

Solar Panels - Another Silly Roof Scheme

25th February

The Carbon Sense Coalition today called for the immediate suspension of another of Mr Garrett's silly roof schemes – the Roof Solar Panel Scheme.

This scheme is driven by the Renewable Energy Target Scheme, Renewable Energy Certificates and obligations on power companies to buy the inconsistent dribbles of electricity produced by solar panels on domestic homes.

The Chairman of Carbon Sense, Mr Viv Forbes, said that like the roof insulation scheme, the Roof Solar Panel Scheme was dangerous, ill planned and a massive waste of community funds.

“There are two aspects of electricity demand.

“First is base load demand, which is present 24 hours a day, every day. However, sun power is maximised for only a few hours around noon and fluctuates with the seasons. Thus solar panels cannot replace even one iota of base load generating capacity. Coal, gas, hydro, nuclear or some expensive power storage system must sit there, ready to supply 100% of base load demand every night and on all cloudy days. Any storage facility must be large enough to cope with several consecutive cloudy days.

“The second power consideration is peak load demand, which tends to occur around meal times, night and morning. Solar panels contribute nothing at these times either.

“Therefore every dollar spent on roof solar panels duplicates capital already spent on conventional power generation – ie community capital is wasted. And the more panels, the more waste.

“Roof solar panels also induce householders into danger.

“Even quite small amounts of dirt, dust, bird droppings, tree leaves or suicidal kites will dramatically reduce the electricity generated by a solar panel. Someone must climb onto the roof to clean the panel. Inevitably, someone will fall off.

“Solar power is not free. Whilst the sunshine is free, it can only be harnessed by the construction, collection, distribution, maintenance and replacement of solar panels and transmission lines, which are not free. Solar power is an expensive option that will always need taxes or hobble-chains on competitors, support from taxpayers or coercion of consumers to survive.

“Surely our parliament cannot be so negligent as to allow rock singers and lawyers to pretend that solar playthings have the reliability, capacity and safety to provide any useful contribution to the future energy needs of our homes, cities, trains, factories, mines and farms?

“If solar panels are so good, consumers will buy them without coercion and subsidies. In reality they are a dangerous waste, so why should other consumers and taxpayers be forced to fund such folly?

“Places like Germany and California have learned to their dismay that massive stimulation of the solar power industry has done three unwelcome things. It has driven up electricity prices, driven away other industries and stimulated the manufacture of solar panels in foreign lands, mainly China. And unless it is propped up by conventional power generation, the inevitable consequence will be network instability and blackouts.

“Solar energy is useful for solar hot water systems, for power in remote locations, for small installations with battery backup and for growing plants. It is not useful for generating electricity for modern power grids.

“The Roof Solar Panel Scheme should be suspended immediately and an independent enquiry made into its engineering and financial feasibility.”

For More - <http://carbon-sense.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/02/silly-roof-schemes.pdf>

See also:

Solar Power Realities:

<http://carbon-sense.com/2009/07/04/solar-realities/>

Solar Power Hits the Dust:

<http://carbon-sense.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/09/dust.pdf>

Solar Power - a subsidised Appendage:

<http://carbon-sense.com/2009/07/05/solar-appendage/#more-214>

Solar Energy Costs and Economics:

<http://carbon-sense.com/2009/06/06/solar-energy-costs-economics/>

Dust on a solar panel will reduce its efficiency by up to 50%:

http://docs.google.com/present/view?id=dfhw7d9z_0gtk9bsgc