



Ein cyf/Our ref SF/LG/1016/13

Jeremy Wright MP,
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State,
(Prisons and Rehabilitation)
Ministry of Justice,
102, Petty France,
London,
SW1H 9AJ

12th April 2013

Dear Jeremy,

I am writing in response to the announcement by the Ministry of Justice on its Prison Estate Programme and your subsequent letter of 26th March regarding North Wales being one of three possible locations for a new prison.

Whilst, of course, the responsibility for deciding where any new prison in England or Wales will be located is a matter for the Ministry of Justice, you will be aware the Welsh Government has consistently made the case for a local prison in North Wales to allow more Welsh prisoners to serve their sentence in Wales. You will also be aware of the support across the North Wales region for a prison to be sited in the area.

The current arrangements, whereby prisoners from North Wales have to serve their sentences in England, are far from ideal. Not only does this mean the relevant Welsh language provision is not in place for prisoners for whom Welsh is their first language, but their families have to travel great distances to visit them. This is not conducive to effective rehabilitation.

In your letter you enclosed the site specification and confirmed that Anglesey is considered outside the search area in view of its location and transport links. Officials in our Department for Economy, Science and Transport have now completed a property search of Welsh Government owned land against the criteria.

Whilst there are a number of sites in Welsh Government ownership of a size which could meet the broad requirements officials report only the former Firestone site in Wrexham meets the specifications. This site is in the latter stages of being transferred to the Local Authority and it is possible that Wrexham County Borough Council may well submit this site to you for consideration.

I know our officials have met a number of times since your announcement. I very much appreciate this ongoing discussion and the openness and understanding demonstrated of the Welsh Government's role in such a significant potential investment.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State for Wales.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carwyn Jones', written in a cursive style.

CARWYN JONES