The Future for Housing Standards

Andy von Bradsky
Chairman, PRP Architects
Legislative programme

- **Ministerial Statement** – published 25 March, statement of implementation and transitional arrangements
- **Royal Assent** – paved way for Deregulation Bill
- **Deregulation Bill** – set new “optional building regulations” power
- **Approved Documents** – set out new standards
- **Impact Assessment** (savings up to £114m per annum)
- **Scope** – Review is **cross-tenure**, applies only to **England**
All change....out

gone
gone
no other Technical standards

Planning standards safe
being revised
### Changes to Current Regulations

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- **M ACCESSIBILITY**: 3 new optional requirements: Category 1 (current ADM) + Category 2 (version of LTH) + Category 3 (wheelchair standards). Percentage of each category set by LA, based on need and subject to viability.

- **G WATER**: Current ADG (125 litres/day) + optional requirement for (110 litres/day equivalent to Code 4). Higher standard intended for water-stressed areas, LAs decide whether to adopt.

- **H WASTE**: Additional measures to reduce 'bin blight'.

### New Regulation

| Q | SECURITY | ? |

- **Q SECURITY**: Govt prefers a single, baseline Regulation (SBD or PAS 24 for doors and windows) but is consulting on whether this should be an optional requirement which LAs can choose to adopt.

### New Planning Standard

| NPPF? | SPACE |

- **NPPF? SPACE**: New single level space standard, suitable for Category 1 and 2 of accessibility, LAs opt-in subject to viability. (Spatial requirements for Category 3 now within ADM)

**+ Zero Carbon with Allowable Solutions by 2016**
Accessibility - main changes to current standards

**Category 1**
**Visitable dwellings**
- Baseline standard as current AD M

**Category 2**
**Accessible and adaptable dwellings**
- Opt-in standard broadly as Lifetime Homes

**Category 3**
**Wheelchair user dwellings**
- Opt-in new wheelchair standard broadly as WHDG
- distinction between ‘wheelchair adaptable’ and ‘wheelchair accessible’
Space - NdSS - Detail of Space Standard

- gross internal areas based on number of bed spaces, bedrooms and stories
- minimum of 1 double bedroom for 2+bed home
- minimum internal built-in storage requirements ie 2.5m² for 3b/4,5 or 6p units
- allowance for fitted cupboards as storage space
- 2.3m minimum ceiling height across 75% of GIA
- minimum room areas and widths as shown
## Space - Proposed single tier standard

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- flats or other one storey units
- houses or other two storey units
Space - Nationally described Space Standard

- new NdSS only applicable where a planning Condition derived from a Local Plan policy is applied – not otherwise
- therefore requires ‘opt-in’ by LPA
- subject to assessment of need and viability
- applies to all tenures across England, incl GLA
- responsibility for compliance, and subsequent enforcement, will rest with LPA (or Building Control?)
The Code for Sustainable Homes has been withdrawn by the Government from 26 March 2015.

From 26 March, only projects were there is a legal requirement to use the Code can be assessed under it – classed as legacy sites.

Local Authorities can no longer stipulate in planning policy that Code assessments are required (local plans will need to be changed by 01/10/2015).

Code assessments can still be registered for legacy projects but this will be time limited.

There will be new voluntary sustainability assessment methods (eg. BRE, Home Quality Mark from 1 October 2015).
Part G 2015 – Water

• Part G 2015 has 2 performance levels -

• 125 litres/person/day

• 110 litres/person /day (Optional Requirement – only applies where imposed as planning condition and need established)

• Two methods of compliance –

• Water calculator (same as 2010)
• Maximum fittings consumption from Part G table

• From 26 March to 30 September, where existing CSH Level 3 or 4 plan policy, authorities may apply a water efficiency standard of 110l/pp/day
Energy Performance

• Local Authorities can continue to set and apply energy performance standards for new homes that exceeds current Building Regulations until 1 October 2016

• Local Authorities are not expected to require energy performance above that required by Code Level 4 in the period up to October 2016

• Where local plans require decentralised energy to be considered in accordance with the NPPF – this will be maintained.

• Planning and Energy Act 2008 requirements no longer from October 2016; proportion of energy from LZC sources or energy efficiency above Building Regulations
Sustainability Performance

• Site wide issues still planning policy matters
• Internal daylight calculations now not required
• Overheating – only in SAP
• Include requirements in ER’s or project briefs
Creation and amendment can be carried out at any time. BUT Any need for a higher standard must be ....

- Clearly evidenced.
- Consider impact on viability.
LPA should not impose new standards above the NNTS

- Except where Local Plan has established a need for a higher standard.

These higher standards can be passported, and may have a degree of conflict with the NNTS

- These higher standards should be referenced to nearest new standards (e.g. M4(2))
  - Access – M4 (1 or 2 or 3)
  - Water – 125 or 110 L/P/D

Imposed energy standards are not expected to be higher than CfSH level 4 equivalent prior to October 2016 when new Part L will be introduced.

Policies relating to the external design and layout of new development, which aim to reduce crime and disorder, remain unaffected.
Space - Issues for housing

- no compulsion for space
- no HQI’s outside London
- Section 106 for RSL’s
- no national guidance for those wanting to go further than baseline minimum
- reliance on enhanced client briefs
- compromise on ceiling heights
Implications for Local Authorities

- Partial Local Plan review and review of local information requirements
- Evidenced need, impact on viability and timing for higher standards
- Introduce space standard and optional regulations
- ‘Pass-porting’ existing standards
- Neighbourhood Plans
- Implications for Design Guides
- Building Control resources
Lost in the review

**Daylight**
BRE guidance for internal daylight

**Indoor Air quality**
Not addressed in Part F.
Take account of external air quality and paints/finishes.

**Sound**
Part E not affected but should acoustic standards be enhanced.

**Materials**
No green specification, evidence of sustainable practices.
More to do….

**Viability** - National guidance of viability and needs testing, transparent and fair.

**Local Plans** - More detail in Local Plans/SHMAA's, for housing need and accessibility requirements.

**Higher energy performance** – a fabric first higher energy performance standard

**Labelling** - Mandatory space labelling for all new homes to better inform consumers.

**Further simplification** - Simplify and re-format B Regs and separate Housing from other use classes.
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