

John Griffiths AC /AM  
Gweinidog yr Amgylchedd a Datblygu Cynaliadwy  
Minister for Environment and Sustainable Development



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-03-260  
Ein cyf/Our ref JG/05816/11

William Powell AM  
Chair Petition's committee  
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*Dear William,*

Thank you for your letter regarding a petition the Committee are considering about light pollution. I am aware that you have also written to the Minister for Local Government and Communities about this matter and this response addresses the issues raised in both pieces of correspondence.

Whilst light pollution is not an area on which the Welsh Government has developed a formal position, it is clearly a matter we are investigating as part of our carbon reduction aims. Unlike many other forms of pollution, light pollution is reversible. Lights can be shielded or replaced with more appropriate designs, and wattages can be adjusted appropriately. For example, we will be trialling LED lighting on the steelwork access road improvement at Llanwern.

In relation to street lighting, the ILE Guidance Note for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light and the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution report 'Artificial Light in the Environment' contain advice on the reduction of light pollution. The guidance provided in these documents should be followed wherever possible in respect of lighting design criteria and for the specification of appropriate luminaires in order to minimise the impact of street lighting on the night sky.

Full cut off street lighting has been used on all trunk road improvement schemes for many years to restrict the upward spread of unwanted light and ultimately reduce light pollution.

The general advice provided by the Welsh Government to our designer contractors is that they should take steps to minimise the amount of light projected (either directly or by reflection) into the night sky to avoid contributing to skyglow (light reflected or refracted on clouds or airborne dust or moisture particles causing a brightening of the night sky above towns and cities).

With regard to the role of the planning process, national planning policy contained in Planning Policy Wales (Edition 4 February 2011) already states that planning strategies and policies established through Local Development Plans (LDPs) should contribute towards minimising environmental risks and pollution and LDPs should adopt policies for lighting, including the control of light pollution. Whilst I do not have specific information on how light pollution has been addressed in LDPs across Wales, it is worth noting that LDPs are subject to Sustainability Appraisal, incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment, and issues which impart on amenity normally feature as part of this appraisal process. This SA/SEA process is iterative, continuing throughout the stages of plan preparation and will inform the framework for monitoring and review of the plan. Further to this, National planning policy is that light pollution can be a material consideration in determining planning applications and local planning authorities can attach conditions to planning permissions for new development which cover the design and operation of lighting systems and the prevention of light pollution.

*Best wishes,*



**John Griffiths AC / AM**

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