

Welsh Government Responses to FOI ATISN (15447) Questions 1 to 11

Question 1

The criteria used by The Welsh Assembly Government in respect of the pre-approval of the proposed site known as Mynydd Margam (Neath Port Talbot) and Mynydd Garnwen (Bridgend County and Neath Port Talbot boundary) for suitability of use in the proposed 'Y Bryn' Windfarm Development of National Significance (DNS).

Response

This is available on the Welsh Government web site at <https://gov.wales/assessment-shore-wind-and-solar-energy-potential-wales>. It includes Arup reports for stage one *Assessment of On-Shore Wind and Solar Energy Potential in Wales*, and stage two *Assessment of On-Shore Wind and Solar Energy Potential in Wales - Refinement of Priority Areas for Renewable Energy*.

Future Wales policies, including policy 17 and 18 covering large scale wind development, have been assessed by Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA) and Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA). Both reports and supporting documentation are available on the Welsh Government web site at the following links [Future Wales: integrated sustainability appraisal](#) and [Future Wales – The National Plan 2040 - Habitats Regulations Assessment](#). The ISA and HRA reports were prepared by Arcadis.

All principal documents relating to the preparation and assessment of Future Wales (except the Future Wales Consultation) are set out here: [Future Wales – The National Plan 2040](#)

Question 2

Copies of ALL correspondence (email, verbal and telephone transcripts) between Welsh Assembly Government and the company Coriolis Energy Limited (22-24 King Street SL6 1EF) from 1st January 2016 to date.

Response

Please see Doc. 2 for emails between Welsh Government and Coriolis Energy Limited.

Question 3

Copies of ALL correspondence (email, verbal and telephone transcripts) between Welsh Assembly Government and the company ESB (Two Gateway, Dublin 3 DO3 A995) from 1st January 2016 to date.

Response

We do not hold information about this request.

Question 4

Copies of ALL correspondence (email, verbal and telephone transcripts) between Welsh Assembly Government and Natural Resources Wales from 1st January 2016 to date.

Response

The references we hold in relation to Y Bryn Windfarm is what is briefly mentioned in the NRW annual report and accounts. The [NRW 2019-20 annual report](#) and accounts is a publically available on their website and on the Senedd laying of accounts.

Please see Doc. 3 for emails between Welsh Government and Natural Resources Wales.

Question 5

What protocols exist that ensure Natural Resources Wales comply with all instruction set down by Welsh Assembly in respect of the tendering of public land.

Response

Natural Resources Wales (NRW) is responsible for managing the Welsh Government Woodland Estate (WGWE) on behalf of Welsh Ministers. However, the legal responsibility or liability for any actions taken by NRW remains with the Welsh Ministers. The Welsh Ministers have the powers to let land acquired under the Forestry Acts by virtue of Section 39(3) of the Forestry Act 1967.

These powers were delegated to NRW from the Welsh Ministers in March 2013 through an agreement under Section 83 of the Government of Wales Act 2006.

This Section 83 agreement allows NRW to exercise these functions on behalf of the Welsh Ministers. The agreement outlines the limitations on NRW's exercise of disposal and acquisition functions. The permission of Welsh Minister's must be sought in relation to decisions to dispose of any part of the WGWE which is novel or likely to be considered controversial.

In addition to the above, in June 2021, the guidance in relation to the 'Identification and Disposal of Welsh Government Non-Core Surplus Land and Buildings' was shared by Welsh Government with all Welsh Government Sponsored Bodies, including NRW.

Question 6

Copies of all correspondence between Welsh Assembly Government and Natural Resources Wales in respect of the authority given for NRW to put Mynydd Margam and Mynydd Garnwen out for tender.

Response

We do not hold information about this request.

Question 7

Copies of ALL correspondence (email, verbal and telephone transcripts) between Welsh Assembly Government and Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council with regards the proposed development known as 'Y Bryn' Windfarm, from 1st January 2016 to date, including discussions and agreements with regards the removal or alteration of public pathways and cycle routes.

Response

Please see Doc. 4 for correspondence between Welsh Government and Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council

Question 8

Copies of ALL correspondence (email, verbal and telephone transcripts) between Welsh Assembly Government and Bridgend County Borough Council with regards the proposed development known as 'Y Bryn' Wind Farm, from 1st January 2016 to date, including discussions and agreements with regards the removal or alteration of public pathways and cycle routes.

Response

We do not hold information about this request

Question 9

The Treasury Green Book Policy is designed to 'Optimise Social and Public Value', and yet Welsh Assembly Government has chosen to not comply with this policy with regards all Developments of National Significance. I'd like copies of all correspondence in respect of the protocol Welsh Government followed in order to justify this decision.

Response

The issue of using the HM Treasury Green Book was considered and commentary on this issue provided in the [Integrated Sustainability Appraisal](#) (page 723).

Due to the nature and scale of Future Wales, the approach the Welsh Government took to its assessment is considered to be the most appropriate method to assess the impacts of the plan, including the economic impacts. To deliver the type of cost-benefit analysis as set out in HM Treasury's Green Book would require detailed proposals for specific projects and that information is not available at the development plan stage.

It was not considered possible to develop a meaningful cost-benefit analysis for the overarching development plan framework. Wider social, economic, cultural and environmental impacts which would be addressed by a Green Book assessment were captured by the integrated assessment approach.

Question 10

All evidence of the landscape modelling for the pre-assessed area 'Y Bryn' Windfarm.

Response

This is available on the Welsh Government website at <https://gov.wales/assessment-shore-wind-and-solar-energy-potential-wales>. It includes Arup reports for stage one *Assessment of On-Shore Wind and Solar Energy Potential in Wales*, and stage two *Assessment of On-Shore Wind and Solar Energy Potential in Wales - Refinement of Priority Areas for Renewable Energy*.

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Question 11

All records relating to the redistribution of all money recouped by NRW as a result of the sale of the land intended for use in the proposed 'Y Bryn' Wind Farm Development.

Response

We do not hold any information in relation to this request.