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Letter of the week to 'FREE PRESS'

By farmer R Davies of Bala.

WE ARE SELLING OURSELVES SHORT

As a Welsh hill farmer farming in this area, I wish to add to the on-going debate on wind turbines as on-farm diversification in the Upper Dee Valley. As farmers the land we farm is not ours, we are merely guardians of it, looking after it for future generations as previous ones have for us. Without farmers there'd be no countryside. Sadly it appears that the ever-increasing greed and want for more, of some farmers throughout the UK is leading to the demise of the very countryside we are supposed to protect. History dictates that decisions in the past, made by farmers, were detrimental to the landscape and to the survival of the countryside; actions we are now reversing at great public cost.

Surely the same will be said of the decision to build commercial-scale wind turbines on our precious land in 30 years time?

We are paid by the tax payer through several different avenues to protect, develop and maintain the land not permanently damage it. Farming is so much more than jumping on the latest get-rich-quick scheme. It is, as one of last week's contributors stated, a way of life. Farming is about the countryside, livestock, crops and people not about large foreign-owned companies preying on the greed of the landed few.

Building commercial wind turbines on your land is simply not farming. We are selling ourselves short for short-term gain for the few. Farming forms part of our Welsh identity, it is as important as our language, and yet we do nothing to protect its longevity. Think about all the poems, songs and fables about our beautiful countryside. What would their creators think of what we are doing to it?

It is time that those of us who truly cherish our country and land stood up to our neighbours: after all they clearly don't care about our future or 'way of life', and protect the countryside that is at risk by its guardians. If you think commercial wind turbines are farm diversification then you are clearly in the wrong job: you are not farming.

R DAVIES, Bala