

21st September 2011

Clerk of the Committee
Environment and Sustainability Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Dear Sir/Madam

Re Energy policy and planning

We are pleased that a government enquiry has been set up to look at planning policy surrounding energy and are writing to outline our concerns regarding TAN 8 and the effect of this badly conceived policy.

My husband and I have lived and worked in Montgomeryshire all our lives and both run our own small businesses.

The confusion that has been caused by the current policy known as TAN8 is of grave concern. The most concerning aspect of planning policy is that no account has been taken of the cumulative effect on visual amenity, transport, flooding, socio economic and environmental factors. It is unbelievable that a policy can be developed and implemented by a newly devolved government and be so poorly thought through. I understand that TAN8 was implemented before a European deadline where a full assessment was required, but regardless of deadlines, this should be carried out.

It is often argued that consultation took place widely when TAN 8 was originally conceived. The original TAN8 document only mentions pylons in a couple of instances in a sixty page document. The transport to construct these schemes is also not referred to. How then could ordinary people have foreseen the devastating consequences. As a full assessment has never been carried out, this reckless approach to some of the most beautiful parts of Wales is astounding. No mapping has been undertaken to look at the total scheme with the wind farms and infrastructure. TAN 8 therefore needs to be amended to state that a full cumulative review is needed in each of the 7 Strategic Search Areas.

We will be faced with a massive increase in transport movements, loads of 200t +, the structural damage to roads and adjacent buildings will go on for five years or more with over 22,000 abnormal loads. How will the population go about their daily business and emergency services function? The economic impact will be devastating, whilst the number of jobs created will be very limited.

Our fragile rural economy relies to a great extent on tourism, we have a large number of caravan parks who attract regular visitors who spend money with local businesses. Day trippers visit our beautiful county travelling from Shropshire and Cheshire whilst a large amount of traffic passes through from the rest of the UK travelling to the Cambrian coast. Our roads are barely functioning now in the tourist season, Welshpool and Newtown are bottlenecks due to new road schemes that have been badly planned. Newtown has adopted a new traffic light system to replace a roundabout in anticipation of being able to handle wide loads carrying wind farm infrastructure. This means an extra hour is added to journey times in peak times.

TAN8 needs to be amended for the sake of the people living in the communities affected by the seven strategic search areas. The cumulative impact needs to be thoroughly examined.

Yours faithfully

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Bethan and Dyfrig Jones.

Bethan and Dyfrig Jones