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Felindre
Llandysul
Carmarthenshire
SA44 5XT
01559-371274



Mr Adam Price MP.,
Plaid Cymru,
House of Commons.

29th May 2008

Dear Mr Price,

Ref :- Blaen Bowi Wind Farm
Formal Request

As you are aware, the operators of the Blaen Bowi windfarm have appealed to the Welsh Assembly to overturn the democratic decision taken by Carmarthen County Council, to refuse permission to erect further turbines on the existing site.

This letter is a formal request to you as our MP and also Mr Rhodri Thomas as our AM, to support us, the Blaen Bowi Action Group, in respect of our continuing objections to the application to extend the wind farm from three to six turbines.

Your words in the recent article in the Carmarthen Journal referring to Plaid election results, have given encouragement to local residents, that they should receive support on issues which affect them, quote- “stand up for the ordinary people of the county”, support that is, from their elected representatives.

Over the past two years and in specific relation to this issue, many local residents who suffer extreme adverse effects from this development feel much unsupported and ignored by their elected representatives, this is compounded by the support given to the investors and developers by the local County representatives, some of which, are members of Plaid.

Our request, therefore, is relatively simple, in that we ask you to support the local residents who are affected by this development and its subsequent possible extension, and who are among the people you have spoken of as “ordinary people of the county”.

As members of BBAG have continually updated you and your local party representatives of the issues and problems caused by the existing wind farm, we will not repeat them all here, however, we feel we must reiterate the issues of noise disturbance and property devaluation, as these two subjects are paramount to the majority of affected residents within the vicinity of Blaen Bowi.

The noise problems are an actuality, and continue to cause discomfort, distress and concern for local residents.

The Council’s department of Environmental health and Public protection are dealing with these issues as best they can, but, their powers are limited.

Noise reports that are issued are controlled by the wind farm operators, they are commissioned, undertaken and published by the operators, and appear to go unchallenged, their data collection periods and locations seem erroneous and give misleading information in favour of the development, examples of which can be supplied.

After investigation, it was found that some of the existing turbines were possibly faulty and produced unacceptable noise disturbance to some local residences. Although this was not freely admitted by the developer however, a replacement gearbox was fitted to one of the turbines recently, but, alas the noise issues still remain, along with the serious certainty that this issue will be exacerbated by an additional three turbines.

With regard to the adverse affect on property prices, there is strong evidence to suggest that those who have moved away from the vicinity of the windfarm, have sold their property for less than would have been the case if there was not a windfarm nearby.

Here are a few examples:-

One property took a couple of years to sell, eventually at a reduced rate causing a significant financial loss to the vendor.

The sale of another property recently fell through after their buyer spoke to the planning department who gave them the impression that the appeal to the Welsh Assembly for the extension may be successful!

A further property was about to go on the market for sale for family reasons. The vendor was advised that it may not be possible to sell their property until after the appeal, and furthermore, if the windfarm extension was granted by the Assembly, then the ensuing construction period would influence any potential buyers as this is a major disturbance issue, with constant noise for many months. Subsequently, the only option as such, would be to accept a ridiculously low offer, which would result in a loss of tens of thousands of pounds, which, for “ordinary people of the county” they can ill afford to do.

These few examples, along with many other people who have the desire to move from within the shadow of the windfarm and its possible extension, are left in a ‘catch 22’ situation.

Since selling problems have arisen for properties situated near to windfarms, the Government have now conceded that amenity and value are indeed damaged by wind turbines. John Healey [Minister for Local Government] in a written response to a question : “ Details of the types of local council tax discount that were being awarded by billing authorities under the local Government Act 2003 as at 8 October 2007 The discounts shown may have been awarded by one or more authority “ :- **Property affected by the proximity of a electricity generating wind turbine** ; it could not be clearer than that.

Summarising a letter referring to issues of this magnitude is extremely difficult, as there are many points to make, that contain enormous ramifications to the lives of the people affected by this development and its possible extension.

In view of this, if you would like to meet with local residents and to discuss these issues and to hear in more detail of how these “ordinary people of the county” are suffering, you would be most welcome and we would be keen to hear how you could help.

As already stated, our request is simple, we need the support and positive action from our elected representatives.

We look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Thank you

Yours sincerely

John Roworth and Tim Greenwood [01559-371365]
Co-ordinators
Blaen Bowi Action Group

Cc Rhodri Thomas AM
Cc John Crossley, County Councillor
Cc Nick Ainger MP
Cc Rhodri Morgan, First Minister, Welsh Assembly.
Cc Ieuan Wyn Jones, Deputy First Minister, Welsh Assembly.
Cc Jane Davidson, Energy Minister, Welsh Assembly.
Cc WH Jones, County Councillor.