

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-04-329  
Ein cyf/Our ref JG/05714/12

William Powell AM

Chair Petition's committee

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

18 April 2012

*Dear William,*

**Petition: P-04-329 control of noise from wind turbines**

I am writing in response to your letter of 19 March, following the meeting of the Petitions Committee on 28 February.

All wind turbine developments proposed for Wales need to comply with the Planning system. Proposals under 50MW are considered by the Local Planning Authority and those above by the Infrastructure Planning Commission or the Department of Energy and Climate Change. The consenting authority is expected to give due consideration to the guidance contained within TAN 8 which endorses the ETSU-R-97 guidelines.

Following concerns raised about the consistency of approaches taken to the practical application of ETSU-R-97, the UK Government commissioned consultants Hayes Mckenzie to carry out a research project to analyse matters arising in the consideration of noise impacts when determining wind farm planning applications. The review highlighted the potential problems faced by local planning authorities dealing with noise assessments for wind farm sites, both in terms of the way the documents are structured, and in the variations in the way some factors are taken into account in the assessments. This suggested best practice guidance is required to confirm and, where necessary, clarify and add to the way ETSU-R-97 should be implemented in practice.

Variation in approach in a number of different areas was found including:

- Background noise measurements, and interpretation of data
- Prediction methodology used
- The way 'wind shear' is taken into account

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*Wedi'i argraffu ar bapur wedi'i ailgylchu (100%)*

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In addition, it is considered that guidance could usefully be provided on:

- Setting the day-time hours noise limit within the range specified by ETSU-R-97
- Dealing with the issue of modulation in the noise
- What constitutes a 'financially involved property'

Consideration could be given to:

- A simplified assessment procedure of limiting turbine noise to a fixed level
- The structure of planning conditions especially where cumulative impact of more than one site occurs.

Following the review, the Institute of Acoustics is leading a working group on establishing best practice guidance. Welsh Government Officials are part of this group. It is anticipated that a final version of guidance will be published in September.

With regard to the point you have raised on reviewing TAN8, in June 2010 Jane Davidson issued a Cabinet Statement which indicated how the previous government would meet its One Wales commitment to reviewing TAN 8. The approach adopted revised the overarching chapter 12 of Planning Policy Wales (PPW) as well as an appropriate factual update of TAN 8 in a letter which was published alongside the revised policy. PPW was revised in February 2011 following a public consultation and TAN 8 was factually updated.

*Best wishes,*



**John Griffiths AC / AM**

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