

Environment and Sustainability Committee

Inquiry into Energy Policy and Planning in Wales

EPP 93 – David Hughes

Please convey my views to the forthcoming Environment and Sustainability Committee. I am an elected member of Kerry community council and for the last 2 years we have been very concerned about Scottish Power's plan to run a 132kV line across the Montgomeryshire countryside and around our village. Initially there was a lack of interest outside our local area, but with National Grid's proposals the whole of Mid Wales (and a considerable part of Shropshire) have woken up to the threat to our landscape. We look to the Assembly to protect us from greedy power companies that are much more interested in the subsidies than their green credentials. They seem to look for the cheapest, quick-fix solutions which will deliver the highest profits.

The arguments are complex and need a sophisticated balance between the need for green energy and damage to the landscape. I am sure that you will have had many representations, but for me these are the main points:

- Wind farms do not produce as much energy as claimed - 18% of the installed capacity was the figure for last year - they need a near gale to generate their maximum capacity
- They need fossil fuel back-up - for when the wind doesn't blow - so the saving in CO2 is even less. These two points support my arguments about the greed of the wind farm companies.
- They generate the need for unsightly pylons - and for cost reason these wind-farm companies refuse to bury these underground. Contrast this with the gas pipelines.
- Some of the wind turbines proposed would be the tallest structures in Wales - over 600 feet - taller than the Telecom Tower in London!
- No consideration has been given to transport issues. Powys County Council calculates that all the planned turbines would generate 3000 "single indivisible large loads" over a 5 - 7 year period. This means one conoy, with its 6-police car convoy, travelling from Deeside to Mid Wales every day. The possible congestion on the A483 beggars belief - and for "health and safety" Scottish Power told me that they cannot travel at night. This would seriously affect the densely populated north east corner of Wales.

I could go on, but it is import and that the committee hears the views of ordinary people as well as the polished patter of the wind farm developers with their vested interest.

David Hughes