

IPC Infrastructure Planning Commission

Meeting Note

Status	FINAL
Author	Eleri Davies

Meeting with	Welsh Government (WG) and Planning Inspectorate (PINS) Wales
Meeting date	19 March 2012
Attendees (IPC)	Ian Gambles (Director of Operations) Simon Farmer (National Infrastructure and Major Policy Officer - PINS) Eleri Davies (Bilingual Case Officer)
Attendees (WG)	Matthew Quinn (Director of Environment and Sustainability) Rosemary Thomas (Deputy Director of Planning) Ron Loveland (Deputy Director of Sustainable Energy and Industry Wales) Julia Williams (Sustainability and Environmental Evidence Division) Theresa Davies (Planning Division)
Attendees (PINS Wales)	Peter Burley (Director – PINS Wales) <i>(by phone)</i> Richard Poppleton (Director Designate – PINS Wales) <i>(by phone)</i>
Location	Welsh Government Offices, Cathays Park, Cardiff

Meeting purpose	Liaison meeting between WG, PINS Wales and the IPC
------------------------	--

Summary of outcomes	<p><u>Update on PINS/IPC integration</u></p> <p>IPC provided an update on the transition of IPC operations to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) on 1 April 2012 and advised that transitional arrangements for nationally significant infrastructure project (NSIP) applications have been issued by the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG).</p> <p>IPC noted that, while the formal status of Welsh Commissioners would disappear with the abolition of the IPC, it would remain important to recognise the sensitivities of working in Wales and take them into account in appointing suitable persons to examine NSIP applications in Wales, subject to availability.</p>
----------------------------	---

PINS Wales noted the priority of the Local Development Plan (LDP) workload in Wales over the next 12 to 18 months. This would make it more difficult to allocate senior Welsh Inspectors to examine NSIP applications during this time.

IPC cases in/affecting Wales

IPC provided a map of IPC projects in and around Wales, and an overview of recent outreach work in Wales. **IPC** confirmed that it had not (to date) received notification of a potential project for the proposed grid connection to serve Anglesey.

WG noted the situation with regards wind farm and associated infrastructure applications in the Powys County Council (PCC) area and the resultant impact on PINS Wales resources if permissions are refused and the developers lodge appeals. **WG** noted that they have provided funding to PCC to carry out specific pieces of work on wind farm schemes in their area falling under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (TCPA 1990) regime.

It was agreed that the resource pressures could be significant and further consideration should be given to handling and timing issues. The possibility of conjoining certain hearings or inquiries might be considered, but was unlikely to be feasible across different regimes or geographical areas.

Update on policy and legislation in Wales

WG gave an overview of the following:

- Planning White Paper on elements requiring legislative provision which will feed into the Planning Bill.
- Creation of a single environment body in April 2013.
- Other key projects which may have implications for the planning system, including:
 - Sustainable Development Bill
 - Housing Bill
 - Heritage Bill
 - Environment Bill
 - Highways and Transport Bill
 - Task and finish City Regions Group set up by the Minister for Business, Enterprise, Technology and Science
 - Welsh Infrastructure Investment Plan under development by the Finance Minister and Leader of the House

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WG research on the consenting process for renewable energy projects in Wales, being undertaken by Hyder on behalf of WG • Report by John Davies (former Director of PINS Wales) on the future structure for delivering planning in Wales <p>Energy Wales: A Low Carbon Transition (March 2012): in relation to bullet point 1 on page 13, the IPC indicated that it could, if required, input into the review of other consenting regimes where there is a cross-boundary element.</p> <p>IPC queried whether WG had any involvement in the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) review of Habitats Regulations implementation. WG advised that while Habitats Regulations matters are not part of the Planning Division's portfolio, colleagues in the Sustainability and Environmental Evidence Division are keeping a close eye on this review.</p>
--	---

Record of any advice given	None
-----------------------------------	------

Specific decisions/follow up required?	
---	--

Circulation List	Attendees