

BWEA Wales Renewable Energy Bulletin Issue 04 - April 2007

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Election call: Tackle Climate Change – support Wind Power

On May 3rd the elections for the National Assembly will be held. The build-up to this presents an opportunity for the public to question the political parties on their policies in addressing climate change. The parties and candidates themselves will have an opportunity to make clear their policies on renewable energy and in particular give their unequivocal support to wind energy as the only immediate, viable and practical renewable energy solution that is now available to attain pressing targets. However, with the policy manifestos of Labour, Plaid Cymru, Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats having now been published, BWEA is concerned that not nearly enough attention has yet been given to generating clean, carbon free energy; three of the four manifestos fail to mention wind power.

There is a tendency for the political parties to avoid realistic and practical solutions to tackle climate change. Politicians need to realise the severity of the situation and the options available to drastically and immediately reduce greenhouse emissions. If we are to cut carbon and achieve the 2010 and 2020 renewable energy targets, as well as contribute to the increasing UK and EU targets, then onshore wind power is currently the main option available.

BWEA hopes that climate change and energy issues will be one of the main discussion points during the election campaign as it reflects the deep concern that the electorate has on the issue. Election candidates of every party are encouraged to join public opinion and voice their support for renewable energy and in particular onshore wind energy as a ready answer to a drastic problem.

Blaengwen Wind Farm

Force 9 Energy has received planning permission from Carmarthenshire County Council for its 10-turbine wind farm near Alltwalis and Pencader. This is the first planning application to be approved in Strategic Search Area G and puts Force 9 Energy at the forefront of wind farm development in this area which is encouraged by planning policy and supported by TAN8. The wind farm will have a maximum installed capacity of 30 MW. The original application for the wind farm had been with the Council since January 2005. The application was approved by the planning committee in August 2005 but surprisingly overturned by the Council's now disbanded Departures Committee pending the results of a study by Ove Arup to refine the Brechfa Forest Strategic Search Area. This study subsequently confirmed the Blaengwen site as being suitable technically and from a landscape and visual point of view and capable of making a significant contribution to the achievement of the Brechfa Forest capacity target of 90 MW by 2010. Work on the project is likely to start in the next 6 to 12 months with construction scheduled to be completed in 2008.



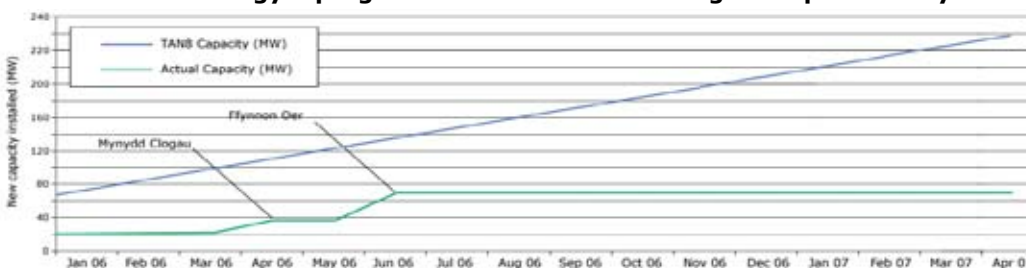
Photomontage of Blaengwen, taken from Brynawel Farm. Distance to nearest turbine is 2.9 km. © Force 9 Energy

Jerry Sturman, Business Development Manager at Force 9 Energy said "We are delighted that the Arup study has confirmed Force 9 Energy's site selection and that the application has been approved after a very thorough assessment. The site is in an ideal location and will bring many benefits to the local community".

Progress towards TAN8 targets

The Welsh Assembly Government has set clear targets for renewable energy generation in Wales by the year 2010 and the Welsh Energy Bulletin monitors progress. No additional MW has been generated by onshore wind power since June 2006, meaning that Wales is 74% behind schedule.

Onshore Wind Energy – progress towards the TAN8 target adopted in July 2005



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