



Janet Finch-Saunders MS|AS
Aelod Senedd Cymru dros Aberconwy
Member of the Welsh Parliament for Aberconwy



Julie James MS,
Minister for Climate Change,
Welsh Government,
By Email

11 October 2021

Re: Planning and Environment Decisions Wales

Office of Janet Finch-Saunders MS,
29 Madoc Street,
Llandudno,
LL30 2TL.
01492 871 198
The Welsh Parliament,
Cardiff Bay,
CF99 1NA.
0300 200 7245
Janet.Finch-Saunders@senedd.wales

Dear Minister, Julie,

I hope that this letter finds you and all the team well. I am writing to express my serious concerns about Planning and Environment Decisions Wales.

As you will be aware, the new service commenced on 1 October 2021. The body is responsible for handling all casework previously handled by PINS Wales, and of course all appeals or casework for consents previously determined by PINS Wales should be directed to the new body.

An open letter by Neil Hemington, Chief Planner, Planning Directorate, dated 15 July 2020, states: *'You may also wish to advise your service users, stakeholders and internal consultees that information on any live appeals or casework will cease to be available from either the Appeals Casework Portal or the Developments of National Significance Portal from that date'*.

Should the date of the open letter be correct, it means that the Welsh Government, and specifically your department, has had 14 months to ensure that a suitable system is in place to keep all informed on live appeals and casework.

I have been privy to correspondence by a Welsh Government official which states: *'Whilst we are undergoing this transition period from the Planning Inspectorate Wales into PEDW we are without full access to our new casework system, or our documents. As such I am unable to provide an indication on the current status of the appeal in question. I know that colleagues in both the Welsh Government and the Planning Inspectorate are working to enable us to return to normal working practices as quickly as possible'*.

[Cont...]



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It seems to me that the transition is causing a serious crisis as officials are without full access to the new casework system and documents, and as such, are unable to provide information on appeals. As I am sure you will agree this shambles is completely unacceptable and unprofessional. It follows that I would be grateful if you could arrange for urgent steps to be taken to ensure that the issues are resolved and that officials are able to continue with their work.

Yours sincerely,

Janet

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