

COMBINED PUBLIC INQUIRY – MID WALES WIND FARMS ETC.

Local Action Group against Wind Farms and Pylons (LAG)

Jan. 18th 2013

OUTLINE STATEMENT

A.

1. We support the Alliance Statement and the Alliance's grounds listed in that Statement for refusing all the proposed wind farm developments - see items 13.1 - 13.8 covering landscape, environment etc. – listed in B below.
2. The proposed National Grid “Mid Wales Connection” comprising a new substation, power line, pylons and other infrastructure is a direct consequence of the proposed wind farm developments and should be brought within the scope of this Inquiry. The Mid Wales Connection is part and parcel of these proposed developments. It would clearly be against public policy and the public interest not to include it.
3. The proposed Mid Wales Connection would damage our Llansanffraid and Deuddwr community in terms of amenity, landscape, economy (with especially negative impacts on tourism, local businesses and employment), wild-life, environment and cultural heritage, including the built heritage.
4. The proposed Mid Wales Connection is counter to local plans and has been brought forward without proper consultation by National Grid with local people who are strongly opposed to it and to the wind farms, which would trigger it. On behalf of our Community Council we have helped to carry out local surveys on these issues which present conclusive evidence of local opinion. We will give that evidence in the Inquiry. Please note that Llansanffraid is the largest community in the Vyrnwy valley affected by these proposals (pop. 2,000+ rising to c. 4,000 in the summer months).
5. We will cooperate willingly and fully with Powys County Council, the Llansanffraid Local Action Group (LAG), MAP, the Alliance and others in presenting statements and evidence at the Inquiry.

B. Alliance Outline Statement of Case

THE MID WALES CONJOINED INQUIRIES JUNE 2013

ALLIANCE STATEMENT OF POSITION AS OF JANUARY 2013.

1. Individually and cumulatively the proposals will have a massive and irretrievable impact upon the environment in which they are contemplated. These proposals are of a scale and have consequences which are frightening. They are directed at areas of enormous value, tranquillity and beauty to the residents and to visitors alike.
2. Permission should only be granted with absolute conviction that the proposals will be acceptable in all respects because the consequences of getting it wrong will last for generations. The precautionary principle applies.
3. National planning and energy statements are plainly supportive of wind energy developments as the starting point. However they cannot be determinative of outcome

where strong dispute exists nor can they restrict the grounds on which such developments may be defeated.

4. Each case demands an exercise in balancing competing factors and consideration of the site specific matters which are relevant.

5. TAN 8 is, purportedly, a relevant document for assisting in determining whether permission should be granted in Wales. However it is a document which should be given very little credibility, weight or credence because:

5.1. It was born out of Government duplicity or out of a chance administrative oversight

5.2. Even if worthy of note, it does not enjoy the status of a policy statement

5.3. If it were intended as a policy statement, it would be unworkable

6. In any event Planning and Energy policy is evolving on any basis.

7. To the extent that any particular aspiration of Government can be characterised as policy in the field of wind energy, a regular flow of ministerial statements shows it to be policy in a state of flux.

8. The direction of travel is, increasingly, towards scepticism with regard to both the benefits and the environmental acceptability of wind power. There is additional concern about both the absolute cost and the subsidy cost of this form of energy and the weight it is placing on the economy.

9. Scepticism becomes positive antagonism when wind development is sought by mighty corporate vehicles to be imposed on rural communities against the will of the victims.

10. It will become apparent, during the Inquiry, that the overwhelming response of Mid-Wales and Shropshire, now under siege from developers, is one of outraged anger and dedicated opposition.

11. If localism, a key policy of this government, is to mean anything, then the views of the local community must be considered and given very significant weight.

12. These are our ancestral lands and we will fight to keep out those who would despoil them and who have treated the residents with such disdain.

13. Evidence will be led and argument directed by the Alliance that not one of the six developments should be allowed on the following grounds:

13.1. Industrialisation and consequent annihilation of much cherished landscape

13.2. Severe damage to one of the few commercial enterprises in the affected area, namely tourism.

13.3. Imposition on the local community of intolerable exposure to health hazards

13.4. Ruination of conditions favourable to bio-diversity and wildlife in general

13.5. Impact on peaty sub-soil transforming Carbon Dioxide sink into Carbon Dioxide source

13.6. Adverse impact on notable features of cultural heritage

13.7. Unacceptable in light of visual impact on the Snowdonia National Park

13.8. Unprecedented levels of construction traffic on access routes and demonstrable inadequacy of the proposed traffic routes proposed. There is also a concern that the proposed traffic routes are completely unacceptable and unsuitable for what is proposed by the Applicants. The roads suggested for the delivery of the necessary infrastructure are completely unsuitable for the proposed use as identified by the relevant Councils who have considered these matters. They will also inflict on the residents living in close proximity a volume and type of noise which will cause serious harm to their residential amenity.

14. The Alliance reserves the right to add to and refine these arguments in the production of its formal statement of case and the evidence to be placed before the inquiry

15. Finally, the Alliance will contend, as a preliminary point, that the Secretary of State's policy as set out in paragraph 4.9.3 of EN1 cannot be implemented in the circumstances currently prevailing and that to continue with the Conjoined Inquiry would be an abuse of process.