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The letter of the week's author will receive an AJ mug. Letters should be received by 10am on the Monday before publication. The AJ reserves the right to edit letters.

## Inconsistent legislation



It is not just the complexity of the housing space and sustainability regulations that is the problem (AJ 21.03.14). Try getting even basic guidance from planning departments about which legislation they intend to apply. My local department cannot even tell me whether they will be invoking the London Plan or not, or sort of. So when clients ask 'What can I put on this site?' I have to say: 'Sorry, \*\*\*\* knows' and then embark on the bone-achingly slow task of finding out via pre-app submissions, which often only results in further vague guidance with regard to the legislation. The housing crisis will go on for generations unless planning departments can state – up front – definitive parameters for development, complex or not.  
*Simon Gill, director, Simon Gill Architects, London*

## Mind your business

Israel faces consequences from RIBA's smart move

(AJ 28.03.14)? Wooo, scared ... Must remember to include that one in a stand-up routine at some point. It is ridiculous.

I am fairly confident that if there was a poll, the RIBA members would not support this position. It is a sly little game to play.

Turn it around, propose taking action against Palestinian architects as a response to any of the atrocities committed by its countrymen – hijacks, athlete massacre, assassinations, whatever: the list is very long. Murder is a bit worse than nicking land, so why not?

You see exactly how shallow this is by looking at it that way. It is pointless, it is discriminatory, and it solves nothing. It does not address the issues at hand, and the belligerents have other fish to fry – like staying alive. Neither Israelis or Palestinians want ruin and death, but this is what faces the loser here. Unfortunately, religion and incompatible ethnicity, not land, is largely at the root of this, not violence or supposed land grabbing – these are only the symptoms.

The proposal is like trying to fix two broken backs with an aspirin administered to one party, and then running around

telling everyone how wonderful you are because you applied inappropriate medication that will sort your imagined naughty one out.

The RIBA really have no business with a matter so complex that it has roots 4,000 years ago and still is not sorted out.

But it gets better:

I see the Israeli architects have gone straight to the top with this. I do not blame them. I suspect the RIBA will get a kicking as a result – either overtly or behind the scenes. Even worse, they may just get dismissed as a non-material and irrelevant interference.

We all can watch the profession slide further downhill now, whichever way this goes, because any form of kicking or dismissal will do no practicing architect a favour. It is an own goal, and a sneaky one at that.

RIBA have no business meddling with things they know nothing about and where they certainly have no skills to enable a professional, considered and effectual opinion.

Should this become a general public scandal, members should call at the very least for apologies



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