



Eich cyf/Your ref  
Ein cyf/Our ref

Mike Hedges MS, Chair  
Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee

4<sup>th</sup> February 2025

Annwyl Mike

### **Consolidation of planning law**

Thank you for your letter of 23 January seeking further information about the consolidation of planning law. As you know I consider this an extremely significant project and one that I look forward to bringing forward to the Senedd.

**Question 1: Have you discussed with the Business Committee (or have Welsh Government officials discussed with Senedd Commission officials) your proposal that the consolidation of planning law should be dealt with over two Bills – a ‘main’ Bill and a second ‘consequential provisions’ Bill? If so, what were the outcome of those discussions?**

Formal engagement with the Business Committee is expected to take place, in the usual way, much nearer to the time of likely introduction. Discussions with Senedd Commission officials about the overall legislative programme and timetables to facilitate effective working are ongoing. Now we have formally set out our intention to split the consolidation project into two Bills, for reasons of accessibility of the law, those discussions will include the implications of doing this.

**Question 2: Please would you confirm the current thinking as regards the timing of when both Bills will be laid before the Senedd for initial consideration.**

As I set out in my recent evidence to the Committee, our current intention is that the Bills will be introduced in September 2025.

**Question 3: Please would you confirm the approximate length (in pages and/or provision numbers) of the ‘main’ Bill and the ‘consequential provisions’ Bill.**

The main Bill, which has a working title of “Planning (Wales) Bill” is expected to contain approximately 410 sections and 20 Schedules and run to approximately 420 pages. The

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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.

second Bill, which has a working title of “Planning (Consequential Provisions) (Wales) Bill” is likely to be about 80 pages, although this is subject to more change than the main Bill at the moment.

In case it is also helpful to the Committee, the Bills will be accompanied by a single Explanatory Memorandum (of approximately 25 pages), but this will have a number of annexes. For example, there will be a lengthy annex of Explanatory Notes for the main Bill and separately a much shorter set of Notes for the consequential provisions Bill, together with separate tables of origins and destinations (as relevant). There will also be annexes containing the Drafters’ Notes for each Bill. Having annexes will ultimately facilitate Explanatory Notes, tables of origins and destinations and the Drafters’ Notes to be published alongside each Act, but I think having one Explanatory Memorandum will help provide clearer information and explanation to the Senedd as it considers the Bills.

Finally, I have been giving some thought to how we might assist the Committee prepare for consideration of these Bills. I am also aware that the Committee felt unable to respond to the Government’s assertion the Legislation (Procedure, Publication and Repeals) (Wales) Bill was a technical Bill as it had not seen the Bill at that time. Therefore in order that you might effectively comment on the proposed timetable for scrutiny of the Bills and, perhaps more importantly, start to become familiar with the Bills ahead of formal consideration, it is my intention to make available to Senedd Members a draft of the main Bill, and hopefully also the consequential provisions Bill, in June. If possible, we will also make available a working draft of the Explanatory Notes (at least for the main Bill) at the same time. Although the Government will still be finalising the formatting of the Bills and finalising the drafting of the supporting documents, I think the documents we make available will be sufficiently settled to still be useful to the Committee and other Members.

I can also confirm that I would be happy to attend a scrutiny session of the Committee on the day the Bill is introduced, ahead of any legislative statement the Government might make in Plenary later the same week.

I am copying this letter to the Rt Hon Elin Jones MS, the Llywydd and Chair of the Business Committee.

Yn gywir,



**Julie James AS/MS**

Y Cwnsler Cyffredinol a’r Gweinidog Cyflawni  
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