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Y Gweinidog Tai a Llywodraeth Leol
Minister for Housing and Local Government



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref JJ/05621/19

Janet Finch-Saunders AM
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27 March 2019

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your letter of the 21 March 2019 regarding the Petitions Committee's deliberations on the 'Ban the Use of Hostile Architecture' petition (P-05-864).

In your letter you asked me to consider 3 specific points which I shall address in turn.

On the merits and practicality of the petition's call for a ban or moratorium on the use of hostile architecture in Wales, the issues that homeless people have to face everyday should not be compounded by the design of new development. Those involved in designing public spaces should not actively seek to prevent homeless people finding rest or a place of safety. However, the practicalities of implementing a ban on the use of such architectural features are challenging.

Local Authorities have extensive permitted development rights to install most street furniture. To remove this right would mean that every lamppost, bench and street sign would need planning permission. This would significantly add to the cost and time of implementing new schemes at a time when local authority budgets are constrained and planning authorities are under pressure to determine planning applications quickly. This is not a practical solution when, in most cases, the chosen approach may be acceptable anyway and would be permitted.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

On the request for a Technical Advice Note (TAN) on hostile architecture, this is a very detailed issue to write a specific advice note on. Our existing guidance, 'Manual for Streets', advises that street furniture of this nature should be integrated into the overall appearance of a street. We are currently working with stakeholders to prepare advice and guidance to the built environment profession on implementing the placemaking agenda introduced by the new version of Planning Policy Wales. I will consider if appropriate reference to the use of hostile architecture can be integrated into this work.

Finally, putting planning controls in place in order to provide closer oversight of the retrospective installation of hostile architecture would be very difficult. Most retrospective changes to street furniture or public spaces would not require planning permission and so it would be very difficult to have an oversight of them.

I believe that the best way to deal with this issue is to advise local authorities and developers, through guidance or advice on this matter, so that our public places are accessible and welcoming to everyone.

Yours sincerely,



Julie James AC/AM

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