

Environment and Sustainability Committee

Inquiry into Energy Policy and Planning in Wales

EPP 183 – Becky Bigglestone

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing to you to voice my objections to the industrialisation of the landscape of Mid Wales. The land of Mid Wales is one of its greatest wealths and assets, and if these plans go ahead, it won't be possible to walk in Mid Wales (or much of the rest of the UK for that matter, but that is a different fight), without being in sight of the windfarms - losing the raw beauty and un-spoiled nature of the landscape. We who live in Mid Wales do not do so for the artistic cultural life, or the good amenities, the good transport links, the night life, the choice of schools etc, we do it because we love this land; and these turbines threaten to destroy so much of what we hold dear.

The turbines will threaten to cause huge damage to our roads, with us not only facing road closures while they are busy shipping in (at huge cost) the turbines and substation and pylons, we will then be faced with all the road repairs that are needed, and the road widening - further damaging our rural land and destroying the hedgerow habitat for many small mammals and birds, and thus threatening the larger predators that feed from them - foxes, buzzards etc.

Not only this, while roads are closed, access to the emergency services will put lives at risk. Time taken on detours to get to Shrewsbury Hospital, or Aberystwyth hospital will put lives at risk; and the fire brigade will face the same difficulties. Already, access to emergency services is slow - this would make it so much slower. Will you come and apologise at someone's funeral if this goes ahead, and the road difficulties cause a death?

The low noise frequency problems are now starting to cause challenges in the courts in Scotland, we do not want them here, and feel that there will be sound pollution along with visual pollution. The last noise study was done over 13 years ago, on much smaller turbines. It is irrelevant to this.

There are risks to swathes of our local forests, which threatens more natural habitat, and the character of the land. Some of the forests are 100s, if not 1000s of years old.

This threat to the landscape brings with it economic threats. The tourism industry brings in much needed capital to the area, and provides jobs that support many families, and keep them from having to claim benefits. This development would jeopardise the tourist industry, and bring economic deprivation to the area. This is without looking at the depreciation of house/land value, which could be up to 70%, trapping people where they live, or causing massive financial hardship.

There has been no environmental study of the implications of TAN8, nor assessment of the cumulative effects this could bring - the risk of flooding from Newtown downwards on the Severn, the loss of rare and fragile habitat, that, even if at a later date all this were removed, would possibly never recover.

All of the above are some (and only some) of the costs of the development of wind power across Mid Wales. There are no benefits, apart from to a few small, but rich and powerful people and businesses - the wind farm developers, Scottish Power, National Grid. To the individual and the tax payer, there are no benefits.

The turbines will do nothing in regards to global warming, they cost as much CO₂ as they save when you take into account the building (in China, causing massive pollution over there), shipping, repairing (which is frequent) and de-commissioning of a pylon (they do not have a long life expectancy), add in that for every KW of power they provide, a conventional power station has to be on standby for when the wind doesn't blow, or blows too hard, all of which is creating more CO₂.

The turbines won't prevent the building of a single power station - nuclear or otherwise. If you were to put turbines on every suitable (& unsuitable) hill top in Wales, you'd get approx 4% of the output of one nuclear power station - **4%**.

Due to the subsidies that the wind developers get, and the fact that the national grid has to buy power from them - at a higher cost than 'normal' power, all of our energy bills are going to increase

more than they already are. Energy hardship is already an economic fact in Mid Wales, with people not being able to pay their energy bills, and either getting into debt, or just going without. This will only make it worse - compounding the economic hardship already threatening through this proposed development.

The idea that wind power is power for free is as ludicrous as saying that oil is power for free - they both cost money to pay for the infrastructure, transmission, and machinery to mine / collect, and to service said machinery. Wind power is not free - it is expensive - both economically and environmentally.

The WAG was created to give Wales a voice, and to protect us from Westminster, when they disregard our views and damage our land and lives. Do not become a Welsh Westminster. This is the sort of scheme that I would expect Westminster to foist upon us, not our own WAG to. I ask you to stand and be counted. I know that power schemes over a certain level are the remit of Westminster, I ask you do all you can to take the fight to Westminster on our behalf for those developments that fall within Westminster's remit, and not to be a toothless tiger; and that for those developments within your purview, you put an end to and protect us from. Please, listen to the people of Mid Wales, not the rich and powerful wind developers and power companies.

Yours sincerely

Becky Bigglestone