

Huw Lewis AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Tai, Adfywio a Threftadaeth
Minister for Housing, Regeneration and Heritage



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref LF/HL/0040/13

Ann Jones AM
Chair
Communities, Equality and Local
Government Committee
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

23rd January 2012

Dear Ann,

Thank you for your letter dated 16 January 2013. I am responding to your request for further information on the suggestion I made at the Constitutional and Legislative Affairs Committee on 14 January 2013 that the Welsh Government proposes to table amendments to the Regulated Mobile Home Sites Bill (Wales).

First, let me emphasise that I remain fully supportive of the key features of the Bill. Any amendments tabled by the Welsh Government will be aimed at making the new regime simpler and more effective in operation, which I know will be important to Members of the Committee.

Since I appeared before the Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee in December, my officials have considered further how the Bill would work in practice, and listened to the evidence taken by the Committee. As a consequence I have concluded that, as currently drafted, the Bill would introduce an extra tier of licensing. This could make the licensing arrangements more complicated, overly bureaucratic and possibly confusing. Our intention is, therefore, to table amendments. The amendments we are considering would preserve the features of the existing, single tier licensing system as currently set out in the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 but would create new provisions which would sit alongside the current arrangements. It is possible that we may also need to make similar changes to the other legislation governing park home sites including, amongst others, the Mobile Homes Act 1983.

My officials met recently with Peter Black to discuss, in broad terms, the amendments we propose. He agreed that the broad approach is acceptable. We are now working with our lawyers to find the most appropriate mechanisms for delivering these changes to existing legislation and to ensure that any changes we make do not have any unintended consequences. At the present time, we are unable to provide specific details on the precise changes that will be required but we have agreed to discuss these in great detail with Peter when they are finalised. In the meantime, I can confirm that it remains our intention to

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ensure that the Bill will include a "fit and proper person test" for site managers, collaborative working arrangements for local authorities, and further, the introduction of time limited licences will be considered. We will also include a requirement for Management Regulations setting out how sites should be managed and enforcement provisions in order to allow local authorities to act where sites are not being properly managed etc. In fact, I can envisage a situation where the vast majority of the existing Bill will be accommodated in government amendments wherever possible, the only difference being the Welsh Government's proposals will build on the existing licensing system.

I should also make it clear that whilst the Mobile Homes Bill is currently proceeding through Parliament, these Bills are entirely separate. There is no suggestion the measures in the Regulated Mobile Homes Sites (Wales) Bill will be made on a joint England and Wales basis. Whilst there are benefits in ensuring that legislation covering mobile homes sites share similarities, the provisions in this Bill only apply in relation to Wales. I know that Peter Black has already raised concerns about this issue with my officials.

I am copying this reply to Peter Black.

Yours sincerely,



Huw Lewis AC / AM

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