

Environment and Sustainability Committee

Inquiry into Energy Policy and Planning in Wales

EPP 171 – Stephen and Susan Wilkinson

22.9.11

Dear Sirs,

We write as householders living and working in TAN 08 area Carno North.

We wish to bring to the attention of the committee very simply the impact of the industrialisation of Mid Wales.

As local residents we have been aware of the serious implications of these proposals on our personal circumstances in relation our lifestyles and our homestead.

The more recent public consultation exercises for both the Dyfnant Forest Windfarm (Scottish Power) and the infrastructure requirements for the whole of our area has confirmed the serious effect on our lives.

Our property is now blighted in planning terms as our home has been on the open market for twelve months and during that time arranged viewings have been cancelled via our agent who informs us that once they become aware of the proposals their interest disappears.

The advice given to us is that we could become 'unsaleable'.

The same situation applies to other locals in similar circumstances.

In one particular case the agent actually declined to even visit a property to perform a valuation - the reason being given as 'your are in TAN 08'.

In terms of the bigger picture the cumulative effect of all the proposed and potential developments at the various planning stages will impact upon the area for possibly the next decade and beyond.

Individual schemes in isolation are considered when in reality the whole philosophy and effect in respect of traffic, congestion, infrastructure works, pylons, substations etc need to be strategically assessed before any decisions are made on these applications.

We have deep concerns that the Welsh Government have handed over the public forests of Wales without any consultation with local communities who live, work and play in these areas.

To leave the developers to 'consult' local communities is tantamount to political negligence.

No compensation packages are being considered (as compared with the high speed rail links).

The only considerations being muted seem to be community benefit funds which in relation to the phenomenal subsidies being given to the mainly foreign windfarm developers is scandalous.

As ordinary taxpayers we are forced to subsidise the governments ridiculous 'green' policies of industrial on shore windfarms with minute benefit to our communities or ourselves.

Our properties are being devalued on a daily basis, we are still paying our Council Taxes based on already inflated valuations (we were revalued without consultation some years ago).

Should these untried and untested 606 feet tall turbines be constructed in the Dyfnant Forest close to our property we will suffer -

the visual destruction of our landscape

the loss of the forest amenity whilst this project goes ahead

the potential effect on our health is totally unknown due to the proposals to install the largest on shore wind turbines this country has ever seen.

we believe the Government should seriously review any minimum distance from habitable dwellings and communities

the guidance being used to assess noise nuisance ETSU R 97 is completely out of date and irrelevant considering the enormity of these developments

a complete review of TAN 08 needs to be carried out in relation to more up to date information in light of innovations in green technologies

with regard to the forests of Wales the Welsh Government should stop all developments until a socio-economic assessment and strategic environmental assessment is undertaken as required by EU directives

the legal implication of how the Welsh Government under the Forestry Act could lease the forests for industrial purposes is still to be investigated

the strategic assessment of the cumulative transport issues has yet to be resolved

the development of the infrastructure for the decimation of Mid Wales will run into millions (if not billions) of pounds

this will destroy lives, homes and businesses

the tourism industry in the area will disappear overnight once the traffic situation takes effect with the subsequent devastation in terms of jobs, incomes and businesses.

In summary the whole essence of industrial sized on shore wind developments and its cumulative effects on communities needs to be addressed before further decisions are made..

The current rounds of statements trying to lay blame on the Westminster government are merely a smoke screen in that any decisions made by any decision-making body can only be considered in relation to planning policies i.e. the current TAN 08 document - hence a review should be undertaken immediately.

Targets quoted as 'upper limits' when trying to placate the masses are known to be false since written evidence is available stating that limits 'are to be seen as a minima'.

The Welsh Government needs to heed its people and consider their views.

The strength of feeling against this programme is immense and shows no sign of faltering - indeed public feelings are at an all time high.

We expect a public statement to be issued to show the outcome of this review and ideally a moratorium be placed whilst all these relevant issues are addressed independently so that the public's faith in its democratic leaders be restored.

Their image at the moment is severely tainted in that the Ministers responsible have yet to come to the area to face questions from the people whose lives are being seriously affected by poorly constructed energy policies.

The Government's approach seems to be simply to handover public funds to major foreign companies to produce totally inefficient and expensive energy forms.

Minimal consideration has been given to actually saving energy as no major energy supplier has any interest in losing income streams.

As a final note an energy company representative stated at a meeting in our property that without subsidies from the taxpayer no on shore windfarm would ever be built.

Regards,

Stephen Wilson and Susan Wilkinson