

From: [Robert Wheatcroft](#)
To: [NDE](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Responding to the Welsh Government NDF consultation
Date: 13 November 2019 15:04:22

From: [REDACTED]

Dear Sirs

Ref : National Development Plan 2020- 2040

I am writing in order to vehemently object to the proposals contained within this document which details policy to proliferate Wind and Solar farms throughout Wales's precious and unique wilderness areas.

As evidence by this NDF, WAG appear content to treat Welsh landscapes as useless wasteland, fit for nothing but development, and the people who live within them are thus treated with contempt. Evidence of that assertion includes the scandalous and undemocratic decision taken by WAG to ignore both the Powys County Council Planning Department rejection of the Hendy Wind development as well as the majority of rural residents who similarly objected to the plan. The residents of Brecon and Radnor are now in no doubt that WAG regard local democracy as completely unimportant and this new NDF provides confirmation of that fact.

Why doesn't the NDF Plan 2020- 2040 mention the more efficient option of Off-shore Wind farms?

It is beyond comprehension why the hugely superior off-shore wind alternative doesn't even rate a single mention in the NDF. The NDF details huge areas of the Welsh landscape that will be visually decimated by wind and solar farms but scandalously (and in ignorance) no mention is made of the greater potential of offshore wind power. There is now irrefutable scientific evidence that off-shore wind must represent the preferred option. Wind farms located off-shore are hugely more efficient than those situated on-shore. The main benefit is that the supply of sustained wind supply off-shore is more consistent and thus has more 'density', with the result the turbines are propelled on a more or less permanent basis. By contrast the density of on-shore wind is hugely less constant and thus (as widely evidenced) on-shore turbines often remain static and consequently perform at less than 25% of their claimed potential. Off-shore wind farms also present the huge advantage that it is easier to connect the resultant electricity to the grid.

Negative affects on Welsh Tourism-

Tourism has now over-taken Farming as largest source of revenue for Powys:

"Scottish tourism depends heavily on the country's landscape, with 92% of visitors stating that scenery was important in their choice of Scotland as a holiday destination, the natural environment being important to 89% of visitors (Tourism Attitudes Survey 2005)."

As evidence by the Scottish evidence detailed above, why would tourists bother to come to Powys to see and walk in the hills only to see wind farms? Scotland Gov published polling (Glasgow Caledonian University - March 2008) stated that 'only' 20% of visitors would not visit Scotland as a result of wind farms. One of the failings of that report (and many similar ones) was that they only asked tourists who were actually visiting Scotland rather than canvassing potential visitors who are aware that that country is covered in such farms and so have decided to holiday elsewhere. Many people are already avoiding Scotland (and increasingly Wales too) as a tourist destination due to the increased presence of wind-farms. Despite that and accepting for a moment the Caledonian University figure of a 20% decrease in visitor potential, that is a catastrophically high potential reduction in visitors

and revenue which the Welsh economy and WAG absolutely cannot afford.

I've researched many other similar reports relating to the effect of Wind Farms on tourism in Scotland and Wales and the lowest percentage of visitors I can find quoted as being deterred by such farms is 9%! Any way you look at it a 9 to 20% loss of revenue is a massive and damaging reduction in revenue. A WAG decision to proliferate Wind Farms would represent a monumental economic 'own-goal'.

The NDF presents a nonsensical and confused approach to 'visual impact'.

The NDF declares on Page 37: 'Large scale wind and solar renewable energy development can be visually prominent' – That begs the question, is there any such development that isn't 'visually prominent'? Answer 'No'. It's the under-statement of the year and is in any case a completely pointless observation??)

It goes on 'A strategic review of landscape and visual impact identified the Priority Areas for Solar and Wind Energy as the most appropriate locations to accommodate landscape change. There is, therefore, an acceptance of landscape change in these areas'. Who decided that these areas are 'appropriate' for 'landscape change'? The answer is that only WAG itself is foolishly content to agree to these 'acceptances'. The vast proportion of Powys residents do not want to see our currently beautiful hillsides desecrated by wind farms.

Then comes the brazenly bizarre contradiction and evidence of a confused strategy when the NDF declares: 'However, the design and micro siting of proposals must minimise the landscape and visual impact, particularly those in close proximity to built up areas'. It must be clear to all involved that it is totally impossible to 'minimise the landscape and visual impact' of 150 metre high turbines?

Secondly, what possessed the authors of this document to seriously claim that the 'visual impact' of such farms should be minimised 'particularly those in close proximity to built up areas'. Are we seriously being asked to accept that 'visual impact' of industrial wind farms should be treated more sensitively in urban areas than in completely rural ones??

Did WAG actually pay money for this worthless document or does it simply represent the skewed attitudes of troubled minds?

As such the quoted statement is pointless and provides evidence that WAG should completely reconsider their entire NDF policy. The answer of course is to build off-shore wind farms because that will ensure that the negative 'visual impact' that WAG claim they want to avoid, will be avoided both in urban and rural areas.

Mental health and 'well-being'- Inconsistencies in the NDF approach

In para One of page 34 of the NDF it is stated 'There are significant positive links between mental-being and access to green space in urban areas and we receive benefits not only by being more active, but also just through being in and near green spaces.' WAG is contradicting itself because on one hand you claim that people benefit in many ways from having access to green spaces but you then seek to justify covering those green spaces with industrial turbines with the result that they are to all intents and purposes, no longer 'green' according to any normal person's definition.

WAG should be encouraging both residents and visitors to exercise in Wales beautiful and largely unspoilt wildernesses. As evidenced above, industrial wind and solar farm developments (very intimidating metal and noisy eye-sores) actively disincentivise huge numbers from visiting affected areas. We are experiencing a highly publicised Diabetes, obesity, heart-health epidemic in Wales and the UK generally: WAG should be encouraging residents and visitors to exercise in the unspoilt wildernesses that currently still exist in Wales. Turning the Welsh country-side into industrial wind-parks will have a detrimental effect on visitor numbers and thus the health of the population.

Bird and Bat-strike caused by Wind Turbines– Various statistics have been published specifying the numbers of birds and bats that are killed by the turbine blades in different countries. WAG professes to care deeply about the preservation of all wildlife but their concerns cynically evaporated when the opportunity arose to approve the Hendy Farm which is situated less than 200 yards from a wood where Starlings congregate for rare

murmurations. Many starlings will be decimated by those turbine blades on that site. That is clear evidence of horrendous double-standards by WAG.

We know that the Redkite population is falling dramatically in German where wind farms proliferate. It is estimated that the turbines kill over 1000 a year with the result that numbers of that species are now down to 12,000.

Turbines with lights (particularly red lights) attract bats and it is estimated that as many as 800,000 may already be decimated each year in the UK . The bats usually manage to avoid the blades but as they pass the threshold their lungs explode due to the pressure differential. What ever the colour of the light, the presence of industrial bright light in the countryside becomes light pollution and as such is detrimental to bats, moths. I presume that WAG is aware of the Campaign for Dark Skies and the compelling evidence that instructs their philosophy.

If the proposals for more on-shore wind farms contained within the NDF will undoubtedly result in the multiple deaths of birds and bats.

Noise from Wind Turbines – There exists irrefutable evidence that the noise and vibrations from large wind turbines can have calamitous health and mental effects on those unlucky enough to live near them. Many around the globe have ultimately been forced to move out of their houses as a result of blade vibration.

Chris Davies (former Conservative Brecon and Radnor MP -2015-2019) has reported that a considerable number of his then constituents visited his MP constituency surgeries to complain about the adverse affects of turbine noise.

Planning Blight – There is incontrovertible evidence that the proximity of wind (and solar) farms reduces house and land value due to the noise and visual pollution they are correctly deemed to cause. As all and any Land or Estate Agents will confirm, pending planning applications for Wind farms will almost always permanently stall the sale of properties affected.

Fracturing Communities - Community Schemes are a misnomer as wind farm developments are known to cause huge rifts both within whole communities as well as the families involved in the applications. The Hendy wind farm is a case in point. WAG have the cheek and temerity to claim they are concern about the mental health and well-being of the Welsh populace and yet this NDF represents a huge negative assault on the mental well-being of communities throughout Wales.

Conclusion

The endless contradictions and confused logic within the NDF, a proportion of which I have evidenced above, leads me to conclude that WAG policy has a purely political 'Urban communities versus Rural communities' agenda. The NDF treats unique and currently un-spoilt countryside with contempt. That same contempt is being shown towards Powys residents and wider rural Welsh communities. The entire NDF is pointless because, as described above, off-shore wind is much more economically efficient and does not damage the countryside or deter tourists.

Yours faithfully

Robert Wheatcroft