

Performing calculative practices: residual valuation, the residential development process and affordable housing

Laurence Murphy

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Abstract

This article examines the ways in which post-social and relational theories have the potential to add to our understanding of housing issues. Drawing on the work of the sociologist Michel Callon and the geographer Susan Smith, it examines the ways in which housing markets are made. In particular, focusing on calculative practices it examines how the performative nature of residual valuation calculations has profound implications for the operation of housing markets and ultimately challenges the capacity of the development sector to produce affordable housing. In addition, using the example of planning practice in England, it examines the ways in which potentially transgressive adaptations of 'locked-in' calculative practices are resisted. It is argued that a research focus on calculative practices challenges 'externalized' understandings of housing markets and has the potential to render the performative nature of calculations visible.

Keywords: Performativity, calculative devices, residual valuation, affordable housing