

The Company Secretary  
Celtic Energy Ltd  
Heol Ty Aberaman  
Aberaman  
Aberdare  
CF44 6RF

Eich cyf . Your ref: SW 696/7  
Ein cyf: Our ref: A-PP185-07-014

Date: 5 August 2004

Dear Sir

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990: SECTION 77  
CALLED-IN APPLICATION BY CELTIC ENERGY LTD  
PROPOSED EXTENSION TO EXISTING OPENCAST COAL SITE WITH ON-  
SITE  
WASHERY, FOLLOWED BY RESTORATION AND AFTERCARE  
MANAGEMENT  
AT EAST PIT, GWAUN CAE GURWEN, NR AMMANFORD

1. The purpose of this letter is to advise you of the outcome of the meeting on 3 August 2004 of the Planning Decision Committee established to consider the above application. At the meeting the Committee concluded that it would be necessary to seek further information relating to issues raised at the inquiry before they could reach a decision on the application.

2. The application was referred to the National Assembly for Wales for determination by a direction issued by it on 3 April 2003 under Section 77 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (the 1990 Act). The Committee met on the 4 August following a resolution by the Assembly on 14 July 2004 that a committee, to be known as Planning Decision Committee (2)2004/4, be established in accordance with Standing Order 17 to discharge the functions of the Assembly under Section 77 of the 1990 Act, in respect of the application by Celtic Energy Ltd described above.

4. At the meeting the Committee gave consideration to the report of the Inspector Clive Nield BSc, CEng, MICE, MCIWEM who held a local inquiry into the application.

5. Having considered all the submitted evidence the Committee had concerns about transportation issues raised by the application and asked that we seek your views on two specific matters before it determines the application.

6. Firstly, the Committee noted that in parallel with this application, Celtic Energy Limited has also submitted an application for planning permission for a new railhead to be constructed on land just to the south of the site, that application being held in abeyance until the current application is determined. In the light of Government policy which wishes to see freight carried by rail or

waterway rather than road wherever this is economically possible the Committee would wish to have further information on the extent to which it is anticipated that coal is likely to be transported from the site by rail were planning permission to be granted for the opencast application and the new railhead. The Committee would also wish to be informed of your views on the imposition of a "Grampian " condition preventing coaling operations until a new railhead to serve the site is constructed and operational.

7. Secondly, the Committee has concerns about suggested condition 21 restricting the movements of heavy goods vehicles, with the capacity of carrying coal or minerals, from entering or leaving the site at specified times so as to protect the interest of the amenities of the area and to prevent such movements conflicting with school times. They are not satisfied on the evidence presented that that such restrictions would necessarily prevent these heavy goods vehicles passing the school at times children were entering or leaving the school site. The Committee would wish to see further information on this matter so that it can be ensured that such condition is effective.

8. The above information should be submitted to this office within the next 28 days.

9. Nothing in this letter should be construed as indicating that the Committee have reached a conclusion on the planning merits of the application.

10. A copy of this letter has been sent to the Director of Environment and Consumer Services Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council and to those persons and organisations who appeared at the inquiry.

Yours faithfully

R. O. Evans  
Head of Branch, Planning 1  
National Assembly for Wales

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