

BRIEFING NOTE

Tuesday 20th February 2024

Short-Term Letting Rules to Protect Communities and Keep Homes Available

The government has posted a press release today relating to a proposal for short-term lets rules to protect communities and keep homes available. Under this reform, councils will have greater power to control short-term lets by making them subject to the planning process. The aim is to support people in areas where high numbers of short-term lets are preventing locals finding affordable housing to buy or rent.

The proposed planning changes would create a new planning 'Use Class' C5 for short-term lets not used as a sole or main home. A short term let property would be defined as the "use of a dwellinghouse that is not a sole or main residence for temporary sleeping accommodation for the purpose of holiday, leisure, recreation, business or other travel.

Existing dedicated short-term lets will automatically be reclassified into the new Use Class and will not require a planning application.

The Government also intends to introduce associated permitted development rights – one allowing for a property to be changed from a short-term let to a standard residential dwelling, and a second that would allow a property to be changed to a short-term let. Local Authorities would be able to remove these permissions and require full planning permission if they deem it necessary.

Both of these measures are focused on short-term lets, and the register will not affect hotels, hostels or B&Bs.

It will be interesting to see – if they go ahead – how this will affect tourist areas, particularly regarding tourist accommodation/short term lets and how easy it will be to change to full residential under permitted change of use rights (and vice versa). It is noted that Airbnb welcomed the plans for the register.

It will also be interesting to see how the proposed new mandatory national register will be resourced and maintained.

CONTACT

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