



## ***Dyfnant & Vyrnwy Horse Riders' and Carriage Drivers' Association***

Committee Clerk

Environment and Sustainability Committee,

National Assembly for Wales

Cardiff Bay CF99 1NA

Dear Sir,

### **Energy Policy Review**

I write of behalf of the Rainbow Trails Project, Dyfnant forest, Llangadfan to bring to the attention of your Committee the issues now faced by this project as a result of TAN 8 and the Lease Option Agreement entered into by the Welsh Assembly Government and Scottish Power Renewables for the development of a wind farm in this forest.

The Rainbow Trails project (originally the Dyfnant and Vyrnwy Horse Riders and Carriage Drivers Association) was conceived by the local equestrian community post foot and mouth in 2001 as a regeneration project for equestrian tourism using the forest as a resource. This followed direction from the Woodlands for Wales Strategy and the Saddling up for Success Consultation document. We have received Objective 2 European Funding, WDA funding, Adwyfio funding and other small grants from local Community Councils. The infrastructure of the project was developed over a four year period and includes a Community Building, car parking, picnic facilities on each of the two sites at Pen y ffordd and Hendre to create a facility for Horse Riders, Carriage Drivers, walkers, husky training to name just some that visit the forest. These trails are a wonderful resource for both local people and tourists. All of the above has been developed within a Partnership Agreement with Forestry Commission. Enclosed is a brochure of the trails and our web site is [www.dyfnanthorses.org.uk](http://www.dyfnanthorses.org.uk).

For ease of debate we list below issues that were instrumental in pushing renewable energy to on shore wind development and never addressed in the Energy Policy.

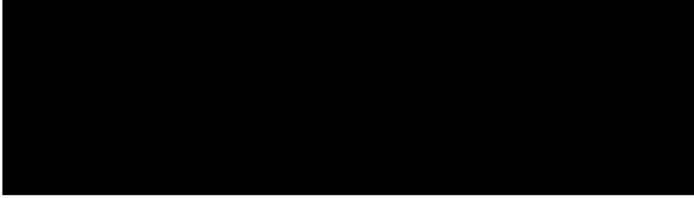
1. The Nation Forest Estate Wind Farm Programme was never consulted with local communities and user groups. The Woodlands for Wales Strategy at the time did not mention the use of the forests for giant wind farm development.
2. No Socio Economic and Strategic Environment Assessment was undertaken. We feel that this was a breach of a European Directive

3. Although our group had a Partnership Agreement with Forestry Commission Wales we were never told of the proposed wind farm development.
4. No assessments have been made of the accumulative effect of wind farm development in the TAN 8 development area. There could be over 600 turbines in our community alone.
5. Our project will be decimated by the imposition of 35 x 600foot turbines by the Welsh Assembly Government and Westminster rendering the whole area unusable by horse riders and carriage drivers.
6. No independent assessment has been made as to the effects such a massive infrastructure could have on the developed upland Mid Wales.
7. No Assessment of The Transport issues has been made. The many road trips necessary for the development will mean gridlock to the area. The weight of the loads would not only cause serious damage to the roads but their design alone is not capable of supporting the proposals. No one would travel these roads to spend excessive time in traffic congestion. Riders will not ride out in their own areas for the risks of constant heavy goods vehicles and traffic congestion un-nerving even the safest of horses. We and the BHS feel that the Dyfnant should be reserved for equestrians to use unhindered by big development. Our group brought this matter to the Petitions Committee and it was thrown out without due consideration as it contravened Government Policy. Equine tourism in Mid Wales will cease and the knock on effect to the local economy cannot be underestimated and a survey ten years ago showed an input of £18million by horse owners alone. People and small farming communities diversified into providing B&B and stabling on the product of the Rainbow Trails Project.  
Property and business prices have plummeted in this area and many in the TAN 8 area are now deemed unsalable.
8. No assessment on how emergency services will reach outlying areas hindered by the traffic congestion nor how the Air Ambulance service could be affected by having to negotiate 600 foot turbines. Many residents in this area are elderly also there are great numbers of visiting walkers and other forest users. No independent assessment of the cumulative noise effect the development will make. ETSU R97 is an outdated methodology for assessing nuisance and should be abolished. Studies should be taken on issues such as low frequency noise and amplitude modulation. Minimum distances from residential properties and recreational facilities should be stipulated and noise readings taken around the base of turbines.
9. We are also concerned that the question of devolution of projects over 50mw would in theory enable the Welsh Government to give planning permission on forestry land which it has already leased to wind farm developers. At best it is undemocratic and immoral and at worst illegal. We are reminded that the Welsh government have received large amounts of money from the developers.
10. We strongly believe the best way to deliver an 'Energy Mix' is to facilitate local communities in developing micro generation schemes. Handing over the Uplands of Wales to power companies – producing little power for their own massive financial gain will enrage communities, decimate landscapes and destroy Mid Wales forever.

The Rainbow Trails project, from its inception, have promoted the public forest, facilitated community cohesion and 'added value' to the area. Turning this forest into an industrial landscape for such a poor return is both locally and nationally an abomination.

If you wish any further information please contact Anne Watson-Smyth, the secretary and should you wish us to give a presentation on our project we would be happy to oblige. Attached is a selection of relevant informative articles

Yours faithfully,



Anne Watson-Smyth  
Secretary

Reply to:

Anne Watson-Smyth, Secretary, Rainbow Trails Project, 

## Supporting evidence

[The British Horse Society Advisory Statement - No. 20 Wind Farms](#)

[Guardian Newspaper - How a wind farm could emit more carbon than a coal power situation 13/08/09](#)

[The Racing Post - Horse Racing: An ill wind blowing in the valley; 'Accidents are certain' says Tony McCoy as he leads protest over plans to site wind turbine in Lambourn.6/09/07](#)

[Clarkson University - Values in the Wind: A Hedonic Analysis of Wind Power Facilities - Martin D.Heintzelman, Carrie M. Tuttle \(page 9\) 3/03/11](#)

[The Telegraph - Damage to peat bogs driving climate change - 18/03/10](#)

[Chilla Against Turbines \(CAT\) - Horse riding near turbines - 2011](#)

[Wind Turbines and Rural Tourism - An analysis of data from VisitScotland](#)