THE BIGGER PICTURE

Compliance-testing software like Inspace's Think-Space can save time and money, but the concept could have wider implications. In 2002, the government in Singapore launched its e-submission system, which enables planning applications to be submitted over the internet. The system was developed to enable designs to be automatically checked against building codes and to flag up potential problems.

Norway was so impressed by the idea that it decided to copy it. Its state building agency is developing a system for checking building regulations compliance, and its state planning agency is looking at a version that checks the design's compliance with planning regs.

In 2005, the US also began work on a system for compliance testing energy and accessibility regulations.

The project is on hold because of a lack of funding, but is expected to start up again next year.

The Netherlands, France, China and Japan are also looking into automated compliance testing. But what about the UK? So far there are no plans, although Jeffrey Wix, director of construction information consultant AEC 3 UK, who was involved in developing the system elsewhere, says they have shown that it works. Surely it is a matter of time before we adopt it...

The requirement for storage volume is not satisfied for the Housing Quality Indicators score

No recycle bins are present in the kitchen or adjacent spaces

Space allocated for the washing machine is less than the minimum required

Window size does not meet the minimum required for daylight levels

The HQI give extra points if there is space for a PC in the living room

The bathroom lacks drainage provision for a future accessible shower

This is too small for wheelchairs

Living room w/kitchen 21.9m²

Bathroom 3.3m²

Airing cupboard 0.4m²

Bedroom 9.2m²

Hall 3.3m²

Closet 2.1m²