best advice you can as to the plans for the land, how you will be affected ,if you are happy with what is going to be the result and then get the very best price you can. You deserve to get its full worth.

CC Fri 22-Apr-16 15:23:24

I would check with an estate agent how this will affect the value of your house. We did once sell the bottom of a very long garden, didn't get much for it but did get two off street parking spaces so it was worth it for us - it added considerably to the value of our house which is on a busy road with no parking.

I also agree with others that you need to make **absolutely** sure that it will be a bungalow with no prospect of storeys being added either to the initial building or any later additions - this can be written into the contract I'm sure.

All in all, unless it is a very high offer, I would say don't do it.

NotSpaghetti Fri 22-Apr-16 15:28:27

My very accommodating and trusting parents had 2/3 acre garden at their home in Manchester and during a rough patch (financially) sold off their little 'orchard' to a builder. They got a reasonable price for it but it created quite a long boundary and cut off some of the pretty views. It was desperate when the trees were bulldozed but the "nice little family" moving in was a consolation to Mum.

They got permission for, and quickly built, a two story house very very close to the boundary - leaving only a narrow footpath round the new house. There was lots of space the other side which they chose to ignore. My parents planted a hedge along the boundary straight away (the builder and family had only put up a temporary wire), but soon we heard on the grapevine that he was going to come back once the house was built and ask for another strip along this edge for another few feet .

This time my parents were prepared and when he came six months later complaining that maintenance was very tricky etc etc and they needed some extra land Dad pointed out that he had chosen to build off-centre and so was basically not getting any more.

I think if Dad hadn't been aware of this "trick" he would have been persuaded.

So yes, the finance came at a good time for them and allowed them to get their finances back on track, but BEWARE, even "lovely" people can have a not so nice agenda.

The house is now 3 storeys and "bulging" on the plot. Mum and Dad would not like it now. Not one bit.

wot Fri 22-Apr-16 15:34:19

The piece of garden I sold is choked by weeds as the developer seems to have abandoned his property. He had all very "high spec" stuff put in his cottage so he said he wouldn't risk renting it out.o

durhamjen Fri 22-Apr-16 15:40:55

Why do you not get outline planning approval for a bungalow on your own piece of land? It will not cost a lot. Then it will be worth more.

wot Fri 22-Apr-16 15:53:26

Brilliant idea, Durhamjen!

granjura Fri 22-Apr-16 16:23:22

As DJ says- that's the way to go.

And beware of con wo/men. When my mil was about 75- she was approached by a man who chatted to her over the fence. He said he saw loved her cottage, and her wonderful garden- and how it would be his dream home for him and his wife as they had just retired and he wanted to grow veg, etc. Her cottage was in what is now one of the most expensive parts of Surrey, in a wonderful cul-de-sac. He came back several times- and continued to chat her up. As so many wonderful and large properties near her had been bulldozed with all the mature trees, etc, to build many many houses- she was so delighted someone loved her cottage and her beautiful garden and would just improve and maintain it.

We tried to warn her- but she trusted the man implicitly. Our bil wanted to take her garden house she had put in a couple of years back, and we asked for a few roses that we loved- but no- she had promised to sell to that lovely man and his wife- and everything had to be left just as...

Two weeks after she moved out, the plot was bulldozed and one multi-occupation house (5 luxury flats) were built in a jiffy, almost wall to wall and none of the garden left. She was heart broken, humiliated and of course- had sold at lowest possible price to 'that nice man and his lovely wife' - who were acting as agents for the property developer and making a very nice living out of it. ****!

AlgeswifeVal Fri 22-Apr-16 17:07:15

I think offering you a mere £2000.00 is taking the Pee. No, do not accept this ridiculous price. He is out to rook you.

dirgni Fri 22-Apr-16 17:18:37

We sold the bottom of our garden for about £100,000 + as we had decided to move house anyway, the developers build 2 houses on it. However we did have a job to sell the house afterwards , it took nearly 5 years! Who knows it may have taken that long to sell with the extra garden as it was in the middle of the recession! What we did of course is capitalised on the price!

I think you have to carefully consider all the pros and cons , take advice and don't rush into anything. Hope this helps.

HildaW Fri 22-Apr-16 17:31:23

Alie if, as I suspect you live in Oxford, which has been officially designated the most expensive place to buy a house (overtaking some areas of London) you need to get expert advice. Also, like paving over one's front garden, some local councils have brought in further legislation to deter its over use.

That being said FIL sold some of his garden in Headington and made a decent amount without detracting too much from his large house (there was still a decent amount of garden left. However, the house built on his spare bit is worth a great deal now and would not be in existence if he had not sold the land. Basically I think I'm saying - get a lot of good local advice from various sources...Citizen's Advice, Local trusted Estate Agents.....the older more traditional one's are always better, even a local Councillor if you know one..... and do not appear too keen to sell!! FIL could easily have held out for more methinks....but he was already on friendly terms with the proposed purchaser.

Marmight Fri 22-Apr-16 17:31:40

The end of our garden was sold 5 years ago. DH designed the layout and got planning but we decided not to build it for ourselves - I couldn't bear the thought of looking down on our old family home. It was a good decision as he died suddenly soon afterwards and I am left with a smaller garden which I can just about cope with and still in the house we loved. We got a good sum for it - considerably more than the paltry £2000 you are being offered **Alie** . Stick in there and wait for a decent offer after having the land valued - that is essential.

Ana Fri 22-Apr-16 17:44:24

Alie hasn't told us what she's been offered - it was **wot** who sold her land for £2,000...😬

TriciaF Fri 22-Apr-16 18:11:38

I agree with **Dillonsgranma** - get some estimates from estate agents.

The price will depend on many things, where it is, the likelihood of planning permission being granted etc.

Even objections of neighbours.

I don't know about the situation in the UK, but in France there's a lot of land which can only be for agricultural use.

AlieOxon Fri 22-Apr-16 18:44:25

I'm 15 miles south of Oxford. As I said, very little land for sale here. The amount mentioned was 18K - BUT it isn't clear how much garden this is for.

i wouldn't want to lose more than 1/3.

I am not appearing keen, in fact I said I can't think about it yet as I have a very fraught month coming up.

True. Too much on my plate!

But I thought I would sound people out here for now.

Estate agents, yes - but i don't want to do that yet either!

durhamjen Fri 22-Apr-16 18:48:01

Given you lots to think about for the summer, though, Alie.

AlieOxon Fri 22-Apr-16 20:11:46

You're right there !

AlieOxon Sat 23-Apr-16 11:27:44

I talked to the neighbours the other side, they don't seem all that bothered if there's a new building. But they told me one or two useful things which confirmed that the builder is making a point of being very nice to me.....

I'm not very keen at the moment.

AlieOxon Sat 23-Apr-16 11:28:17

I'm told to check the council re what might be allowed.

AlieOxon Tue 07-Jun-16 08:58:13

I changed my mind. Decided however much cash, it would be too much intrusion. Yesterday I finally told them and it's ok, they have changed their plans.

Now, was this to do with the fact that they (having been working next door for over 5 months) have now been told (by me, finding them talking about drains and thinking that my drains joined theirs) that the access way they planned past the other side of our building - was actually *over their drains?*

Which are shared by the next 2 semis, not mine.

I hope this is clear - the original builders put in a row of semis, and planned all the kitchens and bathrooms at the adjacent ends of each two buildings so that all the water and sewage facilities came together, and were shared in pairs.

So - hopefully they will finish earlier and put up the promised fence between us where they took out the hedge - and go away!

[Mobile site](#)



Gransnet forums

House and home

UPVC Double Glazing - any recommendations or warnings? (68 Posts)

JessM Sun 13-Jan-13 09:31:54

We are having to replace some wooden double glazed doors. 😞 😡

I need to get quotes.

Has anyone got any recommendations for double glazing companies or are there any you have used that you would like to warn me about please.

annodomini Sun 13-Jan-13 09:54:57

Get quotes from several companies; ask around for local recommendations for well-established companies; and remember - the ones that shout loudest on TV ads are not necessarily the best value!

harrigran Sun 13-Jan-13 11:50:29

Worst windows I have seen were done by big national company. Mine have been done by a small company chosen after examining their work in other neighbour's houses. UPVC frames are the same wherever you buy them, the difference is the quality in the fitting.

tanith Sun 13-Jan-13 13:41:59

I'd also go by recommendations don't use one of the big nationals.. we had ours done by a local glass shop after two neighbours had replacement windows put in.. they were excellent taking away all rubbish making good any damage and have been back once to adjust the French doors that were catching slightly..

JessM Sun 13-Jan-13 13:43:07

Thank you. They used to be a terrible cowboy industry 20 years ago.

Bez Sun 13-Jan-13 14:52:42

In our last house we replaced all the windows - some early on in our renovations were done by DH - a patio door and French doors from national DIY chain and some windows we had made by a local company and were quite satisfied. A bit later we decided to have the remainder of the house done by a company and did choose a national one - the quality of the windows is far better - the rubber seals are all concealed - the locally made ones were not - and the closing and locking mechanisms are also better. They are generally a far superior product.

They have a 10 year guarantee and every year about the anniversary time we got a phone call asking if all was well. The time I said we were having a bit of problem with the front door lock they said it would be done, and sure enough an appointment was made a man came and changed the lock. The guarantee was passed onto the buyer of our house too. I would certainly use them again.

Mishap Sun 13-Jan-13 15:23:55

Over the years, we had all of ours, and our conservatory, done by Weatherseal - it is a national franchise I think, but certainly our local branch gave by far the best quote. And they worked well and fast and we have had no problems.

nanaej Sun 13-Jan-13 15:26:33

www.guildhomeimprovements.co.uk/

Have had good experience of this company when they installed windows for usnot sure if it is within reach of your home. Friends used them subsequently and had a good result too.

Had a conservatory installed by Anglian at our old home,...they were fine as was our fab conservatory but I expect, as they are national, that you are reliant on the actual workmen who are local to you.

nanaej Sun 13-Jan-13 15:29:35

jess if you want wooden doors there are people who will make bespoke double glazed doors for you.. but suppose this might be a lot more expensive.

glammanana Sun 13-Jan-13 15:45:01

JessM ask for recommendations from local neighbours if you can, and if possible look for yourself at the

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finished work. When we lived in the family house we had the Conservatory done by a National firm and the work was first class along with clean workmanship and a definite time for completion. Our neighbour looked to save £4,500 on his work and after 18 months had leakage and had problems when he chased up the installer he had gone out of business and was forced to pay for the repairs himself.

crimson Sun 13-Jan-13 16:10:47

Are upvc doors safer than they were? I know years ago there was a problem in that, because they had a certain amount of flexibility, burglars found them easy to break into. However I think things have improved since then. Although I always prefer wooden doors I so with I had upvc windows and frames and also wish I had white frames. We went with dark wood frames and they drain all of the colour out of a room. I hate them.

nanaej Sun 13-Jan-13 16:54:08

I think that was the sliding doors **crimson** they could be lifted out of the runners. I have some bi-fold doors on our extension which a lovely in the summer as it really blends in /out..but our upvc french doors at old house were v secure.

numberplease Sun 13-Jan-13 17:23:48

Be very careful. We had all our windows and doors replaced with upvc double glazing in 1988, with a 10 year guarantee. 5 years later, a fault appeared, only for us to find that the company had gone out of business. We chose them because they'd just installed new windows at my previous workplace, so thought they'd be OK.

annodomini Sun 13-Jan-13 17:54:29

That happened to me about the same time, **number**. Fortunately the windows were fine, but if they hadn't been, the guarantee would have been worthless.

numberplease Sun 13-Jan-13 20:22:07

What was a bit suspicious about it was, the firm on the end of the phone were in the same premises, and were a DOUBLE GLAZING company!

glassortwo Mon 14-Jan-13 10:18:37

Our house is in the middle of nowhere not overlooked by anyone but the planners stipulated that we had to have wood framed windows and even the colour we could paint them they cost a fortune to have them made to order, now down in the village where one of the main roads into Scotland go through the villagers mostly have UPVC how can that be right.

harrigran Mon 14-Jan-13 12:35:08

Our home in Ulverston is the same **glass** we were told we could only have wooden frames and they had to be varnished dark brown as we are in a conservation area. A couple of years ago they built some new houses across the road and lo and behold doors and windows are all white UPVC. Does not make sense



JessM Mon 14-Jan-13 13:07:31

There was a big scam **number** at the time, with lots of companies closing down to avoid the liability of guarantees and re-opening the following week as a different company. 🤔

numberplease Mon 14-Jan-13 15:46:42

Yes JessM, that's what we thought had taken place, but there was no way to prove it. The "new" company offered to do the repair for us, but at a price. In the end, a bloke my son knew did the job for us at a much more reasonable price.

FlicketyB Tue 15-Jan-13 15:01:53

DD had replacement windows fitted in her house in Hertfordshire and we had them fitted in our French house. In both cases we made a conscious decision to put quality before price.

DD's company was local, but had been around twenty years or more and had a commercial/industrial arm as well. French company was a national company. Neither of us has been anything but satisfied with our choice.

Harrigran, I live in a conservation area, and a listed building. The aim of a Conservation area is to keep everything looking as it did when the order was applied. It is also preferred that houses have windows and roof coverings appropriate to their age and style. So if a new house is built it will be perfectly acceptable for it to have plastic windows because that is appropriate to a new house but older properties will be expected to stay with the window materials and style they were built with. As our house is listed we can do nothing to our windows except install internal double glazing. We do, however have a single storey 1960s extension at the back and hope to get consent to replace those windows with double glazed windows in wooden frames. As all the windows are of a standard size and window pattern we know we can buy suitable replacement windows from any big builder's merchant.

feetlebaum Tue 15-Jan-13 15:21:52

I recently had a window replaced by SafeStyle UK - an excellent job, carried out quickly and cleanly. I'm very satisfied.

annodomini Tue 15-Jan-13 16:50:18

I used them too, **feetlebaum**. I thought I was using a local firm, but although it was a local phone number, it turned out to be SafeStyle. I got a lovely new door and then they kept phoning me. I agreed to talk to them about windows and when I expressed reservations they continually lowered the price; I ended up with half the price they started with and wished I had played harder to get for the door too. I continued to get phone calls for ages but they seem to have realised that I really do not want any more home improvements.

Charleygirl Sat 13-Apr-13 13:22:41

I had all of the doors and windows replaced when I moved into this house in 1996. I vowed never again to have to bargain to get the price dropped, starting at eg £10,000 and they could do it for eg £6,000 but I would have to sign up that day. They went out of business shortly after but restarted again with just a minimal name change. I would not touch them with a barge pole. I went locally last year to get one window replaced and it was a very reasonable price, they did not accept negotiations, I agreed the price and the work was excellent. They were recommended by a friend. I think that small and local is best.

HUNTERF Sat 13-Apr-13 13:42:45

I think you can only go by local recommendations.

Oddly enough my parents used a smaller local company and they gave a 10 year guarantee.

The company got taken over 3 times during the 10 years but in all fairness they did tell us who to contact in the event of a problem.

About 3 months before the guarantee ended Anglian took the company over so a small company went to a big national company.

Frank

FlicketyB Sat 13-Apr-13 16:38:36

In France our window installer gave us a detailed item by item cost for every window we had installed.

He started with the cost of a fixed window, based on size of the window, then everything else we wanted was added on; cost of hinges and catches, internal window bars, obscured glass etc etc. When the survey and specification was complete we had an itemised price for each window and a total for the whole. All done from a price list and non negotiable.

After 5 years we have no problems and no complaints.

annodomini Sat 13-Apr-13 16:50:51

I used Safestyle as well and the door and windows are excellent. A good price too, but I have had to tell them (or their associated company) very forcefully to stop ringing me up to ask me if I want new soffits. My house doesn't even have soffits, as I have told them dozens of times.

Enviousamerican Sat 13-Apr-13 17:05:42

Please excuse me for going off topic. It seems to be becoming a problem with me but I'm so full of questions. I was wondering about the bull nose glass I see in your homes. It's just a decorative and privacy thing or is it an artisan thing? It's not something you see here but I like them. Is it usually just on pane in a window? Or door?

Nonu Sat 13-Apr-13 17:20:43

What is bull nose glass ?



FlicketyB Sat 13-Apr-13 17:22:07

EV, it goes back to a time when it was not possible to make flat glass. Glass was blown and then cut and flattened in small sheets while still warm and pliable. When glass is blown there is a circular area at the end of the blown glass that is thicker and less clear than the other glass (think of the end of a balloon opposite the bit you blow in to). This was a waste product that people who couldn't afford decent glass put in their windows, or sometimes would reduce the price of glazing by using a mix of flat glass and 'bullseyes', as they were called.

Because of its cheapness it was usually used in cottages and small houses. In the first half of the 19th century there was a nostalgia among the urban upper and middle classes for some mythical country idyll they wanted to return to, cottages with thatched roofs and tiny windows and, of course, those bullseye windows. The majority of those suffering from this nostalgia couldn't afford a second home in the country but speculative builders, particularly in the 1930s, responded to it by incorporating cottage features into their new designs, timber framed semis, with a bit of bullseye glass installed into a window here and there.

Nonu Sat 13-Apr-13 17:29:19

Thanks Flick .

Got it .

My georgian house has not got that , mind you some of the panes are original and looking extremely thin.

numberplease Sat 13-Apr-13 17:34:04

Please excuse my ignorance, but what the heck are soffits?

Elegran Sat 13-Apr-13 17:39:20

enviousamerican Originally all glass was made was made by blowing a big bubble and then flattening it. The end bit was impossible to flatten completely.

Then the technique of making plate glass and rolling it out without blowing was invented, and shop window panes could be larger and cheaper. The bull's eyes became old-fashioned and "olde-worldly" and it is now mostly found either in genuinely old buildings or in ones want to give the impression of age, ot make a decorative statement.

Here is a link - [Architectural glass](#)

Elegran Sat 13-Apr-13 17:41:22

Snap, **Flicketyb**

Soffits are those vertical wooden planks at the eaves of the roof.

Enviousamerican Sat 13-Apr-13 17:43:13

Soffits are the overhang from the roof.Usually wooden.Here we usually have rain gutters on them.

numberplease Sat 13-Apr-13 17:57:05

Shows how thick I am, we've always called those the fascia boards, so what are the fascias then? Can't you tell how little work we've had done on our house, lol!!

numberplease Sat 13-Apr-13 17:57:27

Fascias even!

annodomini Sat 13-Apr-13 17:59:43

The wooden surrounds are, I think, the fascia which Safestyle want me to replace with PVC but I have told them when to go. Soffits are the horizontal bit under the overhang of the eaves. Sometimes in the past they were made of asbestos.

Enviousamerican Sat 13-Apr-13 17:59:49

Number please,They might be the same thing in builder talk.

deserving Sun 14-Apr-13 12:22:02

Check them out. Some firms have been going since Ted Moul, and look like being here for a while. Whatever, ensure they are members of the Glass and Glazing federation,British plastics

federation, Federation of master builders, Consumer protection association, Guild of master craftsmen, European builders federation, or as many of the above as possible. That the quality standard is BS570 and that they have public liability insurance. A certificate should be issued after completion, ie FENSA, CERTASS or British Standards Institution, to show that the work complies with the regulations. Ask will they achieve a "u" value below 2.0W/m²K, (the lower the "u" the better, Low "E" (glass, like Pilkington "K") a between glass gap size of 20mm. Are all seams fully welded? Will guarantees be in writing? ie glass type, making good soffits etc? Will they have equal site lines, gasket colours, locks. All uPVC frames are, not as mentioned, the same, the cross sectional areas vary some have more metal, and are stronger, and are better at supporting a wide window gap. what are the guarantees Are you insurance backed, how long are the units guaranteed for? (nothing worse than misted up units). You may well not get all the above, but many are essential and are a must. See if you have any local work that has been carried out by the firm you are considering. Hope this is of some help. ps, How long will it take?

Deedaa Sun 14-Apr-13 20:48:19

For anyone living in the area - we had all our windows done about 7 years ago by Thames Valley Windows. Reasonably priced and very quick and efficient installation. A couple of years ago we got them to replace the cladding on our porch and put up new gutters and fascia boards and again we were very happy with what they did. In the early 70's we did have a VERY brief spell selling double glazing so we had been pretty sceptical to start with, but we were pleasantly surprised.

rugbyguy223 Wed 26-Feb-14 13:14:49

Message deleted by Gransnet for breaking our [forum guidelines](#). Replies may also be deleted.

Fred12 Sat 15-Mar-14 13:09:03

Last summer we ordered double glazing windows from Southampton company, the quality is great and prices - fair. To look full range of their services & prices [visit website](#)

rugbyguy223 Mon 07-Apr-14 16:01:57

Message deleted by Gransnet for breaking our [forum guidelines](#). Replies may also be deleted.

JessM Tue 08-Apr-14 07:03:36

What I learned, seeing as this has been revived was:

Get at least 3 quotes.

Try to track the company via Companies House. It costs pennies. Are they trading under various names and who will you actually be forming a contract with?

We ended up going to the local company that had their showroom and were in control of their own manufacture. They had lots of testimonials from customers. And they were not the cheapest. But the workmen were fantastic and the difference in warmth compared to the wooden double glazed french windows was amazing.

bmbtimber Thu 24-Jul-14 07:05:16

Few days back I replaced my all the steel windows and doors with the timber windows and doors.


Aka Thu 24-Jul-14 07:36:35

 ???

Charleygirl Thu 24-Jul-14 09:08:44

It is also important to find if the company is sub contracting the work.

Anne58 Thu 24-Jul-14 09:26:55

What a coincidence that the poster has "timber" as part of their name! 

harrigran Thu 24-Jul-14 22:12:55

I suggest using a local company where you can go and view their work. I have neighbours who have used big national companies and it has been a disaster. We always chose tradesmen by word of mouth from satisfied customers, if they advertise on TV you are paying for it.

Bez Thu 24-Jul-14 22:27:33

We initially used a local company when we began replacing windows during a house refurbishment but when we had Anglian give us a quote for the remainder of the house it was very apparent how much

superior their product was. We had a good quote from them and the windows were good. Every year about the anniversary of the installation I had a phone call asking if everything was still OK and we were happy. When I mentioned a small fault with a door lock they sent a man within a couple of days to fix it. The only quibble we had was that they used contractors to do the work and the men who came the second day were not as good as the first!

ellisrobertson Wed 01-Oct-14 15:35:21

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stephdawson Thu 21-Apr-16 14:23:34

Message deleted by Gransnet. Here's a link to our [Talk Guidelines](#).

ravipop Thu 25-Aug-16 08:50:40

Message deleted by Gransnet. Here's a link to our [Talk Guidelines](#).

AnnaWhite123 Mon 19-Sep-16 12:05:56

Message deleted by Gransnet. Here's a link to our [Talk Guidelines](#).

jayb Thu 10-Nov-16 13:10:32

Message deleted by Gransnet. Here's a link to our [Talk Guidelines](#).

lancette Tue 15-Nov-16 06:28:16

uPVC windows and doors shows long lasting durability & optimum security feature. This is actual key for everyone. And make your property stylish and attractive. uPVC is non-conductive & less noisy material, help for both internal temperature & reduce the noise in building . It is enable, you to capture more natural sunlight into your interior, which can also help you lower your heating costs during cold, sunny mornings.

grannypiper Tue 15-Nov-16 09:12:05

Neighbour used a national (sounds like the are from the norfolk area to have a conservatory erected the whole job took months and was a nightmare. I was away when the started and when i returned found they had put the foundations over the boundary line only by 7 inches at one end (our boundry was at a20 degree angle !) there answer was " its only 7 inches". The roof leaked and the put in the wrong windows on the side that overlooked us(terraced house) it took them 5 months to rectify the problem.

GrannyA11i Sun 20-Nov-16 13:38:17

We used a local firm a few years back, on a review site called something like 'find a trader.com' and they were as good as other reviewers had said. Earlier this year Safestyle Uk called and offered to do our porch for such a good price we took them up and the price actually got lowered during the process because something was easier to do after the surveyor had inspected the existing porch. We'd been happy with the first price so it was a great bonus! I'd recommend them for the work but not the after sales as they continually rang us up day after day until I threatened to report them to the ombudsman for harassment! They have stopped ringing us now thank goodness.

GertrudeGrace Sun 20-Nov-16 13:57:18

I would avoid Everest. I wanted a wooden front door not a plastic one. The rep was here for ages and eventually came up with a price of £10K - yes, that's right, I haven't mistyped it. When he realised we weren't buying he tried to persuade us that what we really needed was basically a set of patio doors fitted in front of the existing front door (on the hall side) so we could keep the door we had but draught proof it on the inside. It would have looked ridiculous. We had some windows done by a small local firm and their prices were nothing like the big companies, the windows are fine. Don't use any company that starts offering discounts unless they give you a sensible price to start with forget them.

Skullduggery Sun 20-Nov-16 14:15:27

I would hope the OP has sorted out who to buy double glazing from after posting this thread almost 4 years ago...🙄

Anya Sun 20-Nov-16 14:29:44

🙄 Indeed!!

Pigglywiggly Sun 20-Nov-16 16:10:19

We had Anglian to give us a quote for a new door. The quote was £2,000 reduced after two hours to £1,000. TWO HOURS to give a quote for a door! Dread to think how long it would take to quote for a full house

double glazing.

Christinefrance Sun 20-Nov-16 17:48:16

Ditto FlicketyB absolutely no problem and half the price of a big company advertising in the Supermarket. Also here there is never any question of money up front, always when the job is done satisfactorily.

Pigglywiggly Wed 23-Nov-16 08:14:56

We have just found the list of complaints we made after Everest fitted our windows nine years ago. Fit the best? Hmmmm

anniegillingham Sun 19-Mar-17 17:17:03

We used this website for our new windows. They give you an online guide price which as very useful. We were then put in touch with some local installers. Two quotes were very competitive, one wasn't so good but it was helpful to have a few different prices and see different products. We were very happy with the service and would use the same process again 😊 www.doubleglazingontheweb.co.uk

llovecheese Sun 19-Mar-17 19:34:42

Perhaps ask a local estate agent if replacing wooden with UPVC will reduce the value of your property. You might want to consider this when you are thinking about price.

carljenkinson Thu 23-Mar-17 13:39:49

In my experience working with smaller companies is the best approach. The main reason is that they care about you as a client. They don't have many clients as the larger industrial giants, so the unique approach and quality of service is top priority for them. When I was replacing my upvc windows a year ago, Colin was the one who helped me a lot and took the job to heart. You can contact him via his website colinssashwindows.co.uk/

justinye Tue 09-May-17 09:15:25

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Gransnet forums

News & politics

Selling off council homes (79 Posts)

vickymeldrew Thu 08-Oct-15 21:31:01

Any discussion about a shortage of affordable homes inevitably includes comments that it has been a mistake to sell off council properties. Given that tenants have a right to stay in their properties for life, how would any properties be freed up for new tenants?

etheltbags1 Thu 08-Oct-15 22:03:17

I bought my council house its a struggle as I live alone, but I am proud that I have done so. It is a major achievement for me. I could not afford to buy a private sector house so I did the best I could. I can say 'I did it myself'. That's how it is to many ex council house owners. The councils should be allowed to build more homes with the revenue from the sale of the houses.

If you look around estates you will see over the last 30 or so years that council estates have become much more tidy, its almost impossible to tell which are council estates and which are private in some cases. Whereas before renters did not care and dumped old car engines etc in the gardens, you hardly ever see that now.

To get back to the OP, houses become vacant when tenants die/move into care/divorce etc. they sometimes move into private rented homes.

There are several homes near where I live that are empty for over 2 years, they advertise bungalows as they have a glut. So there are often homes available for rent.

Grannyknot Thu 08-Oct-15 22:31:13

I am proud that I have done so. It is a major achievement for me. I could not afford to buy a private sector house ... that's how it is to many ex council house owners

Ethel I've heard lots of people on the Council estate where I live say similar. (We bought our house in a private sale 10 years ago).

You can hardly tell the difference between Council or privately owned houses here too.

So I am always a bit puzzled that to some people it was a dreadful thing, the "right to buy" scheme.

Anya Thu 08-Oct-15 22:42:15

There's nothing wrong with 'right to buy' it's a great idea, but the money raised should be used to build new social housing.

Elegran Thu 08-Oct-15 22:53:14

That was the "dreadful thing", not the right to buy but the assumption that there would then be no need to build any more council houses.

If the money from selling them (at the cost of rebuilding but without making a profit) had been put straight back into more housing, there would have been a continuous feed-in of new houses to replace the old stock. LAs could have built whatever size there was a need for, to modern specifications.

durhamjen Thu 08-Oct-15 23:00:50

Another problem was and is the amount of discount people got for buying the house. The cost of building went up and the money the councils got went down, so there would have been a gap in building like for like even if the councils had been given the money.

etheltbags1 Sun 11-Oct-15 20:35:15

I agree with **anya** that the money should be used for new building and also there should be the option for buyers to sell back like for like to the council if they cant manage to afford their homes. I worry that I will not be able to afford my house as I get older. If we had this option we would have a certain amount of houses returned to the local authorities. I see many run down ex council houses on my travels.

Deedaa Sun 11-Oct-15 20:56:53

Right to buy was fine, but I could never understand why the money wasn't used to build more houses. DS is currently 400th on the council list and that hasn't changed since January.

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Grannyknot Sun 11-Oct-15 22:23:16

So did local authorities take the decision not to spend the income from sold off Council houses on building new (Council) houses? Did they allocate the money to something else? And did all local authorities do that? Where did that money go?

deedaa how discouraging for your son.

durhamjen Sun 11-Oct-15 22:27:47

1980 housing act.

"Half the proceeds of the sales were paid to the local authorities, but they were restricted to spending the money to reduce their debt until it was cleared, rather than being able to spend it on building more homes. The effect was to reduce the council housing stock, especially in areas where property prices were high such as London and the south-east of England. This trend was exacerbated by a government imposed ban on local authorities using their revenues from council house sales to fund new housing.[8] Both these policies, together with rising rents and cuts to state benefits, have been linked to vast increase in homelessness, when rough sleepers became an increasingly common sight. Homeless households in England during the 1980s, trebled from approximately 55,000 (1980) to 165,000 in 1990.[9]

200,000 council houses were sold to their tenants in 1982, and by 1987, more than 1,000,000 council houses in Britain had been sold to their tenants, although the number of council houses purchased by tenants declined during the 1990s.[10]"

Ana Sun 11-Oct-15 22:38:09

Yet Labour did nothing to counteract that in all their subsequent years in government. Why not?

jingbellsfrocks Sun 11-Oct-15 22:44:49

I can't agree that the 'right to buy' was ever a good idea. We need social housing for those who will never be able to afford to buy their own house.

There should be enough affordable housing available for council tenants who want to get on the property owning ladder.

Dingbat Sun 11-Oct-15 22:51:25

In my part of London lots of tenants bought their council houses. Once they had bought them they spent time and money doing them up.

It was a really lovely area to live in.

Then the whole area went through a lot of redevelopment and house prices went up so a lot of the owner tenant sold up and moved to Essex.

The ex council houses are now owned by buy to let people.

The once smart ex council houses now look a mess they are not looked after.

durhamjen Sun 11-Oct-15 23:21:39

Labour first of all reduced the discounts that tenants were given in order to discourage them from buying.

Then the owners had to give the council first refusal on buying them back if they wanted to sell.

Is that doing nothing?

Eloethan Sun 11-Oct-15 23:50:55

Whilst some council tenants have benefited from the right to buy scheme, it has been at the expense of those people who desperately need social housing. Also, nearly one-third of council homes are now owned by private landlords and in one London borough almost 50% of ex-council properties are now sub-let to tenants, often at extortionate rates.

Those with money, such as the son of Ian Gow, the Housing Minister appointed by Mrs Thatcher, have benefited more than most. He was reported in 2013 to own at least 40 ex-council flats and for many other landlords the buy-to-let market has proved extremely lucrative. Despite the high rents now demanded, many landlords - although, of course, not all - are very reluctant to spend money on properly maintaining their properties and, at the end of lease periods, simply evict tenants who ask for essential repairs to be carried out.

Riverwalk Mon 12-Oct-15 06:42:17

Property companies are not buying the flats from owners but are enticing current council tenants with a scheme which lends them the money to buy but the ultimate owner is the company; the tenant is then paid-off (don't know how much) and the company then has a property in a prime central London area at a fraction of the price.

Many of the tenants are on Housing Benefit when they buy - how they explain where the money came from I don't know. Presumably these schemes are legal.

Also, what happens to the tenants - probably back onto the housing waiting list?

Anya Mon 12-Oct-15 07:27:35

It's far more than 'some council tenants' who have benefitted. In our own there was obviously a huge drive to build council houses in the 1920s and 1930s. Almost whole former estates were then bought privately under the 'right to buy scheme' with just the odd house staying in council ownership.

The areas have really developed beautifully since then, with properties being done up by the former tenants. It is very easy to see which houses are not now privately owned but still in council hands.

Grannyknot Mon 12-Oct-15 08:10:13

It is apparent to me that some people who bought their Council houses subsequently made huge profits on selling, especially in parts of London.

I also observe (on the estate where I live) that some of the people who purchased their Council properties have done nothing to improve them in 30 years, which I find absolutely amazing. They still have the original kitchens, cramped layouts, and extremely dated heating systems. I can never work out why they bought the houses (and still live in them) but haven't spent any money on them, but I guess that's human nature for you. By contrast, in the two flats around the corner from me where there is a high turnover of new Council tenants (always young mums with babies) - the flats have been revamped more times than I remember. Funny old world.

We bought a former Council house and have completely revamped it, including taking out walls and putting new ones in, relaying the patio and reclaiming an overgrown area of the garden outside our front gate. Other owners around me have done similar (as Anya says) - these "new" owners are Polish, Ghanaian(sp?), South African, British, and Korean.

Anya Mon 12-Oct-15 08:20:14

How many is 'some'?

Anya Mon 12-Oct-15 08:29:15

I ask because our house was an ex-council house and the previous owner hadn't done much to improve it either. But then I'm thinking this move to improve really grew in the 90s with all the TV programmes that came out about house renovations and improvements.

Until then, people were (by and large and in general) quite content to slap on new paint or re-paper and think that was it. Upgrading heating systems waited until the boiler failed, and replacing a whole house with new Windows didn't happen much, and knocking walls down to extent rooms was looked upon as very new and trendy.

Nowadays people are far more inclined to do all this as a matter of course, don't you think?

ninathenana Mon 12-Oct-15 08:48:01

We bought an ex police house in 1985, we re vamped the kitchen and bathroom installed central heating and double glazing within the first 5 yrs. We have re done the kitchen and bathroom recently. My brother moved back into our family council house after his divorce. He bought it in mums name to obtain the substantial discount. The council had installed central heating and double glazing before he bought it. Mum died two years ago and he's now doing major building works in order to sell it. The road is 95% privately owned now.

Riverwalk Mon 12-Oct-15 09:07:06

I think the biggest injustice for tax-payers is that councils are increasingly having to rent former council properties, at London market rates, to house families on the waiting list.

jingbellsfrocks Mon 12-Oct-15 09:30:13

It shouldn't be about re-vamping the properties, taking out walls, making them modern straight-out-of-

Homes-and-Garden-mag. It should be about giving people who will never be able to buy, a dry, well insulated, decent roof over their heads.

The original idea behind right to buy was to make people feel more 'involved' and, therefore, more responsible for their own communities. It hasn't worked, and anyway, there is more to housing people than that.

Anniebach Mon 12-Oct-15 10:00:05

They may be bungalows available to rent but these were built for the elderly not young couples or singles. The government is now making it possible for housing associations to sell off their social houses and are building houses which they claim will be affordable to buy.

Young people on low wages cannot afford private rentals, have no chance of social housing so even marriage is now for the more affluent only.

Couples on low wages really should abstain from sex after having two children because no matter what is claimed and has been on this forum , contraception is not a 100% guarantee .

People on low pay or unable to work are dismissed as lazy benefit cheats , those who defend them are dismissed as lefties or mocked on having compassion for the vulnerable.

There are serious problems in the mental health services whilst suicide rates are rising. The answer to severe depression is get a job , working for the minimum wage, contract hours, no chance of a home is a sure way to ease depression isn't it.

durhamjen Mon 12-Oct-15 10:07:18

How was the original idea to make people feel more involved in their communities?
Thatcher said there was no such thing as community.

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Gransnet forums

News & politics

"Poor Doors" (11 Posts)

Eloethan Tue 29-Jul-14 10:23:19

On Saturday, the Guardian reported that many London upmarket apartment developments, which have to contain a percentage of affordable homes, are providing two different entrances, typically - one a plush entrance with reception desk, mood lighting, carpeting, etc., for wealthy clients, and one a door - often in a side alley or to the back of a building - leading onto a plain corridor with mail boxes. The "affordable" clients are not allowed to use the main entrance.

This is justified by saying that the affordable housing pays a different rate of service charge. My feeling is that it is a deliberate ploy to physically separate the rich from the less well-off - to whom it is disrespectful and demeaning.

Charleygirl Tue 29-Jul-14 10:30:28

It is like going back many years when there was a servants entrance at large houses and the aristocracy and servants never mixed.

I think that I would feel very uncomfortable if I could afford or if I couldn't.

Mishap Tue 29-Jul-14 10:32:25

This is vomit-worthy.

GIILT57 Tue 29-Jul-14 10:51:30

This is also not news, it has been the case for many years. And lets not get too excited about it, do you as a tax payer want to pay around £350 per month for reception facilities for social housing in a mixed block? I would think that the people living in these blocks are delighted to have somewhere secure and safe to call home with a safeguarded tenancy. I read The Guardian but thought this was a bit of irrelevant mischief making to be honest, we need more affordable housing, not mockery of what there is.

Eloethan Tue 29-Jul-14 11:41:44

I think it's fair enough that certain additional facilities - such as swimming pools - are only available to those that pay a higher service charge. But everyone has to get into a building, so why not have a presentable but less elaborate entrance area that everyone can use? It sends out a very unpleasant message when people are segregated just to enter a building.

Tegan Tue 29-Jul-14 11:47:41

What happened to the classless society we were supposed to be having? [or did I imagine that one election time, along with the NHS being safe and Education being important].

Grannyknot Tue 29-Jul-14 11:56:57

This does happen because I can clearly see it in the fancy new block built across the road from where we live - and where "social housing" was offered (my daughter investigated buying one of the "shared ownership" flats but didn't take it because it was tiny). There is a flashy entrance at one side of the building, and all the "social housing" dwellings are situated at the back of the building and therefore people access it via a separate entrance - at the back. It reminds me of the South African "apartheid" entrances where there were separate doors for different groups. I think it is wrong.

I live on a Council estate in SW London. We started life out on this estate in a flat, one of four flats in a small block where two flats were owned (ours was one) and two were occupied by council tenants. We all entered through a common front door and there was never any problem.

Elegan Tue 29-Jul-14 12:37:35

There is a saying - "Give a dog a bad name and you might as well hang him."

Demote affordable housing tenants to creeping in unseen by a back entrance, where they will not contaminate the occupants of the executive apartments, and they will respond with resentment of said snobbish neighbours. IOt will prpbably end in class warfare and bricks through windows.

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What do they think is "wrong" with people in affordable housing? Is it a crime to be unable to afford an expensive place to live?

harrigran Tue 29-Jul-14 12:47:54

I have experience of communal entrances and hallways, it can be horrendous. Tenants on ground floor piled all their unwanted furniture and even a motorbike in the hallway, breach of every health and safety regulation. The block was all owner occupiers at first and then people let them out. I am amazed at how little people care for their surroundings, never think of brushing the floor and cleaning up their own mess. They stand outside the door and drop the cigarette ends on the ground, leave them until it is a thick sodden mess. Being able to afford the rent does not always make them suitable tenants.

rosesarered Tue 29-Jul-14 17:52:22

Is this much different from poorer houses next to wealthy ones? If I had strong views on this [I don't] then I would not agree to live in those blocks. Presumably the people who do live in them accept it? I agree with **Gill** on this. Newspapers trying to make us hot under the collar again.

rosesarered Tue 29-Jul-14 17:55:03

Where my DD used to live, the social housing opposite was like Hogarths Gin Alley. Not all are like that sure, but plenty are.

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Gransnet forums

Other subjects

Today programme/National Trust. (17 Posts)

jangly Tue 26-Jul-11 11:27:37

They had a spokesperson from the NT on Today this morning who was saying how local governments are being pressed to letting planning applications for business premises go through, just to help speed up economic recovery.

I find this really worrying. Not everyone can easily get out to the protected areas, National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. I think our own bits of local countryside can be very important to us. We all need somewhere local we can get to to walk, or just sit and watch the world go by. When you travel about this country you already see how towns have sprawled.

Surely, economic recovery doesn't have to be the be-all and end-all. There are other things in life beside the financial stuff. Once that countryside is gone, its gone for good. We need this countryside saved. [Bookmark](#)

goldengirl Tue 26-Jul-11 12:04:56

It isn't just business premises. I've just completed a questionnaire [aka consultation document from our Borough Council hmm about the need to increase affordable housing. There were 5 choices and 2-5 included infiltrating on Green Belt land; 'just a bit' apparently, but how long before 'just a bit' becomes 'just a bit more'? I've just been listening to a Radio 4 programme on sparrows and their numbers are reducing because of the lack of hedgerows which has resulted in fewer insects. Anyway there are loads of vacant business premises around, certainly in my area - so why build more?

JessM Tue 26-Jul-11 12:13:18

I think with the government's "localism" ideas about having to have a local referendum about development we will see a major lack of building land in the next few years and the countryside will be fairly safe. It is difficult though - i live in a new house that was built on farmland, like the rest of this new city. Of course i don't welcome the further expansion of the city, because I like walking out of my front door and being in the countryside in 5 minutes. But unless we are prepared to knock down low density housing in order to replace with high density homes, where are people going to live? It is really hard to strike a balance.

jangly Tue 26-Jul-11 12:44:54

The item is here news.bbc.co.uk/today/hi/today/newsid_9548000/9548464.stm.

Its well worth a listen.

JessM Tue 26-Jul-11 13:07:26

Yup I heard the man say that we "shouldn't cover the country in aspic" which was an interesting turn of phrase. Conjured up a pic of woods and fields covered in a layer of savoury jelly. smile

grannyactivist Tue 26-Jul-11 23:01:21

Yes, **JessM** This is what I wrote at the time of the announcement:

Did anybody else take notice of planning related announcements in last week's Budget?
'All planning bodies will be expected to prioritise jobs and growth,' said George Osborne. 'Cumbersome planning laws stand in the way of new jobs,' he added. 'We will introduce a new presumption in favour of development so that the default answer is 'yes'.'

Check out Greg Clark's Ministerial Statement: Planning for Growth - Corporate - Department for Communities and Local Government

The Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) has heavily criticised the proposals, they say, 'This could mean developers building what they like, where they like, and when they like. It's a policy that finally buries genuine localism.'

The Chief executive of the British Property Federation, Liz Peace, had a much warmer response: 'The Government has indicated its intention to introduce a presumption in favour of sustainable development as part of the National Planning Policy Framework. However, it must not be hedged around with so many restrictions as to be meaningless in practice. It is right that planning should prevent urban sprawl but the

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designation as green belt should not mean ruling out any development, the green belt should be an additional hurdle, not an insuperable barrier,' she added.

The CPRE's response: "The Chancellor's default 'yes to development' threatens both the environment and sound planning. The proposed land auctions are hugely risky and have failed to get backing from developers, local government or campaigners. In this context, his reassurances on protection of the Green Belt are nothing more than a fig leaf." angry

grannyactivist Tue 26-Jul-11 23:02:09

Oops, sorry, meant **jangly**. confused

JessM Tue 26-Jul-11 23:08:47

They seem to want to have it both ways don't they. A NIMBY charter on the one hand and a free for all, promoting growth on the other... Eric Pickles does not impress as sec of state in charge of this one. Very much the reverse. Are they beginning to realise that "localism" is not a particularly useful mantra if you want to get anything done?

grannyactivist Tue 26-Jul-11 23:37:04

Agreed **JessM**. I think local communities often are much more savvy than politicians give credit for.

JessM Wed 27-Jul-11 15:14:22

Well - mmm... not quite my point. A year or so ago they were banging on about giving local people a chance to have a referendum about planning. And expecting some crazy percentage to agree before anything could be done. Which is the opposite of a development free for all.

You do see a lot of not-here ism in rural areas, my DH cynically pointed out that people in villages don't want more houses because it will affect their property prices. (and there is something in this surely - around here houses in villages go for a lot more...)

There has to be some scope for development and new homes - and the present planning system is not bad. If it is changed in either direction - and i am not sure which direction the govt are going to jump, it will quite likely be worse than what we have now. I live in a very carefully and lovingly planned place and it works.

There are other examples - model villages etc. High levels of planner input usually has good results. You only have to look at countries where land is cheap and planning lackadaisical to see the difference.

One of the sad things is the push to develop the south east while many areas of the countries have lots of land and lots of unemployment.... but little development.

jangly Tue 06-Sep-11 08:34:42

I find it sad that there are more posts on the subject of "churching" of women - a thing which is now part of history only - and so few responses to this subject.

If you don't care about this, what on earth do you care about?

Supernan did broach the subject in another thread, but, again, had practically no response.

sad

absentgrana Tue 06-Sep-11 09:37:57

jangly I suspect the lack of response is that this is quite a difficult subject to comment on. The waters are further muddled by misleading statistics from those with vested interests. Probably most of us agree that more affordable homes need to be built but may have a range of opinions on what type of homes and where. I don't know enough about Green Belt land, brownfield sites and unprotected greenfield sites or where homes are most needed (apart from London and the South-east). I don't know what is being done to refurbish and modernise already existing properties to make them good homes, how much this costs and whether it is worth doing. Ignorance doesn't usually prevent me from holding forth on a subject but I feel very much out of my depth with this one.

absentgrana Tue 06-Sep-11 09:49:58

Mind you, having just said all that, I do feel very suspicious about this government's version of a new Jerusalem in England's green and pleasant land.

jangly Tue 06-Sep-11 10:38:17

All I need to know is that local authorities are going to have to be more accommodating to planning

applications, and I do not believe for one moment the green belt will be protected.

Brown field sites can be those little bits of green space that are nothing remarkable in themselves but so important to local people when they can't easily get to the countryside proper.

Regarding housing, I think what Princess Anne said might have had a lot of truth in it. (that people shouldn't expect a house per person through divorce)

I'm undecided on that point tbh.

Sook Tue 06-Sep-11 11:31:52

Our lovely market town is now surrounded by an explosion of little boxes all made from ticky tacky (as the song went). Further intrusions into the local countryside are planned. I have attended meetings have written along with many others to the planning department expressing my disapproval.

Everybody it seems wants to live in the countryside.....Trouble is when they achieve this they set about making changes to turn our villages into mini towns.

I agree we need more affordable homes but lets set about refurbishing and restoring what we have in inner cities and towns before we destroy our Green and Pleasant land forever.

jangly Tue 06-Sep-11 11:40:39

I agree **Sook**.

Sounds like you're doing your bit anyway.

Why do they need so many office blocks. Half of them stay empty. hmm

Annobel Tue 06-Sep-11 12:16:17

Twelve or more years ago, when I was a councillor in a NW local authority, we had an application for a new office block which was approved, though many of us asked why it was needed. It is still largely empty! So I take it that the perceived need for more business premises must be in the south east where the need for more homes must also be perceived. There are estimated to be around 750,000 unoccupied houses in England, most of them in private ownership. If measures could be taken to ensure maximum occupation, then the housing crisis would be closer to a solution, but such action is far beyond the reach of local authorities and needs government legislation and possibly taxation measures. And whatever happened to brown field sites?

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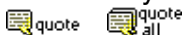
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Thursday 28th February 2013



Planners BBC2

Do people never ask the planners what they can do before they start? Or can you not do that?

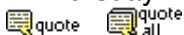
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I know what you mean, not sure if you can, but then the council wouldn't get your money for your application, or re-application.

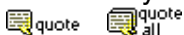
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course you can ask planners what they think before you submit,

I ask planners what they think before I've even purchased the place

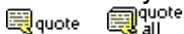
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Thursday 28th February 2013



The Cheltenham family were fairly daft (although the daughter was both hot and clearly well educated). You've got to feel for the Scottish team though. It saddens me how much money and effort we pour into vast divisions of public servants with seemingly a remit of stopping as much investment/development /change as they can. The bigger picture doesn't seem to be their concern.

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Friday 1st March 2013

Though usually they will stick strictly to a policy response and cover their arses every which way they can with caveats!

And there's no accounting for Planning Committees, who are capable of making some very random and ill-informed decisions, in my experience (though the appeals system is supposed to overcome the worst of these). In my experience, it's the elected Members on the Planning Committees who are often the most obstructive and least balanced in terms of considering new development - Planning Officers are usually reasonably unbiased, but these days are little more than box-ticking functionaries.

The Planning Consultant used by the lady who wanted parking in front of her Cheltenham house in the first program in the series (Guy Wakefield of Hunter Page Planning), is one of the very best - if not **the** best - Planning Consultants I've ever worked with, and even he couldn't tip the balance on that decision.

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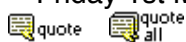
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g7jtk said:

Planners BBC2

Do people never ask the planners what they can do before they start? Or can you not do that? I daresay the Council does not want to commit its staff to providing too much detailed advice because it will use of resources.

The problem that follows on is that they will be non committal unless a proper application is received because they won't be able to give it proper consideration in light of all the facts.

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will use of resources.

The problem that follows on is that they will be non committal unless a proper application is received because they won;t be able to give it proper consideration in light of all the facts.

They increasingly *charge* for pre-application advice, though, so it's not as if they are expending their limited resources for nothing; and it's generally accepted that ironing out the major problems pre-applicatoon is a lot less resource-hungry than having to do so against the clock, within a formal application process *and/or* dealing with a subsequent appeal.

It's true that unless the entire information package is presented to them as an almost finalised 'dummy application', they won't be able to give it full consideration, though, and usually they can't round up comments from all statutory consultees on pre-application consultations (so, for example, you may not get comments back from the likes of the EA or Highways Department that will prove critical to the application's success).

[Mojooo](#)

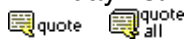
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One thing the TV program shows is that there are 2 sides to every story and the Council is stuck in the middle - at the end of the day they are there to make a tough decision and if the show is anything to do by (clearly on disputed applications) there will always be a winner or a loser

what is interesting is how much of it comes down to opinion about something - such as whether it is good or not or whether its bad for the area.

'policy' is also interesting - you need policy so you have something to fall back on and refer to in the case of a dispute but obviously a policy may not be ideal in every situation.

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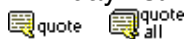
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Mojooo said:

what is interesting is how much of it comes down to opinion about something - such as whether it is good or not or whether its bad for the area.

'policy' is also interesting - you need policy so you have something to fall back on and refer to in the case of a dispute but obviously a policy may not be ideal in every situation.

Of course, the applications shown in the TV series will have been very carefully chosen *because* they're not clear-cut!

But yes, to an extent, the intention of *Local* Planning Authorities their Committees is to allow a degree of localism and local opinion to influence decisions.

has been made.

Arguably the biggest problem with the appeals system - which makes it *pro* development, if anything - is that whilst it's relatively easy to appeal against a refusal, it's not nearly so easy to 'appeal' against the grant of Planning Permission. There's Judicial Review, but that's very expensive and is only a review of the legality of the *process* used to reach the decision, not the decision itself.

[g7jtk](#)

Original Poster ◀



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Friday 1st March 2013

 quote  all

But surly if you wanted to build a house on it's own in the Scottish Borders the planning department should be able to tell you that it was illegal and would be refused on those grounds or if you want to remove a listed wall with windows that you can't do that before you spend thousand of pounds on plans an builders.

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 quote  all

g7jtk said:

But surly if you wanted to build a house on it's own in the Scottish Borders the planning department should be able to tell you that it was illegal and would be refused on those grounds...

Except that it's *not* illegal: there are *potential* loopholes that allow you to build individual houses in isolated locations in the countryside.

Granted, the LPA should (and I am sure *would*) have advised that there would need to be exceptional reasons for permitting such development and that success was unlikely, but some people are too obstinate, stupid or optimistic to seek advice, or to follow it when it's given.

Edited by TheLastPost on Friday 1st March 21:19

[Roo](#)



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Friday 1st March 2013

 quote  all

We just bought a site that had change of use application from A3 to sui generis refused. One of the reasons was increase in vehicle movements.

This is despite their own policy saying A3 generates 114 vehicle movements per 100 sq/m and sui generis 16.

Needless to say the appeal inspector pointed this out to them.

[ClassicMercs](#)

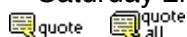
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Saturday 2nd March 2013



Its happens around here - we have two authorities,one of which is the National Park. They will offer general advice, but not sure about exact opinions (in case they haven't been able to predict what other consultees might want to say). Our other council used to be similar, but will now give an opinion - but - they want the planning fee in advance. You are paying for their professional opinion - and what they say will be pretty much binding (so they will be doing all their homework before they give an opinion).

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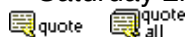
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ClassicMercs said:
 ...and what they say will be pretty much binding.
 You have to appreciate that pre-application advice **cannot** be binding upon the authority or the Officer giving the advice. It would be illegal for them to make such a commitment.

Even works which would appear to fall within the scope of Officer Delegated approval can end up going to committee if issues r objections arise during the formal application process, and the Officers' role is merely to *advise* and make a *recommendation* to the Committee - it's up to elected members to take the final decision.

Written pre-app advice giving an application a clean bill of health would carry substantial weight at appeal, but that's about the most you could say for it.

[g7itk](#)

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designed that has no chance of being passed.

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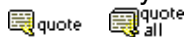
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Saturday 2nd March 2013



g7jtk said:

I would think that paying a few £ for advise before you start is better than paying £20 to have a house designed that has no chance of being passed.

It would, but if you choose the right Architect they will have good knowledge of both national Planning guidance and LPA local policy, so the risk of designing something that has no chance of being passed should be minimal... though as I explained above, the politics of the Planning system mean that it is becoming more and more usual to rely on the appeals process to gain permission for any development that is even slightly contentious.

On major applications, though, it's certainly standard practice to engage in the pre-application process. As you say, even if it costs you, it's usually a small proportion of the overall professional fees for the application and it can be an important stick to beat the LPA with if you end up at appeal.

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[Author](#)
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[ruggedscotty](#)

Original Poster ◀

040 posts

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Wednesday 25th March 2015

 quote  all

Well the clanger has indeed dropped....

I live on an estate that was built on a section of school playing fields. Typical council sold off the land to raise a little money. Barratt bought the land and built a few houses. two estates were built. The one im in was going to be larger but they halved it. Would have been a U shape but remained as an I shape. hard to explain in words lol.

Anyways they said they were not going to build on the land.

10 years or so down the line we get notified - well actually a small number of people in the estate get notified as we were deemed not to be affected. They are going to build a five aside pitch with an advanced pitch. 6 meter high fences and flood lights and going to open it seven days a week - 08:00 to 22:00 weekdays and 09:00 to 20:00 weekends. currently there are a few games there not enough to be a major concern but what is being proposed I really dont like.

Where do you start, how do you go about getting this reviewed and even try to stop it..... the reality of this is starting to sink in and its horrific the thought of it indeed.

based in scotland.... Anyone have any ideas ?

[barryrs](#)



2,104 posts

140 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 25th March 2015

 quote  all

My advice is have a good read of your local authorities planning policy's and try to remain pragmatic.

By putting together a concise objection based on material considerations your concerns should be taken seriously by the planners.

[bobtail4x4](#)



994 posts

26 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 25th March 2015

 quote  all

you can employ a planning consultant to make your objection, as much as employing one to apply in the first case,

[Macadoodle](#)

745 posts

50 months

[\[report\]](#)

So the land used to be used as playing fields, and now its going to be used as.....playing fields? I'm just guessing here, but I don't think the planners will have a problem with that.

Sarcasm aside, they aren't exactly 'building' on the site. Its not a block of flats they're sticking up, its some fencing and some lights. I know its not what you wanted to hear, but I think you may have trouble getting this stopped. Swapping my sarcastic hat for my constructive one, I would look into the volume of traffic the new pitches would generate - this may be your grounds for objection.

[northwest monkey](#)



5,658 posts

106 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 25th March 2015

 quote  quote
all

Personally, I'd rather have the football pitches than more housing. Where we used to live had a couple of five a side pitches nearby and apart from the lights being quite bright there was never any bother.
Advertisement

[jules_s](#)



1,982 posts

150 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 26th March 2015

 quote  quote
all

bobtail4x4 said:

you can employ a planning consultant to make your objection, as much as employing one to apply in the first case,
This sort of thing is usually part funded by the Football foundation and Sport England, and as such the applications are usually nigh on airtight

The lights will have a flood map to ensure acceptable light pollution. There will be a travel plan to manage away travel issue.



I've not yet heard of a 6m high fence around a 5-a-side pitch though or a 3G one

126 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 26th March 2015

 quote  quote all

Macadoodle said:

So the land used to be used as playing fields, and now its going to be used as.....playing fields? I'm just guessing here, but I don't think the planners will have a problem with that.

Sarcasm aside, they aren't exactly 'building' on the site. Its not a block of flats they're sticking up, its some fencing and some lights. I know its not what you wanted to hear, but I think you may have trouble getting this stopped. Swapping my sarcastic hat for my constructive one, I would look into the volume of traffic the new pitches would generate - this may be your grounds for objection.

you'd be surprised, i used to play football for a club that won their league, this would have have meant stepping up into the realms of the what people call non-league football. we had the stand and had floodlights already, but the lights needed upgrading.

it went all the way to parliament, but we were turned down the planning permission to upgrade the lights and had to watch the teams below us move up.

all down to local residents objecting to light pollution, that they said would increase, despite us having it already and them being pointed onto the pitch.

it happens

[JustinP1](#)



13,325 posts

147 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 26th March 2015

 quote  quote all

ruggedscotty said:

Where do you start, how do you go about getting this reviewed and even try to stop it..... the reality of this is starting to sink in and its horrific the thought of it indeed.

Anyone have any ideas ?

What's horrific exactly?

How will it affect you?

Will the lights be shining on you?

The traffic issue is going to be limited. 5 a side at the worst case scenario is 10 cars an hour.

ETA: Don't get me wrong, I'm not having a dig. You need to think of answers to these questions to demonstrate that the impact on your life and the estate will outweigh the benefit to the community.

To do that, you need to be very specific.

Edited by JustinP1 on Thursday 26th March 10:01

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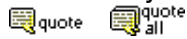
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53 months

[\[report\]](#)

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Thursday 26th March 2015



NIMBYism.

[Inkyfingers](#)

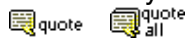
2,072 posts

146 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 26th March 2015



We need more houses, but not near my house.

We need to build more roads, but not near my house.

Kids need to play outside more, but not near my house.

[The Surveyor](#)

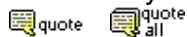
4,393 posts

154 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 26th March 2015



If you are to present an effective objection, you need to do some work yourself understanding what are genuine material objections. 'I don't like it' just doesn't cut it when you're considering a formal objection to a planning application.

As noted before, a playing field being used as a playing field is going to get a smooth ride through planning so you need to focus on the aspects of that use that will genuinely impact on you. Traffic would not be significantly different to the traffic levels had the rest of the residential development been completed so I would suggest that's a non-starter. Look at the type, location, hours of operation of the floodlights and ensure that they have included a light pollution assessment in the application. You can normally view these documents on the Local Authorities planning portal.

Whilst ultimately you may not have a valid objection to the planning application, you will have some protection in the future if the flood lights are a problem as 'light pollution' has recently been added to the list of 'statutory nuisance' under the 'Environmental Protection Act 1990' so if they do genuinely cause you issues later you may still have some redress.

Good luck but keep it in perspective to avoid disappointment!

[rivercatch](#)

37 posts

31 months

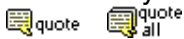
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Thursday 26th March 2015



As described I wouldn't have much hope in stopping it completely.

I would think it would be a much better use of time to identify the things that are most impactful - like lights, traffic, hours of use, etc - and then lobby to get those particular problems changed and become part of the planning conditions.

[benters](#)

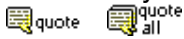
1,459 posts

51 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 26th March 2015



given your explanation OP, I don't think you have a realistic chance of turning this around. There are some fights you cannot win and to me this sounds like one of them. Might be better to look at moving if that is at all realistic and you don't feel you can adapt to your likely new neighbours

[Mr Adds](#)

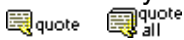
204 posts

66 months

[\[report\]](#)

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Thursday 26th March 2015



I am a planning officer, and the principle of the proposal sounds fine subject to light spillage from the floodlights and highway issues from people parking.

[ruggedscotty](#)

Original Poster ◀

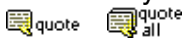
940 posts

126 months

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Thursday 26th March 2015



Ive had some discussions over the past few days regarding this - Currently there is a pitch but it is attached to the school as a part of the PE department. Its used through the week day but has minimal out of hours usage.

The proposal is to add in a 3G pitch with the drainage fencing and flood lights. Flood lights to 10pm every weekday and 8pm at weekends.

What is proposed is a significant up step in usage.

What concerns me is the noise and light overspill.



Its just another example of the residents not being taken into consideration yet again.

154 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 26th March 2015

 quote  all

ruggedscotty said:

....Its just another example of the residents not being taken into consideration yet again.

Maybe they have, and they have decided that the benefits to the wider public health from improved sport facilities outweighs the concerns from one individual.

[Tankman104c](#)



48 posts

26 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 26th March 2015

 quote  all

A few years ago we had a new sports centre built behind my property on green belt land, which made no difference at all to our local planners! They had about 6 floodlit 5-a-side football pitches built. Luckily the pitches were far enough away that the lighting was not a problem but the NOISE was!!! The pitches were in metal cages so apart from all the moronic shouting from the players(?) there was a continuous crashing of the footballs against the cages well into every evening!

There was only one solution..... we moved house just to get away from it!

[deckster](#)



3,073 posts

172 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 26th March 2015

 quote  all

ruggedscotty said:

Ive had some discussions over the past few days regarding this - Currently there is a pitch but it is attached to the school as a part of the PE department. Its used through the week day but has minimal out of hours usage.

The proposal is to add in a 3G pitch with the drainage fencing and flood lights. Flood lights to 10pm every weekday and 8pm at weekends.

What is proposed is a significant up step in usage.

What concerns me is the noise and light overspill.

Its just another example of the residents not being taken into consideration yet again.

I suspect that the existing residents had very similar concerns when your house was built on top of a nice quiet green space - one might perhaps suggest there is an element of karma at work here, if one was of a persuasion to believe in such things.

In any case, it doesn't sound like such a terrible thing to have there. Why don't you just take up football and enjoy the amenity - you never know, it might even be fun!

[JustinP1](#)

[Forum](#)

[My Stuff](#)


[What's New](#)




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147 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

 Thursday 26th March 2015

 quote  quote
 all

deckster said:

I suspect that the existing residents had very similar concerns when your house was built on top of a nice quiet green space

I was actually going to post exactly the same thing in response to the OP, but you beat me to it.

There's a small but compact village near me which is 2 300 year old farmhouses, two dozen 70's semis and two dozen nice detached 4 bed houses built 5 years ago.

The residents are up in arms complaining that the village is earmarked for further development. One of the sods knocked on my door trying to get me to sign a petition to stop development and was quite taken aback when I told him that I thought the building plan put forward was a great idea because I for one would like to buy one.... 😊

The hypocrisy is so bad, there is actually a house half built in the village centre by a different developer with an 18 foot wide sign saying 'Say No To 40 New Homes' on it. I kid you not.

[ruggedscotty](#)

Original Poster ◀




940 posts

126 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

 Friday 27th March 2015

 quote  quote
 all

I love it when peeps trot out the NIMBY..... Yep indeed its a case of not in My back yard - well front actually as I will soon look out at a fence.

You would be very surprised about the extent of NIMBY that exists - most never get to the point where something happens that irks them. But when it does it does. See below drawing - the red line represents where the fence will be. Then you see just how close it is to the properties on the street.



A place for everything as the say and that isnt where it should be.

[JustinP1](#)

13,325 posts

147 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Friday 27th March 2015

quote all

ruggedscotty said:

I love it when peeps trot out the NIMBY..... Yep indeed its a case of not in My back yard - well front actually as I will soon look out at a fence.

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A place for everything as the say and that isnt where it should be. Well that plan makes it easy for you to object.

The bloody fence is touching someone elses.

Go round and speak to everyone else in the close. See who's happy to put in 50 notes to stop this. Invest that in a planning consultant to put forward an objection. Use the same as a template for every other resident to object. 20 objections is difficult to ignore.

There's going to be considerable light pollution out of the back windows of 10 houses.

Whoever is near the fence is going to have noise pollution of footballs bashing into the fence, feet from their back garden.

Who's paying for damage to windows when balls go over?

Were you consulted by the landowner before the planning went in? Not doing so is now seen as poor form south of the border.

Get professional advice, and hunt as a pack and tub thump together. You have a very good chance of a positive result.

[ruggedscotty](#)

Original Poster ◀

940 posts

126 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Friday 24th April 2015

quote quote all

Been getting advice on this and it is looking positive

The Human Rights Act
Protection of property

id a good one indeed. if anything will delay and this has to be answered to.

also the FA recommendations are over 50 meters separation between house and pitch. again one that's going to throw a lot of weight into this.

nearly 70 objections against this development.

[Swervin_Mervin](#)

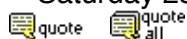
2,082 posts

155 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Saturday 25th April 2015



ruggedscotty said:

Been getting advice on this and it is looking positive

going in with big guns

The Human Rights Act
Protection of property
Yeah, good luck with that...

[ruggedscotty](#)

Original Poster ◀

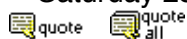
940 posts

126 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Saturday 25th April 2015



anything to delay and annoy them - delays discourage the developers

[ferrariF50lover](#)

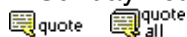
1,499 posts

143 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Sunday 26th April 2015





I asked this of someone else recently and received no reply. Perhaps you'll be more accommodating, especially since you regard this as a human rights issue...

If this development was being made in identical circumstances, except you lived in a different village some 20 miles away, would you be taking such an interest?

172 months

[\[report\]](#)
[\[news\]](#)

Sunday 26th April 2015

 quote  quote all

My first housed had some playing fields at its rear. The amount of swearing and shouting every weekend was not nice TBH. Can't imagine 5 a side players much better, although half the number of players per match.

Move house.



[Moonhawk](#)

7,030 posts

136 months

[\[report\]](#)
[\[news\]](#)

Sunday 26th April 2015

 quote  quote all

JustinP1 said:

Well that plan makes it easy for you to object.

The bloody fence is touching someone elses.

The red line is the limit of the site boundary - not necessarily the location of the fence. From that plan - it looks like the fence is well inside the site boundary (i.e. the rectangular area with black dotted line).

The blue line is the boundary of any land owned by the applicant but which is close to or adjacent to the property.

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/uploads/1app/maps...>

Edited by Moonhawk on Sunday 26th April 12:34

Edited by Moonhawk on Sunday 26th April 12:34



[JustinP1](#)

13,325 posts

147 months

[\[report\]](#)
[\[news\]](#)

Sunday 26th April 2015

 quote  quote all

Moonhawk said:

JustinP1 said:

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The red line is the limit of the site boundary - not necessarily the location of the fence. From that plan - it looks like the fence is well inside the site boundary (i.e. the rectangular area with black dotted line)

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/uploads/1app/maps...>

Edited by Moonhawk on Sunday 26th April 12:34

Edited by Moonhawk on Sunday 26th April 12:34

The OP said that the red line was the fence - so took that as he had annotated a map himself - I must admit that it seemed a poor design to me...

[daytona365](#)



1,773 posts

81 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Sunday 26th April 2015

 quote  all

I'm sorry, but they should develop the sports field, even enlarge it, and pull down the estate. Come to that they should demolish all the horrid shoe box estates everywhere, built after say 1960.....But that's just me !

[Moonhawk](#)



7,030 posts

136 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Sunday 26th April 2015

 quote  all

JustinP1 said:

The OP said that the red line was the fence - so took that as he had annotated a map himself - I must admit that it seemed a poor design to me...

I'd be surprised if the red line did denote the fence if for no other reason than the oblique angle at which the red and blue lines meet would make construction and maintenance problematic (you'd basically have a corner of the playing field on a house fence line).

There should be more detailed plans available via the planning portal showing the detail. All this map appears to show is the site boundary.

[REALIST123](#)



7,836 posts

70 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Sunday 26th April 2015

 quote  all

Has the OP yet said exactly why he objects to this other than he personally doesn't like the idea?

[Swervin_Mervin](#)

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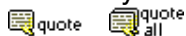
[Preferences](#)

155 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Sunday 26th April 2015



ruggedscotty said:

anything to delay and annoy them - delays discourage the developers

Yeah, as I said, good luck with that. There's nothing like carping about Human Rights to delay planning applications...

[barryrs](#)

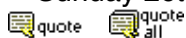
2,104 posts

140 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Sunday 26th April 2015



Those "big guns" sound like pissing in the wind to me and I would refer you to my post on page 1.

[ruggedscotty](#)

Original Poster ◀

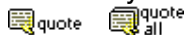
940 posts

126 months

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Monday 27th April 2015



The grey lines are the existing pitch boundary. The new 5 a side pitch is being built on that ground. The red line marking the extent of the new development.

The comment on if I would be bothered if it was 20 miles away.... Yes I would. And I fail to understand the way that folks seem to be quite okay with pulling out the not in my back garden argument. The whole ethos is to work together and to ensure that any development does not seriously encroach on peoples environment. What is being proposed here is a substantial change.

Lighting on till 10pm each week night and 8pm at the weekends. And from past experience such developments are very noisy with shouting and balls hitting the fence. Just now we dont have that - we have the occasional sunday game and thats about it.

Would you seriously like a facility like this planked down right next door to you in what has been a quiet residential area for the past ten years. The school sold the land to developers who built the estate. If the land had not been sold then they could have done this and met the recommendations for siting a five a side football pitch with the minimum recommended distances being exceeded.

anyway over 70 objections and its now affecting house sales in the immediate area....

Barryrs - Thanks for the comment - We have been working on this and doing it properly through research and building a case. Lots going on actually and getting advice and assistance from various people that have experience in this. The European big guns was actually tongue in cheek but actually it

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Edited by ruggedscotty on Monday 27th April 19:02

Edited by ruggedscotty on Monday 27th April 19:09

[jules_s](#)

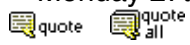
1,982 posts

150 months

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Monday 27th April 2015



I think we need the planning reference here (apologies if you've posted it before)

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Planning consultants

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[Spoonman](#)

Original Poster ◀

1,067 posts

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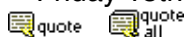
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Friday 15th April 2016



Has anyone here used a planning consultant?

I'm in Lincolnshire, it's about a listed building (only Grade II), and I'm intending to challenge a refusal by the Planning Inspectorate.

Is this a job for a planning consultant or a solicitor, or both?

[parakitaMol.](#)

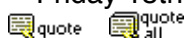
10,492 posts

168 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Friday 15th April 2016



Yes - we have one who helps us wade through inconsistencies, contradictions, vague guidelines and in general the utter ~~bullshit~~ that is our District Council's Planning department.

He's been very successful - including quite a challenging 'retrospective' application, he used to work on the planning side and still has many contacts there - so a well connected person is a useful type of person to seek out.

It's well worth it, if you are doing anything less than straightforward and have a tricky council. We're going through a pre-app enquiry sound out potential usage for a piece of land prior to purchase and also challenging a clause on permission for a garage.

Edited by parakitaMol. on Friday 15th April 20:14

[blueg33](#)

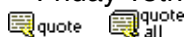
18,412 posts

141 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Friday 15th April 2016



All the time. I mainly use Hunter Page Planning or Peter Brett

[C Lee Farquar](#)

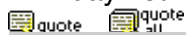
1,737 posts

133 months

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Friday 15th April 2016



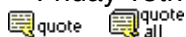
1,356 posts

18 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Friday 15th April 2016



Spoonman said:

Is this a job for a planning consultant or a solicitor, or both?

For an appeal, it *can* become a job for both (plus a barrister, if you want to get really serious), but the Panning Consultant comes first.

PM me if you want a really good one who is familiar with the Lincolnshire area.

Hunter Page and Peter Brett, as recommended by blueg33, are both very good too (I've used both in the past), but not cheap and not from that neck of the woods.

Advertisement

[Huntsman](#)

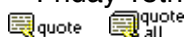
5,735 posts

167 months

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Friday 15th April 2016



The challenge is to find someone good that has experience in the local area, it helps hugely if they are well known and respected by the local authority planners.

[covmutley](#)

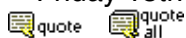
1,200 posts

107 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Friday 15th April 2016



As a planning consultant and assuming refusal was due to impact on listed building, I would say that this may be a job for a heritage specialist rather than a planner, or both. You need a heritage specialist that knows their way around the nppf heritage tests. Someone like cotswold archaeology

[Spoonman](#)



Original Poster ◀

1,067 posts


178 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Sunday 17th April 2016

 quote  quote
all

Thanks, everyone.

I took the appeal to the Inspectorate on my own because the local authority's objections were ridiculous and ever-changing. I also had the local principal planning officer shouting at me in my own garden to "f  k off!" and other such fun.

The local council lied profusely to the Inspectorate in official documents, digitally altered photos and so on. I wrongly assumed that my proof (along with expert witness statements etc) would hold some weight with the Inspectorate.

Unfortunately not. The inspector (who took five months to write a single-sheet refusal) even said the local council behaved perfectly reasonably throughout.

Wish I'd not been so naive to believe in a fair appeal...

I'll look in to those consultants you've all mentioned. Ta.

[Spoonman](#)



Original Poster ◀

1,067 posts

178 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Sunday 17th April 2016

 quote  quote
all

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PM me if you want a really good one who is familiar with the Lincolnshire area.

Hunter Page and Peter Brett, as recommended by blueg33, are both very good too (I've used both in the past), but not cheap and not from that neck of the woods.

Thanks. I'll message you.

[Spoonman](#)

Original Poster ◀

1,067 posts

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Sunday 17th April 2016



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Edited by covmutley on Friday 15th April 22:36

Hmm, that could be an issue. I'm not sure.

The local conservation officer is completely clueless (he couldn't even read a 1D architectural plan) and the council slapped on a refusal of planning permission alongside the refusal for listed building consent. The Inspectorate just rehashed the council's basic reasoning for refusal and got the facts wrong - although I dare say that's not enough for a legal challenge.

[Busa mav](#)

2,085 posts

71 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Sunday 17th April 2016



OP , I think most of the posters are misunderstanding the appeal you need to make , they have I think assumed you are appealing against the councils decision, not the inspectorates decision.

It's going to cost a whole lot more than £750 to do this.

As you know , to appeal the original council process is free , but you really should have had somebody do this stage for you.

Good luck.

[blueg33](#)

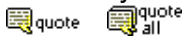
18,412 posts

141 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Sunday 17th April 2016



No point in appealing the inspectorate decision. Better to address the issues and re submit.

High Court challenges are expensive and limited only to failures in process

[Equus](#)

1,356 posts

18 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Sunday 17th April 2016

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assumed you are appealing against the councils decision, not the inspectorates decision. This is true; I'd failed to register that it was the Planning Inspectorate's decision on Appeal that you were challenging.

In that case, you'll certainly still need a top-notch Planning Consultant, but to stand any realistic chance of success you'll also need a damned good lawyer and a Barrister who specialises in Planning work (again, I can recommend one if you like).

...and yes, you'll need *very* deep pockets.

[RedWhiteMonkey](#)



4,899 posts

99 months


[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Sunday 17th April 2016

 quote  quote all

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The local council lied profusely to the Inspectorate in official documents, digitally altered photos and so on. I wrongly assumed that my proof (along with expert witness statements etc) would hold some weight with the Inspectorate.

Unfortunately not. The inspector (who took five months to write a single-sheet refusal) even said the local council behaved perfectly reasonably throughout.

Wish I'd not been so naive to believe in a fair appeal...

I'll look in to those consultants you've all mentioned. Ta.

You need to understand that it is not the Planning Inspectorate's job to comment on the conduct or behaviour (good, bad or otherwise) of the relevant Planning Authority. They are solely there to assess the planning merits of the proposal. If you have a beef over the conduct of the Planning Authority (you certainly shouldn't be getting told to f off) then that is a matter for the Local Government Ombudsman.

[Spoonman](#)

Original Poster ◀



1,067 posts

178 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Monday 18th April 2016

 quote  quote all

Thanks for the replies, everyone. I now understand a lot more about how it works.

It was naive of me to assume the Planning Inspectorate would be independent, or even adept.

perfectly reasonable.

I tried to take it to the LGO, by the way, but the LGO refused to handle the complaint, instead insisting it's the responsibility of the Planning Inspectorate.

[RedWhiteMonkey](#)



4,899 posts

99 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)


Monday 18th April 2016

 quote  quote all

Spoonman said:

Thanks for the replies, everyone. I now understand a lot more about how it works.

It was naive of me to assume the Planning Inspectorate would be independent, or even adept.

As for the council's behaviour, I submitted a costs application to the Inspectorate, which is reckoned to be applicable to 'unreasonable behaviour' of either party. I had stacks of evidence of the council's unreasonable behaviour (including being told to  k off) but the Inspectorate reckoned it was all perfectly reasonable.

I tried to take it to the LGO, by the way, but the LGO refused to handle the complaint, instead insisting it's the responsibility of the Planning Inspectorate.

Please don't take this wrong way (I know none of the details of your specific case) but it sounds like you are struggling to separate planning matters from non planning matters. For example an application for costs would never awarded based on the non planning related conduct of the local authority. I think talking to a planning consultant would be a good move if only to give you a better understanding of the workings and your position.

Removing the emotion from these sorts of issues is normally very beneficial. You will understandably be emotionally involved in this matter but that often clouds reasonable judgement. Planning officers are well used to heated discussions, it goes with the job so it is highly unlikely that you were told to f off (I do not condone that in any way) without there being some provocation from your side. Getting someone who is totally unemotionally involved will help.

[Spoonman](#)

Original Poster ◀



1,067 posts

178 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Monday 18th April 2016

 quote  quote all

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Yes, I hope to discuss it with a planning consultant as soon as I get chance. The Inspectorate's documentation about costs related to unreasonable behaviour of either party - the council in this instance (North Lincolnshire) behaved unreasonably in planning- and non-planning-related matters.

You're very wrong about the circumstances of being told to ~~REDACTED~~ f off. The council's principal planning officer shouted it at me as I walked away from a discussion in my own garden, and later admitted it on film, meanwhile abusing me again. His official duty that day was to offer guidance on how to progress his planning department's repeated failures. The council then seated him in front of me at the planning committee meeting (where 120 other seats were available) and the committee chairman talked over my address to the committee to the head of the planning department - so much that complaints were made by independent members of the public.

[blueg33](#)



18,412 posts

141 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Monday 18th April 2016

 quote  quote all

Was it a full enquiry or an informal one? The former usually gets a highly competent inspector. It's very foolish to fight any appeal without professional advice.

In my experience the inspectorate are generally pretty good, they apply policy properly and make good objective decisions.

Just because the appellant doesn't like the decision doesn't mean it's flawed.

If council didn't follow process the Op could go for a judicial review, but that will only look at whether the decision would have been different if process had been followed correctly. The chances of JR being successful are very slim. In 30 years of land and planning the sensible decision has always been to improve the application rather than fight the decision especially when it's an appeal decision.

Edited by blueg33 on Monday 18th April 16:31

[RedWhiteMonkey](#)



4,899 posts

99 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Monday 18th April 2016

 quote  quote all

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address to the committee to the head of the planning department - so much that complaints were made by independent members of the public.

If the officer shouted f off at you for no obvious reason then something does need to be done about it, it just sounds odd that anyone would do that for absolutely no reason. Anyway, I'm not judging you or the officer on that, I wasn't there and have no idea of the circumstances. Irrespective, that would relate to the conduct of a council officer and is nothing to do with the planning application, hence it is a matter for the ombudsman and not the planning inspectorate. You won't get a planning refusal overturned because you were swore at. Other actions of the council sound like similar considerations for the ombudsman, although the actions of councilors are often uncontrollable!

However, like others have already said the planning inspectorate effectively look at the whole planning decision afresh. They are not interested in the actions of either side, simply in the planning merits. They should have assessed the planning application against the relevant national and local planning policy/guidance. Challenging the decision of the planning inspectorate is likely to get very costly. Are the reasons for refusal of the planning applications very specific or general in nature?

Edited by RedWhiteMonkey on Monday 18th April 16:46

[Spoonman](#)

Original Poster ◀



1,067 posts

178 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Monday 18th April 2016

 quote  quote all

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Edited by blueg33 on Monday 18th April 16:31

It was a pair of appeals against refusal of planning permission and listed building consent. It was formal with representations from both sides (the council's late and adding information against the rules) and a site visit. A site visit in which the inspector failed to view from the angles we specifically requested.

If you saw the way the council had behaved - constantly thinking up new reasons to object when I proved wrong each previous reason or altered the plans to suit - you'd probably understand why I assumed the appeal to be watertight. The council's own formal documents were so riddled with lies and Photoshopped images that they were laughable.

What irks me about the Inspectorate's decision is that, rather than forming an objective decision, it rearticulated the council's falsehoods and sweeping generalisations under various planning policies

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[Spoonman](#)

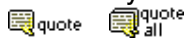
Original Poster ◀

1,067 posts

178 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Monday 18th April 2016



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Edited by RedWhiteMonkey on Monday 18th April 16:46

It was very frustrating when the LGO refused to hear my complaint, believe me. The LGO decided that the resolution to any planning issue was a planning decision, which is not within the LGO's remit. Despite my assertion that I wanted to complain about the council's behaviour regardless of planning permission, a senior LGO representative refused.

I think I was hoping for the Inspectorate to take a fresh look at the planning, taking into account the representations from both parties. Unfortunately, he regurgitated the council's vague reasoning, based on policies of the local plan, core strategy and other all-encompassing stuff. He said an extension would cause 'harm to the listed farmhouse' even though he agreed it would help to conserve a crumbling wall. So, both general and specific, really, albeit factually flawed in many statements.

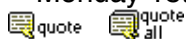
[blueg33](#)

18,412 posts

141 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Monday 18th April 2016



Councils always act like that.

The problem i think you had is that as the applicant your representations carry less weight than those of a professional. For a full public enquiry (are you sure it was that), I use a planning condultant and a barrister.

The best course of action is to employ a planning consultant, look at the appeal decision and address the reasons for refusal in a new application.

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[RedWhiteMonkey](#)

4,899 posts

99 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Monday 18th April 2016

 quote quote
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Is redesigning your proposal an option or was any extension totally ruled out?

Perhaps a new application would be a better option (I suspect you wouldn't get anywhere with a judicial review of the appeal decision other than losing a lot of time and a lot of money). If it is an option I'd suggest that you let an architect and/or planning consultant do all the communications for you and stand well back (if only for the benefit of your own blood pressure). You could ask that a different planning officer deals with the application (some council have that sort of policy in place anyway) although I suspect they have limited conservation officer resources.

[Spoonman](#)


Original Poster ◀

1,067 posts

178 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Monday 18th April 2016

 quote quote
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Apologies - it wasn't a public enquiry, it was just a householder appeal.

Fair point about non-professionals carrying less weight, but I naively expected the Inspectorate to see the council's reasoning for what it was. I've represented myself in court enough times, so wrongly assumed it would be a similar kind of treatment for laymen.

There is one conservation officer; he's useless and seemingly coated in Teflon. He never returns calls or emails, and doesn't understand plans. When he visited the house we had a plasterer on site running ceiling cornices in situ; the conservation officer didn't have a clue.

I'd happily show anyone the decision letter, although it would need to be accompanied by pages of my own prior submissions to make sense 😊.

In brief, we have a Georgian farmhouse with lots of interesting Victorian additions on the front and inside the front section of the house. The rear has a couple of plain Victorian extensions, and we attained planning permission for a large kitchen extension (which included £6k of steels - so quite invasive) and single-storey conservatory across the back.

We built the kitchen extension a few years ago but ran out of cash for the rest. I then decided that the remaining brickwork across the back of the house is completely shot (heavily eroded and suffering water ingress thanks to a horrible old cement wash), so a two-storey extension would be better all-round than a glass conservatory. The council - despite initially objecting to the kitchen extension - now describe it as very successful.

Our architect designed the roof arrangement in a non-interference manner to mirror one of the other extensions, but the council's planning officers didn't like it. Instead, they wanted us to integrate it into the original roof, like you'd see on a new build. And it all escalated from there.

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[blueg33](#)

18,412 posts

141 months

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Monday 18th April 2016

 quote quote
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Sounds tricky. Conservation Officers are frequently a PITA


[Equus](#)

1,356 posts

18 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Monday 18th April 2016

 quote quote
all

It's probably worth saying on forum that there is case law at the highest level which establishes that it is perfectly acceptable, proper and legally/procedurally correct for both LPA's and the Planning Inspectorate to exercise a degree of subjective judgement on the acceptability of Planning proposals.

Tesco Stores Ltd v SoS 1995 Lord Hoffman:

“if there is one principle in planning law more firmly settled than any other, it is that matters of planning judgment are within the exclusive province of the LPA or the SoS”.

Just because your subjective opinion differs from theirs is not valid grounds for a procedural challenge. And because they DO have this effectively unchallengeable right to apply a *degree* of subjectivity, it pays not to wind them up to the point where they start swearing at you. 😊


[Murph7355](#)

16,114 posts

173 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Monday 18th April 2016

 quote quote
all

You have to keep emotion out of it.

Employ professionals for all stages and all comms - it will be cheaper in the long run.

And living in a listed building you simply *must* go into it expecting refusal as a very distinct possibility. Whether you agree or disagree with the rationale, whether you think it's petty or not, is irrelevant unfortunately.

Purely on the basis of your posts on here it sounds like you're letting emotion get the better of you in the overall process. It's understandable - it's your home etc - but it will not help as proven already.

I'd regroup. Get someone with proven, demonstrable heritage experience under their belt on your payroll and go through every ounce of your application. Listen to them.

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If they don't, leave it.

[Murph7355](#)



16,114 posts

173 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Monday 18th April 2016

 quote  quote all

PS It might be useful to post up images of what you're intending...

[Spoonman](#)

Original Poster ◀



1,067 posts

178 months

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Tuesday 19th April 2016

 quote  quote all

Subjective or not, the inspector got his facts wrong and reported them in his decision. He also refused to listen to previous cases I'd cited, saying each must be viewed on its own merits.

I'd happily post up pictures but my Mac's internal hard drive died last week, taking with it everything relating to the appeal (I hadn't backed up in ages...) We've lived in this listed building for 13 years, converting it from a wreck (without mains water or electricity) into a half-finished wreck 😊. The conservation officer didn't want us to build the first half of the rear extension but he was overruled by his boss; now he's got a new boss, he's an unaccountable little Hitler.

Back to the subject of costs, here's what the Inspectorate's documents say:

[i]Local planning authorities are required to behave reasonably in relation to procedural matters at the appeal, for example by complying with the requirements and deadlines of the process. Examples of unreasonable behaviour which may result in an award of costs include:

lack of co-operation with the other party or parties
 delay in providing information or other failure to adhere to deadlines
 only supplying relevant information at appeal when it was previously requested, but not provided, at application stage
 introducing fresh and substantial evidence at a late stage necessitating an adjournment, or extra expense for preparatory work that would not otherwise have arisen
 prolonging the proceedings by introducing a new reason for refusal
 failing to provide relevant information within statutory time limits
 providing information that is shown to be manifestly inaccurate or untrue [/i]

All of the above points apply in this instance.

Anyway, I'll hopefully be able to speak to a planning consultant this week.

[Busa mav](#)

[Forum](#)

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[Preferences](#)

71 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 19th April 2016

 quote  all

Seems as though you would have been better off going for the written representation that is on offer for appeals.

That way nobody gets a last minute chance to have their word or put any slant on anything.

Personally, I would forget any further appeal and start afresh with a different agent, who wont give up.

He / she can go along to the planners with some new sketches , there must be enough previous sketches and notes on file to see what is required, tell them what a tosser the previous guy must have been to not be able to design something appropriate, then work up a different proposal before resubmitting a new householder application.

I have a suspicion that you were being wound up by the agent playing the planner off against you , when maybe it was he who had the problems and was playing both sides.

YOU , shouldn't have been dealing with the planner in the fist place 😊, sit back and let your new guy get on with it, and if he tells you no to something you want , listen 😊

Good luck.

What authority was it ?

[Spoonman](#)

Original Poster ◀



1,067 posts

178 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

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It was by written representation (apologies if I omitted that bit; I'd forgotten what it was called) but the council (North Lincolnshire) kept coming back with more excuses.

I repeatedly requested appointments were made for site visits, but the council staff simply turned up instead. The conservation officer, for example, arrived the day before the decision was due, admitting he'd not looked at the plans or read the heritage statement. He kept saying, "I don't like it," and "It's a bad design."

As for my architect, he genuinely didn't believe me when I told him what the conservation officer said. So much that he threw his toys out of the pram. But that's a different story...

[blueg33](#)



18,412 posts

141 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 19th April 2016

 quote  quote all

Case in point as to why we never let an architect do planning.

I have 3 recent consents in north Lincs, no issues at all. (Not listed buildings)

[Busa may](#)



2,085 posts

71 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 19th April 2016

 quote  quote all

blueg33 said:

Case in point as to why we never let an architect do planning.

I have 3 recent consents in north Lincs, no issues at all. (Not listed buildings)

For the type of projects you are dealing with I totally agree with you , its a specialist subject in itself.

The OP really shouldn't have even found himself in this position in the first place, too many people driving the bus in my opinion.

[Equus](#)



1,356 posts

18 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 19th April 2016

 quote  quote all

blueg33 said:

Case in point as to why we never let an architect do planning.

Even though I'm better than average at handling Planning issues (I think), I can certainly see the sense

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always use a Planning Consultant on anything but the most straightforward proposal - a good one is worth their weight in gold (though good ones are few and far between, sadly).

It gets a bit expensive and unrealistic to employ a separate Planning Consultant on *straightforward* small jobs like extensions and one-off houses, mind you, but I can certainly see where BlueG33 is coming from.

[blueg33](#)



18,412 posts

141 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 19th April 2016

 quote  quote all

Busa mav said:

blueg33 said:

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For the type of projects you are dealing with I totally agree with you , its a specialist subject in itself.

The OP really shouldn't have even found himself in this position in the first place, too many people driving the bus in my opinion.

I agree, plus emotion from architect and client, it was never going to end well.

I don't go to meetings with Planning Officers anymore, because I had to walk out of a meeting to save myself from hitting him.

Seenario was

3rd design for a 50 unit scheme, making lots of changes for the officer who couldn't decide if he wanted contemporary or pastiche

£40k into architects fees

On the 4th meeting and 8 months into discussion the officer said "move that block of flats to the back of the site and I will be happy."

"but it will be too close to the tress and very dark as a result"

His reply "oh I haven't been to the site, are there trees there?"

He really needed a smack at that point. I just got up and said to my planning consultant, you deal with this.

The trees are 5 acres of woodland ffs

[Murph7355](#)

16,114 posts

173 months

[\[report\]](#)

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Busa mav said:

The OP really shouldn't have even found himself in this position in the first place, too many people driving the bus in my opinion.



[hunton69](#)

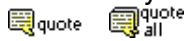
370 posts

54 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 21st April 2016



Spoonman said:

Has anyone here used a planning consultant?

I'm in Lincolnshire, it's about a listed building (only Grade II), and I'm intending to challenge a refusal by the Planning Inspectorate.

Is this a job for a planning consultant or a solicitor, or both?

I thought planning Inspectorates decision can not be challenged unless there is a legal issue in there decision.

[Equus](#)

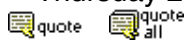
1,356 posts

18 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 21st April 2016



hunton69 said:

I thought planning Inspectorates decision can not be challenged unless there is a legal issue in there decision.

Correct; as has been mentioned above.

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New 'Garden City' at Ebbsfleet

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[What's New](#)3122472

New 'Garden City' at Ebbsfleet

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Author
Discussion

[109er](#)

Original Poster ◀

122 posts

[Forum](#)



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[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Monday 17th March 2014

 quote  all

They must be joking surely 😬

Bluewater next door does NOT have any basements due to the local water table being only 4' below the surface (I was there when it was being built) and they have water pumps running 24 - 7 to keep it at that level.

This map shows where they intend to build these 15,000 + houses. The brown bit is all dirt/earth infill and the water/lakes you can see are natural and not much lower than the surrounding area.

<https://maps.google.co.uk/maps?q=Ebbsfleet&ll=...>

Ebbsfleet International is just up and to the right so not that far away at all.

Should be interesting if they go ahead and we get another wet winter like this last one.



[Mr_B](#)

9,156 posts

160 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Monday 17th March 2014

 quote  all

I live 2 mins from Bluewater, can't say I'm thrilled to hear this, even though they started years ago with doing something on this site, simply because of the fact that one tiny incident at the Dartford Tunnel and the whole area is knackerd for miles around. The crap single lane design getting out and into Bluewater from the A2 is a joke. Hope they do something with the roads or build another Thames crossing.



[dxg](#)

4,693 posts

177 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Monday 17th March 2014

 quote  all

I rather think they've forgotten Howard's principles. This will be a 'garden city' in name only...



[Hackney](#)

5,044 posts

125 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Monday 17th March 2014

 quote  all

This is not a new plan and it won't be a "garden city" other than that it's another fantastic new idea from the Tories

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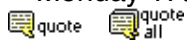
15,366 posts

153 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Monday 17th March 2014



Yeah, centrally planned grand projects always work really well.
Advertisement

[greygoose](#)

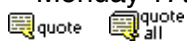
5,111 posts

112 months

[\[report\]](#)

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Monday 17th March 2014



Mr_B said:

I live 2 mins from Bluewater, can't say I'm thrilled to hear this, even though they started years ago with doing something on this site, simply because of the fact that one tiny incident at the Dartford Tunnel and the whole area is knackerd for miles around. The crap single lane design getting out and into Bluewater from the A2 is a joke. Hope they do something with the roads or build another Thames crossing.

They need to build the new Dartford Crossing before they build a new city there, the road network in the area is inadequate for the current traffic when things go wrong.

[McWigglebum4th](#)

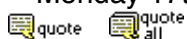
32,414 posts

121 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Monday 17th March 2014



greygoose said:

They need to build the new Dartford Crossing before they build a new city there, the road network in the area is inadequate for the current traffic when things go wrong.

You think they will be allowed cars?

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[greygoose](#)

5,111 posts

112 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Monday 17th March 2014

 quote quote
all

McWigglebum4th said:

greygoose said:

They need to build the new Dartford Crossing before they build a new city there, the road network in the area is inadequate for the current traffic when things go wrong.

You think they will be allowed cars?



Not in daves new world

Electric cars are ok aren't they 😊 ?


[powerstroke](#)

5,567 posts

77 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Monday 17th March 2014

 quote quote
all

Oh stop moaning the migrants That are singlehandedly pulling us out of ressession and selflessly building up our

Economy while saving our kids and doleies from the perrils

Of gainful employment need somewhere to live 🙄


[McWigglebum4th](#)

32,414 posts

121 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Monday 17th March 2014

 quote quote
all

greygoose said:

McWigglebum4th said:

greygoose said:

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You think they will be allowed cars?



Not in daves new world

Electric cars are ok aren't they 😊 ?

Nope

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[109er](#)

Original Poster ◀

433 posts

47 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Monday 17th March 2014

 quote  quote
all

Re Ebbsfleet, the report says the following 'A garden city with an initial 15,000 homes will be built at Ebbsfleet in Kent'.

AN initial 15000, there could be more 🙄

Hypothetical but possible scenario, 15000 houses with say, 50% owning 2 cars = 22500. Assuming they all

have jobs to go to and need the car:

60 cars per minute (1 per second) can get out, that = 3600 per hour = 6 hrs 15 minutes to get 22500 out.

Even if only 60% worked and needed their car it would still take 3hrs 45 minutes. Varying start times for the jobs does not even alter this figure (6.00 am to 9.00 am start times, still takes 3hrs 45 minutes).

As for public transport/bikes, how many buses and or bikes to get 60% out, that's 13500 people.

By the way, for those that live in the area, I was one of the drivers on the first 'Fastrack' buses and due to the 'normal' traffic now, they find it difficult to stay on time. More buses in the area will not be feasible as the area near Bluewater is almost overloaded with buses now. Add some more, and boy would you have problems. As

for bicycles 🙄 just imagine say, 2000 extra potential targets on the road 🙄

Roger

Edited by 109er on Monday 17th March 09:52



[greygoose](#)

5,111 posts

112 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Monday 17th March 2014



 quote  quote
all

Think your maths is a bit off there, 15000 houses with 50% having 2 cars and the rest having one is 22500.

[Johnnytheboy](#)[Forum](#)[My Stuff](#)[What's New](#)[Preferences](#)

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Monday 17th March 2014

 quote  all

Garden city my arse. It'll be lots of generic boxy houses squeezed far too tightly together, as per usual these days.



[Fartomatic5000](#)

528 posts

72 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Monday 17th March 2014

 quote  all

greygoose said:

Think your maths is a bit off there, 15000 houses with 50% having 2 cars and the rest having one is 22500.

True, but I think there will still be a traffic issue, we've seen it before with Kings Hill in Kent. Build houses first and worry about traffic later. Only after years of traffic jam misery does the area get the roads it needs.



[McWigglebum4th](#)

32,414 posts

121 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Monday 17th March 2014

 quote  all

Fartomatic5000 said:

greygoose said:

Think your maths is a bit off there, 15000 houses with 50% having 2 cars and the rest having one is 22500.

True, but I think there will still be a traffic issue, we've seen it before with Kings Hill in Kent. Build houses first and worry about traffic later. Only after years of traffic jam misery does the area get the roads it needs.

<crystal ball mode>

They will build an ECO city with bugger all parking and bike lanes and sustainable housing

They will end up with cars covering all the pavements

The houses will turn out to be crap and made of carboard with no heating

A few brave souls will buy them

The rest will end up as dolite accomdation

20 years from now it will be considered a massive mistake

30 years from now and it will be a war zone with zombie chavs and honey badgers the only things living there



[skvrover](#)[Forum](#)[My Stuff](#)[What's New](#)[Preferences](#)

121 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Monday 17th March 2014

 quote  quote all

McWigglebum4th said:

<crystall ball mode>

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20 years from now it will be considered a massive mistake

30 years from now and it will be a war zone with zombie chavs and honey badgers the only things living there

Pretty much this...

[109er](#)

Original Poster ◀



433 posts

47 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Monday 17th March 2014

 quote  quote all

greygoose said:

Think your maths is a bit off there, 15000 houses with 50% having 2 cars and the rest having one is 22500.

😬 My typo but, it still = 3hrs 45 minutes to get them out.

As to 'tight packed little boxes' this one is just down the road from there towards Gravesend.

<https://maps.google.co.uk/maps?q=Gravesend&ll=...>

<https://maps.google.co.uk/maps?q=Gravesend&ll=...>

Where the London Road runs parallel to Waterside, follow the run of trees to the left then down till its just pass

Capston Mews to Rosherville Way. That lot is built in an old chalk pit. How would you like your house to have a

small 'garden' and a 45-50ft cliff face facing the back or, in some cases the front of your house. Zoom I and see what

I mean 😬

<https://maps.google.co.uk/maps?q=Gravesend&ll=...>

<https://maps.google.co.uk/maps?q=Gravesend&ll=...>

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[Johnnytheboy](#)

14,742 posts

103 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Monday 17th March 2014

 quote quote
all

Actually, the fact that the current government have said that they will do this almost certainly means that they won't.


[toxicnerve](#)

16,712 posts

94 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Monday 17th March 2014

 quote quote
all

McWigglebum4th said:

<crystal ball mode>

They will build an ECO city with bugger all parking and bike lanes and sustainable housing

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The houses will turn out to be crap and made of carboard with no heating

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20 years from now it will be considered a massive mistake

30 years from now and it will be a war zone with zombie chavs and honey badgers the only things living there

Stevenage?


[TheD](#)

2,954 posts

116 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Monday 17th March 2014

 quote quote
all

I had a wee read of Howards vision of a Garden City. <http://www.tcpa.org.uk/pages/garden-cities.html> and there is no way it will even come close.



[Justin Cyder](#)

12,624 posts

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[\[news\]](#)

Monday 17th March 2014

 quote  all

Johnnytheboy said:

Garden city my arse. It'll be lots of generic boxy houses squeezed far too tightly together, as per usual these days.

Not spent much time in WGC or Letchworth then? 🙄



[skyrover](#)

11,162 posts

121 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Monday 17th March 2014

 quote  all

TheD said:

I had a wee read of Howards vision of a Garden City. <http://www.tcpa.org.uk/pages/garden-cities.html> and there is no way it will even come close.

Some key words/phrases in that "vision"

"community ownership of land" (Key for squeeze properties in tighter)

"mixed-tenure homes and housing types that are affordable for ordinary people" (Key for apartment blocks)

"strong local cultural, recreational and shopping facilities in walkable neighbourhoods; and integrated and accessible transport systems" (Key for narrow roads and one way systems)

"However, we have also the new challenges of globalised markets and the urgent need to adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change." (Key for small homes with inadequate parking and dubious construction methods/design"

"as set out in Howard's vision of the 'Social City'" (Key for the government knows best... see Singapore)



[dxg](#)

4,693 posts

177 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Monday 17th March 2014

 quote  all

McWigglebum4th said:

Fartomatic5000 said:

greygoose said:

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<crystal ball mode>

They will build an ECO city with bugger all parking and bike lanes and sustainable housing

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A few brave souls will buy them

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20 years from now it will be considered a massive mistake

30 years from now and it will be a war zone with zombie chavs and honey badgers the only things living there

The core principle of the four proposed ecotowns (of which this is not one) is that employment is available locally, within the town. This negates the need for such large transportation infrastructure - in theory.

Now, there is some hope here. Given that there is no indigenous industry or features of the land that could be used to create industry, perhaps a highly networked city could be the way forward. Think of all the telecommuting that could be done here, supporting the financial sector in 'The City.' Cars, the ecotown theory goes, would not be necessary - but how would you restrict house holds from buying them?

All is not lost, but imagine the quality of life of those poor sods, spending their days in their tiny new build box with only other tiny new build boxes to look at and nary a hill nor a tree to be seen...

The counter argument would be that some decent Code 6 housing, with local work centres (i.e. hire a desk type affairs) and sufficiently dispersed service centres through the city, along with schools and shares spaces may succeed in instilling a sense of community on a village scale within regions of the overall city. Who knows... But the moment Tescos roll up and insist on standard approach being repeats all hope is lost...

[dxg](#)

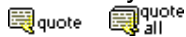
4,693 posts

177 months

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Monday 17th March 2014



skyrover said:

TheD said:

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"mixed-tenure homes and housing types that are affordable for ordinary people" (Key for apartment blocks)

"strong local cultural, recreational and shopping facilities in walkable neighbourhoods; and integrated and accessible transport systems" (Key for narrow roads and one way systems)

"However, we have also the new challenges of globalised markets and the urgent need to adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change." (Key for small homes with inadequate parking and dubious construction methods/design"

"as set out in Howard's vision of the 'Social City'" (Key for the government knows best... see Singapore) The amount of space that Howard allocates to the "The Asylum" is telling, I think!

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[sugerbear](#)



1,276 posts

75 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Monday 17th March 2014

 quote  quote all

All underwritten by the governments help to buy scheme.

What could possibly go wrong...

[grantone](#)



395 posts

90 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Monday 17th March 2014

 quote  quote all

Is there a way to create a 15,000 house town without central planning?

[109er](#)

Original Poster ◀



433 posts

47 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Monday 17th March 2014

 quote  quote all

Best I can find but, they want to build it down that large hole:

The brown bit with the 'lakes' as they put it.

<https://maps.google.co.uk/maps?q=Bluewater&ll=...>

Best pic available from the road.

<https://maps.google.co.uk/maps?q=Bluewater&ll=...>

Roger

[sugerbear](#)



1,276 posts

75 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Monday 17th March 2014

 quote  quote all

space.

[109er](#)

Original Poster ◀



433 posts

47 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Monday 17th March 2014

 quote  quote all

109er said:

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<https://maps.google.co.uk/maps?q=Bluewater&ll=...>

Best pic available from the road.

<https://maps.google.co.uk/maps?q=Bluewater&ll=...>

It seems I may be wrong, or am I 🤔

Just watched Meridian News and they showed this area:

<https://maps.google.co.uk/maps?q=Ebbsfleet&ll=...>

as the new site for this 'city' and then showed a picture of this site as 'how it looks now showing this area.

<https://maps.google.co.uk/maps?q=Ebbsfleet&ll=...>

If its the first site, surely that would be an extension of Swanscombe and be nothing more than a 'new' housing estate. Even if it is the second larger site, the only thing between Swanscombe and 'it' will be a small clump of tree's and a 'cliff' face.

So now the question is, What site is the correct site 🤔

Roger

[Moonhawk](#)



7,030 posts

136 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 18th March 2014

 quote  quote all

McWigglebum4th said:

Nope

They will build an eco town that is public transport and push bikes only

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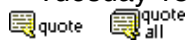
5,044 posts

125 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 18th March 2014



sugerbear said:

grantone said:

Is there a way to create a 15,000 house town without central planning?

I think it should be left to the developers. That we can get reasonably priced properties with plenty of space.



[Campo](#)

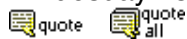
5,697 posts

114 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 18th March 2014



sugerbear said:

grantone said:

Is there a way to create a 15,000 house town without central planning?

I think it should be left to the developers. That we can get reasonably priced properties with plenty of space.

Have another 😊

Whats really confusing me is the name - how on earth do 15,000 homes make a City? Surely thats more like a small town?

[menusername](#)

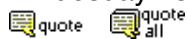
665 posts

59 months

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Tuesday 18th March 2014



think the idea being that these new homes are within walking distance of Ebbsfleet Int. Stn

And the new tenants can commmute to St Pancs in "20 mins"

Not only is the High Speed at the point of becoming unaffordable, but it is also becoming full to capacity too.

Plus alot of the roads in the area are dual carriageways and not great for walking families and commuters.

The proposed developments, if they go ahead, will be purchased off plan by investors looking at buy-to-letting, and owners forced to buy at / forcing up themselves, inflated prices, due to its "easy commute into London"

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[The Don of Croy](#)

4,216 posts

76 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 18th March 2014

 quote quote
all

I think whoever thought of 'Ebbsfleet' and the station there must have been overly influenced by 'Field of Dreams' ("You build it and they will come").

It's been open for years but where's the development that was expected to accompany it?

I did stop some American gap year students alighting the Eurostar there one windswept evening - they thought they'd reached London.

Should have let them carry on and view the beauty that is northern post-industrial Kent...would have been a high point after their visit to Paris no doubt.


[BoRED S2upid](#)

13,546 posts

157 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 19th March 2014

 quote quote
all

I presume these new houses will be reasonably priced so the average Jo can afford them? Â£150k for a 3 bed would be reasonable.

[109er](#)


Original Poster ◀

433 posts

47 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)


Wednesday 19th March 2014

 quote quote
all

BoRED S2upid said:

I presume these new houses will be reasonably priced so the average Jo can afford them? Â£150k for a 3 bed would be reasonable.

I think not, 3 bed detached £300,000 (Local estate agent)

To be built, 3 bed POA 

Only time will tell.



[MysteryLemon](#)

4,816 posts

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[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 19th March 2014

 [quote](#)  [quote all](#)

People saying the local road networks can't support it...

You do also realise they've been given permission to build a Paramount theme park just down the road as well?

[109er](#)



Original Poster ◀

433 posts

47 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 19th March 2014

 [quote](#)  [quote all](#)

MysteryLemon said:

People saying the local road networks can't support it...

To right they won't, you should see the hold ups when Bluewater is open, especially weekends and bank holidays 😞

With this new 'housing estate' it will be one big carpark.



[AV12](#)

5,137 posts

125 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 19th March 2014

 [quote](#)  [quote all](#)

Hackney said:

😄

Seconded. 😄



[Keyser Soze](#)

16,575 posts

108 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 19th March 2014

 [quote](#)  [quote all](#)

109er said:

MysteryLemon said:

People saying the local road networks can't support it...

To right they won't, you should see the hold ups when Bluewater is open, especially weekends and bank holidays 😞

With this new 'housing estate' it will be one big carpark.

I work on the Crossways estate, one single thing goes wrong on any of the roads around the bridge, bluewater etc and it's a nightmare. Of course why normally happens is you get one incident then a

[Forum](#)[My Stuff](#)[What's New](#)[Preferences](#)

[johnfm](#)



13,149 posts

167 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 19th March 2014

 quote  all

 me you guys are miserable.

WhingeingHeads: Moaning Matters

No matter what any government or developer suggest, you moaners will complain ,

It is 15,000 homes new homes That's got to be better than 0 new homes in the south east.

[Keyser Soze](#)



16,575 posts

108 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 19th March 2014

 quote  all

johnfm said:

 me you guys are miserable.

WhingeingHeads: Moaning Matters

No matter what any government or developer suggest, you moaners will complain ,

It is 15,000 homes new homes That's got to be better than 0 new homes in the south east.

Or it's people who live and work in the area and have seen successive developments occur with no thought to the impact on the local infrastructure and the chaos that has ensued

[skyrover](#)



11,162 posts

121 months

[\[report\]](#)

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Wednesday 19th March 2014

 quote  all

johnfm said:

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WhingeingHeads: Moaning Matters

No matter what any government or developer suggest, you moaners will complain ,

It is 15 000 homes new homes That's got to be better than 0 new homes in the south east

Original Poster ◀



433 posts

47 months

[\[report\]](#)

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Thursday 20th March 2014

 quote  quote all

Keyser Soze said:

johnfm said:

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WhingeingHeads: Moaning Matters

No matter what any government or developer suggest, you moaners will complain ,

It is 15,000 homes new homes That's got to be better than 0 new homes in the south east.
Or it's people who live and work in the area and have seen successive developments occur with no thought to the impact on the local infrastructure and the chaos that has ensued

As posted earlier:

I think not, 3 bed detached £300,000 (Local estate agent)

To be built, 3 bed POA 

Only time will tell.

I don't think it will help the local housing shortage, as I don't suspect many are earning enough to get a mortgage for that much.

May I suggest that you go and look at the area concerned. The only roads in and out are very narrow, and don't say 'widen them' because to do so you would need to demolish houses that are already there.

[Foppo](#)



2,277 posts

41 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 20th March 2014

 quote  quote all

johnfm said:

 me you guys are miserable.

WhingeingHeads: Moaning Matters

No matter what any government or developer suggest, you moaners will complain ,

It is 15,000 homes new homes That's got to be better than 0 new homes in the south east.
You have a point John. That is why it takes forever to have anything done in the U.K.
Planning permission is a nightmare. Ok don't build on floodplanes. Or build 15,000 tents people can move about like nomads.> 😊

[Mr_B](#)

[Forum](#)



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Thursday 20th March 2014

 quote  all

johnfm said:

 me you guys are miserable.

WhingeingHeads: Moaning Matters

No matter what any government or developer suggest, you moaners will complain ,

It is 15,000 homes new homes That's got to be better than 0 new homes in the south east. I'm not against new developments and no nimby, but it looks like they will do nothing in the area that's already a nightmare as soon as one single car breaks down near the Dartford Tunnel and the development will be another multitude of flats and houses with garages that you would struggle to get an Austin 7 in and no park. All the other local developments are the same and priced stupidly. Any big developments in the area should go hand in hand with a new Thames crossing.



[The Don of Croy](#)

4,216 posts

76 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 20th March 2014

 quote  all

Keyser Soze said:

With this and the paramount park they'll need to seriously think and invest in the infrastructure. I think that's called an 'increase in Dartford Tolls' at the DoT. You heard it here first.



[Fats25](#)

6,102 posts

146 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 20th March 2014

 quote  all

Fartomatic5000 said:

True, but I think there will still be a traffic issue, we've seen it before with Kings Hill in Kent. Build houses first and worry about traffic later. Only after years of traffic jam misery does the area get the roads it needs.

dxg said:

The core principle of the four proposed ecotowns (of which this is not one) is that employment is available locally, within the town. This negates the need for such large transportation infrastructure - in theory.

I live in Kings Hill and the traffic does not impact me. But that is only because I work from home or am commuting on a motorbike and leave before the office workers come in, and the Kings Hill folks get out to work. However I tried to get out (towards Tunbridge Wells) in the car leaving at 09:30 the other morning. It was 10:15 as I went past Paddock Wood. I could not believe how bad it was!

They are building more houses here too, but nothing happening for the infrastructure to get to and from Kings Hill.

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So you have the traffic leaving and joining Kings Hill at the same time. Ebbsfleet will be a disaster - at least they have a decent train line!

Edited by Fats25 on Thursday 20th March 12:25

[MaximumJed](#)



721 posts

149 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 20th March 2014

 quote  all

Fats25 said:

Ebbsfleet will be a disaster - at least they have a decent train line!

It might be a decent line, but AFAIK it's already standing room only at rush hour(s)

[Fats25](#)



6,102 posts

146 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 20th March 2014

 quote  all

MaximumJed said:

Fats25 said:

Ebbsfleet will be a disaster - at least they have a decent train line!

It might be a decent line, but AFAIK it's already standing room only at rush hour(s)

That's ok. Is only for 20 mins. I would rather stand for 20 mins, than sit crushed for an hour!

[AV12](#)



5,137 posts

125 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 20th March 2014

 quote  all

MaximumJed said:

Fats25 said:

Ebbsfleet will be a disaster - at least they have a decent train line!

It might be a decent line, but AFAIK it's already standing room only at rush hour(s)

Gravesend does that. No seats after. Standing at 130mph isn't fun.

IT's a bad idea without the infrastructure. Either plan as best you can and build development plans around that, not the other way round. It's vote winning talk.

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http://www.kentonline.co.uk/kent_business/news/joi...

and

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paramount_London

Disaster if they don't plan.

Edited by AV12 on Thursday 20th March 13:26

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Author
Discussion

[aponting389](#)

Original Poster ◀

416 posts

[Forum](#)



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Friday 5th July 2013

 quote  all

Hi, im hoping somebody might be able to shed some light on this....

Im putting in a planning app for demolition of industrial units and erection of commercial units. the council have told my agent who is dealing with it that we will be required to make a contribution to local infrastructure in order to be granted permission.

Does this sound right? Can they do this, he says that the money doesn't even have to be spent on things relating to my development. surely this is just some kind of blackmail?

He hasnt mentioned section 106 agreement or cited any other formal process, just said that they will give me a letter asking for a contribution.



[JustinP1](#)

13,325 posts

147 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Friday 5th July 2013

 quote  all

aponting389 said:

Does this sound right? Can they do this, he says that the money doesn't even have to be spent on things relating to my development. surely this is just some kind of blackmail?

Welcome to planning 2013.

I have to sign a form to say that for our self-build house with projected build costs of £150,000, that I will pay the council £11,700 towards 'affordable housing', and an additional sum which will equate to another £16-£18k.

Check your areas Local Plan. There'll be details about it there.

This is how they want to boost regeneration and and building trade apparently...



[barryrs](#)

2,104 posts

140 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Friday 5th July 2013

 quote  all

Might relate to the new Community Infrastructure Levy or CIL.

This new change will effect all development including single dwellings and is calculated on a square meterage rate IIRC.

[Devil2575](#)

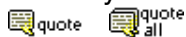
13,399 posts

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Friday 5th July 2013



JustinP1 said:

Welcome to planning 2013.

I have to sign a form to say that for our self-build house with projected build costs of £150,000, that I will pay the council £11,700 towards 'affordable housing', and an additional sum which will equate to another £16-£18k.

Check your areas Local Plan. There'll be details about it there.

This is how they want to boost regeneration and and building trade apparently...
Sounds like another tax to me.

I could understand it if you were a big developer throwing up 2 dozen houses, but for a self build it is crazy.

[johnfm](#)

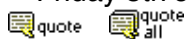
13,149 posts

167 months

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Friday 5th July 2013



Ah, good 'ole S106.

Yep - you will need to make an agreement with them to get planning approval.
Advertisement

[aponting389](#)

Original Poster ◀

416 posts

95 months

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Friday 5th July 2013

use to solely commercial on the new plan they will half this fee. Still seems wrong to be as there wont be any increase in traffic.

[10 Pence Short](#)

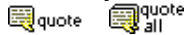
32,880 posts

134 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Friday 5th July 2013



johnfm said:

Ah, good 'ole S106.

Yep - you will need to make an agreement with them to get planning approval. The problem with s106 was developers wanting to use them as bribes, but the bribe having to be related to the development ('Tesco' was the court authority on this, from memory). The new situation let's the LA decide the bribe without the limitation, is my understanding.

[blueg33](#)

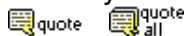
18,412 posts

141 months

[\[report\]](#)

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Friday 5th July 2013



Op

Have they told you if the charge is Community Infrastructure Levy (CiL) or contributions under S106 of the Planning Act?

The latter tends to be negotiable to a degree, the former is supposedly non negotiable.

TBH you need a planning consultant to take these issues on

Regards

Nick

[barryrs](#)

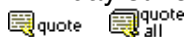
2,104 posts

140 months

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Friday 5th July 2013



Extract from my LA's website.

The PDCS divides the district into three residential charge zones, with Zone A covering town center and gateway; Zone B covering outer Weston and Zone C covering the rest of the district.

The rates for retail developments are proposed to be set according to size. The charge for 'large scale' developments with a net sales area above 280 sq m is proposed as £120 per sq m and for 'small scale' developments with a net sales area below 280 sq m the proposed charge is £60 per sq m.

A rate of £40 per sq m is proposed for all purpose-built student accommodation and for care homes.

Commercial and all other qualifying developments have been set a proposed zero rate levy.

The Council does not intend to permit discretionary charitable relief from CIL.

[blueg33](#)



18,412 posts

141 months

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Friday 5th July 2013

 quote  quote all

Ok. So it looks like its contributions under S106 of the Act. These can be challenged if you have evidence that the contributions are wrongfully applied, in accurate, or not relevant to the development.

Really you need some proper site and authority specific advice from a Planning Consultant or a Planning lawyer

[aponting389](#)

Original Poster ◀



416 posts

95 months

[\[report\]](#)

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Friday 5th July 2013

 quote  quote all

thanks for the replies, it makes no mention of a CIL or S106, just a comment on the Planning Consultation to the words of "no objection subject to condition" one of the conditions being i have to make a contribution of ~£9k towards measures to improve cycle and pedestrian infrastructure between the site and the town, and to mitigate the adverse impact of additional traffic.

now im reading through again i can see where they are coming from. but i am only replacing current buildings with the same footprint. If i was to replace like for like exactly there would be no charge, is that what they are saying?

[Swervin Mervin](#)



2,082 posts

155 months

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Friday 5th July 2013

 quote  quote all

aponting389 said:

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the site and the town, and to mitigate the adverse impact of additional traffic.

now im reading through again i can see where they are coming from. but i am only replacing current buildings with the same footprint. If i was to replace like for like exactly there would be no charge, is that what they are saying?

Yes but if you are changing use from commercial to commercial + offices then the redeveloped site could give rise to an increase in traffic.

Have you not had a Transport Statement/Assessment undertaken to submit with the planning app? This should identify any potential level of change in traffic generation of the site and would potentially serve to bolster your negotiations on any contributions. The contributions have to be proportional to any impact you may generate and so if you can prove that impact is going to be negligible then the contributions should take account of that otherwise the Authority could be challenged under the CIL.

[Swervin Mervin](#)

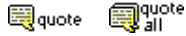
2,082 posts

155 months

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Friday 5th July 2013



Oh and the contribution would have to be made under CIL or S106 as outlined above. To just ask for some cash with no formal agreement of how it is to be spent would be very naughty indeed.

[aponting389](#)

Original Poster ◀

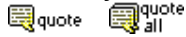
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95 months

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ok thanks for that. it says "in accordance with Policy TRA04 of the Local Plan, contributions from the development can be sought based on the number of multi-modal trips likely to be generated"

well fair enough, so it seems they are only charging me for the increase in what the offices will bring. i am going to keep the use as commercial, scrap the offices from the plan. put the revised application in the fee should be dropped to zero and fingers crossed it gets accepted.

[blueg33](#)

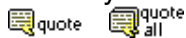
18,412 posts

141 months

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Friday 5th July 2013



Any new application is tested under current policy, even if it is virtual copy of the use already on the site. If policy says contributions will be sought, then contributions will be sought.

Original Poster ◀



416 posts

95 months

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Friday 5th July 2013

 quote  all

i know that, but theyve sought contributions, then ive re-submitted the plan negating the need any of their contributions. do you think they will try and find something else to seek contributions for?

[blueg33](#)



18,412 posts

141 months

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Friday 5th July 2013

 quote  all

aponting389 said:

i know that, but theyve sought contributions, then ive re-submitted the plan negating the need any of their contributions. do you think they will try and find something else to seek contributions for?
 Depends on policy TBH. If there is no policy for contributions that applies your plans then you are in a stronger position. But if they can make a case that relates directly to the development then they can still ask for a contribution, but they can't just ask for money. They have to state what it is for and justify the amount.

[Swervin Mervin](#)



2,082 posts

155 months

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Friday 5th July 2013

 quote  all

Hard to do on a like-for-like replacement development as well, as you could just re-let the existing buildings.

If you decide to go back for a crack at having offices as well make sure you haven't demolished anything first as that'll make life a lot more difficult.

[aponting389](#)

Original Poster ◀

416 posts

95 months

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Friday 5th July 2013

buildings have permission for commercial use they are little more than farm sheds really. i am modernising he site by knocking down some old buildings and using the footage to build one bigger shed with multiple units inside

Edited by aponting389 on Friday 5th July 15:32

[Swervin_Mervin](#)



2,082 posts

155 months

[\[report\]](#)

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Friday 5th July 2013

 quote  quote all

I meant same land use and same floor space. Is that not the case?

[aponting389](#)

Original Poster ◀



416 posts

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[\[news\]](#)

Friday 5th July 2013

 quote  quote all

it is the case yeh, well sort of, its the same sq footage but moved around the site. what do you think will be hard? for them to demand a contribution or for me to get away without paying one?!

[Wings](#)



4,822 posts

132 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Friday 5th July 2013

 quote  quote all

JustinP1 said:

Welcome to planning 2013.

I have to sign a form to say that for our self-build house with projected build costs of £150,000, that I will pay the council £11,700 towards 'affordable housing', and an additional sum which will equate to another £16-£18k.

Check your areas Local Plan. There'll be details about it there.

This is how they want to boost regeneration and and building trade apparently...

^^^The above happened to me when converting a commercial, retail premises into 8 one bed flats, got caught by Bristol City Council under section 106 for £2500.

A section 106 can also involve the cost of implementing and future maintenance of roads, open spaces

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[blueg33](#)

18,412 posts

141 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Friday 5th July 2013

 quote  all

Wings said:

A section 106 can also involve the cost of implementing and future maintenance of roads, open spaces and setting aside new flats, houses for social housing.

Its a much longer list than that! Try building 1000 houses on a site and you will soon find out that the "shopping list" is long!



[garyhun](#)

21,462 posts

145 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Friday 5th July 2013

 quote  all

I got planning permission for my self build Dec 2012. Had to pay a £4000 106 agreement contribution.

Had the planning been granted in Jan it would have been a CIL of £24,000.

Money for old rope!!

Edited by garyhun on Tuesday 9th July 09:40

[aponting389](#)



Original Poster ◀

416 posts

95 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 9th July 2013

 quote  all

garyhun said:

I got planning permission for my self build Dec 2012. Had to pay Â£4000 106.

Had the planning been granted in Jan it would have been a CIL of Â£24,000.

Money for old rope!!



you were lucky then! disgusting isn't it. my dad and some other landowners just had a 106 for £30m, thirty million. makes my £9k look a bit silly, still not paying it though.

[Smiler.](#)

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Tuesday 9th July 2013

 quote  quote all

blueg33 said:

Wings said:

A section 106 can also involve the cost of implementing and future maintenance of roads, open spaces and setting aside new flats, houses for social housing.

Its a much longer list than that! Try building 1000 houses on a site and you will soon find out that the "shopping list" is long!

It's a good point & the next time the lefties are banging-on about developers "banking land", they should be made aware of this.

How does this affect "affordable" housing?



[blueg33](#)

18,412 posts

141 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 9th July 2013

 quote  quote all

Smiler. said:

It's a good point & the next time the lefties are banging-on about developers "banking land", they should be made aware of this.

How does this affect "affordable" housing?

Land banking doesnt go on to the extent that it is portrayed. If I have a site for 1000 units then with a build and sales rate at best circa 50 pa it will take me 20 years to finish the development. So I may trade half of the site, which leaves me with 10 years build left. Many people would see this as a 9 year land bank in that location and to a degree it is, but owing to sales rates its impossible to bring the whole 1000 units to the market in one go.

Affordable housing is always provided on large sites like this. As detailed planning tends to be done in phases the affordable housing element also tends to be released in phases.



[MYOB](#)

1,001 posts

55 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 9th July 2013

 quote  quote all

blueg33 said:

Have they told you if the charge is Community Infrastructure Levy (CiL) or contributions under S106 of the Planning Act?

Sorry to be pedantic but you mean S106 of the *Town & Country Planning Act 1990*...not the *Planning Act 2008*

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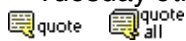
18,412 posts

141 months

[\[report\]](#)

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Tuesday 9th July 2013



MYOB said:

blueg33 said:

Have they told you if the charge is Community Infrastructure Levy (CiL) or contributions under S106 of the Planning Act?

Sorry to be pedantic but you mean S106 of the *Town & Country Planning Act 1990*...not the *Planning Act 2008*.

Yes the 1990 Act. I was posting from my Blackberry and couldn't be bothered to type the whole thing.

[Olivera](#)

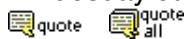
2,539 posts

156 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 9th July 2013



JustinP1 said:

I have to sign a form to say that for our self-build house with projected build costs of £150,000, that I will pay the council £11,700 towards 'affordable housing', and an additional sum which will equate to another £16-£18k.

Please tell me you are joking...

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should "planners" be unbiased?

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Original Poster ◀

2,017 posts

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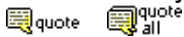
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Wednesday 22nd August 2012



There are some plans afoot to turn a load of green belt around our town into c.2500 houses. Not surprisingly, there is a lot of local unhappiness about it and petitions etc. have been started.

The area in question is close to my home, and it's where I tend to walk the dog - you can walk for miles around country lanes, ponds, farmland etc., and also spot wildlife like the deer herd, badgers, birds of prey.

My wife went to see the planners in a drop in session, and asked why they wanted to build over the land, she said it was "a beautiful area", to which he responded "we'll have to agree to differ, I'm afraid, I find it anything but beautiful".

Should the town planner express such views in a public meeting, or are they supposed to be unbiased?

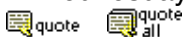
[davepoth](#)

28,235 posts

116 months

[\[report\]](#)
[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 22nd August 2012



activity said:

Should the town planner express such views in a public meeting, or are they supposed to be unbiased? The planners are supposed to take account of "amenity value" when making planning decisions if my decade old university primer on planning is any use.

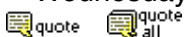
[redgriff500](#)

14,095 posts

180 months

[\[report\]](#)
[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 22nd August 2012



I used to be a land buyer for several national developers...

Large tracts of land that magically become available for development EITHER make sense when you look at a large map (natural infilling of a town) OR as is more frequently the case, they are owned / optioned by an influential person / Co.

I freely admit if I knew who to bribe I would too... agricultural land circa £5k/acre development land £1 million plus in any reasonable area.

[redgriff500](#)

14,095 posts

180 months

[\[report\]](#)

I can only say that my Co. was offered a huge area of land (approx 50 acres IIRC).

We were asked what we'd pay - we told them (approx £800k / acre - it was a few years ago and not the best area) but that it clearly had no chance of getting permission as it was outside the proposed ring road.

Magically within weeks the proposed ring road moved outward and the land was within it and hence earmarked for future development.

No money changing hands... my arse !

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Planning permission

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Planning permission

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Author
Discussion

[Welshbeef](#)

Original Poster ◀

28,802 posts

[Forum](#)



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Sunday 9th February 2014

 quote  all

We have a semi detached and are now actively looking into a planning permission rather than just a nice idea to have (another bun in the oven so need more bedrooms and downstairs pace).

I've been trawling through the planning portal and the one question I cannot see is how close to the boundary can we build? If it is year we could choose to build literally on the boundary great as we need access to the rear so need access at least the width of a wheelie bin.

Also once you have determined max width it appears that from Mar 2013-May2016 there is the option instead of 2 meters extension we could choose to build up to 4m deep (beyond the original rear of the house) again we may not need this at all but would be good to know the maximum we can go.

Lastly it states in the planning portal that provided you follow those rules ie within the sizes it comes under permitted development (like a lift conversion) as such notification to neighbours is for courtesy only.

One final thing would it be financially crippling to even consider a cellar under what will be the extension - thinking cinema room and games room.

[Welshbeef](#)



Original Poster ◀

28,892 posts

115 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Monday 10th February 2014

 quote  all

So it appears that if you go within 2m of the boundary the eaves cannot be higher than 4m 13'1" how on earth can a 2 storey building have the extension ignition fly lower than the existing property? Uoud have to step down into the rooms on the extension.

Thoughts or have I misunderstood?



[Lanby](#)

994 posts

131 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Monday 10th February 2014

 quote  all

As I understand permitted development for a detached house you can:

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two storey
 3m (as long as all of the new part is more than 2m from the boundary - if not I think you are stuck to 3m eaves)

50 cubic metres in the loft.

I am sure they write it as confusingly as possible just for a laugh

[Welshbeef](#)

Original Poster ◀



28,892 posts

115 months

[\[report\]](#)

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Monday 10th February 2014

 quote  quote all

With permitted development do you simply put in your application and its in essence approved as its within the guidelines.

If you want bigger is it then a different type of planning permission.

On the space to the boundary (we are a semi detached) and the joined semi to ours there is barely a wheelie bin wide to the boundary with their extension and the height is 2 storey to the same height as the original house.

[BoRED S2upid](#)



13,546 posts

157 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Monday 10th February 2014

 quote  quote all

Cellar - yes. Our extension a silly amount of money involved in the foundations digging and removing the soil ! Once that was done it flew up and costs were quite reasonable it hate to think of the cost of a cellar.

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[covmutley](#)

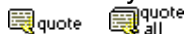
1,200 posts

107 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Monday 10th February 2014



Permitted development means no planning permission is required and you can just go ahead, subject to building regs. However, you will want to write to planning department letting them know what you are doing, size etc, and include sketch drawings so they can confirm in writing you don't need permission.

Many councils now charge a fee for this service.

[Welshbeef](#)

Original Poster ◀

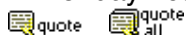
28,892 posts

115 months

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Monday 10th February 2014



We have currently a semi detached with a detached garage pretty within one bricks width of the boundary but a decent gap between garage and house.

We would like a 4.2m wide extension this would be right up to the boundary and then at the rear push out to the maximum within permitted development - it seems until 2016 a semi can get 4m out the back instead of 3 m not sure we'd want or need 4.

So its looking like planning permission in full would be needed. Hmm

[kiethnton](#)

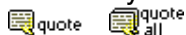
7,989 posts

97 months

[\[report\]](#)

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Monday 10th February 2014



Welshbeef said:

We have currently a semi detached with a detached garage pretty within one bricks width of the boundary but a decent gap between garage and house.

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So its looking like planning permission in full would be needed. Hmm

Even if you don't need the full 4m it may be worth just doing it anyway - negligible difference in building

Original Poster ◀



28,892 posts

115 months

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Monday 10th February 2014

 quote  quote all

kiethnton said:

Even if you don't need the full 4m it may be worth just doing it anyway - negligible difference in building costs and when you've done it you'll likely be grateful for that extra space around the kitchen table etc. Killer is though if we cannot get 4.2m width or it would have to be 2.2m that's 7 foot inside at best useless for bedrooms and frankly we'd not do it.

We want 13-14foot wide by 17foot long min bedrooms mirroring our existing bedrooms

[Lanby](#)



994 posts

131 months

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Monday 10th February 2014

 quote  quote all

I just saw you live in a semi.

How wide is the house excluding the garage?

You can do 50% width of the house excluding garages 3m out (or 6m until 2016 using the neighbour consultation scheme).

If you want two storeys you need planning permission.

What about going out over the garage?

[Welshbeef](#)

Original Poster ◀



28,892 posts

115 months

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[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 11th February 2014

 quote  quote all

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What about going out over the garage?

Not sure of existing size of house will check.

But yes we'd be going over the existing garage/knocking it down and rebuilding it with adequate

[herbialfa](#)



1,373 posts

119 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 11th February 2014

 quote  quote all

WB!

Look into "Prior Notification"

This is a free application without drawings (believe it or not!!!!) for 3 years up until May 2016.

This was to kick start the construction industry!

Fill in a simple for and post it off.

So on a semi you can go out 6 metres, keep the eaves below 2.5 metres and the ridge under 4 metres.

& it only takes 4 weeks!

- UNLES* a neighbour makes a valid planning objection then you would need to put in a full plans submission.

HTH

[Welshbeef](#)

Original Poster ◀



28,892 posts

115 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 11th February 2014

 quote  quote all

herbialfa said:

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[Mr GrimNasty](#)

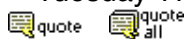
7,680 posts

87 months

[\[report\]](#)

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Tuesday 11th February 2014



Party wall Act may apply as well. You may want to plan to avoid that.

[Lanby](#)

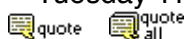
994 posts

131 months

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Tuesday 11th February 2014



Welshbeef said:

Not sure of existing size of house will check.

But yes we'd be going over the existing garage/knocking it down and rebuilding it with adequate footings for a 2 storey house

Isn't the 3m to 6m extending out backwards from the rear wall not width?

Yes it is 3m to 6m backwards and 50% sideways, single storey, but you want two storey so it will require planning

[Welshbeef](#)

Original Poster ◀

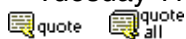
28,892 posts

115 months

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Yes it is 3m to 6m backwards and 50% sideways, single storey, but you want two storey so it will require planning

Great...

existing loft into the master. It is a big loft

[Lanby](#)



994 posts

131 months

[\[report\]](#)

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Tuesday 11th February 2014

 quote  quote all

Why not put up a few photos of the house and I'm sure people will give you some good suggestions, or go speak to an architect 😊

[Busa mav](#)



2,085 posts

71 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 11th February 2014

 quote  quote all

Lanby said:

Why not put up a few photos of the house and I'm sure people will give you some good suggestions, or go speak to an architect 😊

That would make it a lot easier to see what is actually possible to achieve.

OP , I see you are in Berkshire.

fyi, quite a few of the authorities in the unitary would not permit a 2 storey extension within 1m of the boundary , particularly Wokingham BC.

[Welshbeef](#)

Original Poster ◀



28,892 posts

115 months

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Tuesday 11th February 2014

 quote  quote all

I've got an architect coming round later this week (he's done a lot of similar properties in the close proximity) so will see what he comes back with.

He did flag up straight away basically any 2 storey side extensions on a semi unless you have a vast wide plot will need full planning.

Hopefully he will come up with some ideas and advice.

[Busa mav](#)

2,085 posts

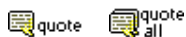
71 months

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Welshbeef said:

He did flag up straight away basically any 2 storey side extensions on a semi unless you have a vast wide plot will need full planning.

Any 2 storey side extension , on any property. on any plot will require planning 😊

So , Is it Wokingham ?

[Welshbeef](#)

Original Poster ◀

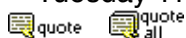
28,892 posts

115 months

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Tuesday 11th February 2014



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So , Is it Wokingham ?

Reading.

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Planning permission for a porch?

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Planning permission for a porch?

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[Censorious](#)

Original Poster ◀

15 159 posts

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Tuesday 25th February 2014

 quote  all

We have an entrance lobby to the house which already has a proper slate roof to it and has a T&G ceiling with lighting underneath; on the furthest corner is a metal reinforced timber support.

It's all original as I describe and our house is the same as others around us.

It currently looks very similar to this house as this is the same builder and design.



We want to lay a floor and close in the sides with an additional door to the front; just to make a dry area where we can hang coats and leave shoes.

We did tentatively ask the council about it and they basically have a blanket response which is "you need to submit a full planning application".

This we were told involves full site plan; plan of house; plan of area in question and full elevations of each to be drawn up; about £1k for survey and drawings plus the planning application and photos costing about another £400.

That's probably about the same price that I can do the work for so it'll double the price and quite possibly to be told that it doesn't need full planning anyway. Local council seem to be quite lazy, I guess it's only other peoples money they're wasting so no biggie for them!

So, my question is..... would you say "feck it" and just do it without even asking?

[Censorious](#)



Original Poster ◀

15,158 posts

151 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 25th February 2014

 quote  all

Forgot to mention.....

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[paulrockliffe](#)



5,892 posts

144 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 25th February 2014

 quote  quote
all

google planningportal

It'll tell you what you can do under Permitted Development.

I **think** you can build a porch to the front so long as it is below a certain floor area, but this is only a vague memory.

[herbialfa](#)



1,373 posts

119 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 25th February 2014

 quote  quote
all

There you go!

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/common...>

You don't need photos!!!

[B17NNS](#)



14,350 posts

164 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 25th February 2014

 quote  quote
all

The planning rules for porches are applicable to any external door to the dwellinghouse.

Adding a porch to any external door of your house is considered to be permitted development, not requiring an application for planning permission, provided:

- the ground floor area (measured externally) would not exceed three square metres.
- no part would be more than three metres above ground level (height needs to be measured in the same way as for a house extension).
- no part of the porch would be within two metres of any boundary of the dwellinghouse and the highway.

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[Alex](#)



8,756 posts

201 months

[\[report\]](#)

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Tuesday 25th February 2014

 quote  quote all

Planning permission for a Porch is easier to get than for a Ferrar.

[Censorious](#)

Original Poster ◀



15,158 posts

151 months

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[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 25th February 2014

 quote  quote all

Thanks folks.

It would be exactly 3sq/mtrs (luckily)!

I think I could treat it as permitted development given the size and that we already have the entire structure as part of the original house and would just need to lay a level floor & fill in the sides.

I'll have a thorough read up on PD first though.

Thanks again!

[Censorious](#)

Original Poster ◀

15,158 posts

151 months

[\[report\]](#)

Aaaw; we'll be 25cm over on the height for permitted development.

This part and height is already there; the porch already exists, it's just open sided.

What do you think?

[herbialfa](#)



1,373 posts

119 months

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[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 25th February 2014

 quote  quote
all

25cm = £172 simples.

Build it and if you get grassed up then go for Full planning!

Can't see why any Planner would refuse such an application TBH!

[Ean218](#)



1,349 posts

167 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 25th February 2014

 quote  quote
all

But you've already got the porch. Presumably it was in the planning permission for the original house, or was permitted development subsequently.

All you want to do is modify it within it's existing size, so there's no planning input to worry about at all, unless you are in a conservation area or the building is listed....

[Censorious](#)

Original Poster ◀



15,158 posts

151 months

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Tuesday 25th February 2014

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all

It is a conservation area, apparently.

I'll double check on this though.

[Censorious](#)

Original Poster ◀

15,158 posts

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Thursday 13th March 2014

 quote  quote
all

I was directed by the local council to do a Domestic Enquiry Self Assessment Form online check via their portal.

Do I take this as the green light and go ahead now, would you?

It returned this info (address & phone number omitted):-

The informal assessment of the information you have provided is that in this instance planning permission is not required.

However this is not a definitive or binding assessment. If you require a definitive answer to the need for planning permission we recommend that you apply for a Certificate of Proposed Lawful Development which provides a legally recognised document certifying whether planning permission is or is not required. Such certificates are recognised by solicitors, banks, building societies and other such bodies. Our experience of this approach is that they can help speed up the buying and/or selling of property when questions are raised by other parties about alterations carried out to the property concerned.

A listed building No

Subject to a Relevant Article 4 direction No

Subject to restrictive planning conditions see help No

None of the above Yes

D.1 a To have a ground floor area exceeding 3 square metres when measured externally No

D.1 b More than 3 metres high from ground level No

D.1 c Within two metres of any boundary with a highway No

D.1 x Subject to a relevant Article 4 direction No



[Spare tyre](#)

2,952 posts

47 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 13th March 2014

 quote  quote
all

i'd just build it, assuming no one is disadvantaged by it, i think you'll be ok

My parents neighbor build some horrific thing in their garden, then when the tree inspector came along about 5 years later her reported them

in the end they just got retrospective planning permission

[Censorious](#)

Original Poster ◀

15,158 posts

151 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)[Forum](#)[My Stuff](#)[What's New](#)[Preferences](#)

It basically said that we can't do anything to change the external appearance (even though the proposed enclosure of the original porch cannot be seen from the road).

My reply:-

Dear xxxxxxxxxx;

Thank you for getting back to me so quickly and thank you for the attachment.

In the attachment (ref xx/xx/xxxx/xxx); it is quite specific in that it states that the permitted dwellings must not be extended or have any alteration affecting their external appearance.

It appears from this condition that any planning permission submitted for our proposed enclosure of the existing porch/canopy with brickwork/window & door would be rejected regardless and would not be open to any debate or appeal.

There is of course a significant cost associated with engaging an architect to draw up plans and submit a full planning application which it would not be sensible to do where rejection of any proposal is the only outcome.

Thank you again for your assistance.

Best regards,
xxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

[Censorious](#)



Original Poster ◀

15,158 posts

151 months

[\[report\]](#)
[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 13th March 2014

 quote  all

I'm now considering frame-less glass to enclose it with and a suspended full height frame-less glass door 😊

Completely out of keeping with the character of the property but completely invisible from the road!



[Busa mav](#)

2,085 posts

71 months

[\[report\]](#)
[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 13th March 2014

 quote  all

Censorious said:
I heard back from the local planners earlier.

It basically said that we can't do anything to change the external appearance (even though the proposed enclosure of the original porch cannot be seen from the road).

My interpretation of that response would be that under permitted development rights , you cannot do _____

[Censorious](#)

Original Poster ◀



15,158 posts

151 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 13th March 2014

 quote  quote all

Busa mav said:

Censorious said:

I heard back from the local planners earlier.

It basically said that we can't do anything to change the external appearance (even though the proposed enclosure of the original porch cannot be seen from the road).

My interpretation of that response would be that under permitted development rights , you cannot do what you propose.

You will need to submit a full application ,I would be very surprised if it was refused.

There are no permitted development rights unfortunately as we're in a conservation area.

The original planning conditions are overriding 😞

[Busa mav](#)



2,085 posts

71 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 13th March 2014

 quote  quote all

Censorious said:

The original planning conditions are overriding 😞

It just means you need to make a householder application , £ 172 , it doesn't mean you wont get an approval.

[Censorious](#)

Original Poster ◀



15,158 posts

151 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 13th March 2014

 quote  quote all

Busa mav said:

Censorious said:

The original planning conditions are overriding 😞

It just means you need to make a householder application , £ 172 , it doesn't mean you wont get an _____

We have had so much conflicting advice from every person we've spoken with so far!

So that I'm clear; even though the original planning conditions say it's a definite "no, no" to alter the appearance we are still able to submit an application without it being a fait accompli?

[Busa mav](#)

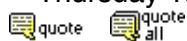
2,085 posts

71 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 13th March 2014



Censorious said:

Oh

So that I'm clear; even though the original planning conditions say it's a definite "no, no" to alter the appearance we are still able to submit an application without it being a fait accompli?

The original approval just placed a blanket restriction on the property , it doesn't mean to say you cant , it just gives the planners a chance to control what happens.

Quite common nowadays too.

[Censorious](#)

Original Poster ◀

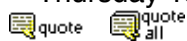
15,158 posts

151 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 13th March 2014



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The original approval just placed a blanket restriction on the property , it doesn't mean to say you cant , it just gives the planners a chance to control what happens.

Quite common nowadays too.

OK thanks; we'll do the provisional application option I think and see what happens.

Thank you for your advice and clarifications.

[ally f](#)

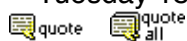
241 posts

104 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 18th March 2014



... this even extends to the type of gravel used on the front flower beds (seriously - we've had letters demanding that we return it to exactly how it looked the day the builders finished). Which is a shame as I'd also love to box in the porch and create an area for coats / boots etc.

It seems like councils are using this as a way of blocking the permitted development rules that are being relaxed nationally.

[Busa mav](#)



2,085 posts

71 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 18th March 2014

 quote  quote all

ally_f said:

Good luck - our house is a normal new build and the permitted development rights for the whole area have been totally "withdrawn" by the local council - meaning nothing that is visible can be altered, at all, in any way!

...

It seems like councils are using this as a way of blocking the permitted development rules that are being relaxed nationally.

That is just simply not true.

What it does mean is that you need to apply for planning permission and can't just do what you want under PD , which given some peoples taste in design, is a good thing.

Normally they withdraw PD rights on developments that are crammed in and already tight for space.

[herbialfa](#)



1,373 posts

119 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 18th March 2014

 quote  quote all

Totally agree with what BM states!

The removal of PD rights (which happens a lot on new build schemes & barn conversions etc) only means you have to apply for planning permission.

Thats not to say PP will "not" be granted you just have to go through the process!

[Censorious](#)

Original Poster ◀

15,158 posts

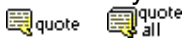
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Tuesday 18th March 2014



herbialfa said:

Totally agree with what BM states!

The removal of PD rights (which happens a lot on new build schemes & barn conversions etc) only means you have to apply for planning permission.

Thats not to say PP will "not" be granted you just have to go through the process!

It's very misleading to anyone who isn't familiar with the process though; the original planning consent makes it appear that it would be out of the question to do anything at all.

[herbialfa](#)

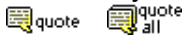
1,373 posts

119 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 18th March 2014



Not really.

A condition of removing PD rights is quite common place. Again its just the removal of the PD rights to stop certain properties to "fly under the radar" without planning. All this means is if you want to build an extension you need to apply for PP.

This is not to say it would be refused you just need to apply.

Lets take a barn conversion for instance. Most barn conversions will be designed to be "in keeping" with what the original barn looked like, hence you see large glazed openings (which would have been doors or just an opening) or arrow shot windows etc. The vast majority of barn conversions have their PD rights removed with any approval. Thus stopping the owner from adding a Victorian/ Georgian style conservatory etc to the property. How many barns do you know that have conservatories? Nothing to stop them putting a lean to extension on (with the right design) but it would still need PP even if it did fall under the generic PD rights.

HTH

[Hub](#)

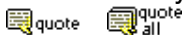
3,461 posts

115 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 19th March 2014



Busa mav said:

Censorious said:

The original planning conditions are overriding 😞

It just means you need to make a householder application , £ 172 , it doesn't mean you wont get an approval.

If you need to submit an application only because the 'permitted development' rights have been withdrawn by a condition of the original planning application, then there would be no fee for your planning application

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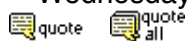
241 posts

104 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 19th March 2014



Yes, you're right to a certain degree, you can indeed apply for planning permission for free where your PD rights have been withdrawn...

...and then they'll reject it on the basis the application breaches the withdrawn rights (bit of a vicious circle).

On our development (which isn't 'crammed in', it's mainly 4 and 5 bed detached houses), many people have improved their front gardens, received letters from the council about the withdrawn PD rights, applied retrospectively, had the application refused and have now been told to restore it to as-was.

Of course, what looks good is subjective, but 30 people all having this issue on a relatively small estate suggest the planning department's opinion is perhaps at odds with those of the people who live there!

[Busa mav](#)

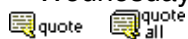
2,085 posts

71 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 19th March 2014



Hub said:

If you need to submit an application only because the 'permitted development' rights have been withdrawn by a condition of the original planning application, then there would be no fee for your planning application.

In this instance with the OP , his porch is higher than 3m so needs to pay.

[Censorious](#)

Original Poster ◀

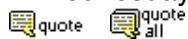
15,158 posts

151 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 19th March 2014



Busa mav said:

In this instance with the OP , his porch is higher than 3m so needs to pay.

But that part of the structure already exists and has planning consent, the additional construction (to enclose the sides) will be much less than the height allowed under PD rules.

[Busa mav](#)

2,085 posts

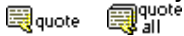
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Wednesday 19th March 2014



Censorious said:

But that part of the structure already exists and has planning consent, the additional construction (to enclose the sides) will be much less than the height allowed under PD rules. I understand that , but at present , it isn't a porch.

Its just how planning is , they need to be bullet proof on everything to avoid people taking the proverbial.

[Hub](#)

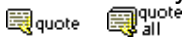
3,461 posts

115 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 19th March 2014



ally_f said:

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On our development (which isn't 'crammed in', it's mainly 4 and 5 bed detached houses), many people have improved their front gardens, received letters from the council about the withdrawn PD rights, applied retrospectively, had the application refused and have now been told to restore it to as-was.

Of course, what looks good is subjective, but 30 people all having this issue on a relatively small estate suggest the planning department's opinion is perhaps at odds with those of the people who live there! It depends what they are trying to protect. If it is a blanket restriction on extensions then each will be considered on its own merits and things like porches and conservatories would probably be allowed. But if it is something like open plan front gardens then they can reject it on it affecting the character of the area.

[skip 1](#)

3,114 posts

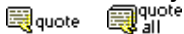
107 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)



Thursday 21st May 2015



Might as well bump an old thread as opposed to starting a new one.

Two things:

-Did the OP ever get his porch?

-We are looking to get a porch built under PP (>3 square metres). We need to make a householder application with the associated plans, elevations etc. Presumably this requires an architect to create a drawing of the porch and do the surveys etc. Online guidance beyond permitted development is very poor.

[Pheo](#)

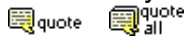
1,426 posts

119 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 21st May 2015



You could get a draughtsman to draw up the plans - or do it yourself - you don't have to have an architect do it

[mikebradford](#)

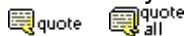
1,334 posts

62 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 21st May 2015



skip_1 said:

Might as well bump an old thread as opposed to starting a new one.

Two things:

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-We are looking to get a porch built under PP (>3 square metres). We need to make a householder application with the associated plans, elevations etc. Presumably this requires an architect to create a drawing of the porch and do the surveys etc. Online guidance beyond permitted development is very poor.

Does anyone know roughly what cost we'd be looking at for the surveys/drawing for a very basic porch? Any recommendations for architects in Leeds/Wakefield very welcome.

Do it yourself its easy

Or get someone to do it as a little job £300 max

Doesnt even need a site vist,

In real terms buy in an OS plan, get google street view pic, or client takes a pic

Get client to define the way they want the roof etc

Bit of paperwork and online submission.

Any issues Pm me

[skip_1](#)

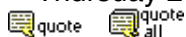
3,114 posts

107 months

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Thursday 21st May 2015



Thanks for the advice, I may be willing to give the plans a go if it is not too difficult to do.

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Validation Criteria

Householder application for planning permission for works or extension to a dwelling

The original plus 1 copy to be provided unless the application is submitted electronically.

For an application to be registered as a valid application it must be accompanied by the relevant forms, plans and associated details to provide sufficient information to make a decision on the application. In all cases the information we request will be necessary and in proportion to the nature and scale of the proposal and a material consideration in determining the application. However if you do not submit the necessary details it may be invalid, resulting in delays. These notes give guidance about what should be provided.

- Completed **application form** signed and dated
- Completed and dated **Ownership Certificate/Agricultural Holding Certificate** (either A, B, C or D)
- I **confirm** that no part of the works, including foundations, guttering or any other overhanging feature, encroaches onto an adjoining property (signed)
- If this is not the case Certificate B will be required including the notice(s) required under Article 6 (Notice No. 1) (please contact us for guidance if you are not sure)
- The appropriate fee: £..... If you consider that no fee is required please state why eg disabled applicant or resubmission (please give application number)

Plans and Drawings

- Location plans** based on an up-to-date map at a scale of 1:1250 or 1:2500 showing
- at least two named roads
- surrounding buildings
- properties numbered or named
- the direction of North

The application site should be clearly edged with a red line and should include all land necessary to carry out the development including access to the site, landscaping etc. Any other land owned by the applicant close to or adjoining the site should be edged with a blue line. This enables us to notify neighbouring properties about the development.

- Block plan of the site** at a scale of 1:100 or 1:200 showing
- all site boundaries
- the position, type and height of boundary treatment (walls, gates, hedges and fences) existing and proposed
- the position of any building or structure on the other side of such boundaries ie neighbours houses
- details of any existing or proposed vehicular access including drop kerbs, hard surfaces and all public rights of way crossing or adjoining the site

Existing and proposed relevant elevations at a scale of 1:50 or 1:100 showing

- the existing elevations accurately showing the situation on site and the proposed elevations clearly showing the works which are proposed
- all sides of the proposal, including any blank elevations eg when the proposal is screened by other building etc
- proposed building materials
- the height of buildings

Existing and proposed relevant floor plans at a scale of 1:50 or 1:100 showing

- existing and proposed floor layouts of each floor to be altered, with dimensions of each room
- internal and external doors and windows
- where existing buildings or walls are to be demolished

Existing and proposed sections, finished floor and site levels at a scale of 1:50 or 1:100 showing

- cross section(s) through the proposed building(s)
- both existing and finished levels
- how the proposal relates to existing ground levels on sloping sites or where ground levels outside the proposal would be modified

Existing and proposed roof plans at a scale of 1:50 or 1:100 showing

- the roof including the eaves and ridges
- the shape of the roof
- roofing materials and vents
- details of dormer windows including their sides and materials
- sections through the roof where solar panels are to be fitted

Other Requirements

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) – You must complete the [CIL Additional Information Form](#). For extensions over 100 square metres of floorspace you should also complete [CIL Form 9 - SB2 Self Build Annex or Extension Claim Form](#) before you commence work for approval by us to be exempt from paying CIL.

Bat survey – If the site is in an area where bats are known to be present or close to a bat roost, you will need to provide a bat scoping survey. This should confirm whether bats are or have been present within the building or its curtilage, using photographs of the soffits, ridge line and fascia boards, and within the roof structure. If evidence of bats is found, a bat survey will be required which meets the Minimum Standards for Bat Surveys in West Yorkshire (<http://www.ecology.wyjs.org.uk/wyjs-ecology-bats.asp>) undertaken by a licensed bat worker. A copy of this report should be lodged with West Yorkshire Ecology to add to the Ecological Record.

Flood risk assessment – You must provide a flood risk assessment if your property is within 20 metres of the top of the bank of a main river. The Environment Agency website www.environment-agency.gov.uk/research/planning/93498.aspx contains the latest information.

Tree Preservation Orders (TPO) - where a TPO exists on the site, the location of all trees must be marked on a plan with details of the species and how they will be protected during construction.

Listed Buildings – you must submit a separate Listed Building application for works to a Listed Building providing the following

- a heritage statement should be provided for any Grade 1 or 2* buildings
- details of any alterations including any features to be removed
- cross sections of the building showing existing and proposed windows, doors, gutter, fascia treatments and any relevant features on the building with manufacturers details @1:20 scale
- photographs of the existing building

Retrospective applications – photographs should be provided showing all elevations

Satellite dishes - photographs should be provided showing where the dish will be positioned and the manufacturers brochure/specification

Proposals involving **plant/machinery** eg wind turbines/swimming pools etc – a noise impact assessment will be required detailing operational noise levels measured in decibels(dB) including manufacturer's specification/leaflet

Now I know we don't have to provide everything in 'other requirements' but am unsure if we need to provide everything in the 'plans and drawings' section. For instance on the block plan, do I need to measure and show all boundaries at the rear of the property?, floor plans of the whole bottom floor or just the adjoining rooms?, roof plans of the whole property? (Not sure I can measure the roof elevations with a tape measure!)

[mikebradford](#)

1,334 posts

62 months

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[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 21st May 2015

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In real terms for a porch they wont want internal layouts etc
Ive seen some very basic plans put in that have been approved.

Simply buy a location plan - make sure it has a north point or some way to orientate
put a red line around the extent of your boundary

Then at a larger scale extracted from the location pan, indicate the footprint of the porch
show dimension (to indicate its in the permitted development size)
Show dimensions to the boundaries, probably front and 2 sides if applicable

Then draw the elevations, indicating eaves and ridge height. Needs to shown relative to the whole
elevation it is being built on. The side elevations of the porch can usually be shown relative to a partial
full overall elevation. If that makes sense ? 😊

Label materials

Indicate how the roof is drained, eg show position if existing surface water drain, and indicate a new
connection to it

Hopefully your house isnt listed etc, such that bat surveys and additional info isnt required

Then tick relevent ownership certificates

pay fee

sit back and hopefully await confirmation of approval

Edited by mikebradford on Thursday 21st May 22:06

Edited by mikebradford on Thursday 21st May 22:06

[mikebradford](#)



1,334 posts

62 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 21st May 2015

 quote  quote
all

like this as well as the location plan

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[skip 1](#)

3,114 posts

107 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 21st May 2015

[quote](#) [quote all](#)

Brilliant, cheers for that. I shall give it a go when we come back off hols in a week or so. I'll send you a PM if I get really stuck if that is OK?

[mikebradford](#)

1,334 posts

62 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Friday 22nd May 2015

[quote](#) [quote all](#)

No worries

Good luck

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Planning permission expiry question

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Author
Discussion

[markwm](#)

Original Poster ◀

140 posts

[Forum](#)



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[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Friday 17th April 2015

 quote  quote
all

Long story short....

Got planning permission to build house in 2008, started to build house, went tits up and in dispute with builders. Solicitors involved and house remains unfinished.

House needs to be demolished and rebuilt.

As planning permission as long since expired, if the houses is demolished, even though it's to be rebuilt exactly as original planning permission. Do you think it will require planning permission again? to be rebuilt exactly the same?

The surveyors want to remove everything, including foundations. I know for a fact building regs say that if you remove the foundation, it will no longer be classed as remedial works and a new regs submission will be required. Will planners take similar view?



[Muncher](#)

10,822 posts

166 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Friday 17th April 2015

 quote  quote
all

Ordinarily I think you would need permission.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/8/section...>

That suggests that on the face of it, planning permission would be required for the reinstatement and also to demolish the existing structure.

However on these facts I think it depends on the extent to which the house was completed, as if it was never substantially completed all of your works are aimed at implementing the original application.

Speak to the council or a planning consultant for this, I'm not sure it's entirely straight forwards (at least not to this property lawyer!)

[0099](#)

6 posts

76 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Saturday 18th April 2015

 quote  quote
all

Sounds like you didn't get a completion certificate from the building inspector?

If that is the case it would seem like you are still building and therefore you might get away with your current permission and just demo and start again. Might be worth checking with either your planning officer or building inspector they are the ones who will be able to give you the best answer.

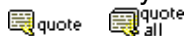
[blade7](#)[Forum](#)[My Stuff](#)[What's New](#)[Preferences](#)

133 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Saturday 18th April 2015



I thought the building inspector had to inspect the trench before footings are poured ?

[C Lee Farquar](#)

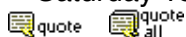
1,737 posts

133 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Saturday 18th April 2015



I've had planning expiry issues which were resolved by a good Planning Consultant, and some off forum advice from our resident expert. Many Consultants are ex local authority and will be much better placed to negotiate with your Planning Dept.

I would strongly advise that you do not deal with this yourself. I spoke directly to the main bod at our local Planning Dept. and was told I needed to re-apply. One conversation between my consultant and Planning bod, a letter quoting some Case Law, and I was under way again.

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Discussion

[dfen5](#)

Original Poster ◀

1,086 posts

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Saturday 4th February 2012

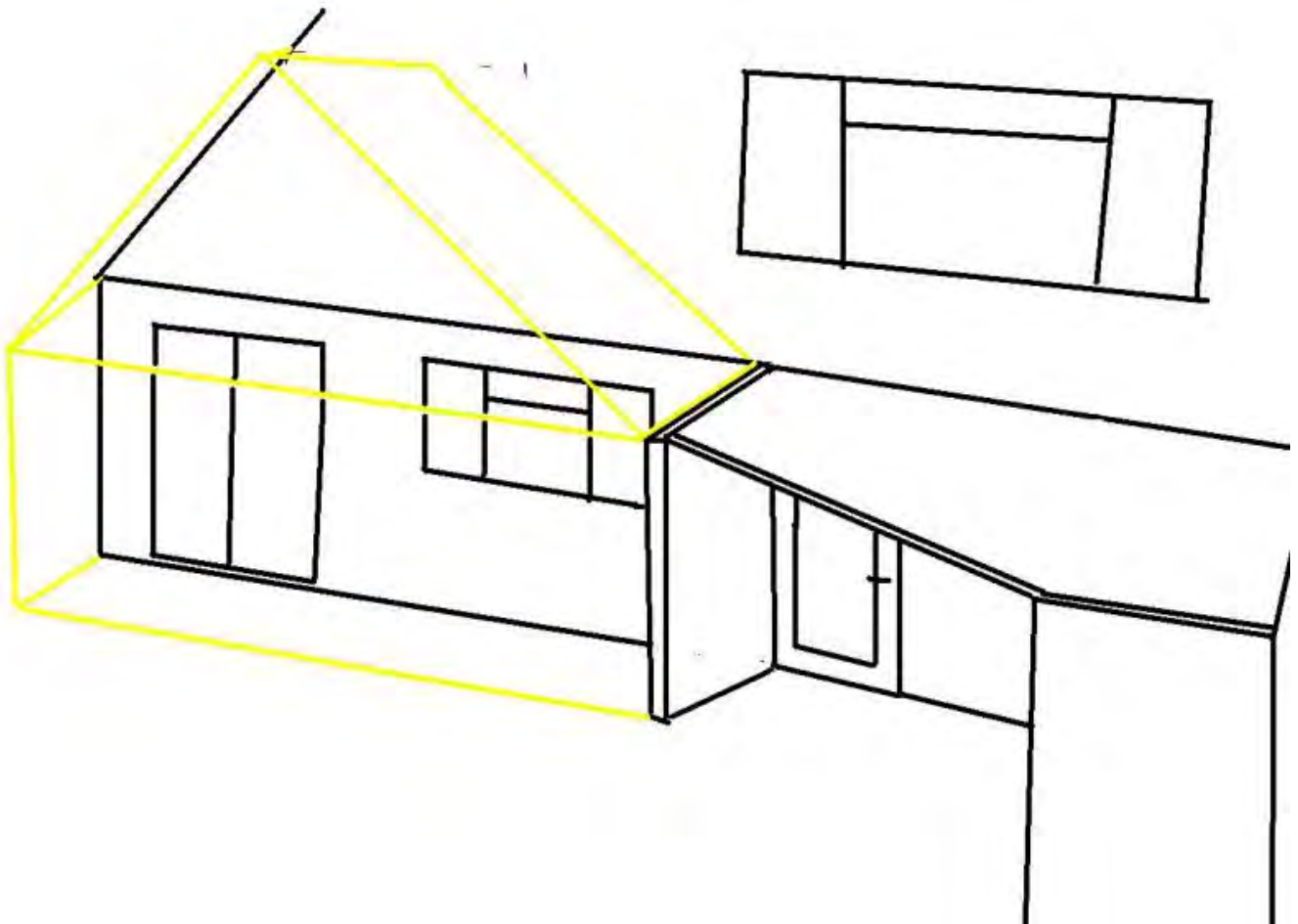
 quote  quote all

Thinking of getting an extension on the rear of the house. It's a chalet style house (steep pointy roof) so I want a single story extension, about 4' deep x 16' across. One wall on the left is there already (garage/rear door/out buildings) and I want the roof to follow the existing roof and then drop down to the existing wall.

Fantastic drawing below, planned extension in yellow..

What's the first step? Got a drawing, go for planning, get a quote or quote, plan, planning, build?

Any ideas what the stages will cost and care to take a guess at the overall?

[Simpo Two](#)

67,439 posts

182 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Sunday 5th February 2012

 quote  quote all

Is it worth it for only 4 feet?



[mattDaniels](#)[Forum](#)[My Stuff](#)[What's New](#)[Preferences](#)

199 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Sunday 5th February 2012

 quote  quote all

Surely that's a pointless extension? If that's 4 foot overall length you're going to have about 3' space max allowing for the cavity wall. That can't be worth it?

Assuming you have no other extensions on the house you may be able to complete that under Permitted Development (ie. without planning permission). Check the rules (Google is your friend).

You'd need plans and to comply with building regs. Once you have plans you can get quotes, then you need detailed drawings for the builders to follow. Also what's to the left of your property? You may have a Party Wall notice to serve on your neighbour.

Best course of action is to chat with an architect. PHer campfreddie (Haus Design) is your man.

Edited by mattdaniels on Sunday 5th February 03:32

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Extension advice

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Author
Discussion

[JackReacher](#)

Original Poster ◀

1,051 posts

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Thursday 25th September 2014

 quote  quote all

At the very early stages of considering a small single story extension to give us a bit more space, about 3x4m so 12sqm. I'd like to think I could get it done for £20k but suspect it might come in as more than that (located in the south east). We want it to feel part of the house, so fully insulated and heated.

We would like a bit of character and like the idea of a vaulted ceiling. Found some pictures online of the sort of thing we want.



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APP2_491



Here is the back of the house currently, it would extend out from the patio doors next to the garage on the left hand side. My concern is whether you can have a pitched roof of the extension running down to the vertical wall of the garage, would this cause problems draining the water away? If this isn't an option then we might have to look at flat roof options but prefer a pitched one.



[jamesc 1729](#)

406 posts

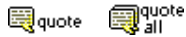
106 months

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I don't think you could have a roof as in your first pic connected to your existing setup. Isn't the obvious answer to extend the back of your house out to flush with the back wall of your garage, but with the roof a continuous pitch with the existing g garage but with velux windows in. This would look seamless. You could have bi-folds running the width of the new part as well.

Edit: just realised the existing windows veto that.. Not sure what the best answer is...

[jamesc_1729](#)

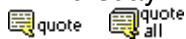
406 posts

106 months

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Thursday 25th September 2014



I don't think you could have a roof as in your first pic connected to your existing setup. Isn't the obvious answer to extend the back of your house out to flush with the back wall of your garage, but with the roof a continuous pitch with the existing g garage but with velux windows in. This would look seamless. You could have bi-folds running the width of the new part as well.

Edit: just realised the existing windows veto that.. Not sure what the best answer is...

Edited by jamesc_1729 on Thursday 25th September 22:12

[JackReacher](#)

Original Poster ◀

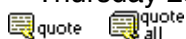
1,051 posts

132 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 25th September 2014



jamesc_1729 said:

Edit: just realised the existing windows veto that.. Not sure what the best answer is...

Edited by jamesc_1729 on Thursday 25th September 22:12

Yep that's the problem unfortunately, which would leave flat as the ing option...

[Chicken Chaser](#)

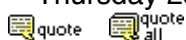
4,762 posts

141 months

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[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 25th September 2014



Id sav flat was the only option. I do believe you can get velux for flat roofs which clean themselves

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[herbialfa](#)

1,373 posts

119 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Friday 26th September 2014

 quote  quote
all

You could continue the pitch of the garage roof along the width of the house!

Use 2 small flat roof sections under the windows with velux windows either side of the flat roof parts.

It can be vaulted inside using a different pitch to hide the flat roof parts & the velux windows would then become lightwells!

HTH



[Spudler](#)


3,985 posts

113 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Friday 26th September 2014

 quote  quote
all

As above. Continue pitch of existing roof with inverted dormers and velux etc.
Easily sorted and will look  loads better than a flat roof.



[Paul Drawmer](#)

3,551 posts

184 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Friday 26th September 2014

 quote  quote
all

A flat roof with a generous skylight will feel better on the inside. I prefer this arrangement for small extensions due to the light advantage.

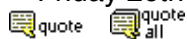
203 posts

97 months

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Friday 26th September 2014



I would go for a flat roof with a large Roof lantern to give that vaulted feel.

[BoRED S2upid](#)

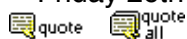
13,546 posts

157 months

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Friday 26th September 2014



Spudler said:

As above. Continue pitch of existing roof with inverted dormers and velux etc.

Easily sorted and will look ~~seamless~~ loads better than a flat roof.

More expensive though. The simpler the roof the cheaper the cost but it's a difficult one.

[shtu](#)

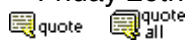
1,278 posts

63 months

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Friday 26th September 2014



Spudler said:

inverted dormers.

Yes.

You might need to find someone who knows their way around leadwork, but that is definitely the way to go. It'll look much neater to carry through the existing roof pitch than to try and crowbar-on something totally different.

It doesn't give you the cool vaulted ceiling like your examples, but will look neater externally. You could try lining the ceiling to match the roof pitch?

Edit - I would go full-width across the rear of the house, match the existing roof, and a line of full-height glazing/doors at the rear wall.

[wolfracesonic](#)

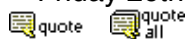
2,206 posts

44 months

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Friday 26th September 2014



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[NorthDave](#)

1,225 posts

149 months

[\[report\]](#)

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Friday 26th September 2014

quote quote all

jamesc_1729 said:

Edit: just realised the existing windows veto that.. Not sure what the best answer is...

Edited by jamesc_1729 on Thursday 25th September 22:12

You could fit a glass roof which would let loads of light in and needs less of a pitch than tile. This could then slot in under the existing garage roof.

[JackReacher](#)

Original Poster ◀

1,051 posts

132 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Saturday 27th September 2014

quote quote all

Thanks all. So if I continue the pitch of the garage roof over, it could look a bit like this. Think it would be the sensible option.



Looking at flat roof ideas, I like the idea of something contemporary like this to a smaller scale, but might cost a lot! Found this pic on PH, love the idea of it.



[SAB888](#)



1,704 posts

124 months

[\[report\]](#)

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Saturday 27th September 2014

 quote  quote
all

JackReacher said:

Thanks all. So if I continue the pitch of the garage roof over, it could look a bit like this. Think it would be the sensible option.



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might cost a lot! Found this pic on PH, love the idea of it.



The first photo is a good way of getting over the problem of the first floor window and actually looks good. Pity they couldn't match the tile colour! The second one looks amazing.

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Extension question

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Author
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[Gio G](#)

Original Poster ◀

1,400 posts

[Forum](#)



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Thursday 5th September 2013

 quote  quote all

Hi all,

Family is growing and finding that the current ground floor space is just not enough. Was thinking of a ground floor extension, with a slight pitched roof. What is the most cost effective way of doing it?

The extension would be around 9m x 4m, going along the back of the house. Seen lots of different styles, some using glass, others bricks. Also from a budget perspective, if I want just the shell, as have other trades friends/families to help, what sort of cost per sq meter?

Also, anyone undertaken something similar to give me a steer?

Thanks G



[DrC](#)

641 posts

168 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 5th September 2013

 quote  quote all

Ive just (last year)spent 25K on a 9X4 plastered shell. Im in the bucks area. I still have my plans if you want a look at them and im happy to answer any specific question you might have..

Edited by DrC on Thursday 5th September 12:58

[Gio G](#)



Original Poster ◀

1,409 posts

126 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 5th September 2013

 quote  quote all

Thanks DRC, do you have any pictures for some inspiration? When you say plastered shell, did that include windows and roofing?

Thanks G

[DrC](#)

641 posts

168 months

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but not the windows or doors- I supplied those myself - an additional 2K if I remember correctly. The electrics and plumbing were also not included in that price - I did the plumbing myself and paid the electrician seperately.

[DrC](#)



641 posts

168 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 5th September 2013

 quote  quote
all

Here are some before, during and nearly after.



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APP2_503







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APP2_507



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NOt sure where photos of the other side are but behind where the last photo was taken from is a set of bifold doors leading to the dining room and to the left in what was the old kitchen is the utility room. when i find them i will stick them up.
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[Gio G](#)

Original Poster ◀

1,409 posts

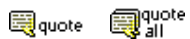
126 months

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This looks exactly like what we are after. Did you need to get planning for it? I understand that if you go max 4m back on a rear extension, you don't need it.

Also how long did it take? Wonderful looking kitchen, with amazing space!

Thanks G

[DrC](#)

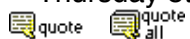
641 posts

168 months

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Thursday 5th September 2013



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Edited by DrC on Thursday 5th September 18:28

[V8RX7](#)

14,095 posts

180 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 5th September 2013

quote quote all

Gio G said:

I understand that if you go max 4m back on a rear extension, you don't need it. New rules mean up to 8m now in some cases (IIRC Detached, 6m attached)

[DrC](#)

641 posts

168 months

[\[report\]](#)

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Thursday 5th September 2013

max 4m back on a rear extension, you don't need it.

Also how long did it take? Wonderful looking kitchen, with amazing space!

Thanks G

Yes, i got planning permission for it, no issues at all with going out 4m but this was done in about may last year so rules may have changed.

It was started at the beginning of the school holidays and the roof was on by late august. I am responsible for fitting the kitchen and decorating - not my day job so I still have a few things to do, painting skirting boards and fitting new doors mostly - promised the wife it will be done by this christmas. overall extremely pleased with how its all turned out.

[Gio G](#)

Original Poster ◀



1,409 posts

126 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Friday 6th September 2013

 quote  quote
all

Looks fantastic, was it a local builder you used? did you get loads of quotes? Any advice on that process?

[DrC](#)



641 posts

168 months

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Friday 6th September 2013

 quote  quote
all

Gio G said:

Looks fantastic, was it a local builder you used? did you get loads of quotes? Any advice on that process?

I used a builder from Watford, I used him as he had done my brothers extension the year before so I had first hand experience of his work. It was always my intention to use him but I did though get other builders round to quote to ratify his quote. Got quite a range of prices some of them ridiculous but I guess they were from builders who didn't want the work! I guess the normal rules of going with a recommendation apply here.

[sider](#)



2,003 posts

138 months

[\[report\]](#)

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Monday 9th September 2013

 quote  quote
all

Priced a similar job/size for a client last year, was about £31k IIRC, that was all in (excluding decoration and final floor finishes), but in the North West.

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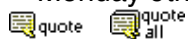
[GreatGranny](#)

6,139 posts

143 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Monday 9th September 2013



We paid about £30k for an 8m x 3.5m single storey.

Think it was £27k build cost and the rest fitting the interior and decorating/floors etc..

We had a few ground condition issues and had to go quite deep. Also had to build a 10m long 1.5m high retaining wall.

Vaulted ceiling and suspended concrete floor.

I'm in Lincolnshire.

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Original Poster ◀

1,256 posts

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Tuesday 12th August 2014

 quote  all

We started on our extension last week and had the council building inspector in for his first site visit, without going into too much detail we would like to consider swapping from the council building control process to using a private firm to provide this service. Does anyone know if it is possible to swap providers given that we have had one site visit?

Cheers



[z4emsee](#)

121 posts

61 months

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Tuesday 12th August 2014

 quote  all

What do you mean when you say work has started? Have you dug foundations? If the answer is yes then you are fooked. An Approved Inspector can only generally undertake the Building Control function if work hasn't started.

[T5GRF](#)



Original Poster ◀

1,256 posts

181 months

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Tuesday 12th August 2014

 quote  all

The foundations are 50% complete. Today was he first building control visit.



[z4emsee](#)

121 posts

61 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 12th August 2014

 quote  all

I think you are stuck with the council as they wouldn't accept an Initial Notice from an Approved Inspector once work has commenced.

What are your concerns on what you are being told? Best to resolve any issues amicably at this early stage!

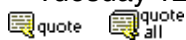
[BFG TERRANO](#)

2,123 posts

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Tuesday 12th August 2014



Why swop inspectors? They all want it done right.
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[elster](#)

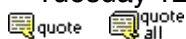
17,400 posts

127 months

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Tuesday 12th August 2014



BFG TERRANO said:

Why swop inspectors? They all want it done right.

Having dealt with most Yorkshire councils, some are great, others are bloody useless and make their own rules up.

[z4emsee](#)

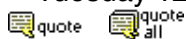
121 posts

61 months

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[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 12th August 2014



BFG TERRANO said:

Why swop inspectors? They all want it done right.

Some want it done more right than others....

[andy43](#)

5,087 posts

171 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 12th August 2014



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Some want it done more right than others....
Private company all the way.
I'd approach one and see what they say.

[T5GRF](#)

Original Poster ◀



1,256 posts

181 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 13th August 2014

 quote  quote
all

Z4msee is about right with his comment. We have a very over zealous inspector (in the eyes of our architect and structural engineer) and I think we will all struggle to work with him given his attitude on site today.

[andy43](#)



5,087 posts

171 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 13th August 2014

 quote  quote
all

We had the reverse. Not the slightest clue about what to look at while inspecting a new stick-built roof, but wouldn't sign the job off until the soil stack had a bird cage terminal on the top.

[worsy](#)



2,989 posts

92 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 13th August 2014

 quote  quote
all

I used a private firm and had mixed experiences. The first was happy to sign off with the most cursory of glances, the second guy who came was a pain in the backside.

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Building a house?

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Building a house?

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Author
Discussion

[fjord](#)

Original Poster ◀

1,810 posts

[Forum](#)



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Tuesday 2nd April 2013

 quote  all

Im trying to sell my house. It's up for £125k and bought for £100k. I have £20k in finances to put towards a new house.

My next mortgage will increase to 155k as a maximum. This will give me the 20k in finances and any profit from the house to put towards it.

Problem is, i wanted a detached house, out in the country. That means im looking at 250k+ and this is something i cannot afford.

Is building an option? Where the hell do you start in terms of finding land, obtaining planning permission and how much more cost effective would it be?

As long as i have a lot of space and the house is detached and a little isolated, im happy. I dont need to spend 10 grand on a staircase like in grand designs and will happy kit the inside out from B&Q.

So, any suggestions?

[garyhun](#)

21,462 posts

145 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 2nd April 2013

 quote  all

Start researching the subject (Books - The Housebuilders Bible, Magazines - Build It etc) and start talking to estate agents. You can join plot searching websites like plotfinder.net.

Depending where you are it is possible to save 30% over the cost of buying BUT don't forget you are in competition with builders, developers, other self builders etc .

I spent 5 years looking for a plot and only just got one by the skin of my teeth. It takes a lot of perseverance and patience.

Good luck!



[worsy](#)

2,989 posts

92 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 2nd April 2013

 quote  all

<http://www.rightmove.co.uk/property-for-sale/prope...>

Countryside

3 beds

Around budget

Seriously though unless you buy the land for around max of 30k you are whistling

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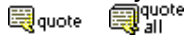
8,271 posts

165 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 2nd April 2013



Plenty of places to search for land.... Such as plotfinder.net

Buy some of the self-build magazines like "Build it!" "Homebuilding and renovating" etc

There will be articles in those mags that will help.

Biggest problem will be finance... £20k will not go far to buy a plot of land.... And then lots of expense in planning and architect fees before a sod of earth is dug.

There are specialist companies that will lend on self builds, and try release the money in stages.

There are several self builders on PH who I am sure will come along with more solid advice very soon!

[monthefish](#)

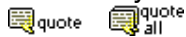
19,013 posts

148 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 2nd April 2013



Have a good look round here:

<http://www.homebuilding.co.uk/>

And maybe buy a copy of the latest issue of the magazine (they've usually got some basic beginners guides in the back of the mag)

You'll also see a link to plotfinder, a site to help you find building land, although it is of limited use and you'll pay a premium for the sites listed there. Other sources are local estate agents or the local press.

A plot is not a plot unless it already has Planning Consent, be it 'full' (which will have dimensioned drawings of the house to be built) or 'outline' (or 'in principle') which normally won't have much more than a basic site drawing. A site with Detail/Full planning consent doesn't normally carry much of a premium over a site with just 'outline', but it will (should?) save you a lot of hassle and money (provided you like the house that has been proposed of course)

Do not buy land without planning consent, even if the seller assures you it definitely will get consent (it won't), and check the expiry date of the consent. If the consent is to expire soon, don't assume that a renewal will be simple/straightforward/guaranteed.

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[mattnunn](#)

12,044 posts

78 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 2nd April 2013

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all

You're on a up hill struggle trying to build a house on that budget and it's quite difficult to finance because you're gonna need big lumps of cash to buy things and pay builders before you're in a position to mortgage, special mortgages are available for self builders but it's not straight forward or cheap.

Unfortunately unless you're in a position to source labour very cheaply or get free materials for the build you're unlikely to be able to make the build of a single house on a single housing plot make massive financial sense, it's not why the majority of self builders do it anyway.

If you want to take a punt you could try buying a cheap piece of commercial or agricultural land and getting a change of use agreed and planning permission, but this is always gonna be a gamble and take many months more likely years.



[Muncher](#)

10,822 posts

166 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 2nd April 2013

 quote  quote
all

If I'm honest I don't think you have enough money right now for this to be an option.



[Busa mav](#)

2,085 posts

71 months

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Tuesday 2nd April 2013

 quote  quote
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[Spudler](#)

3,985 posts

113 months

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Tuesday 2nd April 2013

 quote  quote
all

fjord said:

Is building an option ?

Simple answer, no.

[fjord](#)



Original Poster ◀

1,810 posts

54 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 3rd April 2013

 quote  quote
all

Cheers brothers.

Back to rightmove then 😞



[Muncher](#)

10,822 posts

166 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 3rd April 2013

 quote  quote
all

fjord said:

Cheers brothers.

Back to rightmove then 😞

Don't rule out extend and renovate, it's a lot easier on the cashflow and quicker/less risky in terms of planning.

[fjord](#)

Original Poster ◀

1,810 posts

54 months

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Muncher said:

Don't rule out extend and renovate, it's a lot easier on the cashflow and quicker/less risky in terms of planning.

Tbh, getting even the most run down pile of crap in the middle of nowhere is proving hard to find.

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Building regs

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Author
Discussion

[mel](#)

Original Poster ◀

10,105 posts

[Forum](#)



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Tuesday 26th July 2016

 quote  all

After numerous planning wars with my council due to being metropolitan green belt, I'm going ahead with a double garage under development rights so no planning required, however I'm trying to get the maximum area possible without having to pay them yet more money for building control, regs, and inspection. The regs say that for 15-30 square metres of floorspace, 2m from a boundary and under 4m to the ridge I don't need building regs. But having planned it all out to get the maximum floor space with the steepest pitch possible I can squeeze another 400mm all down the back face if the word "floorspace" means what I would take it to mean (and want it to mean) as the **internal** floor area? It's basically the difference between a garage 6m x 5m external or 6m x 5.4m external, if you allow for a wall thickness of 120mm blockwork all round which is actually 2.68 square metres difference so not insignificant.



[Equus](#)

1,356 posts

18 months

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Tuesday 26th July 2016

 quote  all

Yes, the normal interpretation is that it's 'gross internal' floor area (ie. the internal area, but calculated just using the external perimeter - not deducting the area covered by the thickness of any internal dividing walls).



[monkfish1](#)

5,938 posts

141 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 26th July 2016

 quote  all

Whats the issue with building regs. I assume you are going to build it properly?

Sure, a council BCO will likely be overly pedantic, just employ a private one. Thats what i did. MUCH better idea. He was more than happy to help find a way of doing things whilst still complying, rather than just finding reasons to say no.

Mine too was under permitted development, but was 61sqm, so had to have building regs approval.



[V8RX7](#)

14,093 posts

180 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 26th July 2016

 quote  all

monkfish1 said:

Whats the issue with buildinga reas. I assume you are aoina to build it properly?

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than just finding reasons to say no.

Mine too was under permitted development, but was 61sqm, so had to have building regs approval.
^^^This

[Little Lofty](#)



1,536 posts

68 months

[\[report\]](#)

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Tuesday 26th July 2016

 quote  quote
all

Unless your building it yourself I'd agree that there's no harm in getting regs. The inspector will make sure it's done correctly, well worth a few hundred pound.

Advertisement

[mel](#)

Original Poster ◀



10,105 posts

192 months

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Wednesday 27th July 2016

 quote  quote
all

I view Building Reg's & Inspection as yet another layer of bureaucracy that I'm absolutely sick of to tell the truth. Over the last two years I've had a bad run with so called "professionals" from Surveyors who were meant to be doing mortgage valuations but had to ask what a water softener was (so no chance of appreciating the value of £10K worth of plumbing and heating systems), a Building Inspector who shrugged and said "no idea" when asked how best to bridge an open surface water drainage ditch, Recommended Planning Consultant who it later came to light is married to the Planning Officer, Architect who wanted more in fees than the build value in materials, Architectural Technician whose drawings were just plain wrong, & a Planning Officer with her head so far up her arse that she can see her own kidneys. I'm just sick of shelling out for paper when the only people who've really earned their crusts and performed have been the trades.

Hence why I've taken the decision to split off what was originally a 3 bay garage with room above into a 2 bay with lowered ridge line plus a similar sized building at the complete opposite end of the garden all under permitted development rights. The actual buildings will be groundwork and digging drainage by

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house & sparks is the guy I've used for years in the factory. The bottom line is I trust my trades far more than I trust the clipboards.

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London Housing

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Author
Discussion

[daytona365](#)

Original Poster ◀

1,772 posts

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Wednesday 15th July 2015

 quote  all

Simple question. All the flotsam and jetsam financially forced out of the London property market, well where do they go/get put ?

Edited by daytona365 on Wednesday 15th July 14:37



[Durzel](#)

5,198 posts

85 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 15th July 2015

 quote  all

The surrounding cheaper areas within practical commute distance?

What do I win?

[daytona365](#)



Original Poster ◀

1,773 posts

81 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 15th July 2015

 quote  all

50,000 refugees for Somerset ?



[austinsmirk](#)

2,266 posts

40 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 15th July 2015

 quote  all

They spend decades in hotels b&bs temp accomm whilst the London authorities attempt to rehouse them in social hsg.

If a duty is found to rehouse such persons and a local connection is found, the law is quite clear about an authorities responsibilities. Ultimately it'll just push the poor into London suburbs which are " up coming" to use estate agent chic.

The welfare reform bill is unjust, only needs to apply to London and is socially cleansing the capital.

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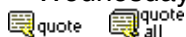
1,688 posts

114 months

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Wednesday 15th July 2015



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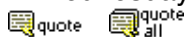
9,821 posts

78 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 15th July 2015



daytona365 said:

Simple question. All the flotsam and jetsam financially forced out of the London property market, well where do they go/get put ? Maybe similar observations were made in 30's Germany ?! Same place the low and middle income workers live, outside of London?

If you are talking about people on benefits, then why do they need to live in London? I was born in London, and work in London. Why can't tax payers pay for me to live in London?

[Hackney](#)

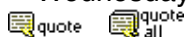
5,044 posts

125 months

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[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 15th July 2015



They rent

They buy impractically small properties in less desirable areas
They move further out and spend more money and time commuting - and become depressed at the amount of time they spend commuting and the expense of it all
Or they move out of London completely and get jobs elsewhere that pay less but cost of living /and


Original Poster ◀

1,773 posts

81 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 15th July 2015

 quote quote
all

"Same place the low and middle income workers live, outside of London?".....So, while London will become more and more desirable, formerly nice places to live ie, 'The suburbs' will eventually be rendered almost unlivable after importing many of London's urban problems ?


[S0 What](#)

3,120 posts

89 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 15th July 2015

 quote quote
all

daytona365 said:

Simple question. All the flotsam and jetsam financially forced out of the London property market, well where do they go/get put ? Maybe similar observations were made in 30's Germany ?!

Really ? try a council estate or any housing state come to that, a 1/4 of all private housing estates are put aside for housing associations/council, there's loads of us still in London.

The dole office now actively offer jobs up country that come with an offer of a council house, bloke next door was offered a bus driving job in sheffield with a 4 bed council house AND moving costs.


[DonkeyApple](#)

26,045 posts

86 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 15th July 2015

 quote quote
all

daytona365 said:

Simple question. All the flotsam and jetsam financially forced out of the London property market, well where do they go/get put ? Maybe similar observations were made in 30's Germany ?!

Ah, not being paid to live in one of the world's most profitable and expensive cities while choosing not to work should not be compared glibly to genocide or ethnic cleansing so why don't you p~~ROBOTS~~ off and have a proper word with yourself and stop being a hysterical, offensive monkey. Good boy.

[Zod](#)

32,566 posts

175 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 15th July 2015

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Simple question. All the flotsam and jetsam financially forced out of the London property market, well where do they go/get put ? Maybe similar observations were made in 30's Germany ?!
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[ali kat](#)

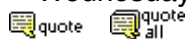
31,030 posts

138 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 15th July 2015



quote



quote
all

DonkeyApple said:

daytona365 said:

Simple question. All the flotsam and jetsam financially forced out of the London property market, well where do they go/get put ? Maybe similar observations were made in 30's Germany ?!
 Ah, not being paid to live in one of the world's most profitable and expensive cities while choosing not to work should not be compared glibly to genocide or ethnic cleansing so why don't you p[REDACTED] off and have a proper word with yourself and stop being a hysterical, offensive monkey. Good boy.



[SturdyHSV](#)

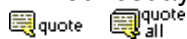
5,708 posts

84 months

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quote



quote
all

Zod said:

DonkeyApple said:

daytona365 said:

Simple question. All the flotsam and jetsam financially forced out of the London property market, well where do they go/get put ? Maybe similar observations were made in 30's Germany ?!
 Ah, not being paid to live in one of the world's most profitable and expensive cities while choosing not to work should not be compared glibly to genocide or ethnic cleansing so why don't you p[REDACTED] off and have a proper word with yourself and stop being a hysterical, offensive monkey. Good boy.



http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Godwin%27s_law

[daytona365](#)

Original Poster ◀

1,773 posts

81 months

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Surprising how Solicitors & Derivative whatnot's can misinterpret a comment so fully and comprehensively.

[Timmy40](#)



11,935 posts

115 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 15th July 2015

 quote  all

Millions of your flotsam and jetson have by an accident of history found that houses they paid next to nothing for are now very very valuable, and so enjoy a huge financial windfall far in excess of what they ever could have earned when they decided to sell and retire out to the South Coast, or move and rent their old house out. It's a process called gentrification which has been going on in London (and other cities) for decades. And is possibly the only effective example of wealth trickle down I can think of.

As for the low paid service sector, now dominated by Eastern Europeans, they live 10 to a room all over London but those low wages in relative local terms in a few years add up to buying a house back home for them, again hardly a bad deal for them or us.

[RizzoTheRat](#)



15,215 posts

109 months

[\[report\]](#)

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Wednesday 15th July 2015

 quote  all

Timmy40 said:

As for the low paid service sector, now dominated by Eastern Europeans, they live 10 to a room all over London but those low wages in relative local terms in a few years add up to buying a house back home for them, again hardly a bad deal for them or us.

And when they all go home the remainder will find London's not quite so desirable when there's nobody to collect their bins, serve them in restaurants or look after them in hospital 🤖

[daytona365](#)

Original Poster ◀



1,773 posts

81 months

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Wednesday 15th July 2015

 quote  all

We'll all have to move to relatively unpolluted Hampshire then ?

[Timmy40](#)

11,935 posts

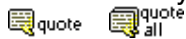
[Forum](#)

[My Stuff](#)

[What's New](#)

[Preferences](#)

Wednesday 15th July 2015



RizzoTheRat said:

Timmy40 said:

As for the low paid service sector, now dominated by Eastern Europeans, they live 10 to a room all over London but those low wages in relative local terms in a few years add up to buying a house back home for them, again hardly a bad deal for them or us.

And when they all go home the remainder will find London's not quite so desirable when there's nobody to collect their bins, serve them in restaurants or look after them in hospital 🇪🇺

Except they tend not to go home. They tend to split there life between London and there home country spending holidays and special events at home, but also living in London. Also the are replaced by the enxt generation graduates from there home countries to come here much as the Aussies and Kiwis used to.

[Zod](#)

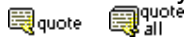
32,566 posts

175 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 15th July 2015



daytona365 said:

Surprising how Solicitors & Derivative whatnot's can misinterpret a comment so fully and comprehensively.

How exactly did you think your reference to 30s Germany would go down?

[Timmy40](#)

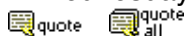
11,935 posts

115 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 15th July 2015



daytona365 said:

We'll all have to move to relatively unpolluted Hampshire then ?
Where hurricanes hardly happen.

[Studio117](#)

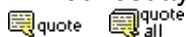
4,250 posts

108 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 15th July 2015



They should ship all the scum up north. Then they can revel in real misery.

[CC07 PEU](#)

1,152 posts

[Forum](#)



[My Stuff](#)

[What's New](#)

[Preferences](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 15th July 2015

 quote  all

I bought my London flat in 2012 when prices were still at a low point. The deposit was completely self funded i.e. no help from the bank of mum and dad etc and I was on what was probably an average London salary at the time. The flat was in desperate need of modernisation so I did the majority of the work myself and it's now pretty much finished after three years worth of weekend DIY. It's also now worth at least £100k more than I paid for it three years ago. So I'd say, there are still opportunities to get on the London property ladder if you're prepared to save and put in a bit of graft.

[daytona365](#)



Original Poster ◀

1,773 posts

81 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 15th July 2015

 quote  all

Well done. Almost like a second income isn't it ?



[aquarianone](#)

215 posts

94 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

👍 Wednesday 15th July 2015

 quote  all


Timmy40 said:

daytona365 said:

We'll all have to move to relatively unpolluted Hampshire then ?

Where hurricanes hardly happen.

Worked for me, slightly more affordable in Farnborough (and it's next to some nice bits) 🇬🇧

 London, and the traffic, congestion, buses, noise...it makes me seeth just driving back thourgh grrr.. or maybe i've finally become an old git!



[p1stonhead](#)

9,881 posts

84 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 15th July 2015

 quote  all

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2012 is a lifetime ago in terms of what has happened to the London property market since in some areas.

[Timmy40](#)



11,935 posts

115 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 15th July 2015

 quote  quote all

aquarianone said:


Timmy40 said:

daytona365 said:

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Worked for me, slightly more affordable in Farnborough (and it's next to some nice bits) 🇬🇧

 London, and the traffic, congestion, buses, noise...it makes me seeth just driving back thourgh grrr.. or maybe i've finally become an old girl!

Oh I entirely agree I had my "Falling Down" moment vis a vis living in London and walked out of the place 6 years ago and have never returned. And have no desire to. Different lifetime as far as I'm concerned.

[CC07 PEU](#)



1,152 posts

121 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 15th July 2015

 quote  quote all

daytona365 said:

Well done. Almost like a second income isn't it ?

Yes, that's right. There are other people my age who may have more senior job titles and may be getting paid more but they're still renting, have little in the way of savings, and they're not sitting on the same equity or in possession of the same assets I have and these things definitely matter.

[CC07 PEU](#)



1,152 posts

121 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 15th July 2015

 quote  quote all

p1stonhead said:

2012 is a lifetime ago in terms of what has happened to the London property market since in some areas.

It's all relative though. If I didn't buy then, I'd still be able to buy now because my savings will have gone up and my salary has increased too. I think one of the main issues is that so many people just can't _____

[Forum](#)

[My Stuff](#)

[What's New](#)

[Preferences](#)


[John D.](#)

11,211 posts

126 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 15th July 2015

 quote quote
all

CC07 PEU said:

p1stonhead said:

2012 is a lifetime ago in terms of what has happened to the London property market since in some areas.

It's all relative though. If I didn't buy then, I'd still be able to buy now because my savings will have gone up and my salary has increased too. I think one of the main issues is that so many people just can't commit to saving which is really scuppering their chances of getting anywhere near the property ladder. It's not though, unless you had some kind of mega interest saving account and your career progress has been similarly spectacular. House prices have increased far more sharply than wages.

As said, 2012 is another time.


[Rude-boy](#)

21,219 posts

150 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 15th July 2015

 quote quote
all

daytona365 said:

Surprising how Solicitors & Derivative whatnot's can misinterpret a comment so fully and comprehensively.

Because it could not possibly be that what you wrote was unclear on your actual intended comment to the point that it sounded like you were comparing the policy to those of 1930's Germany?

Given that they have so spectacularly misinterpreted your words perhaps it might be advisable for you to try and re word you enquiry, to clarify what it is you meant?

Until then I am still giving Zod the award for "Best use of the word 'monkey' in a post today."


[p1stonhead](#)

9,881 posts

84 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 15th July 2015



 quote quote
all

And also why remove the German reference from the original post if we misunderstood it?

[rolex](#)[Forum](#)[My Stuff](#)[What's New](#)[Preferences](#)

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 15th July 2015

 quote  all

Timmy40 said:

daytona365 said:

We'll all have to move to relatively unpolluted Hampshire then ?

Where hurricanes hardly happen.

I believe one is still flying



[SPS](#)

1,305 posts

177 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 15th July 2015

 quote  all

Kingston upon Hull - er HULL!

Old Prezza will take em all in - he just has to get rid of one Jag ;-)



[IroningMan](#)

8,664 posts

163 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 15th July 2015

 quote  all

daytona365 said:

50,000 refugees for Somerset ?

That happens already for a long weekend in June - the rest of the year you can FRO.



[scenario8](#)

4,606 posts

96 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 15th July 2015

 quote  all

daytona365 said:

Simple question. All the flotsam and jetsam financially forced out of the London property market, well where do they go/get put ?

Edited by daytona365 on Wednesday 15th July 14:37

I appreciate I'm late to the party and this OP has been edited but that doesn't read like a "simple question" to me at all. Did it make more sense originally? Is there a context to it or was it originally in response to another thread, article or discussion or something?

[davtona365](#)

[Forum](#)[My Stuff](#)[What's New](#)[Preferences](#)

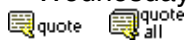
1,773 posts

81 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 15th July 2015



Well. If you all keep on like that, I'll be loathe to impart any more wisdom on these forums. Then you'll be sorry.

[numtumfutunch](#)

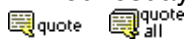
1,975 posts

55 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 15th July 2015



OK, now that we've mentioned Godwin can we get back on track please 😊

The current known knowns on this thread are :

Indigenous scrounging pondlife will be sent to Sheffield to drive buses and/or sign on

Standard PH issue powerfully built directors and bankers continue to live in riverside penthouses

Eastern European plumbers, waiters, cleaners and general dogsbody's live 10 to a room in Hanwell

But what about teachers, nurses, coppers, ambos and fire fighters?

It's a while since I emigrated the smoke but whilst teachers and nurses often seemed to be aussie temps (certainly schools in sink estates seemingly relying on agency staff) the emergency services had mostly locals looking after us

Where exactly do the 999 people live in London today when a bedsit in a previously scummy area costs a fortune without even thinking of a family home?

Forgetting London, a couple of teachers looking to buy a family home in my scummy northern bolthole would struggle yet prices here are toughened up by so called starter homes bring throttled by BTL investors. Possibly until last week's budget.....

Cheers

[mgtony](#)

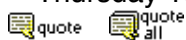
3,004 posts

107 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 16th July 2015



CC07 PEU said:

It's all relative though. If I didn't buy then, I'd still be able to buy now because my savings will have gone up and my salary has increased too. I think one of the main issues is that so many people just can't _____

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Near me in parts of East London, the average terrace has risen in the last few years from about £350k to now £6/7/8/900K!! 🤔 So a deposit For a £350k place, even with a few years more savings might possibly reach the deposit for a property now, but unless you have a huge salary people can't now mortgage for todays prices.

numtumfutunch said:

Where exactly do the 999 people live in London today

Cheers

Emergency Accommodation. 😊

[TwigtheWonderkid](#)



21,382 posts

67 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 16th July 2015

 quote  quote all

If a worker in the 999 call control room has a heart attack, who do they phone?

[CC07 PEU](#)



1,152 posts

121 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 16th July 2015

 quote  quote all

[quote=mgtony]With the massive rise in rental prices in the last few years, most who were renting had probably not been able to save at the rate to afford a deposit on the increased house prices in London since 2012. [/quote=numtumfutunch]

I don't think that's strictly true. In West London, where I'm based, you can still find flat shares for between £500 and £600 per month which is pretty cheap. The problem is that many people think that these places are below them or are not willing to sacrifice their lifestyle in the short term for a long term gain, which would be leaving enough money aside for savings, getting a deposit together, and getting on the property ladder.

[menusername](#)



665 posts

59 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 16th July 2015

 quote  quote all

CC07 PEU]gtony said:

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perhaps your average London salary is not so average

perhaps you do not have the same pressures that require a plan b / rainy day fund that cuts into your deposit and allows you to take a bit more risk

perhaps you got lucky being in the right place at the right time

perhaps your equity is meaningless because everything you would trade out of your property for have also sky-rocketed in price

[p1stonhead](#)



9,881 posts

84 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 16th July 2015

 quote  quote all

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Its easy to look back and feel smug that you have 'made' money on property but generally its  because no one predicted the sharp increase in prices from 2012 to now. I count myself in this becuae I bought in 2011 and have seen similar gains.

Those who complain that 'the young' wont sacrifice things to save are ususally those who already have a property - im probably guilty of it myself but have spoken to numerous friends and realised its just not possible for some people, especially when paying extortionate rent for somewhere in the first place.

If CC07's property had dropped in value by £100k he wouldnt be on here shouting about it. His gain was luck pure and simple (other than the works he did which improved the property but thats just natural).


[oyster](#)

7,818 posts

165 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 16th July 2015

 quote quote all

CC07 PEU said:

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It's all relative though. If I didn't buy then, I'd still be able to buy now because my savings will have gone up and my salary has increased too. I think one of the main issues is that so many people just can't commit to saving which is really scuppering their chances of getting anywhere near the property ladder. You're showing massive naivety. Would someone with your 2012 savings and salary be able to afford your flat now?

That is the relevant point.

[XJSJohn](#)

14,405 posts

136 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 16th July 2015

 quote quote all

Timmy40 said:

Millions of your flotsam and jetson have by an accident of history found that houses they paid next to nothing for are now very very valuable, and so enjoy a huge financial windfall far in excess of what they ever could have earned when they decided to sell and retire out to the South Coast,

Or turf up in Thailand where they proceed to blow everything in about 3 months from what I have seen 🤔


[XJSJohn](#)

14,405 posts

136 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 16th July 2015

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menusername said:

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[/quote=numtumfutunch]

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on the property ladder.
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If CC07's property had dropped in value by £100k he wouldnt be on here shouting about it. His gain was luck pure and simple (other than the works he did which improved the property but thats just natural).

Edited by p1stonhead on Thursday 16th July 10:14

By the way, a slight off topic here, but a few of you are talking about this unprecedented property gains in London since 2012, i sold out a few places in the East End in 2007 (Bow and Isle des Chien's) and i was just looking at property again based on your comments. The same property has gone up maybe 5% - 8% in that time..... is it more of a correction that has happened??

Sorry, just a numpty that has been away for a while and not really bothered looking back much (mainly because car prices make me cry they are so cheap)

[Thankyou4calling](#)

5,216 posts

90 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 16th July 2015



There isn't a rule for where in London people live when on an average salary as each will have their own circumstances.

I do know of the "Key worker schemes" where those in what's considered vital jobs ie nurses, teachers, police, fire and so on get access to housing at prices the average shop worker can't.

Many other people rent a room or live with a partner.

Don't go thinking that London is only for the wealthy, that's far from the case.

Of course the likes of Mayfair, Kensington, Chelsea are out of bounds but go South of the river (or

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[Preferences](#)

You can't have two bedroom flats for £350,000 in Sydenham or rentals for £1350 a month in Tooting if people aren't going to pay it and believe me it isn't Russian Oligarchs living there. The prices are only determined by the buyers and renters and people are pretty resourceful.

[Timmy40](#)



11,935 posts

115 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 16th July 2015

 quote  quote all

XJSJohn said:

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Or turf up in Thailand where they proceed to blow everything in about 3 months from what I have seen 🤔

Hey John, 🤔 are you still dealing in the black stuff? My new venture is trees....thousands of the buggers. Still commodities of of sort.

In London it's hard to say, a mate of my wife's has seen their house in a terrace go up by about 50% since 2012, but I reckon it's a patchy picture, often a school getting an upgrade in the league tables can have a huge local effect, or a new transport link.

In Bristol that happened with a house we rent out, there's been a micro boom where house price inflation has been every bit as bonkers as London. But that doesn't mean the whole of Bristol have gone bonkers price wise.

[princeperch](#)



5,258 posts

164 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 16th July 2015

 quote  quote all

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p1stonhead said:

menusername said:

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Sorry, just a numpty that has been away for a while and not really bothered looking back much (mainly because car prices make me cry they are so cheap)

I owned a 1 bed flat on the old ford rd in e3 in a well known factory conversion. I paid 250k for it in mid 2011, the bloke before me had paid 230k for it in 2006. I sold it in December 2014 for 435k and hadn't done a thing to it. That was a bit of good luck but most people round there have made very good returns over the same sort of period...

[V6Alfisti](#)

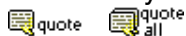
2,233 posts

144 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 16th July 2015



I am a particularly frustrated first time buyer, looking to buy in London but in all honesty have put it on hold.

Position

- . Have a very solid deposit
- . Have a good job
- . Can get a mortgage for a 2 bed flat in Maida Vale/Queens Park
- . Extremely concerned about buying at the peak of the market and particularly ~£500k for ~50 sqm !

So why the concern...surely house prices always go up? 😊

. London market has flat lined (west/south/north), but east is still busy as £400k just about buys you a 2 bed flat

. Prices where I am looking have dropped from anywhere between £25k to £80k from the optimistic 'asking prices', however they have 'dropped' to about £470K-£500k and none are selling. Literally of the 10 properties I have short listed, about 6 were removed without a sale, 2 have sold, 4 still on market

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[What's New](#)

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interesting time.

- . Personal debt is 3x higher now then it was in 2008 (no doubt because everyone getting scared and getting a MASSIVE mortgage).
- . Interest rates are LOW but even so volumes in London are low, and I know many FTB who have bought that are literally living to the pound, any interest rate increase = mortgage default
- . BTL market has been hit by the recent announcement, expecting to see more properties released given the yield will be lower and London property just isn't growing.
- . Government intervention - Personally I find HTB e.t.c extremely aggravating, I see it a bit like a day loan. Give someone who really can't afford it, the opportunity to get indebted. Genius.
- . Bonds/shares/house prices are largely considered to be overvalued, generally it takes one of these to be too high to initiate a crash....but the markets have been holding out.
- . A couple of high end (£1m+) estate agencies in London have gone bankrupt due to low low volumes.

Basically I can afford to buy, but concerned we are right at the top of a peak and the market is going to correct soon. Therefore continue to pay ludicrous rent in the meantime.

I can understand why many professionals are leaving London and ...the country! In the same vein I truly feel sorry for the public sector that must be struggling even more.

Edited by V6Alfisti on Thursday 16th July 11:57

[superkartracer](#)



8,420 posts

139 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 16th July 2015

 quote  quote all

V6Alfisti said:

- . Personal debt is 3x higher now then it was in 2008 (no doubt because everyone getting scared and getting a MASSIVE mortgage).
- All debt driven nonsense , it'll end in tears.

After 2008 i made sure i have zero debt (that was huge warning and lucky escape) . x3 number (it's prob far higher) is utterly insane , this time around people wont be lucky.

Land/houses/Cars/insert here are way way overpriced , purchase with caution.

[superkartracer](#)



8,420 posts

139 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 16th July 2015

 quote  quote all

<http://news.sky.com/story/1520010/mps-to-get-backd...>

Ho ho

[Timmy40](#)

[Forum](#)



[My Stuff](#)

[What's New](#)

[Preferences](#)

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 16th July 2015

 quote  all

V6Alfisti said:

Basically I can afford to buy, but concerned we are right at the top of a peak and the market is going to correct soon. Therefore continue to pay ludicrous rent in the meantime.

I sympathise with everything you're saying. BUT it's very hard to time the market. After 10 years of waiting for the crash I gave up and started buying property 6 years ago fully expecting there to be a crash and to end up in negative equity, I've seen the exact opposite big time.

Over the 30-40 years you will expect to be in the housing market it is very unlikely, even if purely due to inflation, that your property will end up being worth less than you paid for it.

So IMO the best thing to do is ignore Mr Market, buy where you want to live and make sure you have some reserves so you can always make your mortgage payments.



[V6Alfisti](#)

2,233 posts

144 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 16th July 2015

 quote  all

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I sympathise with everything you're saying. BUT it's very hard to time the market. After 10 years of waiting for the crash I gave up and started buying property 6 years ago fully expecting there to be a crash and to end up in negative equity, I've seen the exact opposite big time.

Over the 30-40 years you will expect to be in the housing market it is very unlikely, even if purely due to inflation, that your property will end up being worth less than you paid for it.

So IMO the best thing to do is ignore Mr Market, buy where you want to live and make sure you have some reserves so you can always make your mortgage payments.

Have thought about this position too but there have been a few key changes imo. Certainly agree about timing the market, but the government have certainly been helping to inflate the market, as they know where Bank debt is, reliance on property by pension schemes e.t.c

Also I am only likely to stay in a 2 bed flat for 4-5 years, so considering this kind of period and the associated £15k stamp duty!. Although I do know that if a 2 bed flat goes down, so will the house that I am likely to buy next...but negative equity does not impress me.

. The market up until about 2012 was moderately priced, however since then we have seen 30-40% plus increases in house prices, bringing the London average house price up to around £512k from memory.

Consider this in terms of a mortgage/affordability, you are basically talking something like a £200k deposit and £85k job, or say £80k deposit and £120k job. Assuming one person. Even with two people and an £80k deposit, that assumes both people are on £60k + salaries with no debt and nothing else that impacts 'affordability'/mmr.

. The market has been fuelled by BTL demand and international demand over this entire period, BTL in London is now madness given the low growth, low yield and changes in taxation (IMHO). International markets are struggling, even our own has seen the first signs of reversal in reducing unemployment levels.

~~Also a large driver of house prices have been historically low interest rates, so people with cash in the~~

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So reducing international demand, likely reduced BTL demand (particularly based on reactions from BTL'ers regarding the recent taxation changes) and for those locals/FTB'ers they literally cannot afford now to get on the ladder, regardless of desire.

Despite all the above, I still have only a 50% chance of being right. Although interestingly many areas outside of London are struggling, with big price reductions and some prices still reflecting 2008...that situation certainly still hasn't reached London, Bristol, Oxford, Cambridge, Guildford however 😊

What astonishes me, is the complete lack of analysis by the majority of people entering into the property market. The amount of banking e.t.c professionals I know, that don't know any of the above and buy into £400k- £2m+ property is staggering, people generally pay more attention to their weekly shop than buying a house.

Edited by V6Alfisti on Thursday 16th July 13:13

[XJSJohn](#)



14,405 posts

136 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 16th July 2015

 quote  quote all

princeperch said:

XJSJohn said:

p1stonhead said:

menusername said:

CC07 PEU]gtony said:

With the massive rise in rental prices in the last few years, most who were renting had probably not been able to save at the rate to afford a deposit on the increased house prices in London since 2012. [/quote=numtumfutunch]

I don't think that's strictly true. In West London, where I'm based, you can still find flat shares for between £500 and £600 per month which is pretty cheap. The problem is that many people think that these places are below them or are not willing to sacrifice their lifestyle in the short term for a long term gain, which would be leaving enough money aside for savings, getting a deposit together, and getting on the property ladder.

perhaps your average London salary is not so average

perhaps you do not have the same pressures that require a plan b / rainy day fund that cuts into your deposit and allows you to take a bit more risk

perhaps you got lucky being in the right place at the right time

perhaps your equity is meaningless because everything you would trade out of your property for have also sky-rocketed in price



Its easy to look back and feel smug that you have 'made' money on property but generally its been foretold because no one predicted the sharp increase in prices from 2012 to now. I count myself in this because I bought in 2011 and have seen similar gains.

Those who complain that 'the young' wont sacrifice things to save are ususally those who already have a property - im probably guilty of it myself but have spoken to numerous friends and realised its just not possible for some people, especially when paying extortionate rent for somewhere in the first place

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natural).

Edited by p1stonhead on Thursday 16th July 10:14

By the way, a slight off topic here, but a few of you are talking about this unprecedented property gains in London since 2012, i sold out a few places in the East End in 2007 (Bow and Isle des Chien's) and i was just looking at property again based on your comments. The same property has gone up maybe 5% - 8% in that time..... is it more of a correction that has happened??

Sorry, just a numpty that has been away for a while and not really bothered looking back much (mainly because car prices make me cry they are so cheap)

I owned a 1 bed flat on the old ford rd in e3 in a well known factory conversion. I paid 250k for it in mid 2011, the bloke before me had paid 230k for it in 2006. I sold it in December 2014 for 435k and hadn't done a thing to it. That was a bit of good luck but most people round there have made very good returns over the same sort of period...

Sold a similar 1 bed in another factory conversion nearby (E14)in '07 For 250k, they are now running 320k I see. Ok that is bit more, but bigger rise than I suggested, but we were the first 1 bedded there to hit the stamp threshold, so me were a bit of a watershed property, and that is over 8 years (I made 40% in my 18 months ownership on it.

Timmy, hey mate. Dabble now and again but its an opportunistic thing these days, got my fingers in other pies now, metal plant, wooden trees, alcoholic bottles etc ;-) can take the boy out of London etc etc!!

[RizzoTheRat](#)



15,215 posts

109 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 16th July 2015

 quote  quote all

princeperch said:

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Which is why I never understand why people want to live in London, that sort of money gets you 3-4 bed detached with a garage and a big garden around my area (farnborough/aldershot/farnham)

[daytona365](#)

Original Poster ◀



1,773 posts

81 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 16th July 2015

 quote  quote all

[Forum](#)

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[Thankyou4calling](#)

5,216 posts

90 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 16th July 2015

 quote quote all

On what basis do you doubt it,

If you put a 5 mile radius into Rightmove at that price there are 135 DETACHED HOUSES with 3 plus bedrooms for sale.

Plenty of options so it's easily done.


[davidc1](#)

350 posts

79 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 16th July 2015

 quote quote all

Don't forget you buy a house to live in first and foremost.easy to forget this!

The price of property is just silly in my area , South London/Kent.
My dads house has tripled in value in 12 years. And the house is nothing amazing .


[retrorider](#)

1,320 posts

118 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 16th July 2015

 quote quote all

Studio117 said:

They should ship all the scum up north. Then they can revel in real misery.

That's what HS2 will be for.Extending the London commuter belt...

Edited by retrorider on Thursday 16th July 16:52

[Hackney](#)

5,044 posts

125 months

[\[report\]](#)[Forum](#)[My Stuff](#)[What's New](#)[Preferences](#)

Thankyou4calling said:
On what basis do you doubt it,

If you put a 5 mile radius into Rightmove at that price there are 135 DETACHED HOUSES with 3 plus bedrooms for sale.

Plenty of options so it's easily done.

But then youve got the cost of commuting.

We moved from Islington to Harrow. We looked at Radlett at the same time but the cost of a rail ticket versus the daily tune (for two of us at the time of the move) made us look further in rather than out.

[Hackney](#)



5,044 posts

125 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Friday 17th July 2015

 quote  quote all

dauidc1 said:

Don't forget you buy a house to live in first and foremost.easy to forget this!

But do most people? The phrase I hear most when it comes to first time buyers is about "getting on the ladder" which smacks of desperation, rather than "looking for a home"

Of course this is fuelled by BTL and the horrendous number of property programmes - did they increase or decline during the slump / boom, I can't remember - where buying somewhere and increasing it's value (not adapting it to your needs) is the be all and end all.

[RizzoTheRat](#)



15,215 posts

109 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Friday 17th July 2015

 quote  quote all

Hackney said:

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Only if you work in London. Sorry, didn't explain my original point well enough. Obviously both salaries and house prices are higher in London, but I don't think the maths make sense except for the seriously big earners. I might be able to earn more living in London but it wouldn't be enough to be able to afford a house similar to what I current have.

[V6Alfisti](#)

2,233 posts

144 months

[\[report\]](#)

Further to my previous mind dump.

Certainly some interesting times what with :-

. Rate increases indicated. <http://www.theguardian.com/money/2015/jul/16/base-...>

. Change in taxation for BTL'ers - The BTL'ers can see what is coming and are not particularly happy about it. <http://www.property118.com/open-letter-george-free...>

I have slightly more hope of actually owning my own place.

[dibblecorse](#)



3,550 posts

109 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Friday 17th July 2015

 quote  quote all

princeperch said:

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Bow Quarter ??? I'm guessing, I sold those when they were new, fell into receivership in the later 80's during the build and we were instructed to sell them by KPMG who were the receivers.

[Thankyou4calling](#)



5,216 posts

90 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Friday 17th July 2015

 quote  quote all

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We moved from Islington to Harrow. We looked at Radlett at the same time but the cost of a rail ticket versus the daily tune (for two of us at the time of the move) made us look further in rather than out.

I was referencing people that live in that area (for instance) but also work there.

A poster doubted that it were possible to buy a detached house in the area for £435,000 and I found there were more than 100.

I find this a lot people saying "you can't get a shoebox round my way for xxx " then a quick look reveals it to be nonsense.

[princeperch](#)

5,258 posts

164 months

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not the bow quarter a much smaller development right next to Victoria park. similar style properties though.

bow quarter is a classic example of what happens to the values when the service charge gets out of control though. I wouldn't have wanted to have purchased a flat in there - the service charges are way north of 3 grand a year for anything that isn't a small studio from what ive seen. good facilities there though.

[KFC](#)



3,687 posts

47 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Friday 17th July 2015

 quote  quote all

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What does the service charge get you? For 3k a year I'd be wanting a pool & gym included.

[V6Alfisti](#)



2,233 posts

144 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Monday 20th July 2015

 quote  quote all

Most service charges include only basic maintenance (no pool/gym e.t.c) and sometimes hot water.

I came across a 1 bed flat in a mansion block recently with a £2.5k service charge for just that.

[sugerbear](#)



1,276 posts

75 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Monday 20th July 2015

 quote  quote all

[Forum](#)

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Certainly some interesting times what with :-

I Change in taxation for BTL'ers - The BTL'ers can see what is coming and are not particularly happy about it. <http://www.property118.com/open-letter-george-free...>
It's hard to sympathize when

He has a highly leveraged business that relies to a large extent on low interest rates
He has a highly leveraged business that relies to a large extent on the goodwill of the chancellor

[V6Alfisti](#)



2,233 posts

144 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Monday 20th July 2015

 quote  quote
all

sugerbear said:

It's hard to sympathize when

He has a highly leveraged business that relies to a large extent on low interest rates
He has a highly leveraged business that relies to a large extent on the goodwill of the chancellor
Indeed, even my current landlord is in a slightly ludicrous situation.

Completely over extended, living to the penny each week because she owns 3/4 of a period property in Warwick Avenue and a 2 bed flat in a low rise in Kilburn...bought many years ago and paying a mortgage she can only just afford via rental.

PS: She is a music teacher !

[youngsy](#)



9,712 posts

109 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Monday 20th July 2015

 quote  quote
all

daytona365 said:

Simple question. All the flotsam and jetsam financially forced out of the London property market, well where do they go/get put ?

Edited by daytona365 on Wednesday 15th July 14:37

Here's the answer:

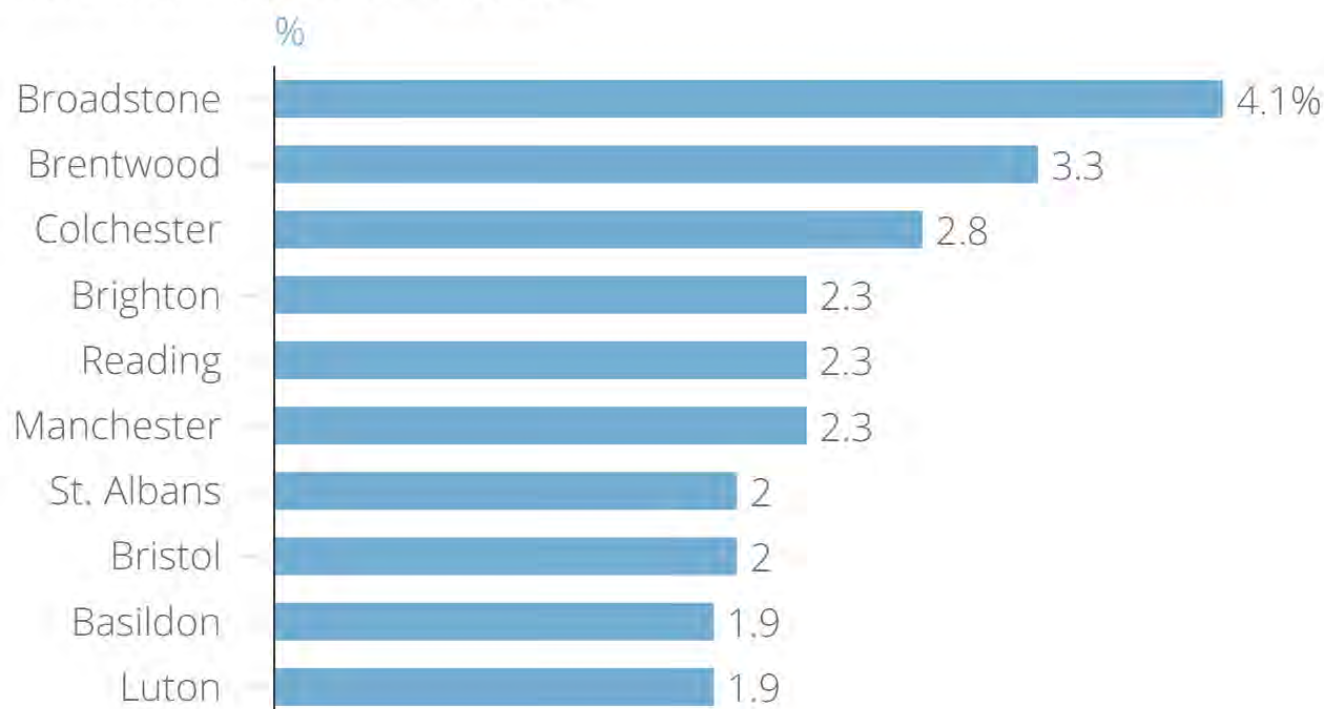
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Where do Londoners move to?



<http://www.cityam.com/220504/as-london-rental-pric...>

[Magog](#)

2,614 posts

106 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Monday 20th July 2015

quote quote all

V6Alfisti said:

sugerbear said:

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PS: She is a music teacher !

A cynic might think that George want's to keep the bumptious parvenus in their place, rentier capitalism isn't for the likes of them.

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Social Housing on New Build estates?

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Social Housing on New Build estates?

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12,714 posts

116 months

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Wednesday 8th June 2011

 quote  quote
all

I understand that these days developers are finding it easier to get planning permission for large new estates if they dedicate some of the housing to "social" housing?

Does anyone have any direct experience of this?

A house we are looking at is on an estate roughly 5 years old, and seems very nice, neighbours are university lecturers and vets, rest of the estate is made up of house with nicely kept gardens and decent cars parked outside.

However a different developer is currently building on the dge of the estate - smaller, houses which I am led to believe are going to be social housing?

Is the old new estate going to be devalued massivly in the next few years and end up being surrounded by smack dens?

Can I find out what percentage of the housing is dedicated to social?

Some of the newbuilds are up for sale at normal prices though?

I know PH will be able to help me with such a snobbish and short sighted question 😊

[garyhun](#)



21,462 posts

145 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011

 quote  quote
all

It's not that planning is easier, it's now a condition of new developments over a certain number of units that a percentage is social housing.

It's not the housing that's the issue, it's who lives in them.

[Simpo Two](#)



67,439 posts

182 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011

 quote  quote
all

Social housina beina better termed 'unsocial housina' of course.

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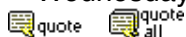
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9,496 posts

122 months

[\[report\]](#)
[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011



FACT, a new development too close for comfort for me has gone from 10%, to 20% to now 30% social housing. A quick drive around there reveals prejudices I have are not prejudices at all. They are filling them with free loading scum who don't give two s**ts about the place. It's enough to make me sell up & move on which is going to cost me about £100K to get what I want.

It may not bother a lot of people but it bothers me.

Finding out what % will be social (sorry, affordable, it's affordable because they pay f**k all for it!) is easy, most developers have this on their plans, if not the site plan will show some units greyed out. Google is your friend.

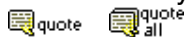
[miniman](#)

18,683 posts

179 months

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[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011



Any more than 12 properties on a development = social housing must be present.
Advertisement

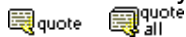
[ChunkyloverSV](#)

1,099 posts

109 months

[\[report\]](#)
[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011



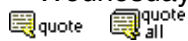
My brother has just moved into social housing on a new build estate, estate is still being built on. In

9,496 posts

122 months

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Wednesday 8th June 2011



ChunkyloverSV said:

My brother has just moved into social housing on a new build estate, estate is still being built on. In total of 20 houses 8 are social. Social housing right next to 350-400k houses.... Lovely.

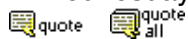
[tim0409](#)

1,700 posts

76 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011



It's not a snobbish question - it's perfectly reasonable to want to know who you will be living next to, and whether or not it will have an effect on house prices.

I have direct experience of this and it pays to do some research. Here in Scotland, new developments (over a certain size) have to incorporate a certain percentage of social housing, which in our area is normally 25%. We were looking at buying a house off plan in a new development (80 units) around 5 years ago and noticed there was a block of "affordable housing". This was far enough away from the property we eventually bought so as not to cause any real problems but I did some enquiries anyway. The developer had told us it was going to be key workers ie teachers, nurses, police etc but when I checked with the council they said they could house anyone in there. I was concerned because a recent "exclusive" development completed nearby had included social housing which was shared equity, but the council failed to find applicants so began housing homeless/vulnerable people there instead. Imagine working hard to buy your dream home for £500k, only to find dodepot mcdougal and his drug addict mates living next door? There is a big difference between shared equity and accommodation for "vulnerable" people. Anyway, we bought our house and whilst we were far enough away from "cell block H" as it became known, those who bought nearby had a personal nightmare. About 75% of the people they housed there (in lovely, brand new flats - all for 200-250 pcm paid for by housing benefit) did not care about anybody else and were engaged in drug dealing, prostitution and general anti-social behaviour. The police were there daily. Finally, after lots of complaints, the council took action and began moving out most of the problem tenants and moved in people who genuinely needed help and respected other people/property. We sold up a few years later and by then it had calmed down.

If you think I sound like a rabid, right wing lunatic, I'm not. I understand the urgent need for social housing but I don't agree with social engineering - we work really hard to live in a nice house, pay a lot of taxation and I don't want to be reminded that its all going on some feckless individual living free next door.

Whilst I am on a rant, I visited my mum yesterday. She is worried about her heating bills for next year as she has a really old, inefficient boiler. She is 73 and has just retired as a civilian police worker (having worked since the age of 15) on a small pension. She bought her own house and has never claimed anything in her life (apart from CB). There are people who live around her who have never worked a day in their lives, yet get new boilers, kitchens and bathrooms installed by the council. She is not eligible as she is not on pension credit. Who says work pays?

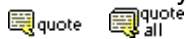
[RichvBov](#)[Forum](#)[My Stuff](#)[What's New](#)[Preferences](#)

134 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011



I lost 50k when I had to sell my house in a new build area not because of social tenants, they were fine. The damn students were the ones that downgraded the area. There was rubbish floating around everywhere, rubbish left everywhere, shopping trolleys, regular house parties, banging fences, dead cats on the side of the road, music playing 24/7, car accidents, property damage etc, all because of the students.

[Dave ST220](#)

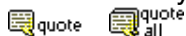
9,496 posts

122 months

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Wednesday 8th June 2011



tim0409 said:

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Nail & head.

[OllieC](#)

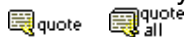
3,813 posts

131 months

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Wednesday 8th June 2011



This practice of addings 'social' housing to new developments is crazy.

When I bought my house coming up for 18 months ago i avoided any new builds on any sort of large development (not that there were that many in 2010 !) precisely for this reason. That and the fact that all the houses in my (near bottom end of the market) price range seemed to be constructed from cardboard.

Idiotic socialist policy and I am dead against it.

[scotal](#)

8,751 posts

[Forum](#)



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Wednesday 8th June 2011

 quote  quote
all

Dan_1981 said:

Is the old new estate going to be devalued massively in the next few years and end up being surrounded by smack dens?

Depends entirely on who moves into the new housing, social or not.

Social Housing can be about shared ownership, and can attract good people who want to own a stake in their own home.

Dan_1981 said:

Can I find out what percentage of the housing is dedicated to social?

Phone the developer's sale office and ask. Or ask the local Authority, it will have been noted on the planning app.

Dan_1981 said:

Some of the newbuilds are up for sale at normal prices though?

Yep, its the social engineering thing they talked about above.

If I lived on the old estate I'd be a little concerned about an influx of a sizable chunk of new people irrespective of whether they were socially housed or not.

The developer will sell the houses to whoever chooses to pay for them, they don't care who moves in.....



[budgie smuggler](#)

2,456 posts

76 months




[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011

 quote  quote
all

I live on one of these new build estates. My flat shares a wall with social housing.

Unfortunately it's not a good situation for a number of reasons:

1. The walls are very very thin.
2. As they don't work, it doesn't occur to them (or they don't care enough) to keep normal hours. They have parties which start at 4am. They go out drinking on Sunday night, and stagger loudly back at 3am on Monday morning.
3. Parking space is very limited as on most new build estates, but despite having no job, they all own many cars. Three cars to two people is common. We have one allocated space, and there are visitor spaces which are always full of beaten up old BMWs, Mercs leaking oil, rusty transit vans etc. Our guests can never get parked. These tards also think nothing of blocking you in with some rusty old s
heap.
4. Because they don't pay maintenance charges like we do, they think nothing of dumping sofas, christmas trees, furniture into the shared dustbins. All the other residents get charged for this, not those
kers.
5. Fights involving baseball bats, a lot of needless SHOUTING, endless replays/karaoke to Adele's s
tly album and general annoyance means that you try to keep the windows closed as much as possible.

[Forum](#)[My Stuff](#)[What's New](#)[Preferences](#)

coming home from a long day at work to find you can't park in your own paid for space.

I'm sure there's more, that's all I can think of without getting too angry 🤔🌍

[Soovy](#)



35,687 posts

188 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011

 quote  quote all

The missus and I went to look at a new build near Cambridge last weekend. £600k if you don't mind.

The roads were filled with feral gypsy families living there on benefits.

Over half a bar to live on a ~~feral~~ smoking campsite. No thanks.

[tim0409](#)



1,700 posts

76 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011

 quote  quote all

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4. Because they don't pay maintenance charges like we do, they think nothing of dumping sofas, christmas trees, furniture into the shared dustbins. All the other residents get charged for this, not those ~~feral~~ smokers.
5. Fights involving baseball bats, a lot of needless SHOUTING, endless replays/karaoke to Adele's s ~~feral~~ album and general annoyance means that you try to keep the windows closed as much as possible.
Oh, and a constant smell of cheap weed/cigarettes blowing in too

[Forum](#)

[My Stuff](#)

[What's New](#)

[Preferences](#)

coming home from a long day at work to find you can't park in your own paid for space.

I'm sure there's more, that's all I can think of without getting too angry 🤔👤

Following on from my earlier post, I could have written the above as we had exactly the same issues but luckily we were a bit further away. Add to that the endless stream of mini-cabs delivering carry outs and ferrying them around (something I could not afford). Forget your key after a night out? No problem - just boot the communal door down (this happened every weekend and guess who paid? Yep, the other residents by way of factoring charge.

I was involved in the recent Scottish Parliament elections at a party level and have been asked to stand for selection for a safe council seat next year after the incumbent retires. I am really passionate about trying to make a difference at a local level but having attended a council meeting last week I found the lack of common sense and intelligence etc quite bleak!

[SGirl](#)



7,589 posts

178 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011

 quote  quote all

RichyBoy said:

I lost 50k when I had to sell my house in a new build area not because of social tenants, they were fine. The damn students were the ones that downgraded the area. There was rubbish floating around everywhere, rubbish left everywhere, shopping trolleys, regular house parties, banging fences, dead cats on the side of the road, music playing 24/7, car accidents, property damage etc, all because of the students.

When we were househunting a couple of years ago, we looked at a new build on an estate. The developer's representative showed us the properties earmarked for social housing (poorer quality, and cunningly cordoned off from the rest of the estate by blocking the end of a road!). All okay, we thought. Then I noticed a couple of blocks of flats going up at the other end of the estate (it wasn't a particularly big estate) and thought to ask whether those were to be privately owned or rented out. The developer's rep hesitated, then admitted the flats were intended to be used for student accommodation.

So. Students at one end, potential soap dodgers at the other (because of course, you never can tell with social housing - sometimes people are perfectly reasonable). It didn't take us long to make the decision not to buy.

[Trustmeimadoctor](#)



2,913 posts

72 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011

 quote  quote all

the new site we are buying on 83 plots iirc no social a few others we looked at had no social on either

[Forum](#)

[My Stuff](#)

[What's New](#)

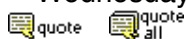
[Preferences](#)

132 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011



Do not touch new build estates with a barge pole!!!

[Dave_ST220](#)

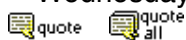
9,496 posts

122 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011



Trustmeimadoctor said:

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[andy400](#)

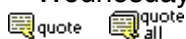
8,532 posts

148 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011



Our estate is very nice overall, and there is no trouble as such, but you can tell *very* easily which houses are 'social'.

It is, I think, true that most people will care less for something they are just given, than something they have had to work hard for.

[Deva Link](#)

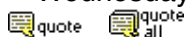
26,934 posts

162 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011



Dave_ST220 said:

Trustmeimadoctor said:

the new site we are buying on 83 plots iirc no social a few others we looked at had no social on either Love to know how they have achieved that one, who's the developer & what site? New build with no social? Good luck.

They'll sell what they can quickly while quietly negotiating a deal to sell the remainder to a housing association. 😊

[Forum](#)

[My Stuff](#)

[What's New](#)



[Preferences](#)

122 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011

 quote  all

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They'll sell what they can quickly while quietly negotiating a deal to sell the remainder to a housing association. 😊

But if rules state there MUST be a social aspect from day 1 misselling of property?

[monthefish](#)



19,013 posts

148 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011

 quote  all

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Trustmeimadoctor said:

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A local developer in this area managed that, by arguing that his 'social housing' quota was achieved by means of a block of flats he was building elsewhere (about 3 miles away).

[Dave_ST220](#)



9,496 posts

122 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011

 quote  all

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A local developer in this area managed that, by arguing that his 'social housing' quota was achieved by means of a block of flats he was building elsewhere (about 3 miles away).

I did speak to a developer about this who said something similar, however I wouldn't trust a developer on a site that was not 100% finished & all sold tbh.

[miniman](#)

18,683 posts

[Forum](#)



[My Stuff](#)

[What's New](#)

[Preferences](#)

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011

 quote  all

Our village has the typical 1960s approach to provision of the kahn slice, with a cluster of them at one end of the village, which is now referred to as "that" area of the village. The village has two playgrounds, one at "that" end and one at the other. The playground in the badlands is continually vandalised and then repaired by the Parish Council only to be vandalised again. However we keep repairing it so that the ferral kids don't decamp to the brand new playground elsewhere.

It's quite a strange choice, I guess - a borderline no-go area made up entirely of social housing, or interspersing social housing amongst private housing in an attempt to dilute the effect and potentially socially engineer out the problem.



[Munter](#)

27,502 posts

158 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011

 quote  all

Social Housing full rent = avoid
Social housing part rent part buy = better than private rentals.

As a part rent part buy tenant, you have to get a mortgage, you have to be employed, you have to provide references etc.

The only trouble in our street comes from the privately rented properties. All the part rent - part buy houses are looked after and the occupants don't want to cause trouble.

So it's not "social housing" you need to avoid. It's 100% rent housing (be it private or Housing Association). That's where the trouble is.



[Dave ST220](#)

9,496 posts

122 months


[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011

 quote  all

miniman said:

It's quite a strange choice, I guess - a borderline no-go area made up entirely of social housing, or interspersing social housing amongst private housing in an attempt to dilute the effect and potentially socially engineer out the problem.

Or just scrap the whole idea of giving lazy  something for nothing for them to trash? How radical would that be.



[miniman](#)

18,683 posts

[Forum](#)[My Stuff](#)[What's New](#)[Preferences](#)

[\[news\]](#)


Wednesday 8th June 2011

 quote  all

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Or just scrap the whole idea of giving lazy  something for nothing for them to trash? How radical would that be.

Works perfectly for me.



[russ_a](#)

2,276 posts

128 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011

 quote  all

We used to rent (private) in the cheap seats on a new build estate a few years ago just after the estate was built.

It started off fine as most of the houses were owner occupied however, after a couple of years the BTL mob had got them all and it went down hill fast. Police being called out at all hours, fights, visitors blocking drive and garage.

I will now never buy anywhere near the cheap seats again! Though I do agree that new estates should be forced to have a mixture of housing. As this is a better solution that council estate ghettos IMHO



[Soovy](#)

35,687 posts

188 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)


Wednesday 8th June 2011

 quote  all

russ_a said:

this is a better solution that council estate ghettos IMHO

No it isn't. They should fence scum into their own areas.

I pay a LOT of money to live somewhere nice, and I work  hard for it. The Council have recently housed a family of feral scum at the other end of our road. They've already been barred from the local pub (owned by an East End ex boxer hardcase who "had a word" with them) and from the local shop, for stealing and are always causing noise and trouble. It's called "pepperpotting" - the idea is that if you house scum in a nice area they'll become nice themselves.

All it does is ruin it for everyone.

They should all be left to fester in their own vileness in areas well away from the rest of us.

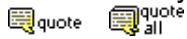
[Forum](#)[My Stuff](#)[What's New](#)[Preferences](#)

122 months

[\[report\]](#)


[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011



Soovy said:

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They should all be left to fester in their own vileness in areas well away from the rest of us.



All it does is ruin it for everyone.

+1 Exactly how I feel right now.

[garyhun](#)

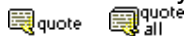
21,462 posts

145 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011



Decent, hard working, tax paying people really do get totally ked over in this country.

I've posted a couple of threads in the last couple of days about moving. The current plan of living in Norfolk, in a converted barn, in a village with no estates, within 30 minutes of Snetterton gets more attractive with every post I read in this thread.

We really do need a revolution and a new form of government in this country.

[tim0409](#)

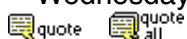
1,700 posts

76 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011



russ_a said:

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[Forum](#)

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I will now never buy anywhere near the cheap seats again! Though I do agree that new estates should be forced to have a mixture of housing. As this is a better solution than council estate ghettos IMHO. But is it a better solution? Why should honest, hard working, respectable people's lives be blighted by the anti-social behaviour of a sub-set of society?

The solution is more complex than just lumping everybody together - this just results in causing tension and enforcing stereotypes. As a social experiment it has failed.

[Dave_ST220](#)



9,496 posts

122 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011

 quote  quote all

Too f***ing right. One reason we will move, what I can't see can't piss me off EVERY f***ing DAY!!! Life is too short to get angry but a revolution to kick the work shy scum into touch would see me right at the front.

[Dave_ST220](#)



9,496 posts

122 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011

 quote  quote all

Out of interest, who introduced this rule? Do I need to ask?! Social experiment which will never work and has not worked, EVER. Stop benefits, don't work? Starve to death then you idle f***er. Off for lunch now, too much anger!!!

Ironically the film "falling down" was on last night 😊

[Sam_68](#)



9,939 posts

162 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011

 quote  quote all

Dan_1981 said:

I understand that these days developers are finding it easier to get planning permission for large new estates if they dedicate some of the housing to "social" housing?

Not so much a matter of 'easier' as 'essential'. Local Authorities have policies that *force* us to provide 'affordable' (social) housing. No affordable housing = no planning consent, simple as that.

Dan_1981 said:

Does anyone have any direct experience of this?

Lots, from the developer side.

Dan_1981 said:

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[My Stuff](#)

[What's New](#)

[Preferences](#)

Ironically, for a given number of bedrooms, social housing house types tend to be bigger than the open market ones, due to the design standards required by the Registered Social Landlords (Housing Associations) to obtain grant funding. You can find out easily enough by looking up the planning application for the development on your local authority's Planning website, or by speaking to the Planning Officer responsible.

Dan_1981 said:

Is the old new estate going to be devalued massively in the next few years and end up being surrounded by smack dens?

Despite the doom-mongers, no, not significantly. Overall 'quality' of social housing tenants varies, but it tends to be linked to the general tone of the area, because the majority of tenants will be drawn from a quite local population. So affordable housing in a Birmingham ghetto may well be filled with drug addicts and scrotes; affordable housing in a Cotswold village will more likely be filled with basically nice, respectable people who can't afford to get on the normal housing ladder for whatever reason (though that will doubtless include a percentage of unemployed/unemployable and single mums). Developers don't usually develop mixed tenure sites in the *really* grim areas, because sales values would in any case be low, but where we've developed in 'marginal' city centre locations, we've not found that the inclusion of even a very high proportion of affordable housing has had a significant negative effect on the open market houses on the site, either initially or at resale.

miniman said:

Any more than 12 properties on a development = social housing must be present.

There is no such fixed threshold. It varies from Authority to Authority (and sometimes on geographic location within an Authority), according to locally adopted policy.

Edited by Sam_68 on Wednesday 8th June 12:40

[Deva Link](#)



26,934 posts

162 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011

 quote  all

It can happen anywhere though - the house behind us has been rented out for the entire 20yrs we've lived here.

First 10 years or so was a solicitor and his family who was fine. Then they moved out and the house has had a pretty high turnover of tenants. It's always that house that has the big fireworks on bonfire night, the noisy barbecues on summer evening and, horror of horrors, they've now got one of those big trampolines in the garden!

[jdw1234](#)



6,021 posts

132 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011

 quote  all

monthefish said:

[Forum](#)

[My Stuff](#)

[What's New](#)

[Preferences](#)

Love to know how they have achieved that one, who's the developer & what site? New build with no social? Good luck.

A local developer in this area managed that, by arguing that his 'social housing' quota was achieved by means of a block of flats he was building elsewhere (about 3 miles away).

That is what the Candy Brothers did with 1 Hyde Park I believe.

[scotal](#)



8,751 posts

196 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011

 quote  quote all

Soovy said:

I pay a LOT of money to live somewhere nice,

If you live where I think you live, its an peaceful oasis in a desert of scum..... in fact the scum were there first. You're on their turf old son.

[monthefish](#)



19,013 posts

148 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011

 quote  quote all

jdww1234 said:

monthefish said:

Dave_ST220 said:

Trustmeimadoctor said:

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Maybe it's more common/legal than I thought.

(I thought the local chap here had done it with an envelope of 'used' notes to the planning dept)

[ClaphamGT3](#)

5,709 posts

160 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011

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[What's New](#)

[Preferences](#)

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(I thought the local chap here had done it with an envelope of 'used' notes to the planning dept)

An off-site provision or commuted sum are quite rare and hard to obtain. You have to argue the case to planners very hard on these

[lawrence567](#)



7,507 posts

107 months


[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011

 quote  quote all

Just a quick one for all the "i pay my taxes" etc lot.

You do realise that in social housing it's not just work shy, thieving  that live in them.

The elderly & disabled also live in them.

I know a couple of people who lvie in "social housing" which are mixed amongst privately owned houses.

Of those houses they are by far the better neighbours, not noisy, look after their gardens etc as they know if they mis-behave they won't have a house to live in.

I know there's always the exception but not everyone's a kwit.

[OllieC](#)



3,813 posts

131 months

[\[report\]](#)


[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011

 quote  quote all

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A fair point, we mustn't tar everyone with the same brush.

I still wouldn't want the risk of living near social housing given the choice though. I'm no snob by any means, and my parents grew up on a council estate, but I'd rather live somewhere nice please.

[carvhun](#)

[Forum](#)

[My Stuff](#)

[What's New](#)



[Preferences](#)

145 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011

 quote  all

lawrence567 said:

You do realise that in social housing it's not just work shy, thieving ~~people~~ that live in them. Hence why, in my earlier post, I stated that it's not the housing that's the issue, it's the people in them.

[Munter](#)



27,502 posts

158 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011

 quote  all

OllieC said:

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I still wouldn't want the risk of living near social housing given the choice though. I'm no snob by any means, and my parents grew up on a council estate, but I'd rather live somewhere nice please. Social Housing not equal to council housing.

Social housing includes people with mortgages, and those without. Social Housing includes people who can lose their home and be moved in to council funded accommodation, and those who are already in council funded accommodation.

If anybody is thinking Social Housing is just people "being put up by the Gov" it's not. I've never taken a penny in benefits, I pay 40% tax (far to ~~feckin~~ taking much of it as well!), and I live in social housing.

If you don't like dole scrounging wasters, being homed by the Gov. It's not social housing you don't like. You'd be using totally the wrong term.

Government funded rental accommodation would be a better description. And even then that includes those people mentioned above who have legitimate reasons to need the state to assist them.

What we need is accommodation that's built from concrete and stainless steel, where antisocial neighbours in council funded accommodation are moved to.

[OllieC](#)



3,813 posts

131 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011

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[Preferences](#)

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What we need is accommodation that's built from concrete and stainless steel, where antisocial neighbours in council funded accommodation are moved to. I'm sorry if my post came across as suggesting that it is just people being given a free house etc, I didn't mean to infer that. There is very much a need, and every justification for providing housing for those who are willing to try and help themselves.

[Munter](#)

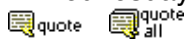
27,502 posts

158 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011



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I'm sorry if my post came across as suggesting that it is just people being given a free house etc, I didn't mean to infer that. There is very much a need, and every justification for providing housing for those who are willing to try and help themselves.

No worries. 

It just annoys me that people think social housing is just about council/housing association rented property. When it isn't. There are a number of different types of "homes" under the Social Housing umbrella. So developers/gov/anybody referring to something as Social Housing really doesn't tell us anything about it. The question "what type?" has to be asked next to gain more insight into who could live there in the worst case.

[yellowbentines](#)

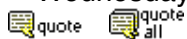
3,895 posts

124 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011



I think some of you are confusing social housing with affordable housing, which includes shared equity and shared ownership properties, bought by people who work, pay taxes and have mortgages, but need a hand up due to restrictive mortgage lending by banks.

So...presence of social housing on a new build estate says nowt about the type of person who will likely live there.

[Dave_ST220](#)



9,496 posts

122 months

[\[report\]](#)


[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011

 quote  quote all

lawrence567 said:

Just a quick one for all the "i pay my taxes" etc lot.


You do realise that in social housing it's not just work shy, thieving  that live in them.

The elderly & disabled also live in them.

I know a couple of people who lvie in "social housing" which are mixed amongst privately owned houses.

Of those houses they are by far the better neighbours, not noisy, look after their gardens etc as they know if they mis-behave they won't have a house to live in.

I know there's always the exception but not everyone's a kwit.

The majority are the former without doubt. As for the misbehaving & your out rubbish, bullsot, do some Googling & see how long it took a Manchester housing association to evict known drug dealers.

[madslk](#)



30 posts

73 months


[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011

 quote  quote all

I have direct experience on both counts, firstly I work for a housing association and secondly I live on a relatively new build close which has a mixture of o/o, btl, private rentals and social housing. In my experience I've never had a problem with the s/h, it's the private rentals that do my head in! Parties and old bangers rotting in the car park! I do however get my alarm serviced yearly! Lol

From my employment point of view it is the 1% minority who tar everyone else with the same brush. It is also different from town to town. In my local area generally everyone is very respectful of their neighbours and really look after their houses which makes my life easier! An hour up the road however my life gets difficult! (I work in maintainance). The properties are not looked after and are general t heaps! It doesn't help that the association doesn't have a big enough budget to maintain as we would like, given the right budget we could make the houses really great. However it doesn't help with the tenants mind set. They have different life skills and have been brought up differently others.

From a management point of view I can see why people don't want to live near s/h, but if you doand are having problems complain complain complain. They will get moved on eventually. Just feel sorry for who gets them next.

[worsy](#)

2,989 posts

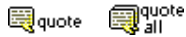
92 months

[Forum](#)

[My Stuff](#)

[What's New](#)

[Preferences](#)



Sadly all of this sounds familiar.

We live in a lovely house, nice quiet spot overlooking steam railway and a field full of a protected flower. Bought the house new and specced it to our requirements.

Our driveway is shared amongst 3 other large properties and one coach house. The coach house has 4 garages below one for itself and three for two of our neighbours.

Unfortunately it's a BTL and the owner advertises it on Gumtree. The standard of tenant has got worse and we now have some fat minger in there with 3 kids.

They don't go to school, hang out of the window, throw things on the floor etc. The social appeared to take the them into care a few months back as a car with some official people came one day but now they appear back. Same car visits every now and then, assume she is social worker. During the day all you can hear is "f**k this" "f**k that" at the kids.

Just looking at her garage now and there are 5 bin bags sitting there, mounting up over the last few days becuase she seemingly can't be arsed opening the garage to put them in the bin. To top that her boyfriends dog has s**t all over her neighbours front path.

I really want to move but love my home.

Edited for spelling.

Edited by worsy on Wednesday 8th June 23:11

[Dave ST220](#)

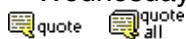
9,496 posts

122 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011



worsy said:

I really want to move but love my home.

So do I but I'm getting out before I can't sell it at any price 😞

[littlegreenfairy](#)

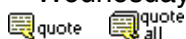
9,989 posts

138 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011



worsy said:

Sadly all of this sounds familiar.

~~We live in a lovely house, nice quiet spot overlooking steam railway and a field full of a protected flower.~~

[Forum](#)

[My Stuff](#)

[What's New](#)

[Preferences](#)

garages below one for itself and three for two of our neighbours.

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Just looking at her garage now and there are 5 bin bags sitting there, mounting up over the last few days becuase she seemingly can't be arsed opening the garage to put them in the bin. To top that her boyfriends dog has s**t all over her neighbours front path.

I really want to move but love my home.
Sounds similar to the area I'm in.

Massive mistake to rent a flat in a smallish block thinking that it'd be with similar minded people. It's a little chavvy and I'm convinced most don't work, especially the neighbour who rather likes their "intimate time" with their other half. She's a screamer and being woken up at 2am with it really ruins your day.

[worsy](#)



2,989 posts

92 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 8th June 2011

 quote  all

littlegreenfairy said:

Sounds similar to the area I'm in.

Massive mistake to rent a flat in a smallish block thinking that it'd be with similar minded people. It's a little chavvy and I'm convinced most don't work, especially the neighbour who rather likes their "intimate time" with their other half. She's a screamer and being woken up at 2am with it really ruins your day. Went past your place Sat. Very quiet round there, you'd never know!

[littlegreenfairy](#)



9,989 posts

138 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 9th June 2011

 quote  all

worsy said:

littlegreenfairy said:

Sounds similar to the area I'm in.

Massive mistake to rent a flat in a smallish block thinking that it'd be with similar minded people. It's a little chavvy and I'm convinced most don't work, especially the neighbour who rather likes their "intimate time" with their other half. She's a screamer and being woken up at 2am with it really ruins your day. Went past your place Sat. Very quiet round there, you'd never know!
Ah we do live in the sort of same place! Yes, I know who you are now!

[Forum](#)

[My Stuff](#)

[What's New](#)

[Preferences](#)

It's a real shame about your end because it's a very nice place on the whole. Perhaps we should swap houses with your problem neighbour and let her inflict herself on mine 😊

[P101](#)



1,253 posts


75 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 9th June 2011

 quote  all

An awful lot of the residents living in social housing (Council housing) are total scum and don't help themselves at all. We have a small amount of these houses near us. They let the whole area down. Most have really skanky gardens littered with fag butts and dog ~~sees~~  England flags in the windows, rusty cars and vans blocking the streets, fat bints sat outside the front of the house smoking spliffs all day. When I walk my dog past this area you can nearly always hear the occupants shouting at their kids or screaming profanities at each other. Why do chavs shout all the time? have they not learnt to go over to the person they want to communicate with and talk? There is a rule that no white Van type vehicles are allowed to be parked on a permanent basis on our development, when I complained to the council, I was told that the social housing occupants have different rules, because most of them are blue collar workers and rely on their vans, they are exempt from this rule! But none of them bloody work! They use their vans as far as I have witnessed for fly tipping! Also we pay an annual fee for the maintenance to communal area's, grass cutting etc, most of this communal land is around the social housing area, yet they pay diddly squat! In the couple of years of living here I have witnessed chav kids setting light to tyres, dumping rotting mattresses on the communal playground, using portable BBQ's on the grass in this same playground scorching the grass, then emptying it on the grass, littering same area with beer cans. Luckily we only have one road of about 5 houses near us like this. Dread to think what it would be like if there were more.

I should add, there is one Social home in this road lived in by some pensioners, their home is extremely well kept. Why don't they put the scum in tower blocks, and the more civilised more deserving tenants into the nicer areas.

[Dave ST220](#)



9,496 posts


122 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 9th June 2011

 quote  all

Why don't they just tell the scum to ~~feed~~  off? Get a job or starve to death. Simple. Social housing should not be a life style for those who do not want top work & do not care about their surroundings.

[garyhun](#)



21,462 posts

145 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 9th June 2011

 quote  all

[Forum](#)

[My Stuff](#)

[What's New](#)

[Preferences](#)

Because it loses votes?

[otolith](#)



33,479 posts

121 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 9th June 2011

 quote  all

Soovy said:

They should all be left to fester in their own vileness in areas well away from the rest of us.



Should do the trick.

[JB!](#)



4,812 posts

97 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 9th June 2011

 quote  all

This has happened in Broughton in MK, massive expensive homes surrounded by social housing all piled in, as tight as they can build them. It's s~~ensored~~.

At least with the old way you could just plain avoid the scummy areas, Fishermead, Conniburrow, The Lakes, but now it's all mixed in. No way on earth do I ever want to buy or rent in any of the new estates purely for that reason.

[OllieC](#)



3,813 posts

131 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 9th June 2011

 quote  all

Soovy said:

Because it loses votes?

I suspect you are correct, but I cannot see why people want the underclass who cannot be arsed to work feeding and housing off the back of their effort.

Parasites.

[worsy](#)



2,989 posts

92 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 9th June 2011

 quote  quote all

littlegreenfairy said:

Ah we do live in the sort of same place! Yes, I know who you are now!

It's by no means as bad as your situation but I'd still not want to part with my cash to buy a place like this.

It's a real shame about your end because it's a very nice place on the whole. Perhaps we should swap houses with your problem neighbour and let her inflict herself on mine 😊



Update, neighbour has phoned owner. He took a drive past earlier and we are up to 6 bin bags 😊

[Dan_1981](#)

Original Poster ◀



12,714 posts

116 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 9th June 2011

 quote  quote all

een and had a drive round the development again this morning

the new homes are being built by Rosa homes

<http://www.rosahomes.co.uk>

and seems to be in affiliation with something called www.homesandcommunities.co.uk

Looking on the rosa homes website i'm slightly more relaved to see most of them seem to be on the homebuy scheme - shared ownership etc rather than 2here have a free house"

But on the developers notice borads there were numbers to ring for sales details and also for rental details.

[Munter](#)

27,502 posts

158 months

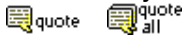
[Forum](#)

[My Stuff](#)

[What's New](#)

[Preferences](#)

Thursday 9th June 2011



Dan_1981 said:

But on the developers notice boards there were numbers to ring for sales details and also for rental details.

I'd suggest phoning them and asking about the rental details 🙄

[zcacogp](#)

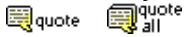
11,239 posts

161 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 9th June 2011



Any housing type will have a mix of people, but there seems to be a strong association between those who are being provided accommodation completely for gratis and those who you don't want to be living next to. Owner-occupiers seem to be generally more concerned about their house (they own it, after all!) and keeping the local area desirable.

Having said that I live on a street of Victorian terraces, and the two opposite us are converted to flats and are housing-association owned. And the occupants there have never given us a moment's grief, and I count two of them as friends. As I said, every housing type is a mix ...

America has a different model; privately-owned accommodation is very geographically separate from state-provided accommodation. Which means that you get areas where crime is pretty much unheard of (yes, really), and areas where you simply do not want to go, any time of the day or night. Is this a better arrangement? I'm not convinced.

Munter said:

What we need is accommodation that's built from concrete and stainless steel, where antisocial neighbours in council funded accommodation are moved to.

And that, I understand, is the model in Germany. State-provided accommodation mixed in with private accommodation, and indestructible 'sink estates' for 'challenging' families to go and live in. And there is social shame associated with living in the sink estates; state-housed families know that they need to behave themselves otherwise they will be moved to somewhere that they *really* don't want to be. By all accounts, it works quite well ...

Oli.

[ChunkyloverSV](#)

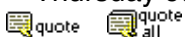
1,099 posts

109 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Thursday 9th June 2011



Dave_ST220 said:

Lovely.

I have had a look into it, and there are only two true free houses. One my brother has, the other is for emergencies where people need accommodation ASAP, domestic violence cases etc. The rest are owned by the Council but for helping first buyers get onto the market.

[Forum](#)

[My Stuff](#)

[What's New](#)



[Preferences](#)

60 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Monday 28th May 2012

 quote  quote
all

Probably THEE worst decision I ever made was to buy a house on a new development with social housing block. Considering the SH block was only a small part of the estate, I figured they wouldn't be a problem. WRONG. You only need a small percentage of scum to f*** up the whole estate. Remember, they don't work, so will be the most visible part of the community.

The posters advertising the estate depict a happy family strolling the grass. What you actually get is streams of woman too fat to walk, accompanied by ADH kids, scrawny heroin addicts / drug dealers / bull terriers / dog sh** / constant crime / car vandalised / bikes nicked / ect...

All of this is bad enough, but the thing that REALLY gets you is the fact that that your paying for every aspect of their lives, and are constantly reminded of it every time you look out your window.

Anyone want to buy a house?

[scenario8](#)



4,606 posts

96 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Monday 28th May 2012

 quote  quote
all

Did you join this site specifically to look up a thread dormant for nearly a year to post that?

In the spirit of Pistonheads I shall award you 4/10 with three of those four acknowledging the commitment to the rant but only a one for content. Needs much more swearing. Try again.

I'll allow the spelling errors to pass this time.

[z4chris99](#)



8,516 posts

96 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Monday 28th May 2012

 quote  quote
all

actually on point blame the council for the section 106 affordable agreements that cause such problems

[blueg33](#)



18,412 posts

141 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 29th May 2012

 quote  quote
all

[Forum](#)

[My Stuff](#)

[What's New](#)

[Preferences](#)

Pay more tax and you might be able to get them in their own purpose built slum.

I don't agree with social engineering, I don't believe we should build slums, so what is the solution? The fact is that most people in social housing are perfectly normal regular people paying for the bulk of the cost of their property (eg shared equity), so why shouldn't they live in a nice place?

As for fat noisy ugly smelly scum of people, the worst ones I have seen and the ones that got me as the developer the most grief from neighbours had bought an £800k ish (in 2002) house on a gated development.

Don't tar all with the same brush

Edited by blueg33 on Tuesday 29th May 08:43

As for the rant, I thought it was weak, lacked venom as has already been said lacked swearing until the Op's response.

Edited by blueg33 on Tuesday 29th May 08:45

[el stovey](#)



20,026 posts

180 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 29th May 2012

 quote  quote all

Dan4321f said:

Probably THEE worst decision I ever made was to buy a house on a new development with social housing block. Considering the SH block was only a small part of the estate, I figured they wouldn't be a problem. WRONG. You only need a small percentage of scum to f*** up the whole estate. Remember, they don't work, so will be the most visible part of the community.

The posters advertising the estate depict a happy family strolling the grass. What you actually get is streams of woman too fat to walk, accompanied by ADH kids, scrawny heroin addicts / drug dealers / bull terriers / dog sh** / constant crime / car vandalised / bikes nicked / ect...

All of this is bad enough, but the thing that REALLY gets you is the fact that that your paying for every aspect of their lives, and are constantly reminded of it every time you look out your window.

Anyone want to buy a house?

Great first rant! Depicts the scene and the posters rage perfectly.

[Munter](#)

27,502 posts

158 months

[\[report\]](#)

[Forum](#)

[My Stuff](#)

[What's New](#)

[Preferences](#)

z4chris99 said:

actually on point blame the council for the section 106 affordable agreements that cause such problems Thing is. Every single bit of trouble in our street is caused by the privately rented properties. All the affordable housing is full of people with jobs to go to and kids that stay in line. The privately rented properties....not so much.

I think the problem with new build is that many of the are purchased as buy to let, by landlords who do not give a toss. So I'd say put a rule in that all new build must not be let out for the first 5 years. The owners must live in them.

[monthefish](#)



19,013 posts

148 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 29th May 2012

 quote  all


Dan4321f said:

scenario8 said:

Did you join this site specifically to look up a thread dormant for nearly a year to post that?

In the spirit of Pistonheads I shall award you 4/10 with three of those four acknowledging the commitment to the rant but only a one for content. Needs much more swearing. Try again.

I'll allow the spelling errors to pass this time.

More swearing? Ok,  off you pompous little cocksucker. I give you 10/10 for COCKSUCKING. I'm with the newbie.



[Davey S2](#)



11,407 posts

171 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 29th May 2012

 quote  all

Fortunately no such problems for me but my first house was a small mid terrace starter home which has social housing on one side.

During my ownership there were 4 different tenants there. 2 were great, very friendly, polite and good neighbours who looked after the place while the other 2 were scum with no idea how to behave.

I've generally been lucky with neighbours since and will be looking to move next year once I get married but wont be looking anywhere on a large development or anywhere near social housing.

[Dan4321f](#)

4 posts

60 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

[Forum](#)

[My Stuff](#)

[What's New](#)

[Preferences](#)

Whilst the public expect the developer (landowner) to pay to house the less fortunate (scroungers for Mail readers), then they are likely to be sharing the same site. That's the way it works.

Pay more tax and you might be able to get them in their own purpose built slum.

I don't agree with social engineering, I don't believe we should build slums, so what is the solution? The fact is that most people in social housing are perfectly normal regular people paying for the bulk of the cost of their property (eg shared equity), so why shouldn't they live in a nice place?

As for fat noisy ugly smelly scum of people, the worst ones I have seen and the ones that got me as the developer the most grief from neighbours had bought an £800k ish (in 2002) house on a gated development.

Don't tar all with the same brush

Edited by blueg33 on Tuesday 29th May 08:43

As for the rant, I thought it was weak, lacked venom as as has already been said lacked swearing until the Op's response.

Edited by blueg33 on Tuesday 29th May 08:45

Let's be clear on this, I don't expect anyone to pay to house the "less fortunate". I would gladly pay more tax if we could build them own slum, especially if it was in the arctic circle.

In truth it's mugs like me paying 20k tax bills and living in a ~~scum~~ hole who are "less fortunate". The "less fortunate" live in the same housing and get EVERYTHING FOR FREE.

The 800k house people may have been a pain in your arse, but I bet they didn't smash your car, steal your stuff and make it a requirement for you to carry a weapon when you left your house. Lets get things into perspective.

[blueg33](#)



18,412 posts

141 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 30th May 2012

 quote  quote all

Dan4321f said:

Let's be clear on this, I don't expect anyone to pay to house the "less fortunate". I would gladly pay more tax if we could build them own slum, especially if it was in the arctic circle.

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The 800k house people may have been a pain in your arse, but I bet they didn't smash your car, steal your stuff and make it a requirement for you to carry a weapon when you left your house. Lets get things into perspective.

Fully in perspective thanks, its your perspective that is skewed. Most occupiers of social housing on new build are key workers, eg nurses, teachers, firefighters, they are not the scum you refer to. Scum

[Forum](#)

[My Stuff](#)

[What's New](#)

[Preferences](#)

the bigger picture and what the country would be like without some state support. I would suggest that there would be more crime and damage to the economy. Some people are less fortunate, what about disabled people, people who spent their childhood in care because their parents abused them so they got a crap education etc. Again I would suggest the country would be a worse place if we did nothing for them.

I do not support lazy scroungers, but its way too simplistic to suggest that people who can't afford a house are scum and everyone else isn't.

As for the £800k house, they attacked our sales director with a scaffold pole, smashed the windows of the aston on the drive next door, pulled down fences, drove their cars across the landscaped areas and verbally abused just about everyone else. What's more unlike a social tenant it was their house so they couldn't be moved out, as happens with social tenants.

Edited by blueg33 on Wednesday 30th May 06:59

[Miguel Alvarez](#)



4,764 posts

87 months

[\[report\]](#)


[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 30th May 2012

 quote  quote
all

Dan4321f said:

Let's be clear on this, I don't expect anyone to pay to house the "less fortunate". I would gladly pay more tax if we could build them own slum, especially if it was in the arctic circle.

In truth it's mugs like me paying 20k tax bills and living in a  hole who are "less fortunate". The "less fortunate" live in the same housing and get EVERYTHING FOR FREE.

The 800k house people may have been a pain in your arse, but I bet they didn't smash your car, steal your stuff and make it a requirement for you to carry a weapon when you left your house. Lets get things into perspective.

Where on earth did you move to and why didn't you do a few walk bys before hand to understand what you were getting into?

[fido](#)



12,468 posts

172 months

[\[report\]](#)


[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 30th May 2012

 quote  quote
all

blueg33 said:

Fully in perspective thanks, its your perspective that is skewed. Most occupiers of social housing on new build are key workers, eg nurses, teachers, firefighters, they are not the scum you refer to. Scum appear at all levels of society. You can't tar all with the same brush.

That's a single '800k house anecdote' which i call bulls  on OR they were dealt with by the law/otherwise - and one assumes they would have some pretty nice cars on their driveway as well. And

[Forum](#)

[My Stuff](#)

[What's New](#)

[Preferences](#)

problems in the area were from the remaining council homes. The older generation that lived in these homes were mostly decent folk but the drivel that has replaced them were often less than desirable. The BiB are well aware of the families because they pay frequent visits. After the London riots last year, we had some of the feckless idiots trying to copycat anti-police behaviour. Oh, and being a 'key worker' doesn't exclude you from being a Neighbour From Hell - but it can make you a smug w8nker who knows everyone else is paying for your home whilst they are struggling with a mortgage.

Edited by fido on Wednesday 30th May 13:20

[blueg33](#)



18,412 posts

141 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 30th May 2012

 quote  quote
all

fido said:

That's a single '800k house anecdote' which i call bulls**seesaw** on OR they were dealt with by the law/otherwise - and one assumes they would have some pretty nice cars on their driveway as well. And that's really the hub of it - yes, people with expensive stuff (which they pay for) can be total assholes - but they do have something to lose. I grew up in mostly private area with the occasional council house dotted about as most of the ex-council stuff was sold off in the 80s. Nearly all of the anti-social problems in the area were from the remaining council homes. The older generation that lived in these homes were mostly decent folk but the drivel that has replaced them were often less than desirable. The BiB are well aware of the families because they pay frequent visits. After the London riots last year, we had some of the feckless idiots trying to copycat anti-police behaviour. Oh, and being a 'key worker' doesn't exclude you from being a Neighbour From Hell - but it can make you a smug w8nker who knows everyone else is paying for your home whilst they are struggling with a mortgage.

Edited by fido on Wednesday 30th May 13:20

You know something, I do not appreciate being ciled a bulls**seesaw** by a bigot. You clearly have no real world experince ofthe subject and are just spewing out mis informed rubbish that you have clearly been unable to give any proper thought to, probably becuae its beyond your intellect.

So I can't be bothered to make any further comments on your misguided biased and uninformed posts. Have a nice day.

Edited by blueg33 on Wednesday 30th May 13:36

[fido](#)

12,468 posts

172 months

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You clearly have no real world experince of the subject and are just spewing out mis informed rubbish that you have clearly been unable to give any proper thought to, probably becuae its beyond your intellect.

Yes, it's clearly uninformed rubbish as i grew up in mixed housing, and the previous poster has to live in it. Sorry, to hear you couldn't handle the debate. Enjoy your next Polly Toynbee article. 🙄

Edited by fido on Wednesday 30th May 14:26

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Social Housing on New Build estates?

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Social Housing on New Build estates?

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Author

Discussion

[blueg33](#)

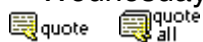
18,412 posts

141 months

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Wednesday 30th May 2012



fido said:

Yes, it's clearly uninformed rubbish as i grew up in mixed housing, and the previous poster has to live in it. Sorry, to hear you couldn't handle the debate. Enjoy your next Polly Toynbee article. 🤔

Edited by fido on Wednesday 30th May 14:26

Not couldn't handle, just couldn't be arsed - who the ~~fuck~~ is Polly Toynbee?

My company currently owns around 2000 social houses and builds another 3500 pa, as the main investor I would get to know of the problems as it reflects the value of the investment. I am looking at a much broader sample than you are.

Edited by blueg33 on Wednesday 30th May 15:15

[thismonkeyhere](#)

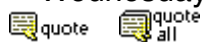
8,532 posts

148 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 30th May 2012



blueg33 said:

Most occupiers of social housing on new build are key workers, eg nurses, teachers, firefighters,

Well, you may be right, and I can only speak from experience of the (otherwise very nice) development I live in, but if they are nurses, teachers & firefighters, then they are nurses, teachers & firefighters who rarely appear to go to work, keep 'their' houses in a ~~secluded~~ state externally (probably internally, too, but I don't get to see that), let their dogs crap on the pavements, and generally behave with zero consideration for others.

[blueg33](#)

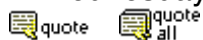
18,412 posts

141 months

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Wednesday 30th May 2012



thismonkeyhere said:

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pavements, and generally behave with zero consideration for others.

It sounds to me like you have an atypical mix of tenants. Have you contacted the Social Landlord to register a complaint? Do you know if they are rented or shared ownership?

[tim0409](#)



1,700 posts

76 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 30th May 2012

 quote  all

thismonkeyhere said:

blueg33 said:

Most occupiers of social housing on new build are key workers, eg nurses, teachers, firefighters,

Well, you may be right, and I can only speak from experience of the (otherwise very nice) development I live in, but if they are nurses, teachers & firefighters, then they are nurses, teachers & firefighters who rarely appear to go to work, keep 'their' houses in a ~~seemingly~~ state externally (probably internally, too, but I don't get to see that), let their dogs crap on the pavements, and generally behave with zero consideration for others.

I remember being spun the line about key workers from the developer we bought from - I checked with the local social landlord at the time and it was a complete lie in this case. In fact what we got were some decent people, and the rest were the dregs of humanity (described as "most in need"). Thankfully our house was far enough away from the flats to be affected but those who spent £300k+ (crazy, in my opinion) to live next to a bunch of people who were completely anti-social really suffered. The council/HA finally decided to take action only because the decent people living in the social housing complained. The only way this policy of social engineering will work is if the social landlord selects people who have at least half a chance of integrating into normal society.

[fido](#)



12,468 posts

172 months

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Wednesday 30th May 2012

 quote  all

tim0409 said:

The council/HA finally decided to take action only because the decent people living in the social housing complained.

And who can blame the private owners. Ok you have the choice a) register a complaint and potentially devalue **your** property b) put up with the misery, and sell it on to the next punter.

Customer feedback, not always.

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18,412 posts

141 months

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Wednesday 30th May 2012

 quote  all

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The social landlord usually has the right to refuse to take people, there is a nominations agreement in place with the Council that sets out the methodology for approving tenants. The pressure comes when units are empty and the RSL is paying for them as nominations agreements rarely commit the Council to paying for voids

[Dan4321f](#)



4 posts

60 months

[\[report\]](#)

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Thursday 31st May 2012

 quote  all

Just to be clear, I'm not talking about key workers and part rent / buy. I thought this would be obvious. These are people who want to get on the property ladder but can't lift the full mortgage, which is 90% of people under 40 and a great idea.

The people I'm moaning about are also not the people in GENUINE need.

The people I've got a problem with are the lazy scroungers, that sit and watch / appear on Jeremy Kyle while taking / dealing drugs all day while the rest of us pay for it. I've seen them in town pretending to be homeless and selling the Big issue!. Their excuse, is that there aren't no jobs, yet the block next to theirs is full of foreign workers doing all the jobs that they can't be arsed doing. If they cause problems you can complain to the housing authority, who have the power to evict them, except if they are pregnant / have small children, which they all have. In this case it has to go to court and takes months of evidence gathering, ect..And finally they get a slapped wrist and nothing happens.

I drove round the estate several times before moving in, but didn't notice anything too bad. Don't let this fool you, they come out in the warm weather.

I'm not going to go on about it any more, and am going to move out as soon as possible at my great expense of time and money.

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[TinySpock](#)

149 posts

60 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Sunday 3rd June 2012

 quote  all

andy400 said:

Our estate is very nice overall, and there is no trouble as such, but you can tell *very* easily which houses are 'social'.

It is, I think, true that most people will care less for something they are just given, than something they have had to work hard for.

+1

We have a 3 year old house, we moved in at 18 months ago. Part of the development is 'social housing' and it shows.

Fortunately we are in the 'nice' bit, in a very quiet crescent with fields to the rear. By nice I mean private owners where people have bought houses with hard work; where they are proud and all have nice cars, go to work and generally take pride in their houses and possessions.

I get the coach into London where I work so I walk up the estate through the 'social housing' bit to get to the coach stop, while it's not a dump by any means, you can clearly see the difference between private owners and social.

Edit: To add I grew up in a council house on a council estate, I'm no snob!

Edited by TinySpock on Tuesday 5th June 13:31



[russ_a](#)

2,276 posts

128 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Monday 4th June 2012

 quote  all

Our first house we rented was in the cheap-seats section. When we first moved in the houses all belonged to the residents we were the only people renting. It was lovely, everyone was friendly no issues with parking etc.

Gradually all the houses became BTL and it was terrible, drunken parties until all hours, shared parking was a nightmare. None of the houses were social housing but all privately owned and rented out to anyone.

~~We lasted about 6 months and brought a place and after we moved out the next tenant~~

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if they cause trouble. The private landlords don't care so long as the cash is rolling in.

[Johnnytheboy](#)



14,742 posts

103 months

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Monday 4th June 2012

 quote  all

When a large development was planned on old factory land in the middle of our village, much was made of the provision of social housing "for local people who can't find a house to rent".

When they were built the local council filled them with "challenging tenants" from a rough town about eight miles away instead.

When one of my acquaintances rang the council to query the wisdom of this he was told that these proven-to-be-unpleasant people's characters would no doubt change for the best on moving to a nice village. The lady that said this actually seemed to believe it.

[stargazer30](#)



939 posts

83 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Monday 4th June 2012

 quote  all

Contrasting real life story here. I was brought up on a council estate. I've owned my own bought council house on a council estate now for 11 years. I've worked all my life as has my partner. I don't think I've ever claimed anything other than child benefit and tax credits when we first started out on low pay. So I have a grumpy old council guy on one side, other side privately owned but rented out to whoever. I've never had any real trouble "touch wood" in all 11 years, other than the odd loud argument and grumpy next door complaining about me fixing up the house is too loud on occasion!

Flip side, my sister who's net worth is double mine and then some. Has lived in about 5 houses in the last 10 years, all private estates. Each time she has had to move due to neighbour disputes. Most of them petty that escalated due to the general stupid stubbornness of the middle class (sister included) and one or two where to be fair the neighbours were nut cases or chavs with money.

Okay so maybe I'm not in the same league as you down south lot with houses worth £500K plus, but money doesn't mean your neighbour won't be a total pain in the arse, nut case, drug dealer, axe murder etc..

[roofer](#)

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Monday 4th June 2012

 quote  all

stargazer30 said:

but money doesn't mean your neighbour won't be a total pain in the arse, nut case, drug dealer, axe murder etc..

Quite so, however, these 'problem' neighbours rule by fear, be it physical or mental.

Until people get a bit of backbone and reverse the rule of the scumbag, it will continue and get worse.

Hiding behind a curtain and bleating on the internet achieves nothing. I had an incident a few years ago where a neighbouring property was let to a family of scumtoids who thought loud music after nine was acceptable (My son was 4 days old) An axe through the power supply in the electric box on the wall (Fibreglass handle, Elf n Safety regs) put paid to that, and once they'd engaged both brain cells and realised that they didn't 'rule' the roost, behaved impeccably.

The social degradation of this country has been bred into the last 3 generations now by successive gutless limp wristed govts, started by the 'Get pregnant get a house scheme' Until we start a 'Sterilisation before benefits paid' scheme, it will continue.



[GBTurbo](#)

247 posts

88 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 5th June 2012

 quote  all

^^

Correct. If the normal hardworking people all stood together as one there would be none of this bulls**shit**. I went down to my local council to rent a garage and it was just full of slappers with kids and foreigners. It made me angry.



[rix](#)

1,899 posts

107 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 5th June 2012

 quote  all

I'm quite happy with an estate comprising of x % of affordable housing if that is indeed what it means, i.e. freehold/lease hold properties for sale to private individuals below a deminimus threshold. What I don't want is a proportion of housing given to those that are able to work but ~~choose not to or have self-inflicted circumstances that mean they cannot~~

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(I haven't drafted my policy on the disabled/elderly yet!)

[NightRunner](#)



7,783 posts

111 months

[\[report\]](#)

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Tuesday 5th June 2012

 quote  all

miniman said:

Any more than 12 properties on a development = social housing must be present.

That explains why both the developments just up the road are of <12 houses, each one costing >£775k.

[wildcat45](#)



6,210 posts

106 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 5th June 2012

 quote  all

God what a lot of snobbery out there!

And why not? I am lucky enough to own a house in a nice area. It is a nice area because it is expensive to live there. People aspire to live here. People pay more and have better standards. The local park is in good condition and safe to walk in. The local state primary is a top notch place to send your kids because people there demand that level of performance from a school. The local private school has a good reputation, is in a nice building. There is a village association which clamps down on undesirable elements creeping in.

It's old money in the main. Where I live I know of 5 or 6 houses nearby that haven't changed hands in more than half a century. People buy and leave them to kids. My house has only changed hands once - to my parents in 1982 - from when it was built in 1901. It was left to the woman who sold it to us, and subsequently my parents left to me. A nice area, posh but in a way that sees few RR Sports, and more battered old Volvos.

Not everyone's cup of tea, but I like it, and more to the point, estate agents like it.

Now to many that may sound terrible and snobbish.

But the housing market in the UK is based on snobbery. It is all about location, location, location we are told and a good location doesn't involve social housing.

The fact is there are good and decent folk in social housing, but there are also more likely to be people with no money, and that usually means lower standards of behaviour, presentation, and different norms and values to others. I would not be prepared to take a gamble with a social housing complex. Might be great people, but there is a good chance they might not.

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Social housing. Great in principle if you are a lefty wanting to "help" people. In practice, it doesn't improve lives. The bad council types carry on with a fuck you attitude doing what they want and expect the hard working, lucky or wealthy to bend over and take their s---. Or in the poster above's case take an axe to their power supply. Meaning their behaviour gets normally decent people to a point where criminal damage is an option.

About 20 years ago, plans emerged for some council housing on a bit of spare land in our village. The village association went nuclear! Local QC's judges, MPs Freemasons, God knows who else got it stopped. There is a plan to build a new small supermarket here. If it isn't a Waitrose, I fear the local middle class mafia will want blood! :-)

My in laws are good, decent hard working people. They have a lovely modest semi which is immaculate. All bought and paid for by my FIL who was for many years a coal miner. He worked his arse off inside bloody planet earth to provide a good home for his wife and daughters. Everything - and I mean everything - in the house is theirs, not an inch of finance. When they save money they spend it on making the house nicer. Their next door neighbour on the other side is the same. A Good hard working bloke who is retired but who takes pride in his new Ford Focus which he gets every year. On the other side....the house is social housing. When they bought into the street 20 odd years ago, it was occupied by a lovely old lady. She died, and now an appalling skank is there. Loud music, feral council kids, police at the door. They are all scared of her. I am often tempted to turn up and put the slag straight on a few points, but what is the point. She'd just give me a load of abuse and make my in laws life a little tougher. I really wish I could tell you a PH story about how the ~~skank~~ got a good talking to, a slap and a trip to court....but it isn't going to happen. My in laws home isn't worth that much - even less with the slag next door. They have invested so much money in the place, they would never see a return on it.

All because of social housing.

Sorry No to the type of folk who rely on the local authority or housing association to sort out their accommodation.

To the OP. Don't get involved with council neighbours. You might get lucky, but it is probably your most important and expensive asset you are taking a punt with.

(And why should teachers get social housing? My wife teaches and she is bloody well paid. Get two together as a couple and they will be on a decent salary. Perhaps in London, but elsewhere teachers in social housing are just taking the piss.)

Edited by wildcat45 on Tuesday 5th June 12:52

Edited by wildcat45 on Tuesday 5th June 13:30

Edited by wildcat45 on Tuesday 5th June 13:36

Edited by wildcat45 on Tuesday 5th June 13:38

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[Panda76](#)

1,588 posts

67 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 5th June 2012

 quote  quote
all

Used to be some wasteland over the road from me. Some building firm comes along and builds houses there (couple from work live in one) a certain percentage were given to social housing. You can tell which ones, once the short term tenancy agreement is done with the vans turn up with joiners and carpet dudes carrying new carpets.

Damn shame they just ~~fix~~ k it up.

I bought an ex council fixer upper some years ago very cheaply (basically the last people bought it from the council and couldn't afford to fix it) When I say cheap I mean it cost me £62k cheap lol.

Nice little Cul de sac with very few houses still in council ownership, mostly now in private hands and a pretty quiet well looked after place right on the edge of the estate. Open fields over the back with a view of derbyshires countryside.

Needed a hell of a lot of work, it was basically a house with some things in it that needed taking down and throwing away anyway. Which made it just bricks and mortar and not a lot else. Even the exterior doors were binned. Staircase painted black sort of thing, just ugh why?

Plan was to get it done (is done) and sell it on for profit and go live somewhere else. Kind of failed when the economy nosedived 😞.

Still in it atm and now the borders and garden are well stocked. Aiming to be out of it in the next 18 months or less. Shame really as we've found a house we want and that would be the last move until my mortgage is paid for. I'm just too sensible to test the market yet. Or is that wary.



[Munter](#)

27,502 posts

158 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 5th June 2012

 quote  quote
all

wildcat45 said:

To the OP. Don't get involved with council neighbours. You might get lucky, but it is probably your most important and expensive asset you are taking a punt with.

You have no control over that in the majority of streets. Virtually any rented house could be rented by someone receiving their rent from the council. You cannot control when next door will decide to move and rent it out, or sell it to a landlord who doesn't care about the tenants so long as the council keep paying them.

The only trouble in our street comes from the privately rented houses. The only connection the council has with them being they pay the rent.

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New Housing Development - Neighbour

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Original Poster ◀

1,045 posts

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Monday 16th September 2013

 quote  quote all

Our house is on a quite estate which backs onto a large site that was has recently stopped trading as a sand quarry. Our house currently backs onto a dense wooded area and is some way from the day to day operations which have never been heard in the 25 years that we have lived here anyway.

The new housing development is typical in that it consists of 100+ houses all on top of each other.

The current proposal (which has been given outline planning permission) means that the wooded area will be completely removed making way for many houses, two of which are semi detached and will be close to the fence line due to typically small gardens. These two houses will have full visibility of the entire back of our house, which was previously completely private.

What options do we have (other than continuing to object like 41 neighbouring residents already have, which have and ultimately will continue to be ignored).

The development turns our property from a private setting, to a fully overlooked property with no privacy. It is inevitable that having two properties looking directly at the back of our property will decrease the value of our home, the extent of which could be magnified if the proposed houses are designated as affordable housing etc.

Thoughts and advice welcomed.

[GSP](#)



Original Poster ◀

1,945 posts

121 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Monday 16th September 2013

 quote  quote all

On a similar type thread to the one a couple of post down, our house is on a quite estate which backs onto a large site that was has recently stopped trading as a sand quarry. Our house currently backs onto a dense wooded area and is some way from the day to day operations which have never been heard in the 25 years that we have lived here anyway.

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Is it simply tough luck?

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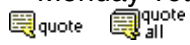
2,074 posts

155 months

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[\[news\]](#)

Monday 16th September 2013



You could plant your own trees / shrub / hedge, etc at the boundary to provide a privacy screen, if that's what you require?

[Prizam](#)

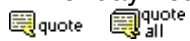
1,239 posts

58 months

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Monday 16th September 2013



Find some protected trees and wildlife quickly!

Also look for a quick tree protection order.

[mikeveal](#)

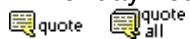
2,712 posts

167 months

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Monday 16th September 2013



1/ Buy the land behind your house.

2/ Lump it.

3/ Move away.

4/ Get TPOs placed on some strategic trees.

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Monday 16th September 2013

 quote  quote all

I'm not sure the existing trees are significant enough to obtain a TPO against them, and buying the land would not be an option given they have planning permission for it.

I could potentially grow a large hedge, sell up, or lump it though.

Hedge may be the winning idea :-S

Thanks

[Rude-boy](#)



21,219 posts

150 months

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Monday 16th September 2013

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mikeveal said:

1/ Buy the land behind your house.

2/ Lump it.

3/ Move away.

4/ Get TPOs placed on some strategic trees.

5/ Start planting Leylandii now.

[Rude-boy](#)



21,219 posts

150 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Monday 16th September 2013

 quote  quote all

Sorry OP was typing as you were posting.

Serious answer is that you had best start getting your hedge up now unless you plan to move. There are possibly other options if I were to go through your deeds and the neighbours but the chances are the land owner/agent is well over £100k into this to have Outline PP for that many homes and the horse is already halfway to Newmarket, let alone out the stable. Out of the 47 others this affects you can bet one of them has spent good money finding out there is nothing you can do short of some very illegal things that possibly find you being re-homed anyway 😊

[Devil2575](#)

13,399 posts

105 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

[Forum](#)

[My Stuff](#)

[What's New](#)

[Preferences](#)

the land and put up a load of houses. The houses behind were built on land about 10ft higher than our house so they could see straight into our bedroom.

I didn't like it but there was nothing we could do to stop it.

[5lab](#)



1,435 posts

113 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Monday 16th September 2013

 quote  quote all

if this is the only complaint you and your neighbours have, why not suggest to the developers that if they leave, say, one row of trees (or whatever you feel is needed) in the plans, then you will not oppose any further planning? I'm sure they'd be more than happy to sacrifice 3' of garden if it means they slip quickly through the planning process

[Devil2575](#)



13,399 posts

105 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Monday 16th September 2013

 quote  quote all

5lab said:

I'm sure they'd be more than happy to sacrifice 3' of garden if it means they slip quickly through the planning process

If they're new builds the Garden will only be 6'...

[Rude-boy](#)



21,219 posts

150 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Monday 16th September 2013

 quote  quote all

5lab said:

if this is the only complaint you and your neighbours have, why not suggest to the developers that if they leave, say, one row of trees (or whatever you feel is needed) in the plans, then you will not oppose any further planning? I'm sure they'd be more than happy to sacrifice 3' of garden if it means they slip quickly through the planning process

To be honest at this stage you'll be lucky depending on density and the plans. 1m x 500m is a lot of land...

[Kudos](#)

2,581 posts

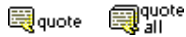
91 months

[Forum](#)

[My Stuff](#)

[What's New](#)

[Preferences](#)



How old are the trees? Could a tree preservation order stop them chopping them down?

Also, to the best of my knowledge, there are rights in planning law to stop others interfering with your privacy e.g. being overlooked

[dundarach](#)

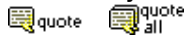
1,523 posts

145 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Monday 16th September 2013



Be realistic, object on sensible, sound grounds.

Try and not let it consume you, people need homes and builders jobs, the council doesn't live in your house and will look at the facts.

Sorry, but these things have a habit of ruining peoples lives, remember that once the houses are built, the next owner of your place will not give them a second look.

[herbialfa](#)

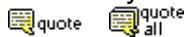
1,373 posts

119 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Monday 16th September 2013



MOVE! Sorry, but there is no getting away from the fact that many many back garden views will be gobbled up by developers!

[ging84](#)

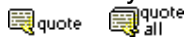
4,683 posts

63 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Monday 16th September 2013



It's touch luck, you almost certainly can't sue without some complex technical legal reason that they should not have been allowed to build there.

You can try objecting, with enough people you have more chance, but although 41 people already objecting seems a lot, what about all the people who will end up living in the 100+ houses that will be hundreds of people who are on the opposite side of the argument to you.

For people who don't want new homes being built near their's they could always buy the land themselves or choose a property that comes with enough surrounding land to make sure their privacy is always ensured to the level they expect, rather than trying to exercise rights over land which doesn't belong to them.



[Sid's Dad](#)

518 posts

58 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Monday 16th September 2013

 quote  quote all

So you'll no doubt be fighting this along with many others, and you might even succeed in stopping or changing the development. But you probably won't succeed. So use the time you have left to do two things: first, plant a screen of pretty trees (think silver birch *Betula Utilis* var. 'Jacquemontii') at the end of the garden - by the time the planning is finished, the houses are built and sold on they will be nicely established and you'll have a nice screen. Second, look at how you use your garden and see where (if anywhere, realistically) you are going to be overlooked and plan your seating areas accordingly.

But most of all, check your attitude: you can let this piss you off and fill you with resentment, or you can get in with living alongside your fellow man in harmony, like millions of us do. It's entirely up to you which you do....



[Munter](#)

27,502 posts

158 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Monday 16th September 2013

 quote  quote all

GSP said:

our propety will decrease the value of our home, the extent of which could be maginified if the proposed houses are designated as affordable housing etc.

Thoughts and advice welcomed.

Yeah people who have to prove their employment status, get good references from employers and previous landlords, and satisfy a bank to give them a mortgage on their part of the house. They are a nightmare compared to new houses owned by someone 3 counties away, on a buy to let mortgage, let out to anybody with a few hundred quid deposit....

As someone else said. Plant what you want to see out your windows on your land. And accept that people need houses to live in and they have to go somewhere.



[Centurion07](#)

6,492 posts

164 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Monday 16th September 2013

 quote  quote all

ging84 said:

There is a big difference between a bit of garden grabbing to slap up a cramped property or 2 in an inappropriate place which upsets many and benefits few, and a large scale development which has been well planned and will benefit many hundreds of people

No there isn't.

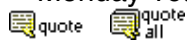
[Forum](#)[My Stuff](#)[What's New](#)[Preferences](#)

3,612 posts

123 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Monday 16th September 2013



If it's any consultation, you are not alone! We have all the beautiful fields near us due to be replaced with 1000 houses. Won't effect us directly up those 100+ house who over looked these fields and paid a premium for the privilege during peak of house prices are totally ducked. 😞

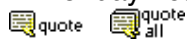
[RYH64E](#)

7,960 posts

161 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Monday 16th September 2013



GSP said:

What options do we have(other than continuing to object like 41 neighbouring residents already have, which have and ultimately will continue to be ignored).

If you can, I'd say sell up and move. Life's too short to waste campaigning against something that you have no power to prevent, and you'll most probably get increasingly frustrated with the perceived injustice of the development as time goes on. I don't suppose it will be much fun living next to a building site for the foreseeable future

either. Look on it as an opportunity to move to somewhere bigger/smaller/nicer etc.

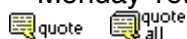
[ackbullchang](#)

267 posts

127 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Monday 16th September 2013



Don't greater crested newts and certain bat species live in woods? Just saying!

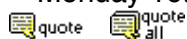
[Jasandjules](#)

59,778 posts

146 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Monday 16th September 2013



Selling is an option - not everyone will mind but as you say you will pay a price on your house. I am afraid that it would be something you would need to disclose at the outset too as otherwise the searches will throw it up.

Keeping the house - time to plant a hedge or trees along the fence and get some large dogs to protect your garden.

[Forum](#)[My Stuff](#)[What's New](#)[Preferences](#)



[Nickyboy](#)

4,904 posts

151 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Monday 16th September 2013

 quote  all

You are aware people don't generally sit in their windows staring at their new neighbours?



[Fizpop](#)

330 posts

86 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Monday 16th September 2013

 quote  all

Objecting on the grounds you cite won't help as the planning system doesn't recognise the right to a view. In addition, the outline PP makes the development proposal only subject to detailed planning which is nothing more than a process in reality.

As you don't own the land, you're limited as to what you can in fact do to control it. Opening constructive dialogue with the developer might help, they are not in the habit of pissing folk off and will listen to your concern. Most developers have a community engagement coordinator for a development such as this. The plans are outline so get your message across now, even offer to be a community spokesman for the neighbours if it gets you what you're after.

Failing that, consolodate your boundary. Planting fast growing conifers now will preserve your privacy and not offend your new neighbours when they arrive.

Talk of TPOs etc will not really help. Don't fight the development, Council policy and Government guidance will work against you and leave you disaffected and in the position you're trying to avoid. Calm dialogue and clarity on the issue will get you what you're after.



[speedyguy](#)

3,194 posts

120 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Monday 16th September 2013

 quote  all

ackbullchang said:

Don't greater crested newts and certain bat species live in woods? Just saying!
Just saying do you think the newts should have a greater priority for 'housing' than what is clearly regarded as a reasonable area for development by the local planning authority.

You could have over a hundred happy new home owners to the detriment of just over 40 owners.

Better that benefit than one of building 40 houses and upsetting over a 100 homeowners if it was the other way round.



[Hooli](#)

32,278 posts

117 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Monday 16th September 2013

 quote  quote all

Nickyboy said:

You are aware people don't generally sit in their windows staring at their new neighbours?

Seems to depend where they are from. We had 'censors' (no I don't now exactly where they are from) over the road from us & they spend hours sat in an upstairs window pointing into our windows to teach a toddler to watch us. Strange buggers they were & we're glad they've moved out.



[pcvdriver](#)

1,789 posts

116 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 17th September 2013

 quote  quote all


Fizpop said:

Objecting on the grounds you cite won't help as the planning system doesn't recognise the right to a view. In addition, the outline PP makes the development proposal only subject to detailed planning which is nothing more than a process in reality.

As you don't own the land, you're limited as to what you can in fact do to control it. Opening constructive dialogue with the developer might help, they are not in the habit of pissing folk off and will listen to your concern. Most developers have a community engagement coordinator for a development such as this. The plans are outline so get your message across now, even offer to be a community spokesman for the neighbours if it gets you what you're after.

Failing that, consolodate your boundary. Planting fast growing conifers now will preserve your privacy and not offend your new neighbours when they arrive.

Talk of TPOs etc will not really help. Don't fight the development, Council policy and Government guidance will work against you and leave you disaffected and in the position you're trying to avoid. Calm dialogue and clarity on the issue will get you what you're after.

Nah  it!! buy up the world's stock pile of Leylandii - plant and forget, privacy issues?.....what privacy issues? Hehehe!!!



[ging84](#)

4,683 posts

63 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 17th September 2013

 quote  quote all

Centurion07 said:

ging84 said:

There is a big difference between a bit of garden grabbing to slap up a cramped property or 2 in an _____

[Forum](#)[My Stuff](#)[What's New](#)[Preferences](#)

I'm not sure i quite understand your point, are you in favour of all developments regardless of objections, or none that have any objections?

[Centurion07](#)



6,492 posts

164 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 17th September 2013

 quote  all

ging84 said:

Centurion07 said:

ging84 said:

There is a big difference between a bit of garden grabbing to slap up a cramped property or 2 in an inappropriate place which upsets many and benefits few, and a large scale development which has been well planned and will benefit many hundreds of people

No there isn't.

I'm not sure i quite understand your point, are you in favour of all developments regardless of objections, or none that have any objections?

When it's at the end of YOUR garden there is no difference regardless how many people "benefit".

[ging84](#)



4,683 posts

63 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 17th September 2013

 quote  all

Centurion07 said:

When it's at the end of YOUR garden there is no difference regardless how many people "benefit". Sounds like the attitude of the average nimby, these are the sort of attitudes which mean that the op and his 41 neighbours concerns will not be taken anywhere nears as seriously as they otherwise might be. This development might be particularly inappropriate compared to most other developments or they may not be totally opposed to having the development just certain aspects which could reasonably be worked out, but if that is the case how would they make their complaints stand out above those of every other nimby who will object to anything being built near anything they own.

[Centurion07](#)



6,492 posts

164 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 17th September 2013

 quote  all

ging84 said:

Centurion07 said:

When it's at the end of YOUR garden there is no difference regardless how many people "benefit". Sounds like the attitude of the average nimby, these are the sort of attitudes which mean that the op and his 41 neighbours concerns will not be taken anywhere nears as seriously as they otherwise might

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[Preferences](#)

determine which of those he can use to object with.

Everyone is a NIMBY when it affects them and rightly so. Would YOU be happy to be in the OP's situation, having your view, privacy and house value ruined?

[mikebradford](#)



1,334 posts

62 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 17th September 2013

 quote  quote all

As long as the new housing are set out, with distances from habitable rooms complying with planning regulation guidance, you have little to object about

i accept that your outlook will be worse than before, but as you dont own that area of land their is little you can do

people always seem to think they are entitled to maintain certain outlooks, especially when they are nice ones

but unfortunatley, without ownereship of the view its always liable to dissapear

[Wyvern971](#)



1,489 posts

125 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 17th September 2013

 quote  quote all

Depending how long your garden is, what's the legalities of planting a few oak trees down at the bottom of the garden

[Shilvers](#)



363 posts

124 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 17th September 2013

 quote  quote all

Unfortunately, it's government policy that now makes this scenario much more likely. We need houses building and this sort of site is a lot easier to use then it was. Overlooking green fields and woodland isn't as secure as it once was.

You're objections need to be made on planning grounds. The road network, public transport, impact on the community are all taken into consideration.

With enough objections, you should trigger a planning committee decision, but once again, they have to base the decision on planning law and not because 40 people in their constituency object to a ruined

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domain. Have a look and see what you can find. There might have been previous applications for that site that you can use in your defence as well, especially if they were refused.

Just a quick note as well. You don't need to own the land/property to apply for planning permission. I could do it on my neighbours house if I wanted. They would of course be informed and if it was granted, it's still their house so I couldn't do a thing, but don't assume that because there's planning in, it's a done deal. (It usually is, don't get me wrong, but it's worth knowing)

All the best.

[tvrjit](#)



8,400 posts

169 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 17th September 2013

 quote  quote all

Bear in mind that if it already has Outline Planning Permission, then you are now probably too late for objections to the principle of the development (ie road network, public transport, impact on the community, education etc). Any objections now have to be objections to the detail they submit at this stage, not "whether the site can be developed at all".

Not the news you want to hear, but I'm afraid that's how it is.

[irocfan](#)



13,491 posts

107 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 17th September 2013

 quote  quote all

GSP said:

It is inevitable that having two properties looking directly at the back of our property will decrease the value of our home, the extent of which could be magnified if the proposed houses are designated as affordable housing etc.

Thoughts and advice welcomed.

IIRC ALL new developments must contain a proportion of 'social needs' housing

[Terminator X](#)



6,401 posts

121 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 17th September 2013

 quote  quote all

Plant some trees, the ones that grow real quick!



TX.

67 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 17th September 2013

 quote  quote all

irocfan said:

IIRC ALL new developments must contain a proportion of 'social needs' housing I believe if the development is over a certain number then they must include them hence the rise in smaller 'exclusive' developments to get round this.

[GSP](#)

Original Poster ◀



1,945 posts

121 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 17th September 2013

 quote  quote all

As I suspected tough luck other than liaising with the developers coordinator.

It would be nice if they left some trees, limited the boundary properties to 2 floors rather than 3 storey. I have in the past dealt with situation where the interior design layout was influenced so that bathroom with frosted windows mainly comprised of the top floor where other properties were overlooked. This is ideal situation though :-)

Transport is not a concern from my perspective as a neighbour to the site, so not something I could object about. The street where the development has it's only access point does have issues, so maybe a subject for others to raise their concerns. It currently has parking on both sides of the road with only room for one car to pass at a time. So an additional 107 families trying to travel that road will be a concern.

I have seen the tree survey for the site and the majority are scottish pines with no TPOs, with the survey recommended they be removed for the development and have a reasonable life of only 10 to 20 years.

I'll install a hedge 🌳

[GSP](#)

Original Poster ◀



1,945 posts

121 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 17th September 2013

 quote  quote all

Munter said:

GSP said:

our propety will decrease the value of our home, the extent of which could be maginified if the proposed houses are designated as affordable housing etc.

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nightmare compared to new houses owned by someone 3 counties away, on a buy to let mortgage, let out to anybody with a few hundred quid deposit....

As someone else said. Plant what you want to see out your windows on your land. And accept that people need houses to live in and they have to go somewhere.
This is never the reality, as much as the government and developers would like to sell that view.

A large proportion end up occupied by council tenants with the rent paid by housing benefit, and they generally do not give a crap about the property or their neighbours. Sadly in the area I live that is very common, and there is a massive social housing demand in this town. There are many developments locally that have gone this way around here.

[Kermit power](#)



20,605 posts

130 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 17th September 2013

 quote  quote all

Sid's Dad said:

So you'll no doubt be fighting this along with many others, and you might even succeed in stopping or changing the development. But you probably won't succeed. So use the time you have left to do two things: first, plant a screen of pretty trees (think silver birch *Betula Utilis* var. 'Jacquemontii') at the end of the garden - by the time the planning is finished, the houses are built and sold on they will be nicely established and you'll have a nice screen. Second, look at how you use your garden and see where (if anywhere, realistically) you are going to be overlooked and plan your seating areas accordingly.

But most of all, check your attitude: you can let this piss you off and fill you with resentment, or you can get in with living alongside your fellow man in harmony, like millions of us do. It's entirely up to you which you do....

That's the best bit of advice on here, in my view.

You could start kicking yourself for not thinking all those years ago before you bought the house that a sand quarry was ultimately always likely to be a prime site for housing redevelopment (no expensive industrial buildings or waste to clear, but equally not a protected nature reserve or prime agricultural land either), or you could just accept that pretty much every new housing development in the country is likely to be bitterly opposed by the people who live closest to it, but as the country needs more housing, complaints are likely to fall on deaf ears.

Crack on with doing whatever you can to minimise the impact within your own boundaries, and look forward to the fact that the influx of new people might support new businesses which will add to your quality of life which are currently not viable. Hell, you might even make some new friends! 😊

[kooky guy](#)



562 posts

83 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 17th September 2013

 quote  quote all

Outline consent doesn't generally involve details such as overlooking. Overlooking and subsequent loss of privacy should be part of your objection to the detailed planning application for those houses that will directly affect you.

[Forum](#)

[My Stuff](#)

[What's New](#)

[Preferences](#)

developer beforehand to see if they can come up with something to mitigate this problem - he can only say no.

Shame about the trees being removed but it may be too late to get TPOs put on them now that outline consent has been granted - might be worth looking into though. Were the trees mentioned in the outline consent?

[Munter](#)



27,502 posts

158 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 17th September 2013

 quote  all

GSP said:

This is never the reality, as much as the government and developers would like to sell that view.

A large proportion end up occupied by council tenants with the rent paid by housing benefit, and they generally do not give a crap about the property or their neighbours. Sadly in the area I live that is very common, and there is a massive social housing demand in this town. There are many developments locally that have gone this way around here.

You said affordable. Not social.

Affordable = get a mortgage. Until they buy the other part, and rent it out to people "on the social"....

[Perik Omo](#)



534 posts

65 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 17th September 2013

 quote  all

Hedge is the way to go. We have a Leylandii hedge to the side of our place screening the garden from the farmer next door, it was planted about 10 years ago and the trees are over 70 feet high now and 15 feet thick at the base and the length of the "hedge" is about 45 feet. There's no way you can see through, over or under it.

[tvrqit](#)



8,400 posts

169 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 17th September 2013

 quote  all

GSP said:

The street where the development has it's only access point does have issues, so maybe a subject for others to raise their concerns. It currently has parking on both sides of the road with only room for one car to pass at a time. So an additional 107 families trying to travel that road will be a concern.

Unless there are conditions attached to the outline planning consent requiring road improvements or some other measures, then it's too late to object on that basis - the principle of development has been

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[My Stuff](#)

[What's New](#)

[Preferences](#)



[z4chris99](#)

8,516 posts

96 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 17th September 2013

 quote  quote
all

rights of light
encroachment
right to privacy
looking into windows etc

make yourself a massive pain, attend all their community meetings etc.. email and phone the project manager stupid questions

they will pay you off , loads if your house has injunction rights

source: work for property developer



[Devil2575](#)

13,399 posts

105 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 17th September 2013

 quote  quote
all

Centurion07 said:

Everyone is a NIMBY when it affects them and rightly so. Would YOU be happy to be in the OP's situation, having your view, privacy and house value ruined?

Not everyone. I refused to sign a petition against a new housing development and against a proposed windfarm very close to where I live.

I also think that 'house value ruined' is a little bit strong, unless the housing development is local authority housing or a Traveller camp.



[Devil2575](#)

13,399 posts

105 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 17th September 2013

 quote  quote
all

Perik Omo said:

Hedge is the way to go. We have a Leylandii hedge to the side of our place screening the garden from the farmer next door, it was planted about 10 years ago and the trees are **over 70 feet high now and 15 feet thick at the base** and the length of the "hedge" is about 45 feet. There's no way you can see through, over or under it.

It's easy to see why Leylandii are the biggest source of neighbour disputes. Surely an 8ft fence would have been just as good...



[Forum](#)[My Stuff](#)[What's New](#)[Preferences](#)

121 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 17th September 2013

 quote  quote
all

Devil2575 said:

It's easy to see why Leylandii are the biggest source of neighbour disputes. Surely an **8ft fence** would have been just as good...

Won't stop First Floor curtain twitchers.

TX.

[Devil2575](#)



13,399 posts

105 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 17th September 2013

 quote  quote
all

Terminator X said:

Devil2575 said:

It's easy to see why Leylandii are the biggest source of neighbour disputes. Surely an **8ft fence** would have been just as good...

Won't stop First Floor curtain twitchers.

TX.

With 70ft trees it sounds more like he has at least 5 stories...

[jazzyjeff](#)



3,651 posts

176 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 17th September 2013

 quote  quote
all

Devil2575 said:

With 70ft trees it sounds more like he has at least 5 stories...

...and he could use the wood from the trees to print them 😊

[blueg33](#)



18,412 posts

141 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 17th September 2013

 quote  quote
all

z4chris99 said:

riahs of liacht

[Forum](#)

[My Stuff](#)

[What's New](#)

[Preferences](#)

make yourself a massive pain, attend all their community meetings etc.. email and phone the project manager stupid questions

they will pay you off , loads if your house has injunction rights

source: work for property developer
Can't see any of the above having any bearing whatsoever.

Rights to light are very unlikely to have an impact with 2 storey new housing and not a planning issue either

There is a tree belt and it sounds like the OP's house is newish so encroachment is unlikely and possessory title or prescriptive rights equally unlikely. Developer will just tell the op to ~~fuck~~ fuck off. Also not a planning matter unless op can demonstrate that the consent couldn't be implemented
Right to privacy - no such thing in planning, but you could chat to the planning officer when the reserved matters application goes in

Looking into windows - weak argument as a rule as the developer will allow the relevant separation distances.

The site already has outline consent, the development will take place, the very best the op can do is try and spek with the developer so that they plan the layout in the way that least affects him, but TBH I doubt they will care.

There is nothing in the ops posts to suggest that he has anything that would create a payoff, there certainly wouldn't be one from me.

(Source 20 years as housebuilder Land Director and Managing Director).

[z4chris99](#)



8,516 posts

96 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 17th September 2013

 quote  quote all

if he came to every meeting, stirred up the residents against you, kept calling and emailing you over anything trivial, was a pain in the ass over dust, noise, operating hours, traffic movements etc...

you would pay him off just to keep him sweet...

[blueg33](#)



18,412 posts

141 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 17th September 2013

 quote  quote all

z4chris99 said:

if he came to every meeting, stirred up the residents against you, kept calling and emailing you over anything trivial, was a pain in the ass over dust, noise, operating hours, traffic movements etc...

you would pay him off just to keep him sweet...

Not with anything substantial. he may get some landscaping but nothing that would "cost" me more _____

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has outline consent.

Ultimately if he has issues with noise, dust, operating hours etc, I would let him take them to the council because I know my site would be compliant.

[Perik Omo](#)



534 posts

65 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 17th September 2013

 quote  quote all

Devil2575 said:

It's easy to see why Leylandii are the biggest source of neighbour disputes. Surely an 8ft fence would have been just as good...

The tree line is at least 200 feet from his house and he wanted it as much as we did as it gives him (or did as he died in February) privacy when we are in the garden or entertaining visitors outside so the size was not a problem for him or us.

[z4chris99](#)



8,516 posts

96 months


[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 17th September 2013

 quote  quote all

OP i would band together with the other 41, call your self a community group etc.. you become the leader.

complain about king everything under the sun, find out who is the PM on the job, get his direct line and email and pester him night and day. You will soon see results simply because the PM doesnt have the time to answer 41 emails a day to residents..

[KTF](#)



6,809 posts

67 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 17th September 2013

 quote  quote all

z4chris99 said:

OP i would band together with the other 41, call your self a community group etc.. you become the leader.

complain about kina everythina under the sun. find out who is the PM on the job. aet his direct line

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down once as per above.

[Centurion07](#)



6,492 posts

164 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 17th September 2013

 quote  quote all

Devil2575 said:

Centurion07 said:

Everyone is a NIMBY when it affects them and rightly so. Would YOU be happy to be in the OP's situation, having your view, privacy and house value ruined?

Not everyone. I refused to sign a petition against a new housing development and against a proposed windfarm very close to where I live.

Close as in end-of-your-garden close or somewhere in the vicinity of your house?

Devil2575 said:

I also think that 'house value ruined' is a little bit strong, unless the housing development is local authority housing or a Traveller camp.

So you would pay the same price for a house that essentially is now in the middle of a housing estate as one that has no dwellings behind it and also happens to look out onto woodland/fields/nature etc? I don't think so.

[z4chris99](#)



8,516 posts

96 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 17th September 2013

 quote  quote all

I speak from sitting on the other side of the gate and I know what a pain in the arse residents can be... we're developing around £1b of London at the moment and like everyone else have problems with residents.

him up there speaks as a MD of a house builder, maybe he didn't know his pms were paying people off? who knows

[blueg33](#)



18,412 posts

141 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 17th September 2013

 quote  quote all

Where would the PM get the money to pay off residents. From the company? I would know its what finance depts are for, from his own pocket? I doubt it. Either way he would be sacked pretty quickly.

The developer holds all the cards. He may make a few concessions eg landscaping but little else.

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[Preferences](#)

Pester the PM and he just won't answer.

[blueg33](#)



18,412 posts

141 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 17th September 2013

 quote  all

Op

Best thing to do is engage with the developer and planners on the layout.

Be polite, be constructive, suggest some tree planting along the boundary.

(Off topic but I did a small luxury site a few years ago, next to a sand quarry with a thick belt of trees in between. I keep wondering if you are on that site. Is it in a rather nice part of the Midlands between Solihull and Coventry?)

[pork911](#)



5,272 posts

100 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 17th September 2013

 quote  all

with respect I don't see any reasonable objection, only nimbyism

the existing estate is 100 house on top of one another with small gardens, hardly some rural idyllic cottage being invaded upon

yet op seems to want no one to look at his house from an angle previously undeveloped

was it never considered that the sand quarry may not last forever?

sure express your concerns in the hope they might accommodate but normally i'd expect to think these things through in advance and maybe shell out a bit more on a house to expect never to be looked at???

[Andehh](#)



3,612 posts

123 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 17th September 2013

 quote  all

GSP said:

This is never the reality, as much as the government and developers would like to sell that view.

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common, and there is a massive social housing demand in this town. There are many developments locally that have gone this way around here.

Take a step back matey, affordable does not equal social housing! 30% are required to be 'affordable housing' which is what most of my mates (mid 20s) are trying to buy with their girlfriends etc. These are the houses are the bottom of rung of the housing ladder, but NOT designated social housing off the bat. Sure there will be a few bought for social housing but the chances are the council/housing association will try and keep the 'brand new house' in reasonable order whoever moves in. Don't instantly assume the houses behind will be filled with the dreggs of society bent on ruining your life - that is not the norm despite the horror stories we have all read!!! Any housing estate built in the last 20-30 years (???) will have a percent set aside for 'affordable' housing so it is hardly as if your estate is suddenly gunna turn into a war zone! 😊

My big worry would be the land value , but if you have gone from quarry to housing I know which I would prefer to live next door to!!!

pork911 said:

with respect I don't see any reasonable objection, only nimbyism

I don't think that is fully fair. Loosing total privacy to no privacy is more then deserves a 'you're just a NIMBY'. ANYONE would object to a sudden loss of privacy, esp if it as severe as OP thinks it will be... which highly doubt it will!

Edited by Andehh on Tuesday 17th September 19:10

[hidetheelephants](#)



13,589 posts

110 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 17th September 2013

 quote  quote all

Fizpop said:

Objecting on the grounds you cite won't help as the planning system doesn't recognise the right to a view. In addition, the outline PP makes the development proposal only subject to detailed planning which is nothing more than a process in reality.

He not objecting about the view(which, as you say, is not a planning issue), he's objecting to having his house overlooked(which is a planning issue, albeit not a major one).

ging84 said:

Centurion07 said:

ging84 said:

There is a big difference between a bit of garden grabbing to slap up a cramped property or 2 in an inappropriate place which upsets many and benefits few, and a large scale development which has been well planned and will benefit many hundreds of people

No there isn't.

I'm not sure i quite understand your point, are you in favour of all developments regardless of objections, or none that have any objections?

The scale is irrelevant; a badly planned development with an inappropriately high density(it seems obligatory now to have 'detached' houses which are cheek-by-jowl with a separation of a few feet and gardens the size of postage stamps where a terraced row or semi-detached would make more sense if high density is the aim or deleting every other house to give space and visual balance if not) is worthy

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[z4chris99](#)

8,516 posts

96 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 17th September 2013

 quote  quote all

most affordable housing goes to key workers

the planning and s106 will give more info on the mix



[astroarcadia](#)

1,440 posts

117 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 17th September 2013

 quote  quote all

blueg33 said:

Where would the PM get the money to pay off residents. From the company? I would know its what finance depts are for, from his own pocket? I doubt it. Either way he would be sacked pretty quickly.

The developer holds all ther cards. He may make a few concessions eg landscaping but little else. Developers deal with these issues day in, day out. Objectors do it once or twice in a lifetime. Who do you think knows the system better? Who do you think has the experience?

Pester the PM and he just won't answer.
This.



[z4chris99](#)

8,516 posts

96 months

[\[report\]](#)[\[news\]](#)

Tuesday 17th September 2013

 quote  quote all

appears big national house builders operate differently to boutique London developers

what's a finance department ?? 😊

[av185](#)

4,551 posts

44 months

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GSP said:

Our house is on a quite estate which backs onto a large site that was has recently stopped trading as a sand quarry. Our house currently backs onto a dense wooded area and is some way from the day to day operations which have never been heard in the 25 years that we have lived here anyway.

The new housing development is typical in that it consists of 100+ houses all on top of each other.

The current proposal (which has been given outline planning permission) means that the wooded area will be completely removed making way for many houses, two of which are semi detached and will be close to the fence line due to typically small gardens. These two houses will have full visibility of the entire back of our house, which was previously completely private.

What options do we have (other than continuing to object like 41 neighbouring residents already have, which have and ultimately will continue to be ignored).

The development turns our property from a private setting, to a fully overlooked property with no privacy. It is inevitable that having two properties looking directly at the back of our property will decrease the value of our home, the extent of which could be magnified if the proposed houses are designated as affordable housing etc.

Thoughts and advice welcomed.

I am a qualified General Practice Surveyor with extensive experience in planning law. No one can possibly give you any specific and therefore accurate and valid advice without knowing the full case and visiting the site. The wrong advice is worse than no advice at all.

No one is entitled to the right to a view. That is not a planning issue, and to a degree, depending on the Council, neither is a right to privacy.

It is extremely unlikely that there will be a breach of you and the adjoining resident's right to light.

Whilst the quarry has been inoperative for years, it is unlikely that the proposed residential development will create more disturbance than took place previously.

If you are truly concerned about the proposed development, my final advice would be to instruct an expert to act on the residents behalf, the apportioned fee of which would be split between the people concerned.

[Fitz666](#)

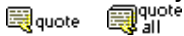
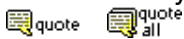
437 posts

59 months

[\[report\]](#)

[\[news\]](#)

Wednesday 18th September 2013



Never buy a house for the view, until you own the view....

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[Watch](#)

[Reply](#)

[Bookmark](#)

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Appendix 3

Building Rights beyond this study

The following paragraphs imagine a moment in the life of a later refinement of Building Rights in which many of the findings from Alpha, in relation to the contextualisation of the project in Sections 2-3, are further developed. This speculative and propositional text imagines the result of a further development of the design – beyond the confines of the present researcher, and can thus be considered a qualitative brief for the immediate future life of the platform.

Building Rights is busy today. The most ‘popular’ question, at the top of the site, is about the impact of the new ‘PD’ rights about commercial buildings becoming houses. This has been possible for a few years now, and one user has already linked the question to earlier discourse about the issue before the rules changed again last week, but it was never quite this easy to change such buildings without needing permission. The question is probably ‘popular’ because it is so contentious – the new legislation is seen by a lot of people as a chance to create a home in cities which are currently unaffordable, whilst a lot of older and professional users see just a further erosion of the UK’s town centres. Some have posted some nasty plans of PD schemes which look like prisons, and the same user who joined up the thread to earlier discussions has tagged the plans they have posted as ‘horrorshow case studies’.

Things are quietly progressing in the Dulas local group, a mid-Wales community who first found each other on Building Rights when multiple Dulas valley residents sought help to support a local play project. The group is vital for its users because this bit of the country sits on the edge of two administrative areas, Powys and Gwynedd, and Building Rights has therefore enabled the first chance ever for these communities to have a cross-authority conversation about the future of their environment. A big moment occurred a few months back when the Head of Planning at Powys joined the site in order to ‘see what the fuss was about’, and admitted in a post that the discussions taking place were unusually positive and wide-ranging, with even famous local NIMBYs getting involved in supporting local initiatives, albeit with a bit of friendly coaxing. A discussion about a potential extension to a pub in the Dulas area recently degenerated into an argument about a recent pub quiz, but was tagged as ‘off-topic’ and allowed to remain within the site, despite protests from some over-zealous moderators.

One of the most active posters in the ‘pub extension’ question mentioned above is a regular visitor to the Pub Preservation area of Building Rights, which began as a lone voice seeking help to protect their local from redevelopment as flats and has since clustered into a significant movement, with many virtual raised glasses to past victories

and noble failures. A proud moment for this community was when their case studies were cited in a think tank's publication about the evening economy. Another was when HoldMyPint43, one of the more vocal users of this part of the site and by day a copywriter, appeared on BBC News as an 'expert' on pub protection, offering lessons to people dealing with this question derived from similar situations across the country. A professional user, posting from the bus on their way home from a job as a local authority planner, commented to HoldMyPint43 that the knowledge she conveyed during the interview was the kind of thing he's been trying to tell locals in his local pub for years.

A first-time poster has just returned to the site having posted a question about extending their 'outrigger' terraced house, and is delighted to find a basic 3D model of the site waiting for them, authored by a user who publicly acknowledges that they're a planning student interested in new ideas for extending Victorian residential architecture and based on a project for a similar house 350 miles away. The poster adjusts a couple of the parameters to correct the student's estimates, and is delighted when the model adjusts to allow for a couple more m² of internal room to their proposed extension, but are dismayed when they finish 'tagging' their project as 'Conservation Area' and their dream extension shrinks back in size. In a few months time, and several dozen photo and model updates later, the extension will be finished, with many lessons and tricks learned and with a devoted community of followers, each waiting for the latest twist in the story (the best one, really, was when work on site was suspended when the poster's aunt fell into a hole dug for the foundations).

Following her engagement with the Dulas valley group, the head planner of Powys has 'okayed' an official presence for her planning authority on the site, and initiated this presence by asking a series of direct questions about the authority's local plan, and in time gets the most representations she has ever received during a plan consultation, not all of them complementary of course. Building Rights automatically hyperlinks many of the key terms in the uploaded local plan to its glossary, allowing users to follow these terms and explore the consequences of these ideas in other places. It also notes that the neighbouring local plan should also be considered, particularly by residents geotagged as living on the border.

In the early days of Building Rights there was a huge amount of discussion about viability and greedy developers. This has subsided somewhat since the issue of development viability became a key election issue last year, with the public demanding better models. Building Rights played its role in this, and along with Reddit was one of

the most active forums for members of the public concerned about the issue, and a major source (alongside Concrete Action) for journalists seeking out particular examples across the UK, and a source of leaked viability statements. A highlight of these discussions was when a visiting academic from the US was invited by a BR moderator to share his own stories of this issue. Another was when a group opposing estate regeneration in London formed a 'real world' alliance with a similar group up in Sheffield, and their performance at the planning committee made the national headlines, resulting in a significant modification to the developer's first plans in favour of affordable housing. Speaking of which, 'affordable' is still probably the most contentious word in the Building Rights glossary, with several thousand posters (lay and pro) arguing its meaning and making sure, finally, that the term is properly contextualised. One of the major political parties has even proposed to stop the use of the term entirely – and cited Building Rights and the Sheffield/London solidarity group in their planning white paper.