


Carl Sargeant AC / AM  
Y Gweinidog Cyfoeth Naturiol  
Minister for Natural Resources



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-619  
Ein cyf/Our ref CS/00682/15

William Powell AM  
Chair Petitions Committee  
Ty Hywel  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

 May 2015

Dear Bill,

Thank you for your letter dated 23 April asking for my views on comments made in response to a petition relating to “localism in planning and compensation for third parties re: infrastructure projects (P-04-619)”. The petitioner asks me to safeguard democratic decision making processes of local communities and to provide protection and compensation for those affected by major infrastructure projects in Wales.

The Planning (Wales) Bill (“the Bill”) strengthens the democratic processes and participation of local communities through a number of measures. Namely:

- The introduction of a statutory purpose for the planning system in Wales which ensures that the development and use of land contributes towards sustainable development by improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales in accordance with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015;
- A strengthened development plan framework supported by local democracy and requirements for community engagement;
- Formal pre-application community consultation requirements on prospective applicants for major developments and developments of national significance (“DNS”) and consultation requirements imposed on the Welsh Ministers when determining applications submitted directly to them;
- A requirement for the determining authority to notify town and community councils when making decisions on planning applications; and
- A requirement for local planning authorities to submit a report documenting the impact on the locality where a DNS application has been submitted in their area, as well as a voluntary arrangements for town and community councils to do so.

Other measures that fall outside of the Bill include the introduction of place plans, which will encourage greater community engagement in local decision-making by allowing communities to shape their localities. Further detail on place plans is contained in the development plan prospectus:

<http://gov.wales/docs/desh/publications/150211development-plan-prospectus-en.pdf>

Regarding the impact of major infrastructure schemes on communities, amendments were tabled at stages 2 and 3 of the Bill to make provision by development order for the payment of compensation in respect of DNS applications. These amendments were considered and opposed by the Environment and Sustainability Committee and the National Assembly for Wales.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'C' followed by a vertical line.

**Carl Sargeant AC / AM**  
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Minister for Natural Resources