



Press Release

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MAYOR'S HOUSING PLAN FAILS WORKING FAMILIES

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Only 2.4% of new housing in London should be made available to families on moderate incomes who cannot afford to buy on the open market[1]. This is despite the fact that the great shortage of affordable family homes is undermining social cohesion[2]. Furthermore, there is a strong hint that the Mayor hopes that working people with families will leave London altogether in order to find the housing they need. [3]

This is CPRE London's[4] analysis of what the Mayor of London has proposed today through his draft housing strategy [5]. It concerns the Mayor's proposed position on 'intermediate' affordable housing (shared ownership) with 3 or more bedrooms, i.e. that which is suitable for families with children.

Nigel Kersey, Director of CPRE London said:

"2.4% is pathetically inadequate. The Mayor is failing to meet London's housing needs within London. There seems to be no intention to stem the exodus of working families from London[6], which fuels development pressure in the Green Belt, undermines the London economy and puts more pressure on commuter services."

More over/...

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The Campaign to Protect Rural England exists to promote the beauty, tranquillity and diversity of rural England by encouraging the sustainable use of land and other natural resources in town and country.

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The draft strategy makes vague comments about the need for co-operation between London and neighbouring counties in order to help meet London's housing needs[7]. Commenting further on the draft strategy, Nigel Kersey said:

“There is a sinister hint that the Mayor expects London's neighbouring regions to take the pressure. It's not clear that those neighbouring authorities are happy about this. It's as if he's saying ‘if you have a decent job and family in London, you can have a house or you can have a job, but you can't have both’.”

- END -

NOTES FOR EDITORS

[1] The Mayor's draft housing strategy for London (see ref 5, below) includes the following targets:

- i) That 50% of all new housing built in London should be ‘affordable’ – i.e. social rented or shared ownership (‘intermediate’). Intermediate housing is predominantly for individuals on moderate incomes who therefore do not qualify for social rented accommodation but are still unable to afford housing on the open market.
- ii) That 30% of all affordable housing should be intermediate.
- iii) That 16% of intermediate housing should be ‘family’ housing (three or more bedrooms)

Taken together, this means that 16% of 30% of 50% (i.e. 2.4%) of all new housing should, according to the Mayor, be intermediate family housing.

[2] Paragraph 23 states: *There is a chronic under supply of family homes (three bedrooms or more) in the social rented sector and very few in the intermediate sector, undermining attempts to meet need, improve social cohesion and create mixed sustainable communities. Although there is continuing need for one and two bedroom homes in the affordable sector, there is a particularly serious shortage of large homes. Over the last ten years, only 6.7 per cent of new affordable homes were of four bedrooms or more.*

[3] Paragraph 8 states: *The Mayor is strongly of the view that London should seek to solve the housing problems of its citizens within its own boundaries, making the maximum*

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use of its own development potential. However the city boundary is of little significance to people seeking homes and the London labour market extends well beyond London's boundaries. The south east and east regions benefit from London's economic dynamism and there is a strong element of interdependence between the three regions. The Mayor wishes to maximise the benefits of the regions working together on issues where there is an overlapping interest, and not just in the growth areas.

- [4]** CPRE London is the London Branch of the Campaign to Protect Rural England. CPRE exists to promote the beauty, tranquillity and diversity of rural England by encouraging the sustainable use of land and other natural resources in town and country. We promote positive solutions for the long-term future of the countryside to ensure change values its natural and built environment. Our Patron is Her Majesty The Queen. We have 59,000 supporters, a branch in every county, nine regional groups, over 200 local groups and a national office in London. CPRE is a powerful combination of effective local action and strong national campaigning. Our President is Bill Bryson.
- [5]** The Draft Mayor's Housing Strategy, Mayor of London (September 2007). Published today.
- [6]** Each year, some 100,000 more people leave London for destinations elsewhere in the UK than move in the opposite direction. Most of these people do so for 'housing-related' reasons and most comprise families with young children. Most do not qualify for social affordable housing because they are in moderately well paid employment, but nevertheless cannot afford to buy suitable housing on the open market in London. These figures imply that there is a need in London for several thousand new shared ownership homes each year. The Mayor's target for new housebuilding in London is 30,500 per year and 2.4% of that is about 762.
- [7]** See ref.3, above.