

Environment and Sustainability Committee

Inquiry into Energy Policy and Planning in Wales

EPP 202 – Moira W Smith

Dear Sirs,

In Wales generally and within Powys in particular, we have sufficient descending water to run ‘cheap to manufacture and install’ electricity generators that work for years with the minimum attention, do not run dry and could generate enough power to serve **local communities** and return any surplus to the National grid. A typical example of the locations mentioned is at Furnace, on the borders of Ceredigion and Powys, where there is a restored iron foundry with a working, water-driven wheel powered by a long fall of water capable of running several generators, none of which in any way would contaminate the flow of water. Even the existing wheel could serve a whole village, were it to be used to generate electricity.

Recently, Lord Dafydd Elis Thomas, to his immense credit, has successfully thwarted an attempt by one County Council Planning Department to obstruct an extension to an existing water powered system, but some landowners and developers benefit to a huge extent by ignoring local, green, cheap, proven systems of hydro power. Local power generation would not require wind farms, overhead pylons or electricity sub stations.

The wind farm lobby comprises greedy people. They have the power to abuse the public and benefit themselves. Those who pay for their lavish gravy train are the poor, who are growing poorer by the day. What happens when people do without electricity because it has become too expensive? Furthermore, if Westminster supported financially those who wish to have solar power batteries and water-heating installed on their homes, not with laughably small sums, but generously, much environmental destruction would be avoided and the cost would compare favourably with wind-farms and their infrastructure.

Newly built homes should have these facilities installed. Social housing, in particular, would be of greater benefit to those who use it, if their bills for electricity and heating were reduced by these means. Surely, it does not take much effort to make such installations mandatory for all new buildings, whether domestic or commercial. The huge Welsh dams that provide water for England also have potential to be used in the same way, by using the water that runs over the dam walls to power turbines.

Many people who would love to have solar powered batteries and water heating simply cannot afford the cost of it, and know that they would not see enough benefit in their life time to recover that cost.

What reasons are given for turning a blind eye to the glaringly obvious solutions available? The answer is sheer greed on the part of those who insist on wind farms being the only solution to growing energy demand because of the huge returns they receive for having the wind farms erected on their land.

For the sake of commonsense, please think again about TAN 8, its expense and its damage to our countryside before we lose so much that we hold dear.

Yours faithfully

Moira W Smith