

Julie James AC/AM
Y Gweinidog Tai a Llywodraeth Leol
Minister for Housing and Local Government



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref: OAQ53844

Ian Westley
Chief Executive
Pembrokeshire County Council
County Hall
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23 May 2019

Dear Ian,

At Oral Assembly Questions on 15 May Paul Davies AM tabled a question highlighting concerns by constituents and Pembrokeshire County Council regarding One Planet Development (OPD) policy. I am writing to you so I can better understand any difficulties Pembrokeshire County Council may have in this respect.

I continue to support OPD policy, which provides opportunities for those wishing to live a sustainable and low impact lifestyle in the countryside, and whose presence provides a small but positive contribution to the climate change discussion. OPDs formed part of a suite of policies designed to support vibrant rural communities which also included extending the scope of agricultural dwellings to encompass a wider range of enterprises and allow the transfer of farms to younger generations. I do not propose to make any changes to OPD guidance at the present time. However Welsh Government planning policy is kept under constant review to ensure it remains up to date and relevant.

Since 2014, when the Welsh Government started collecting information on OPDs from Local Planning Authorities, Pembrokeshire County Council has advised us of approximately 5 approvals and 3 refusals (up to April 2018). During the same period 17 rural enterprise dwellings were approved and 15 refused. I recognise Pembrokeshire has received more OPD applications over this period than other Local Authorities in Wales, 8 out of 15 submitted. However, in relation to mainstream affordable and market housing, and perhaps more specifically rural enterprise dwellings (213 of which were approved over the same period across Wales), this number remains very small, averaging just over 1 OPD approved per year.

Local Development Plans provide a tool by which specific OPD policies can be introduced to address local concerns. I understand Pembrokeshire County Council will be reviewing its local development plan soon, and this may provide an opportunity to put in place criteria reflecting local circumstances.

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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.

Paul Davies AM alluded to the pressure that OPD monitoring is putting on local planning authorities to ensure that OPD schemes are progressed appropriately and in line with any agreed management plan. Local Planning Authorities are responsible for their development management services and should prioritise resources accordingly. The current planning fee structure is designed to provide Local Planning Authorities with the necessary means to deliver effective and efficient development management services. The OPD monitoring toolkit provided by the Welsh Government is not compulsory, however it is important that effective monitoring is undertaken to ensure the policy is effective.

Whilst I have set out some of my thoughts on OPD above, I would very much like to hear your views on the matter, including how OPD monitoring is co-ordinated alongside monitoring of agricultural occupancy conditions, so I am able to consider the matter further.

Yours sincerely



Julie James AC/AM

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