

Greens accuse government of 'unacceptable dithering' on Swansea tidal lagoon



12 July 2017

***Funding put on hold after government fails to approve project**

***Greens demand a date for final decision**

***Green Party leaders: "This dithering has resulted in uncertainty over investment, putting this valuable project in jeopardy"**

The Green Party has written to the Government to demand action on the Swansea tidal lagoon, which has not been approved despite a report calling for the project to go ahead.

The lagoon's investors have put further funding on hold [1] as the government is yet to approve or even respond to the review by former minister Charles Hendry, which was published over six months ago [2].

Jonathan Bartley, co-leader of the Green Party of England and Wales, and Grenville Ham, leader of the Green Party of Wales, have written to Greg Clark MP, Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy to raise concerns over the delay and demand a date the government will respond to the Hendry review and make a final decision.

In the letter, they said:

"The Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon project would be an integral part of the energy revolution this country needs. The independent Hendry review commissioned by the UK government gave a glowing endorsement of the project, highlighting that the energy provided would be less expensive than offshore wind and significantly less expensive than nuclear.

"The report – which unambiguously called for strong government backing of this project – was published over six months ago. Yet, not only has the government failed to act on its clear recommendations, it has not even published a response. This dithering has resulted in uncertainty over investment, putting this valuable project in jeopardy."

Notes:

1. <http://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/local-news/money-drying-up-swanse-tidal-13306328>
2. <https://wales.greenparty.org.uk/news/2017/01/12/wales-green-party-welcomes-positive-findings-of-hendry-review-on-swanea-lagoon/>
3. Full text of the letter:

Dear Rt. Hon Greg Clark MP

We have been extremely concerned by this week's reports that investors might withdraw from the Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon project if it is not shortly approved by Government.

As Green Party leaders, we strongly support the transition to renewable power across the UK. Therefore, we are writing to urge you to give investors the clarity that they need.

The Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon project would be an integral part of the energy revolution this country needs. The independent Hendry review commissioned by the UK government gave a glowing endorsement of the project, highlighting that the energy provided would be less expensive than offshore wind and significantly less expensive than nuclear.

Beyond the lower costs of energy, the project would also create thousands of jobs, it would help to kick-start a new industry, and it would make a valuable contribution to our decarbonisation targets. In contrast to Hinkley, the tidal lagoon would also be on grid sooner, would be in operation for longer, and would carry significantly less environmental risk.

The report – which unambiguously called for strong government backing of this project – was published over six months ago. Yet, not only has the government failed to act on its clear recommendations, it has not even published a response. This dithering has resulted in uncertainty over investment, putting this valuable project in jeopardy.

Please will you now provide a firm date for your department's formal response to the Hendry review and your decision on whether to support the project? In doing so, we hope that you will accept the findings of the Hendry review and accept the wishes of the Welsh Government by approving this project.

Yours sincerely,

Jonathan Bartley

Co-leader of the Green Party of England and Wales

Grenville Ham

Leader of the Green Party of Wales

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