

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



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Countryside Alliance

political@countryside-alliance.org

20 April 2023

Dear Countryside Alliance,

Thank you for your emails regarding the Say NO to pylons campaign. I am responding to you as the campaign organiser, rather than to each individual email.

Welsh Ministers are the decision makers on Developments of National Significance and consequently I am unable to comment on the details of the Green GEN Cymru project. However, I am able to point to our policy position and our expectation of developers as they bring their projects through the planning process.

During this climate change emergency, we need to ensure that we end the burning of fossil fuels and instead harness the renewable potential Wales for our energy needs. We also need a stronger and more resilient electricity network to enable communities across Wales to take up low carbon technologies such as heat pumps, solar panels and electric cars, as well as to connect renewable energy projects into the system. However, in doing so, we need to strike the right balance and avoid unacceptable impacts.

We recognise that energy proposals, and in particular the resulting landscape change, can be controversial and they require careful consideration. It is our planning system's role to ensure that decisions are made openly and transparently, in the context of a clear plan-led policy framework and through a process that allows material evidence to be brought forward and considered by decision makers. This process is designed to consider whether any specific developments are appropriate and meet our policy requirements.

You can find our National planning policy [here](#). It sets out the Welsh Government's preferred position on new power lines, stating that, where possible, they should be laid underground. However, it is recognised that a balanced view must be taken against costs which could render otherwise acceptable projects unviable. Where undergrounding of lines is not possible or applicable, proactive engagement with energy companies and the public to mitigate the visual impact of any potential new transmission lines should take place.

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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 expect developers to involve people in projects they are developing and to listen to and act on their concerns. Developer engagement with communities is encouraged at the beginning of a project to provide the public and other stakeholders with an opportunity to express their opinions at an early stage. If an application is formally submitted to Planning and Environment Decisions Wales (PEDW), Developments of National Significance proposals are subject to statutory consultation and publicity requirements so that the public and other stakeholders can make formal representations at the appropriate time. Guidance on the DNS process can be found on the PEDW website [here](#).

Yours sincerely,

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

**Julie James AS/MS**

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