

Impossible for wind power to displace nuclear-generated power says new report

THE much-vaunted 'balanced renewables policy' will not be achieved if the industry remains so overloaded with wind power and its well-known technical shortcomings.

This is the view in a newly-published briefing, *Public attitudes to wind power on Lewis*.

A spokesperson for Views of Scotland (VoS), the environmental group fighting the proliferation of wind power developments which published the report, commented: 'Opinions on the island have been surveyed more intensely than elsewhere but there is little reason to assume that the findings are in any way unique.'

'We earnestly hope that the ministers' assurances will prove as robust when the considerable number of s.36 applications currently before the government come to be determined and will be reflected in planning advice to local councils.'

'The much-vaunted balanced renewables policy will not be achieved if the industry remains so overloaded with wind power and its well-known technical shortcomings.'

'It is not clear what CnES means by "primary" supply. If it is referring to the industry term "base load" (most of which is currently provided by nuclear-powered generation) then, quite simply, the lights will go out.'

'Wind-powered turbines cannot provide base load because their output fluctuates randomly. It is impossible for wind power to displace nuclear-generated power.'

The report goes on: 'Comhairle nan Eilean Siar last week issued a call to the Scottish government urging it to reject nuclear power and "vigorously pursue renewable energy as Scotland's primary supply".'

'The Comhairle has long been an ardent devotee of wind power on an industrial scale with little apparent concern for the environment on Lewis or for local public opinion.'

'Tough European environmental legislation stresses the importance of public consultation and ministers in the Scottish

Government have also been robust and consistent about the importance of public participation in the planning process.'

It continues: 'Both Jim Mather and Stewart Stevenson have repeatedly said that local referenda and the views of the public and local communities, where based on relevant planning matters, will be material considerations that should be taken into account when considering proposals.'

'Local public opinion on the three massive wind power proposals for the Isle of Lewis has been surveyed no less than twenty-seven times in the last three years.'

The report also states: 'It is common for politicians and the wind industry to cite surveys as proof that a majority of people support wind power. But those questioned rarely, if ever, live in the vicinity of developments.'

'Such polls were invariably conducted a long time ago when sites had a few small turbines and the majority of those questioned lived too far away to be troubled. In one much-quoted poll report, ninety per cent of the "strongest advocates" lived more than 12 miles from any wind-power development.'

'This new report is an important contribution to the debate on the public perception of wind power,' it adds.