

I agree that the UK needs energy security, however I'm sceptical that "energy security" & "net zero are sides of the same coin". Whilst energy security is a necessary requirement, net zero is merely an aim.

Energy security needs to be a reliable source, not intermittent or inefficient, we cannot rely wholly on renewables to power the grid, therefore the UK needs to deploy a reliable form of power generation.

The granting of new North Sea licenses for oil & gas extraction may help in the medium term to achieve reliable gas turbine generation, thus maintaining a reliable energy source. With the gas being domestic rather than imported, this will to a degree aid energy security.

In the longer term however the UK needs to invest in high density reliable & clean energy generation. This is presently offered by nuclear.

Germany invested many billion of Euros in renewable energy, closing their nuclear plants and became reliant on Russian gas for base load energy and dull/still days. With Russias invasion of Ukraine & the destruction of the nordstream pipe line Germany was forced into demolishing wind turbines and villages to facilitate the mining of the dirtiest of coal, Lignite Then reopen closed coal power stations. Energiewende was proven to be an expensive embarrassment to Germany.

France was less dependent on either renewable or gas thanks to the Government owned nuclear sites. These albeit ageing power stations managed to keep the price of energy down whilst most of Europe & UK were exposed to higher import prices for gas. France produced 25.3% of it's energy last year from renewables. The UK produced 40% from renewables, but that did nothing to offset the high energy bills to consumers. But profits were made.

With the Government offering financial inducements & tax breaks to renewable companies, it is little wonder the UK has become a renewables gold rush, US, Canadian & Australian firms amongst others are registering with companies house as UK limited companies. Multi million dollar fund investors are moving funds here on the promise of huge returns on their investment, paid for by the consumer.

In the powering up Britain papers, affordable energy bills are alluded to as are highly paid jobs in the renewable sector, bills, it seems cannot be affordable, with the cost per unit electricity set for investor & developer profits, land rental costs, LCOE, Green levy and highly paid renewable workforces.

Recently I read reports that off shore wind farms were asked to switch off in higher than average winds so as not to overload the grid but received 227 million pounds in compensation/subsidy.

This too could potentially happen with the number of Solar sites expanding, once usage capacity is reached in fine bright weather conditions, selected sites may be taken off line, The company would then expect a subsidy payment too.

Some of the graphs & text made much about how UK CO2 emissions had been reduced over the past decade, by circa 42%

Whilst I agree there has been a concerted effort to reduce emissions not least by levying ever increasing taxes, if the theoretical reasoning that the less disposable income and individual has, the less CO2 that individual emits, then some success may be claimed.

However it is probable that the true reason for the remarkable decline in UK emissions is that as a nation, the UK has deindustrialised and become more of a service provider and importer. We have in essence exported our CO2 emissions to our main provider of goods, China.

China is responsible for about one third of global CO2 emissions. Industry is mainly powered by coal fired generation, New coal fired power stations are being built, with plans to expand exponentially coal power generation capacity, China is buying and storing in huge quantities, (for some future undisclosed reason) LPG Coal, & Oil (inc diesel & petrol).

China, owns or controls most of the rare earth and mineral mines & quarries in the world, China has within the last month put restrictions on certain rare minerals that are vital for the manufacture of semi conductors, needed for defence items, phones etc. & threaten a ban exports.

Most, if not all of the equipment for the construction of solar farms is manufactured in China.

Given the country's belligerent attitude to the West, It cannot be wise for the UK Government to rely on the importation of this technology as a mainstay of energy security.

There is also the ongoing war in Ukraine, once a major supplier of wheat world wide, Russian grain exports are sanctioned. This situation will not be resolved for many years even if the conflict is resolved tomorrow, In addition there is a crop failure in many rice producing countries. This will impact wholesale & retail prices in the coming months. Although not mentioned in Security, it is an compelling reason why Solar should not be sited on fertile farmland that can help provide food to offset the nations demand on food imports.

If Solar PV is an augmentation requirement, then let Government take the initiative and plan an egalitarian approach with no interest loans to businesses and residential homes to have Ethically sourced Solar PV mounted on rooftops, offsetting home owner/ residents energy bills, trickle feeding into the grid and remittances used to repay government loan for initial Solar fittings. It's true the corporate US pension funds would not benefit, but the UK would by nuclear base load and reliable clean energy available constantly, topped up when available by trickle feed from rooftop solar and reduced grid demand. That seems like a better Energy Secure future, with affordable bills.