

GALAR ECOLOGY VOLUNTEER GROUP

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Your Ref P-04-533

William Powell AM

Chair Petitions Committee

Tuesday, 06 May 2014

Dear Mr Powell,

Our response to the Ministers letter of the 7th of April with regard to our petition is not able to be considered a full response as we are time restrained. We did not have sight of the letter till the 30th. April, and including a bank holiday weekend, we are asked to reply by midday of the 6th of April.

Para two of the Ministers letter sets out the WAG ambition for a low carbon economy for Wales. We would fully support that, and our group has proposals to accomplish this, which we feel are more suitable to the Welsh Economy, than the WAG's over reliance on Wind Energy.

Indeed the Ministers use of the word sustainable is questionable, in that total economic validity for the turbines this petition objects to rests with subsidies over which the WAG as no control. This is true for both commercial and private wind turbines. The subsidies are provided by consumers and industry; and as we are struggling to achieve inward investment in Wales, and the Welsh families paying for both private and commercial turbines are pro rata, far more likely to be in fuel poverty than the rest of the UK then using wind as a 'sustainable' means of providing a low carbon economy borders on the cynical. If central government reduce subsidies all turbines become uneconomic and will not be built, and those built will not operate.

The WAG ambition for a low carbon economy allows commercial wind farm operators access to the countryside in an unrestricted way, even subverting TAN 8 the WAG's supposed protection against overexploitation. Similarly, turbines operated by private individuals are being allowed without reasonable planning restriction, and while the Commercial wind farm operator's are outside Wales the private operator, with the exception of some absentee landlords are local to the problems they are causing, and real divisions in community relations are being caused.

The 'open goal' planning applications for private wind turbine exploitation, has produced "The dash for cash", which is neither sustainable nor good for Wales. Rather than pursuing the very real goals of reduction of CO2 by adaption, (as called for by the IPCC in their 2014 report), the WAG (like the landowners), are shunting their responsibilities into a technology over which they have no control, for cash benefits which will not last.

I would request the Petitions Committee allow us time to fully respond to the Ministers letter.

Yours Sincerely

James Shepherd Foster

Technical Adviser GALAR