

# Evening Standard.

## Labour plan to axe permitted development rules spooks housebuilders

JOANNA BOURKE | 22 hours ago



The prospect of a government under Jeremy Corbyn has spooked some parts of the property industry (Andy Rain/EPA)

**Housebuilders were angered on Wednesday over new Labour proposals to axe rules that allow developers to convert offices into flats without planning permission.**

The Labour party said permitted development rights, introduced in 2013, give firms “a get-out from requirements to provide affordable housing and meet basic quality rules such as space standards creating ‘rabbit-hutch’ flats”.

The prospect of a government under Jeremy Corbyn has already spooked parts of the property industry, amid fears higher taxes could deter buyers.

Antony Stark at Linea Homes, which has built in areas such as Bounds Green and Dalston, said the latest proposal will further the views of some London businesses “that a Corbyn-led government would harm the economy and stifle business growth”.

Stark added: “The speed in which office conversions can be brought forward brings much-needed new homes.”

Galliard Homes’ chief executive Donagh O’Sullivan said: “Almost every politician in the main parties publicly decries the lack of housing delivery, but the majority of their local intervention and personal input is focused on targeting ways of stopping homes being built.”

Great Marlborough Estates’ Dean Clifford said: "While some office to resi schemes have been of questionable quality, the majority have delivered decent homes at a faster rate and in a more sustainable way than new-build development."

Telford Homes’ chief Jon Di-Stefano was less worried: “I don’t think this is a sign that [Labour] are trying to restrict development, but instead hopefully just looking at how it is best delivered to meet all levels of need.”

