

UK Minister of State for Energy, Clean Growth and Climate Change submission of 5 August 2022

PE1864/LLLLL: Increase the ability of communities to influence planning decisions for onshore windfarms

Thank you for your letter of 7th July, about a petition from ‘Scotland against Spin’ asking the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to increase the ability of communities to influence planning decisions for onshore windfarms. As you will appreciate, given that the petition was directed to the Scottish Parliament, it would not be appropriate for me to comment on the specifics of this request.

Onshore wind is a mature, efficient and low-cost technology and forms an important part of the UK energy mix. As set out in the Energy White Paper and Net Zero Strategy, a low-cost net zero system of the future will be predominantly comprised of wind and solar. To achieve this, we will require a sustained increase in locally supported onshore wind to 2030 and beyond, alongside other renewables such as solar and offshore wind.

It is important that onshore wind and other renewable developers continue to engage with local communities as we increase renewable deployment to meet net zero. As set out in the recent British Energy Security Strategy, the government will consult this year on developing local partnerships for a limited number of supportive communities who wish to host new onshore wind infrastructure in England. This will include consideration for how we can maximise the benefits for host communities, including for example lower energy bills.

The UK Government is always willing to engage and hold constructive conversations with the Scottish Government on planning matters.

THE RT HON GREG HANDS MP

Minister of State for Energy, Clean Growth and Climate Change