

Caroline Lucas: Clean Growth Strategy is a missed opportunity



Green Party

12 October 2017

* Lucas welcomes many of the proposals, but slams Government for being too vague

* Green MP attacks handouts to nuclear, and lack of support for onshore wind and solar

Caroline Lucas, the Green Party co-leader, has said that the Government has 'blown' an opportunity to meet its climate targets after it published the Clean Growth Strategy.

Lucas, who said that many of the proposals in the strategy are 'welcome', argued that document overall was 'too vague to guarantee success'.

Caroline Lucas said:

"The Government has blown this enormous opportunity to put Britain on track to meet its climate target. This should have been a greenprint for the future, but instead this looks like a blueprint for under-achievement.

Missing targets

"This strategy suggests they won't meet the fourth and fifth carbon budgets [1] and, while some of the aspirations in the document certainly move us in the right direction, they don't go far enough to shift this UK to a zero carbon future.

“While many of these proposals are welcome, parts of the document appear too vague to guarantee success. The energy efficiency upgrades, for example, seem ambitious but are caveated with unspecific language and no cast iron guarantees.

Failure on onshore wind and tidal

“The lack of a plan to reinvigorate onshore wind is a huge missed opportunity – especially given that this is the cheapest low carbon technology available. Similarly a lack of commitment to solar and a persistent refusal to fully back tidal energy are serious shortcomings from a strategy that should be embracing the technologies of the future. When it comes to democratising energy this strategy also fell woefully short – and risks locking us into years more centralisation.”

Ploughing millions into new nuclear

“It’s absurd to see the Government ploughing more than half of the low carbon innovation fund in nuclear[3], when we should be doubling down on the incredible progress in truly renewable energy. There is no role for overpriced, dirty nuclear power in an energy system fit for the future.”

Failure on airport expansion

“It’s shocking that this plan fails to get a grip on key issues around transport. With no plans rethink airport growth [4], and nothing new reducing Britain’s dependence on cars, it’s clear that the Government have utterly failed to truly understand just how big they need to be thinking if they’re serious about placing our economy on a truly sustainable footing.”

“This should have been a greenprint for an economy fit for the future, instead it seems that the Government risks damning the next generation by failing to take the action now that will protect them from the dangers of climate breakdown in the coming decades.”

Notes:

[1] Page 41, Table 2

[2] Page 13

We want all fuel poor homes to be upgraded to Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) Band C by 2030 and our aspiration is for **as many homes as possible** to be EPC Band C by 2035 **where practical, cost-effective and affordable**

Develop a long term trajectory to improve the energy performance standards of privatelyrented homes, with the aim of upgrading **as many as possible** to EPC Band C by 2030 **where practical, cost-effective and affordable**

Consult on how social housing can meet similar standards over this period

[3] Page 15

Innovation: Invest around £900 million of public funds, including around:

- £265 million in smart systems to reduce the cost of electricity storage, advance innovative demand response technologies and develop new ways of balancing the grid
- **£460 million in nuclear to support work** in areas including future nuclear fuels, new nuclear manufacturing techniques, recycling and reprocessing, and advanced reactor design
- £177 million to further reduce the cost of renewables, including innovation in offshore wind turbine blade technology and foundations

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