

Mears Group submission of 11 January 2024

PE2049/C: Introduce buffer zones outside migrant accommodation

Thank you for your correspondence in relation to petition PE2049: Introduce buffer zones outside migrant accommodation. Mears Group appreciate the Committee providing an opportunity for us to provide our view.

Mears Group believe that any decision about buffer zones would be a matter for the Home Office as the Contracting Authority, in discussion with Police Scotland. Mears Group currently operate 17 hotels in Scotland, and, as requested by Home Office ministers are closing hotels on a phased basis as part of the government asylum hotel exit programme.

We have experienced a limited number of protests to date. These have been well managed and largely peaceful. Private security teams have a legal power to remove people from private land and they are supported in doing so by police. This has been an effective tool in managing protests. Comprehensive security measures are deployed to protect service users. This includes security officers, CCTV, fencing where appropriate, and strong relationships with local police (including calling on police support and resources if required).

Mears Group thank the committee.