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Y Gweinidog Tai a Llywodraeth Leol  
Minister for Housing and Local Government



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref JJ/05274/19

David John Rowlands AM  
Chair - Petitions committee.  
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15 February 2019

Dear David,

Thank you for your letter of 28 January regarding Petition P-04-648 Unconventional Oil and Gas Planning Applications.

In December 2018, Lesley Griffiths, Cabinet Secretary for Energy, Planning and Rural Affairs issued a Written Statement stating that to help deliver on her commitment in 2016 to reduce the use of fossil fuels she confirmed Welsh Government will not undertake any new petroleum licensing in Wales. Individual licenses will only be considered to ensure the safe management of abandoned mines or to support scientific research.

Planning policy for onshore oil and gas is contained in Planning Policy Wales (PPW) Edition 10. PPW has been comprehensively re-worked to align it with the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (2015). PPW states the continued extraction of all fossil fuels including shale gas, coal bed methane and underground coal gasification are not compatible with Welsh Government's challenging targets for decarbonisation. As such, Welsh Government's policy objective is to avoid continued extraction and consumption of fossil fuels.

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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.

The Notification Direction relates to planning applications. It states from 5 December 2018 planning applications for the development of coal and petroleum must be referred to Welsh Ministers, where local planning authorities are minded to approve them. The referral is to enable Welsh Ministers to consider whether they will call-in an application. Any decision on whether to call-in an application, be this referred as a result of a Notification Direction or through a call-in request, will be considered on its merits. In doing so, appropriate consideration will be given to whether proposals are:

- are in conflict with national planning policies;
- could have wide effects beyond their immediate locality;
- may give rise to substantial controversy beyond the immediate locality;
- are likely significantly to affect sites of scientific, nature conservation or historic interest, or areas of landscape importance;
- raise issues of national security; or
- raise novel planning issues.

A fuller explanation of our approach to call-in requests can be found on the Welsh Government website at <https://gov.wales/docs/desh/report/160401call-in-guide-en.pdf>: and you can find more information about the Notification Direction here: <https://gov.wales/topics/planning/policy/dear-cpo-letters/coal-and-petroleum-notification-direction-wales-2018/?lang=en>

Yours sincerely,



**Julie James AC/AM**

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