

CONFIDENTIAL

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Privy Council Office
68 Whitehall
London SW1A 2AT

22 July 1983

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25/7

Dear Mr. Jenkin

CROWN LAND (PLANNING PERMISSION) BILL

Patrick Jenkin wrote to you on 18 July to ask that his Crown Land (Planning Permission) Bill be added to the list of Bills for Second Reading Committee.

As you know, this matter was discussed in Cabinet on 7 July and it was thought that Second Reading Committee treatment would be a possible alternative in the event that no Private Member were inclined to take up the Bill. Patrick Jenkin explained in his letter that it was now unlikely that the Bill would be taken up.

I have considered Patrick Jenkin's request with the Chief Whip. We take the view that there must be some doubt as to whether this measure would be accepted by the Opposition as being entirely uncontroversial. There must be a question mark therefore against the prospects of the Bill receiving Second Reading in Committee, although I understand that some effort is being made to find an alternative title for the Bill which will make it appear, on the surface, less controversial. There is the additional problem that the Opposition are not at present focussing on the question of Second Reading Committee Bills.

I have no objection to this Bill being added to the Second Reading Committee Bill list but I think it only fair to warn Patrick that it may well not be accepted by the Opposition. I am therefore content to give approval for the employment of Parliamentary Counsel on the drafting of the Bill on the understanding that there is no guarantee that the Bill will be added to the main programme if Second Reading in Committee is refused by the Opposition.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, Members of QL, Patrick Jenkin, Norman Fowler, First Parliamentary Counsel and Sir Robert Armstrong.

John Biffen

JOHN BIFFEN

The Rt Hon Viscount Whitelaw CH MC
Lord President of the Council and
Leader of the House of Lords

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CC No2 MARSHAM STREET
LONDON SW1P 3EB

01-212 3434

My ref:

Your ref:

18 July 1983

Dear Willie,

Cabinet agreed on 7 July (minute 4.3) that if the proposed Crown Land (Planning Permission) Bill were not taken up by a private Member, consideration should be given to the possibility of its being added to the list of Bills for Second Reading Committee. As you will know from my letter to you of 27 June, the main provision in this Bill would overcome the Crown's inability to apply for planning permission when disposing of surplus land and would help to ensure that disposals achieved full market value. I am convinced of the need to legislate for this at the earliest opportunity and have the support of several colleagues. However, I am now advised that there is no chance of the Bill being taken up by a private Member and I am therefore writing to you as Chairman of QL Committee to ask that the Bill be added to the Second Reading Committee list.

If you are able to accede to this request, I would be grateful if John Biffen would give his approval to the drafting of the Bill by Parliamentary Counsel.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, Members of QL, Norman Fowler, First Parliamentary Counsel and also to Sir Robert Armstrong.

PATRICK JENKIN

Parliament
Legislative Program
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