

Abermule with Llandyssil community council

Cyngor cymuned abermiwl gyda llandyssil

# Gwilym Rippon

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# **Chair / Cadeir**

## Jane Rees

*Your Ref:*

*Our Ref: GJR01/12/17*

Response to Garn Fach Wind Farm Consultation

Abermule with Llandyssil Community Council wish to make comment on the Garn Fach Wind Farm proposal.

1) No consideration for the exporting of power generated

The Draft Planning Statement indicates that power will be exported from the site at 132kV, but the application does not include the required infrastructure to transfer the power to the national grid. The closest 132kV line to the proposed site is the feed to Newtown, but this line only has a capacity of 90MW and Carno (60MW) and Tirgwynt (30MW) wind farms are already connected to this line and so it has no further capacity. The next closest 132kV line is at Welshpool and so it can be seen that significant infrastructure is required to connect the proposed wind farm to the grid. Any such infrastructure required to connect to the grid at Welshpool is likely to cross our community area and so we are very concerned for residents in our community. It is totally unacceptable for a planning application for a wind farm to be submitted without the infrastructure required to connect it to the grid included in the application, so that proper consultation on the whole project can take place. In our opinion this has been done deliberately to reduce the scope of the initial consultation.

2) Location

By not including the transmission infrastructure in the planning application, no data regarding losses in the transmission network has been taken into account. For the proposed transmission design for the Llaithddu wind farm in 2013, an analysis of the power losses indicate that there would be 2.44MW of losses between the wind farm and Welshpool for transmission of 85MW which is 2% of the power transmitted. The transformer at Welshpool which reduces the voltage to 33kV for local distribution is only rated at 60MW and so if we assume that only 50% of the maximum power generated is consumed locally, there is a further 0.57MW of losses in transmitting the remaining power to the 400kV connection at Oswestry. Taking these factors into account the available power from the wind farm becomes 82MW rather than 85MW, with the losses contributing to global warming, and this is without considering further losses in transmitting the power from Oswestry to larger urban communities. It is clear from this analysis that power should be generated close to large urban area’s to reduce the losses as much as possible, and for Wales this means along the South Wales coast. This being adjacent to an estuary with the second largest tidal range in the world, it is beyond our comprehension that building wind farms a long way from significant consumer bases is being proposed rather than tidal power that can produce far more energy than wind at a location adjacent to a large consumer base. The tidal range in the Severn estuary causes enough water passing between Lavernock Point, just south of Cardiff, and Brean Down, south west of Western Super Mare, to provide 5.2GW of power, 61 times greater than the proposed wind farm. If we want to tackle climate change seriously, this is the type of scheme we should be looking at, not generating power on an intermittent basis a long way from the consumer base.

3) Storage Capacity

Another area of major concern is the proposed storage capacity at the wind farm site. The Draft Planning Statement indicates that the storage capacity will be 50MW, but MW is a unit of power not energy. If we assume that the planned capacity is 50MWh rather than the incorrectly quoted 50MW, the batteries will be fully charged after just over 35 minutes, and would be fully discharged at the quoted 69,000 home consumption in just 1hr 20 mins. For an application that is entitled GARN FACH WIND FARM AND ENERGY STORAGE FACILITY, this level of energy storage capacity seems miniscule. Regarding the misquoted units, either the authors are ignorant of their subject matter, or they have tried to deliberately mislead the planning inspectorate in the usefulness of the energy storage. What happens when the wind does not blow? We have to have capacity elsewhere to cover this. We are also concerned about the amount of toxic materials used in battery technology which will have a detrimental effect on our environment. It is far better to place wind turbines off shore where there is a consistent wind pattern and no requirement for storage.

4) Visual impact and accumulative effect

The Llaithddu Wind Farm was considered at a conjoined Public Inquiry between June 2013 and May 2014 and the Inspector recommended refusal on the basis that the landscape and visual impacts of the proposed southern group of turbines would cause significant harm and conflict with national, Welsh and local planning policy. The Secretary of State subsequently refused the application in September 2015.

The Draft planning statement argues that these issues have been mitigated with this new application, but we do not agree. The turbines proposed for the new application are much bigger than in the original application and so how can the visual impact be less?

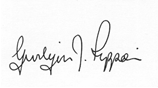
5) Environmental impact

We can find very little on the loss of peat bogs and the effect on protected and rare birds. Although the Draft planning statement indicates that the pylon foundations will be back filled with excavated material, there is no mention of back filling the 62 by 25m of hard standing area by each pylon created for the cranes. The NRW consultation response raises series concerns of the effect on protected and rare birds.

6) Life expectancy

The proposed wind farm has a life expectancy of 30 years. We would like to see more information on how they are going to return the site to its natural landscape, not some woolly statement indicating that it will be decommissioned in accordance with planning policy and best practice guidance at the time.

Yours faithfully



Gwilym J.Rippon

Clerk

To Abermule (with Llandyssil) Community Council

Copies to

Russell George MS   
Craig Williams MP