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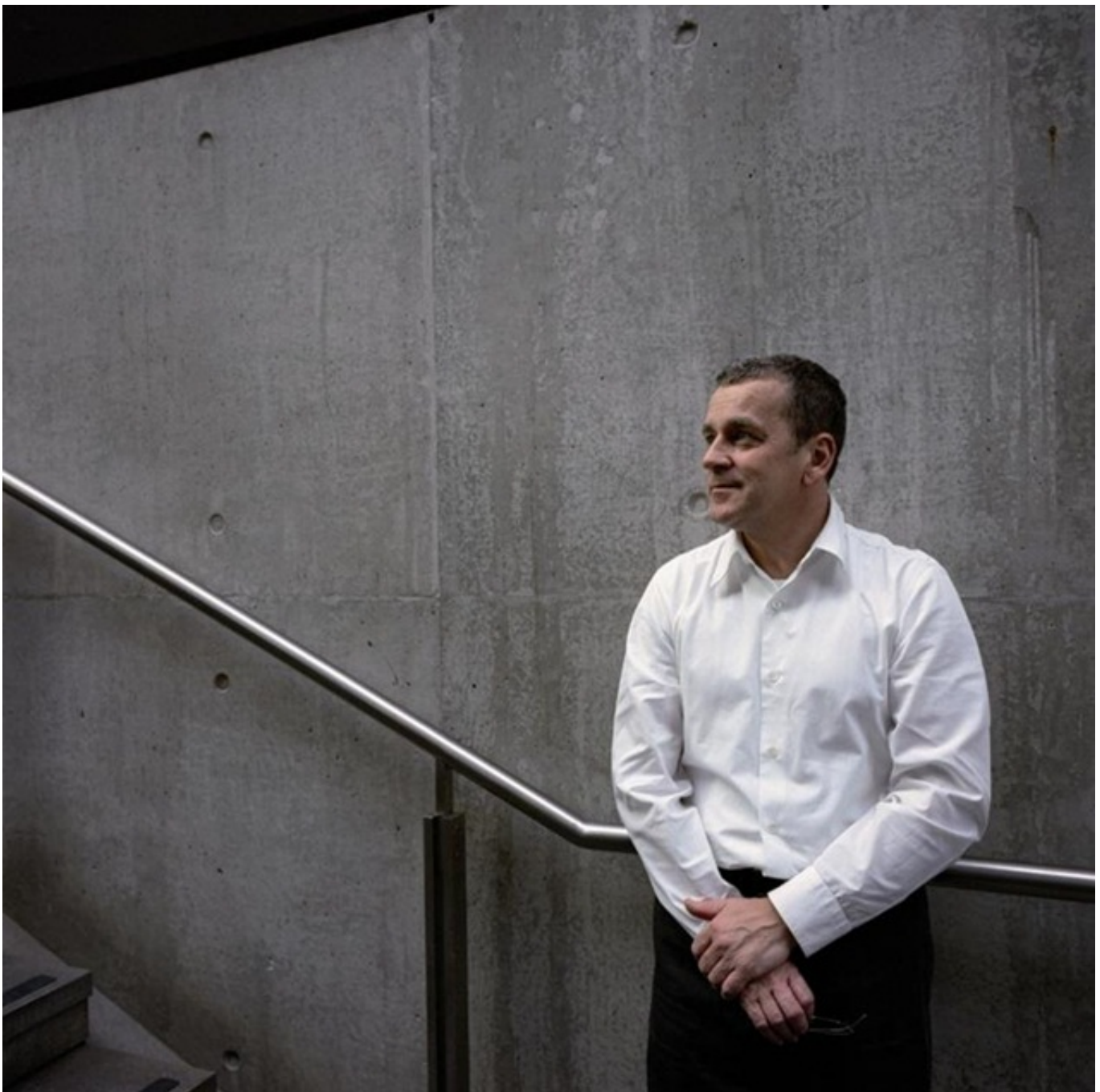
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McAslan's ten point plan to solve the housing crisis

2 October, 2015 | By [Laura Mark](#)



John McAslan has called for homes to be built around transport hubs and urged for more use of alternative models of housing including micro-homes, co-housing, and mid-rise development to solve the housing crisis

Speaking to the Benjamin Franklin Society about the housing crises in both London and New York, McAslan, told of how his practice's development at Dalston station had 'triggered the perception of [the area] as being nouveau hip' causing property prices to rise.

'These transformations to desirable urban neighbourhoods, can happen almost anywhere – particularly if there's a transport hub nearby', he said.

McAslan, added: 'One logical strategy is to create new housing in the vicinity of transport hubs. This creates mixed-use concentrations – commercial in the lowest levels of buildings, residential higher up'.

He told the audience that in the last five years house prices in London had risen more than the equivalent total worth of all housing in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland combined.

McAslan said that the homes London needs should be built through intensification, infill and by housebuilding on brownfield land, but added that the solution was not to build on the green belt.

'There should be a far greater focus on house-building on empty sites, whilst identifying further ways of bringing more derelict land into the system without threatening the Green Belt, which I believe should be protected at all costs', he said.

McAslan hit out at 'placemaking' efforts in the capital. 'Architects often speak about the architecture of regeneration in

terms of placemaking.

‘But what’s happening in London and New York is not so much about placemaking, in a civic and socially inclusive sense, but rather the creation of domestic architecture as a series of investment containers’, he said.

He finished: ‘The government and local authorities, planners, developers, house-builders and the construction industry can no longer plough on, heedless of the potential social and cultural effects of the national housing crisis that has become so profitable to so many people, and so crippling to vast numbers of others.

‘They can no longer make empty promises to deliver and fail on housing targets. There must be accountability.’

John McAslan’s ten points on how to tackle the affordable housing crisis

- 1. Government must recognise the housing crisis as a suitable case for exceptional measures and come forward with a co-ordinated housing strategy**
There should be legislation that defines and delivers housebuilding targets through joint public and private sector involvement in both market and affordable schemes.
- 2. Greater focus on building homes on empty sites without threatening the green belt**
There is space for at least 400,000 new homes through intensification, infill and building on brownfield land – many with unimplemented planning permission already in place. The green belt should be protected at all costs.
- 3. Tougher regulations should force developers to build out higher quality permissioned schemes within a specific period**
These regulations, administered by planning officials and design champions working across London’s boroughs, would stop developers building poorly or sitting on permissions until land values and sale prices increase.
- 4. Micro-housing is here to stay**
Micro-housing, like that being developed by developers The Collective and Pocket Living, will provide good quality, affordable living for hundreds of thousands of people across the capital.
- 5. Build medium-rise developments as an alternative to vertical residential housing**
If well-designed, large-scale domestic buildings can be exemplary and pleasant places to live. Existing housing blocks should also be renovated and adapted.
- 6. Co-housing should be encouraged**
There would be lots of people willing to invest in co-housing opportunities. They would make a modest return on investment but their contribution would, in a low risk way, help London’s affordable housing crisis.
- 7. New use classes should be created to facilitate the adaptation of redundant buildings in housing and live/work units**
In London there is vast amounts of space about low-rise shops which could be converted into flats and live/work units.
- 8. More firmly regulated rent differentials using means-tested rental models**
These are being adopted at Dolphin Living’s New Era Estate in Hoxton and if successful could ensure a greater, more culturally civil mixture of different types of people and housing in London.
- 9. Local authorities should become co-developers of social and affordable housing**
Some London councils are committing to building homes. Haringey council is considering joint ventures with private developers – taking an equity stake in regeneration to create new mixes of social, affordable housing within a public/private ownership model.
- 10. Design quality of housing is crucial**
This is not just about aesthetics – well-designed homes contribute to the quality of domestic life. There is no reason for housing to be designed badly or cynically.

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Pity design quality comes last.



- [Chris Roche](#) | 2-Oct-2015 10:47 am

11 Every Local Authority should re-introduce a Borough Architect with a strategic and pro-active view of

development co-ordination throughout the Borough to ensure civic and community benefits beyond private site boundaries.

Chris Roche / Founder 11.04 Architects

- [Julian Owen](#) | 2-Oct-2015 4:08 pm

Build more council houses. Selling them off cheap for years is what has caused the shortage of affordable and key worker housing and allowed private landlords to charge very high rents, which we taxpayers have to pay for through the benefits system.

Also pressurize the volume house builders to sell all the land that they are banking to local authorities and self builders. It is easier to make a profit by building fewer houses and selling them for a high price than building the many houses that are needed and selling them more cheaply.

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