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16 March 2015

Gwilym Davies
Chief Planning Officer
Powys County Council
The Gwalia
Llandrindod Wells
Powys LD1 6AA

Dear Mr Davies

P/2012/0573

Having heard of your Authority's plan for yet another postponement of a decision meeting from the 9 to 28th April, I rang Mr Packer on Friday morning and he explained to me that basically the reasons were twofold: 1. a desire to have the meeting in the Town Hall and that no earlier date was available and 2. it would be a lot easier for him to write his report if he knew whether or not a technical start had been made.

After I put the phone down the more I thought about it, the more vexed I became. Whatever the reality, the impression consistently given over the last fifteen months is that if the objectors sneeze the earth shakes - and the applicant is fobbed off for another day. RAs (sic) a result the scheme has remorselessly been pushed further towards, and eventually past, the key date of 25 April 2015.

What's wrong with the ordinary committee room? This is not a decision meeting about a wind farm but an access track and I cannot see that the ordinary committee room is not perfectly adequate for the purpose. The public have no right to take part in the debate and turning the meeting into a public spectacle is hardly likely to improve the decision making process.

It was the second reason that on reflection struck me as complete nonsense; 'it would be easier for me writing my report if I knew whether or not a technical start had been made'. What has that got to do with arriving at the correct decision on the Llanshay access track? Precisely nothing. As Michael Phillips and I confirmed to Mr Packer when we met him on 5th March, we have indeed started proceedings to effect a technical start. That is not something we wanted to do but something we have been forced to do because of the inordinate time it has taken for Powys not to make a decision on the Llanshay access track. And it is something which, done from inside the site and without any use of the Llanshay Lane, Bond Dickinson and a planning barrister have opined will not contravene the provision of the 106 Agreement. Para 1.12 specifically excludes site access and establishment.

At the conclusion of that meeting Mr Packer confirmed that the 9th April was the date set for a decision meeting, providing he could clear up any CEMP issues

raised in the more recent consultation. He is surely now aware that nothing new of any significance has emerged. Bond Dickinson's opinion on the objector's submission will be with you today.

Just over fifteen months ago, Michael Phillips of Dulas and I sat with you, the second case officer, in your office and you indicated that you couldn't see any reason why it should not go forward with a recommendation for approval. You admitted that it had taken a long time to get thus far and that we should aim for the April meeting. That was April 2014. At the end of January, fifth case officer Mr Packer inherited from Mathews Griffiths a 53 page report that ended with a recommendation for approval. He indicated that he wanted to edit it, something that he has already had a month to work on, and in the absence of any significant developments must surely be able very quickly to finish. I am sure he can, for if he cannot he would be demonstrating the sort of procrastination that consistently, with the exception of the brief period of Mr Griffith's stewardship, has so frustrated the applicant over the last two and a half years.

Before Christmas and the subsequent further January postponement, a very experienced planning consultant - himself an ex-planning officer - described the saga of this application as the most shambolic he had ever witnessed. If the application does not go for decision by the Committee on the 9th April, the whole story will be referred to your internal complaints procedure and, if necessary, thence to the Planning Ombudsman.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) Simon Gourlay

Sir Simon Gourlay

CC Jeremy Patterson	Interim CEO Powys CC
Sue Bolter	Head of Regeneration and Development
Councillor David Price	Planning Committee Chairman