

Environment and Sustainability Committee

Inquiry into Energy Policy and Planning in Wales
EPP 232 – J Saffron

I wish to make a submission to your Committee, as a member of the public severely affected by current wind farm proposals in Powys.

I live at the end of Abermule nearest one of the sites proposed for an electricity substation (with accompanying pylons and cables). I fear damage to my health associated with this infrastructure. Electricity companies appear satisfied that links between power generation infrastructure and widely reported evidence of damage to health of those living nearby is "only" statistical and are happy to carry on building on that basis. I, on the other hand, find a statistical link persuasive and alarming. To my knowledge, no assessment of health risk on this particular site have been carried out.

I am 60 years old, and single. I have no children.

My sole asset (apart from some personal savings) is my property acquired through a lifetime of public service as a teacher. It is my only means of securing long term care, should I need a residential placement. I already know (from discussion with the estate agent who sold it to me) that my house has lost £10,000 in value since the start of the consultation for this project. This is IN ADDITION to the devaluation of property value suffered by everybody as a result of the current state of the market. This loss can only get worse if the substation is built. By what right does the state, in the form of the W.

A.G. but ultimately the U.K. Government steal from its citizens without any form of redress or appeal? The benefit of the scheme to me, in the form of more environmentally friendly power generation, is vastly outweighed by this loss of property. If the generation of this power is SO important to the whole state, then the burden should be spread evenly among the population and not applied unjustly to those suffering from an accident of geography. The First Minister spoke, in a recent statement, of people getting the "disbenefits" of these schemes. I am one of those people, but my sense of injustice is compounded by the fact that there are winners and losers here. A local farmer who will gain from the siting of pylons or turbines on his land was heard, in the village shop, to remark that this scheme would "put my children through university". As far as I am concerned, he's doing it with my long-term care money.

It is clear that everybody in the area will be subjected to years of traffic chaos during the building of one of the biggest infrastructure projects ever seen in Wales. I, too, will suffer from this misery.

Abermule has been described by proponents of the scheme as "semi industrial" and it is true that we already shoulder our share of infrastructure we all need, in terms of road, rail, sewage disposal and small factory development. We are not "nimbys". But we think of it as "semi-rural" You can see kingfishers, herons, dippers and wagtails on the river from the bridge in the middle of the village. It is a beautiful place, resting below one of the most culturally significant buildings in Wales-- the castle of Llewellyn. Our elected representatives should not be prepared to allow it to be devastated for schemes of such dubious benefit, built for the enrichment of groups and companies with no stake in this area or community..