



Ministry of Housing,  
Communities &  
Local Government

[REDACTED]  
*Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for  
Housing, Communities & Local Government*  
2 Marsham Street  
London  
SW1P 4DF

Our reference: [REDACTED]

ME Hassell  
Senior Coroner  
Inner North London  
St Pancras Coroner's Court  
Camley Street  
London  
N1C 4PP

13 January 2025

Dear ME Hassell,

**RESPONSE TO REGULATION 28: REPORT TO PREVENT FUTURE DEATHS - INQUEST INTO THE DEATH OF MALIKA HIBU**

Thank you for your letter and investigative report dated 7 August 2024 into the tragic death of Malika Hibu, which was made in accordance with Paragraph 7, Schedule 5, of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 and Regulations 28 and 29 of the Coroners (Investigations) Regulations 2013.

First, I want to express my sincere condolences to Malika's family and friends. No parent should have to suffer through the loss of a child at such a young age and in these tragic circumstances.

**Matter of concern one – the role of Peabody**

Your letter and report were also addressed to the Chief Executive of Peabody Trust, and their response has now been published on the Judiciary website.

The Regulator of Social Housing has engaged directly with Peabody in relation to this tragic case and having assessed all relevant information against regulatory standards, has now concluded no further regulatory action will be taken. However, the Regulator will continue its regular engagement with Peabody and note the steps that Peabody is taking in response including working with other parties to address issues raised in the Prevention of Future Deaths notice.

**Matter of concern two – the role of national planning policy**

In your report, you "also heard that when the planning application for the 2015 housing development was considered in the first place, no consideration was given to the safety of the barrier as part of the development. I have been told that the government has announced a consultation on the national planning policy framework (NPPF). I have also been given to understand that section 12 sets out policies relating to the achievement of safe, inclusive and accessible spaces. It has been put to me that paragraph 135(f) could include a requirement that when development takes place in proximity

to open water, railways and other hazards, special regard should be paid to ensuring the safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults. There will of course be many planning applications considered before any changes can be made to the NPPF.”

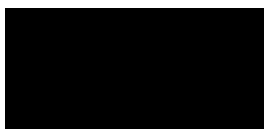
The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. In addition to paragraph 135(f) referenced in the Coroner's report, chapter 8 (promoting healthy and safe communities) provides further policy on achieving healthy, inclusive and safe places.

On 12 December 2024, the Government published an updated NPPF in response to the 'Proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and other changes to the planning system' consultation. As part of this update, and in direct response to findings set out in the Coroner's report, additional policy has been added to paragraph 102 a) setting out that the safety of children and other vulnerable users in proximity to open water, railways and other potential hazards should be considered in planning and assessing proposals for development.

The updated NPPF can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>.

I want to thank you for bringing the tragic death of Malika to my attention and once again, I wish to express my sincere condolences to Malika's family and friends.

Yours sincerely,

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Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Housing, Communities & Local Government