



UNTRIED . . .
what the plant
will look like

A HUSBAND and wife are masterminding a controversial £1 billion energy project . . . and YOU'RE paying for it.

Green entrepreneurs Mark Shorrock and Juliet Davenport are behind an unproven scheme to bring tidal power to Britain, which was this week given the green light by Energy Secretary Amber Rudd.

It means Shorrock's Tidal Lagoon Power (TLP) can build a six-mile breakwater with 16 giant turbines around Swansea Bay, South Wales.

But critics have slammed the project as a "calculated gamble on immature technologies", which is demanding the highest subsidies of any form of energy.

For TLP to cover the project's £1 billion capital cost, taxpayers will have to pay them £168 per megawatt hour for the power TLP generates.

Wind farms cost £140/MWh to subsidise.

It also means a boost to the bank balances of Shorrock and Davenport, dubbed Britain's Billion-Pound Hippies, who have earned their fortunes through taxpayer-subsidised energy.

Last night Jonathan Isaby, chief executive of the TaxPayers' Alliance, said: "It is taxpayers who will be literally paying the price for this. The huge subsidy being asked will make it the most expensive electricity anywhere in the world and we will have to pay for it through either higher taxes and/or higher energy bills.

"Given the size of the subsidy, this project warrants particular scrutiny in order to make sure any decision is in the interest of taxpayers."

Developer Shorrock, 45, who styles himself as a "green energy innovator", says the lagoon will be completed by next spring and supply "clean, renewable" power for more than 155,000 homes.

The project has a predicted life-span of 120 years.

TLP, which this month signed a £300 million contract with the China Harbour Engineering Company to provide the harbour works in Swansea Bay, brags it will be "the world's first, man-made, energy-generating lagoon, with a 320MW installed capacity and 14 hours of reliable generation every day".

When consulted on the project, the Citizens Advice Bureau warned it could see taxpayers' money being



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squandered, saying it "cannot be justified" for the public to be locked into donating such eye-watering sums of cash for the next 35 years (*the expected time frame of the high subsidy*).

A second company, Shire Oak Quarries – of which Shorrock is the chief executive – is expected to build a "super quarry" in St Keverne, Cornwall, to supply the breakwater with stone.

Despite opposition from locals, the Cornwall site will be used to extract at least 1.5 million tonnes in the first year, which will be shipped to Swansea to build the sea barrier.

Davenport, 47, is also expected to profit as founder and chief executive of Good Energy, which buys the subsidised power from Shire Oak and sells it on. Good Energy, which has 46,000 electricity and 20,000 gas customers, specialises in selling renewable power at a premium to thousands of green-minded customers. Last year it bought ten per cent of the projected power from the new lagoon for a £500,000 investment in Shorrock's firm.

Shorrock, who lives with Davenport in a £2 million Gloucestershire mansion, has plans for six such lagoons around Britain. He described the project as "a game-changer".

Chancellor George Osborne paved the way for the project in his March Budget, while earlier this month David Cameron said the fact it could be part-built by the China Harbour Engineering Company was a win-win situation.

But Citizens Advice warned that on strict value-for-money considerations the case for the lagoon looks "very weak". In evidence to the Department of Energy and Climate Change, it added the move was a "calculated gamble on immature technologies" that it was "acutely uncomfortable" about.

Swansea West MP Geraint Davies hit out at the lagoon, saying: "The idea of blighting our iconic view and future tourist economy with a power station . . . is astounding."

Last night Good Energy said: "When we announced news of the investment to the market we clearly stated that Mark Shorrock, CEO of Tidal Lagoon PLC, is the husband of Juliet Davenport." A TLP spokesman added the "strike price of energy is still in negotiation".

The Sun Says – Page Eight



NOD . . . Rudd

SWITCH IS OFF

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