

**OBJ/416/002**

**Statement to the Conjoined Public Inquiry on behalf of  
Abermule with Llandyssil Community Council  
Session 4 (Cumulative)**

Introduction

Abermule with Llandyssil Community Council carried out a fully verifiable community survey to inform their representation. The results are appended.

The survey gave the Community Council the authority for our previous statements in respect of SSA C and the Llandinam transmission Line which impact most directly on our community. We now wish to make a short statement on the overall cumulative effect of the proposals on the people of Montgomeryshire.

The Community Council would respectfully wish to bring a number of issues to the attention of the Inspector and the Secretary of State.

**1. Capacity**

1.1 Mid Wales already has 250 turbines. The visual impact of these is significant in parts of the county and any further increases would cause disproportionate industrialisation to a rural area particularly since the proposed turbines are considerably bigger and would all be prominently situated on the upland plateaus.

1.2 The local grid is at capacity. Further windfarms will necessitate extensive transmission lines at least and a massive infrastructure programme, including a transformer station, 400kv steel tower pylon line and a network of 132kv double pole lines, in the worst case scenario.

**2. Construction**

2.1 The protracted construction period over many years will have a disproportionate impact on an area with predominantly single track, narrowly winding and frequently steep roads with weak bridges, long established hedgerows, easily eroded verges and with many houses built directly onto the carriageway.

- 2.2 The effects of construction transport will be widespread and directly or indirectly impact on many communities in Powys and beyond. Delays over many years could seriously compromise agricultural, tourism and businesses dependent on timely deliveries and distribution.
- 2.3 Given recent weather events there must be concerns regarding the possibility of local flash flooding but also the downstream effects on areas proximate to the Wye and the Severn. Removing large quantities of upland soils and peat and replacing them with deep concrete for turbines, crane pads and sub-stations and creation of many kms of 5 metre wide aggregate access tracks will inevitably reduce absorbency of the uplands as well as change their hydrology. The cumulative effects of this are unknown but could prove disastrous.

### **3. Economy**

- 3.1 Existing windfarms demonstrate that very few jobs are created other than possible short term construction work. Overall the socio-economic impacts are likely to be negative, particularly when considering our thriving tourist economy based largely on the attractions of panoramic views and tranquillity.
- 3.2 Similarly community benefits from existing local windfarms have provided no noticeable overall advantages to the host communities and such 'incentives' are unacceptable in the planning balance. They are no recompense for long term adverse effects across a wide area.

### **4. Balance**

- 4.1 The community council is supportive of unobtrusive small scale sustainable energy applications that do not adversely impact on others in the community but unanimously object to the imposition of large commercial windfarms and their infrastructure for so little benefit.
- 4.2 The consulted and legally binding Powys UDP requires that development takes account of the need to protect, conserve and, wherever possible, enhance the natural and historic environment. These proposals are in and affecting areas of high scenic quality that are also significant in our cultural heritage. These

proposals constitute industrial developments over an extensive area that will be visible for many kms. They fail the test of protecting, conserving and enhancing on every count.

4.3 Carbon savings are likely to be insignificant given construction on remote upland sites without grid connection and an average energy output totalling less than 150MW must be balanced against the impact on the unspoilt and varied landscapes, the livelihoods, sense of place and cultural heritage of Montgomeryshire. Our communities believe this is too high a price to pay for so little advantage.

## **5. Community Involvement**

5.1 As a Community Council we actively promote and facilitate community engagement in the shaping of localities. Our communities nor our council were consulted on plans to define Strategic Search Areas in Montgomeryshire and Radnorshire uplands. There is no mandate for the creation of a windfarm and transmission infrastructure industrialised landscape.

5.2 Many community and town councils have carried out community surveys and in all cases the overwhelming majority of respondents are opposed to the proposals before this Inquiry.

5.3 Montgomeryshire communities have a very special and strong affinity with their landscapes through many aspects of their lives. These proposals and others that will surely follow in a 'desensitised' area, would inappropriately dominate Montgomeryshire.

5.4 Concerns about the impacts of windfarms are often dismissed as being based on fear. Here in Mid Wales we know what windfarms are like. We know the distance over which even small turbines can be seen; proximate communities know the noise they make and the disturbing quality of massive moving objects and the loss of rides and walks they used to enjoy. We know they create very few local jobs and that areas that were once deep peat have been destroyed.

Communities who accepted the first windfarms and those who have received benefits oppose these proposals. This is not fear of the unknown but reality.

5.5 Elected County Councillors voted publicly and unanimously for a moratorium on windfarm development until TAN8 was properly consulted and reviewed as required after seven years. The democratic process is only ignored at the risk of disenfranchisement. We would request that community views are given significant weight shaping the landscapes in which they, and not the developers or their representatives, live.