

Lesley Griffiths AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Amgylchedd a Materion Gwledig
Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-785
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/02382/17

David John Rowlands AM
Chair - Petitions committee.
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

government.committee.business@wales.gsi.gov.uk

24 October 2017

Dear David

Thank you for your letter of 27 September, regarding Petition P-05-785 calling to 'suspend Marine Licence 12/45/ML to deposit radioactive marine sediments from the Hinkley Point nuclear site into Wales coastal waters off Cardiff'.

I am concerned by the public perception around this matter and the resulting support for this petition. I issued a written statement on 29 September to clarify the position and with a view to alleviate concerns on this matter. The full written statement can be found via the links below:

<http://gov.wales/about/cabinet/cabinetstatements/2017/marinelicencehinkleypoint/?lang=en>

Natural Resources Wales (NRW) are the marine licensing authority in Wales, and they act on behalf of the Welsh Ministers. NRW issued this licence (12/45/ML) and continue to be responsible for it, including ensuring compliance with the conditions imposed on the licence.

I would like to draw your attention to the project specific conditions 9.3 to 9.5:

9.3. The Licence Holder must submit a proposal for a sediment sampling scheme of the source sites and immediate environs to Natural Resources Wales acting on behalf of the Licensing Authority for written approval at least 6 months before any disposal operation to occur after 4th March 2016. The scheme will include details of sampling grid, analyses suites (including any appropriate radiological assessment) and proposed format of a report determining the suitability of the material for disposal at site LU110 along with timescales for carrying out these actions.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

9.4. The Licence holder must ensure the sediment sampling must be undertaken in line with the agreed scheme, as referenced in paragraph 9.3. Sampling scheme reports must be submitted to Natural Resources Wales acting on behalf of the Licensing Authority within the timescales agreed within the scheme.

9.5. The Licence Holder must ensure that no material is deposited after 4th March 2016 without written confirmation from NRW, acting on behalf of the Licensing Authority, that they are satisfied the material is suitable for deposit at site LU110.

As Chair of the Petitions Committee, I would ask you to consider the following points as part of your first formal consideration of this petition:

- The marine licence has a number of conditions requiring the sampling and testing of material to be disposed of and NRW must still provide an approval before any disposal can happen.
- As a matter of good practice, Welsh Ministers must be mindful of their role in relation to appeals under the marine licensing system and as such it is not appropriate for Ministers to comment on specifics of a marine licensing decision. Therefore, I am concerned I will be unable provide additional information to my written statement or comment further on this matter.
- Representations relating to this decision should be made directly to NRW, not the Welsh Ministers.
- However, concern remains with the public of South Wales and I will ask my officials to consider with NRW how they can communicate information on this licence as clearly and openly as possible to alleviate concerns further. NRW will also need to take into account the concerns raised in their decision making process.
- No material has been disposed of under the terms of the licence to date and material will only be disposed of if the result of sampling show the material is considered safe and suitable for disposal at sea.

Thank you for your letter on this matter and if I can be of any further assistance, please do let me know.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Regards Lesley Griffiths'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lesley Griffiths AC/AM

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