



Alun Ffred Jones  
Environment and Sustainability Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff Bay  
CF99 1NA

14 January 2015

Dear Alun

**Grid connectivity and the development of marine renewable energy in Anglesey**

The Enterprise and Business Committee is currently undertaking an inquiry into the maritime economy in Wales, including the opportunities provided by marine renewable energy, the potential economic benefits of this sector, and how effectively the sector is being supported. At a recent meeting we heard evidence which seems to be relevant to the remit of your Committee.

When we visited Anglesey Energy Island on 9 July we heard from those involved about the significant opportunities for development of marine renewables, and the fact that Anglesey hopes to be a world centre of excellence in this sector. We were told that many international companies are interested in investing and / or establishing themselves in the area. Opportunities exist not only in generating electricity on and around Anglesey, but also in establishing a cluster of firms in the area with expertise which could lead to innovations in the sector, with potential opportunities for manufacturing as well as export of equipment and construction of installations elsewhere in the UK and beyond.

However, we were also told that securing adequate grid connectivity represents the most significant of three critical issues for future development of marine

renewables on Anglesey, along with securing the necessary permissions for development and finance (both investment and the electricity price).

Energy Island has an ambition to generate 140MW of marine renewable electricity, and considers grid connectivity to enable the export of 150MW to be required. However, we were told that while grid connections are often provided reactively in response to specific requests, a more proactive approach is needed because of the nature of the industry as a rapidly emerging sector, and the number of companies considering Anglesey as a base. The reactive approach currently applied appears to be a barrier to the development of the sector.

This is also an issue which Rhodri Glyn Thomas AM has also identified in his work in this area on behalf of the Committee of the Regions.

The Environment and Sustainability committee has considered energy generation already in this Assembly, and I understand you are about to return to this area. Consequently, we felt it might be helpful to share the evidence we have heard in this area as you consider your future work.

Kind regards,

William

William Graham,

Chair, Enterprise and Business Committee