

Cyngor Tref Y Trallwng
WELSHPOOL TOWN COUNCIL



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14th December 2009

Welsh Assembly Government
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
Wales

Dear Sir

Mid Wales Wind Farms

First of all may I thank you for your time in helping us to put this petition together, it was much appreciated.

The enclosed petition is seeking a intervention by the WAG into the transportation and the practicality of a large number of wind farms in the Mid Wales area.

The reasons for this request are:

Lack of consultation

The County Council is not giving the community councils an opportunity to discuss or represent their views fully in an open debate; this can only be achieved with a public inquiry.

Lack of local knowledge

It is clear that the companies are not taking into account the local environment. Every wind farm constructed so far in the UK has underestimated the transport issues. From one meeting held with National Power they suggested that a quiet time for moving Lorries would be when the schools are on holiday!

Co-ordination

There appears to be a lack of co-ordination to ensure that an overall picture is presented and considered before any wind farm applications are considered.

Road transport

The road network is not able to cope with the large loads required for the construction of wind farms even with alterations proposed to junctions etc.

Overall effects on Mid Wales

The overall effect on a fragile economy, particularly with regard to tourism, is not being considered properly.

Main issues affecting transportation

The main issues which have not been addressed include:

- a) The effect on foundations along the main routes through towns and villages in older buildings need to be protected.
- b) The effect on the environment with alterations to road layouts is extensive.
- c) The effect on traffic and in turn the effect on tourism is excessive.

Representation

The people of Mid Wales feel that the Wind Farms are being imposed without proper consideration and to ensure that this is redressed a public inquiry is the only way forward.

The public of Mid Wales do hope that you will find it possible to support such action and insist upon a public inquiry so that whole issue of Wind Farms can be covered with special emphasises on the transportation with the road network.


I enclose a copy of one of our objection letters to Powys County Council which more fully explains our situation.

I shall also be taking a copy of this petition to Westminster in the coming weeks seeking their support for a public inquiry.

I have not offered a full report as I know time is precious and you will be aware of many of the detailed issues. However, if you wish to have a full report on our concerns I can arrange this for you.

Thank you again for your time.

Yours sincerely



Robert A Robinson FRICS AILCM
Town Clerk

Jane Davidson AC/AM

**Y Gweinidog dros yr Amgylchedd, Cynaliadwyedd a Thai
Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing**



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-03-273

Ein cyf/Our ref JD/00152/10

Christine Chapman AM
Chair Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
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CF99 1NA

25 January 2010

Dear Chris,

PETITION P-03-273 TRANSPORTATION OF WIND TURBINES IN MID WALES

Thank you for your letter of 7th January regarding the petition from Welshpool Town Council which was sent to the Deputy First Minister. As the petition raises issues associated with the planning process, I am replying to you on this matter.

As you may be aware responsibility for consenting wind farm proposals over 50MW currently lies with the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, these powers will soon transfer to the newly established Infrastructure Planning Commission and the Welsh Assembly Government has no formal role in the consenting process for such developments. Proposals under 50MW fall to local planning authorities to determine under their Town and Country Planning powers and it is this category of wind farm development where the Welsh Assembly Government policies are relevant.

Requirements for consultation on planning applications by local planning authorities are set out in Article 8 of the Town and County Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995, and these are clearly prescribed. There is no intention to revise the requirements.

I am aware of the broader issues associated with the development of large wind farms in Mid Wales; in particular the concerns of some people regarding the impact on the road network during the construction phases of wind farms. In April last year we wrote to all local planning authorities to remind them of the requirements for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for wind farms. This letter set out the guidance on EIA which states that applications should not be considered in isolation and that highway considerations need to be fully considered before any planning consent is given.

The Welsh Assembly Government is fully committed to working with stakeholders in order to address and resolve the matters associated with the movement of wind turbine components in Mid Wales. We have already commissioned a study into the nature of the problems and we are working constructively with relevant stakeholders such as the police

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and the Powys County Council, as the relevant local planning authority, in order to address the issues.

As you will be aware the One Wales agreement states that the Welsh Assembly Government will review its planning guidance on renewable energy contained in Technical Advice Note (TAN) 8 following the production of an over-arching Energy Statement. It remains our intention to produce a revised version of the TAN by the end of the year. As part of the policy revision process there will be a public consultation on the revised TAN and this will be the appropriate mechanism to comment on the Assembly Government's Planning Policies. Consequently, I cannot support the calls for a public inquiry as advocated in this petition.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jane', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.

Jane Davidson AM

Y Gweinidog dros yr Amgylchedd, Cynaliadwyedd a Thai
Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing



Christine Chapman
Chair, Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

3 February 2010

Dear Christine

Petition: Transportation of wind turbines in Mid Wales

Thank you for your letter regarding the petition from Welshpool Town Council about the transportation of wind turbines.

The Sustainability Committee carried out an inquiry into carbon reduction from energy production in Wales in 2008 and this was one of the issues that arose during the inquiry.

The committee made the following comments and recommendations in our report published on 13 May 2009:

2.10 We received evidence during the inquiry about the importance of the adequacy of existing infrastructure during the construction and connection phase of new energy production facilities.

2.11 Road access for large plant and machinery to sites where new power plant was to be installed had proved difficult for new sites, especially those in

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more rural areas and had led to long delays in installation work and local disruption.

2.13 The main infrastructure issues have so far been encountered mainly by developers installing renewable energy projects. The Committee is concerned, however, that new sites for fossil fuel power stations and possible carbon capture and storage technologies could also suffer from a lack of existing infrastructure. We therefore recommend:

Headline recommendation 2: The Welsh Assembly Government undertake a thorough review of the adequacy of the transport infrastructure and grid connection for the construction of both fossil fuel and renewable energy plants in the areas identified in the strategic framework recommended in HL1.

The Minister for Environment Sustainability and Housing responded on 8 July 2009:

Response: Accept in part

The issues raised mainly concern on-shore wind projects. We are aware that development of on-shore wind farms, particularly in Mid Wales, have implications for the management of transportation of construction materials. We are discussing the question of a strategic approach to managing these transport issues with BWEA, industry developers and other stakeholders including the Assembly Government's own transport experts. Our aim is to ensure there is collaboration minimising the impact of this activity on local communities.

Financial Implications: *The cost of the highway improvements necessary for wind turbine components to be transported to sites by means of Abnormal Indivisible Loads is yet to be established. The safe movement of components will require a dedicated police resource. The windfarm developers will be responsible for these costs.*

During the plenary debate on 15 July 2009, the Minister said:

On transport infrastructure, that is mainly a restraint with regard to large onshore wind projects that are located in remote areas. The size and output of wind turbines has increased substantially in the years since the publication of TAN 8. I am fully aware that the transportation of component parts and construction materials, particularly in mid Wales, presents a major challenge. That needs a strategic approach, which is being prepared by the Assembly Government's transport team. The British Wind Energy Association has a major role to play in the ongoing discussions between industry developers, stakeholders, local highway authorities and the Assembly Government's transport experts. I want to do what I can to help in this process and I am pleased that your report acknowledges the importance of well-placed wind in this agenda.

We have received no further information from the Minister about this issue since the inquiry.

I hope that this information is useful to the Petitions Committee

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mick Bates". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Mick Bates AM
Chair, Sustainability Committee

Letter from Deputy First Minister

Ieuan Wyn Jones AC/AM
Dirprwy Brif Weinidog /Deputy First Minister



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Welsh Assembly Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-03-273
Ein cyf/Our ref DFM/00876/10

Christine Chapman AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
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30 April 2010

Dear Christine

Thank you for your letter of 31 March to the Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing, regarding the transportation of wind turbines in mid Wales. As the study into the movement of wind turbine components in Mid Wales is being carried out by the Department for the Economy and Transport, I am replying.

The investigations and studies required to develop a suitable approach for the transportation of wind turbines are progressing. Wind farm developers, local authorities, and the Police are working with officials from my Department to develop options for managing the delivery of the loads. This is a complex task and I hope that we will have an agreed approach to routes, management, and scheduling of movements later this year.

The Welsh Assembly Government, as the Highway Authority for the Trunk Road network in Wales, is in regular contact with the principal local authority and highway authority for Welshpool, which is Powys County Council. I would expect Powys County Council and the settlements within Powys to be important contributors to this work. I will be happy to keep the Committee updated as this work progresses.

On the Petition Committee's suggestion that Welshpool Town Council be included in any future consultation relating to the review of planning policy for renewable energy, the Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing agrees and her officials will make the necessary arrangements.

Ieuan

Ieuan Wyn Jones
Gweinidog dros yr Economi a Thrafnidiaeth
Minister for the Economy and Transport

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Ieuan Wyn Jones AC/AM
Dirprwy Brif Weinidog /Deputy First Minister



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Ein cyf/Our ref DFM/01269/10

Christine Chapman AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
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28 June 2010

Dea Christine

Thank you for your letter of 28 May requesting an update for the Petitions Committee on the study into the movement of wind turbine components in Mid Wales.

My officials have been working with the wind farm industry, local authorities, highway bodies, and the Police on ways of bringing the wind turbines safely to site in the timescales appropriate for the developments whilst reducing the potential impact on communities, businesses, the environment, and on other traffic in Mid Wales.

The developers are continuing to undertake studies and road trials of different routes. The most recent trial runs took place in late June and we will need to consider the implications of the issues raised by these trials, and other trials, over the coming months.

To minimise impact on the communities and the local economy, and to reduce uncertainty for communities and businesses, some General Principles for the movement of wind turbines on Trunk Roads in Mid Wales are being drawn up for discussion, which include:

- identification of the appropriate routes;
- identification of improvement works to be undertaken before any route is used;
- guidelines on the times of day when loads may be moved;
- guidelines on the maximum duration of a movement through a community;
- guidelines on the number and frequency of movements;
- procedures for the co-ordination and management of movements to minimise delays to other road users.

My officials will continue to work with the industry, the County Councils, the Police, and the other relevant highway bodies to ensure that the Traffic Management Plans, produced by the developers to accompany their planning applications for wind farm developments, will comply with the General Principles and incorporate the most appropriate routes and most effective solutions for bringing turbines to site. I have asked that my officials keep the committee updated as plans progress.

Ieuan

Ieuan Wyn Jones
Gweinidog dros yr Economi a Thrafnidiaeth
Minister for the Economy and Transport

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Response from petitioner

E-mail 23/08/10

Hi, I am sorry it has taken so long to get back to you.

The reponse from the 1st Minister does not, in our view, recognise the difficulties of road transport in Mid Wales.

Until an overall plan of the effect of the volume of wind farms has been completed no one, not even the professionals, know the real impact.

My Council urges the 1st Minister to convene such a plan and to ensure that full consultation is part of it and that the Communities are involved in its production, not

just professionals from a County Council who often just ignore the local communities.

Thanks for your time.

Yours sincerely

Robert Robinson Town Clerk

Jane Davidson AC/AM

Y Gweinidog dros yr Amgylchedd, Cynaliadwyedd a Thai
Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing



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Welsh Assembly Government

Eich cyf/Your ref: P-03-273
Ein cyf/Our ref: JD/02245/10

Christine Chapman AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
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25 October 2010

Dear Christine,

Thank you for your letter of 5th October regarding the transportation of wind turbines in Mid Wales.

In my Cabinet Written Statement of 8th June I outlined how the Welsh Assembly Government would meet its One Wales commitment to increase the deployment of renewable energy technologies by updating our over-arching planning policy on renewable energy. Proposed changes to our policy were the subject of public consultation over the summer and this consultation closed on 8th October. As requested Welshpool Town Council was contacted directly regarding this consultation and I can confirm that we have received representations from them in this respect.

The issues associated with the transportation of wind turbine components require a concerted and cross-cutting response from a variety of stakeholders including local planning authorities and the Welsh Assembly Government and we will continue to work towards a successful resolution of the issues.

Yours,

Jane Davidson AM

Y Gweinidog dros yr Amgylchedd, Cynaliadwyedd a Thai
Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing

Response from DFM

Ieuan Wyn Jones AC/AM
Dirprwy Brif Weinidog /Deputy First Minister



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Eich cyf/Your ref
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Christine Chapman AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
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31 December 2010

I am responding to your letter of the 22 November regarding petition P-03-273, the transportation of wind turbines in Mid Wales.

We are actively working with the industry, police and other highway authorities to resolve the particular issues surrounding the transportation of wind farm components in Mid Wales. We are waiting for the Industry's consultants to provide reports on the trial runs carried out this summer.

In the meantime, we are working with several individual developers to agree individual traffic management plans, which will help form the basis of the generic traffic management plan that the industry are due to prepare. We expect this plan to be ready by the middle of next year.

Ieuan Wyn Jones
Gweinidog dros yr Economi a Thrafnidiaeth
Minister for the Economy and Transport

Ieuan Wyn Jones AC/AM
Dirprwy Brif Weinidog /Deputy First Minister



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Christine Chapman AM
Chair - Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
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CF99 1NA

14 March 2011

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ieuan Wyn Jones'.

I am responding to your letter of 26 January regarding petition P-03-273, Transportation of Windfarms through Mid Wales.

My officials are working very closely with a number of windfarm developers to develop viable transportation routes to sites in Mid Wales. Additionally, we are holding discussions with Renewables UK, the industry representative body, the Police and other highway authorities to develop a strategic approach to delivering wind farm components.

We are still awaiting the report from the industry covering their trials last year, but I am advised that it will be issued to us in the very near future.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ieuan Wyn Jones'.

Ieuan Wyn Jones
Gweinidog dros yr Economi a Thrafnidiaeth
Minister for the Economy and Transport