

## **Environment and Sustainability Committee**

Inquiry into Energy Policy and Planning in Wales

EPP 247 – Diane Reeves

Dear Sir/Madam

I would like to comment on the following 2 petitions which I understand are currently being given consideration by the Welsh Government:

1. No to TAN8 wind farms & high voltage lines spoiling our communities
2. Transport of wind turbines in mid-Wales

I write as a resident of Shropshire where my home is very close to one of the suggested pylon routes. I can scarcely guess at the **FUTURE** damage this project will do to the rural communities in the areas that will be affected by this proposed project, but let me assure you that the ripples are **ALREADY** being felt. In an already depressed housing market we are now hearing of instances where current offers to buy property are being withdrawn because of the chaos and destruction of this beautiful landscape that will happen should this project go ahead. In some instances the offers are not being withdrawn, but are being drastically reduced. Why should home-owners in this area pay such a considerable price? Why are we in **England** to pick up the bill for something that is so wholly unconnected with us, i.e. something that has been decided by the **Welsh** Assembly? I realise that underground cables are a more expensive option than the erection of pylons for the National Grid, but rather than penalising the afore mentioned home-owners by wiping what collectively will amount to millions of pounds off the value of properties in the affected areas, surely a more just and fair way of distributing the cost would be for the end-user to fund the new supply?

What I have said above is in regard to the effects being felt *now*, before any further decisions have been made. However, in regard to the wider problems associated with this project I wish to raise further objections.

One of my concerns is the associated health problems caused by the proximity to homes and communities of electro-magnetic fields around the pylons, the associated noise issues with both the wind farms and the pylons, and the dramatic impact of stress that will be caused to the people living and working in quiet rural areas who will now have to live amid the chaos and destruction of their beautiful environment.

Another concern is the effect of all the transport needs for such a massive undertaking. The required access over such a large area with a relatively undeveloped transport infrastructure will mean that the face of this landscape will be changed forever. Instead of area of outstanding natural beauty we will be faced with industrialised scenes on a scale never before seen here. If the Welsh

Assembly are determined on this plan and think that concerns about prospective damage to such a beautiful area is without sufficient weight, perhaps they should consider keeping the whole project in Wales, where they could run the pylons through the Brecon Beacons and connect up to the National Grid further south? Just because the proponents of this plan may not have visited or even heard of the area where I live does not mean it is any less beautiful than the Brecon Beacons.

Whilst considering the cost of underground cables versus pylons, another consideration must surely be the effect this project will have on the employment market in this area. If the beauty and serenity of the area are lost, tourism will be considerably affected. Therefore one of the consequences is surely much higher unemployment in the area being as so many jobs are in the tourism sector. What will be the cost of this in terms of personal well-being and financial hardship to local families, and furthermore, who will pick up the bill for all subsequent unemployment benefits?

As a final point, I understand that huge swathes of forest will need to be cut down to accommodate the wind turbines. Surely this is hardly a 'Green' action? Is it not counter-productive to the so-called benefits of wind energy? May I suggest that a much less intrusive and less reactive way of providing 'Green' energy is go down the road of Solar power? If all buildings were fitted with solar panels surely the need for all this proposed devastation to communities and landscapes would be superfluous. The National Grid itself is currently advocating Solar power with advertisements encouraging people to fit Solar panels in their homes. This, they say, will provide sufficient energy to power the resident's own homes *with enough surplus energy to sell back into the National Grid*. Solar energy is obviously a much simpler, more cost effective and seriously more harmonious solution to fulfilling our country's future energy needs.

Yours faithfully  
Diane Reeves