

Julie James AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Newid Hinsawdd
Minister for Climate Change



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1383
Ein cyf/Our ref JJ/02932/23

Jack Sargeant MS
Chair - Petitions committee
Senedd Cymru
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

15 November 2023

Dear Jack

Thank you for your letter of 27 October, informing me of Petition P-06-1383 from Carys Matthews. I am aware the petition has already attracted a lot of interest and will be discussed by the Petitions Committee.

It is clear from your email, and the petition that many people feel strongly about this matter. During this climate emergency, which is a serious threat, we need to ensure that we bring to an end the burning of fossil fuels. To achieve this, we need to harness the renewable potential of Wales for our energy needs.

Our recent consultation on our renewable energy targets analysed our energy needs and that we will need a range of renewable technologies of different types and scales to address the climate crisis and meet our energy targets. Wind energy, along with solar are the most mature technology and these are likely to make the most significant contribution to our energy needs in the short to medium term. We anticipate much of this will be offshore, but we will need further onshore generation. What the evidence base supporting our consultation made clear is that we cannot rely on one type of renewable energy source to support our long-term energy needs. While offshore wind will contribute to our electricity needs in the future, without the addition of a range of other renewable energy sources, including onshore wind, we will have insufficient renewable electricity generation to meet the equivalent of our needs.

Offshore wind is already contributing to our energy mix, and the potential for floating offshore offers a huge economic opportunity for local suppliers and our coastal communities. An economic opportunity I am determined that Welsh Government will do all it can to seize. However, a number of key levers that the offshore wind industry need lie in the hands of the UK Government. Without a supportive framework from the UK Government, I have concerns that the offshore wind sector will not provide the electricity generation and economic opportunities we know it can. We have made clear that the UK Government, and the Crown Estate that more work is needed to provide greater levels of certainty to the industry.

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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.

We have a robust planning framework, with our strategic position outlined in Future Wales and Planning Policy Wales. Future Wales, which was published in 2021, has development plan status and sets out the Welsh Government's strategic planning policies on a range of topics including renewable energy. Future Wales supports the Government's overall ambition to decarbonise our economy and has specifically identified pre-assessed areas where there would be a presumption in favour of onshore wind developments. All planning decisions for renewable technology, including onshore wind, are required to take into account environmental factors and public feedback. Anyone is free to submit a planning application for whatever proposed development and restricting this freedom is not the best way forward, and I do not support the call for a moratorium on onshore wind or solar farms as they still have an important role in the future energy mix.

Thank you again for your letter and bringing the petition to my attention.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Julie James". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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