IT'S NOT FOSSIL FUELS OR RENEWABLES. BRITAIN NEEDS BOTH…FOR NOW

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e2 Energy Partners calls for a pragmatic rethink of Britain's energy transition, warning that the race to decarbonise must not come at the expense of industrial stability, energy security or economic growth.

Britain's energy debate has become dangerously polarised. Clean versus dirty. Green versus brown. Renewables versus fossil fuels.

But energy security is not a choice between one or the other. It is about using the right energy sources, in the right places, at the right time.

e2 Energy Partners is calling for a more pragmatic approach to the UK's energy transition, one that recognises the enormous potential of renewable energy while acknowledging the critical role that reliable, dispatchable generation must continue to play.

The ambition to achieve net zero should not be abandoned. But the pathway towards it must reflect the realities of today's infrastructure, technology and industrial energy requirements.

Britain cannot afford to pursue decarbonisation at the expense of the very industries its economy depends upon.

The industrial reality: reliability comes first

For manufacturers, aerospace suppliers, automotive producers and the rapidly expanding data centre industry, electricity is not simply a commodity. It is the foundation of their operations.

A factory cannot stop production because the wind drops. A data centre cannot suspend its servers because the sun has gone down.

The International Energy Agency projects that global data centre electricity consumption will roughly double to 950 TWh by 2030, driven in significant part by artificial intelligence.

Britain must prepare for this growing demand while maintaining a reliable and affordable energy supply for its existing industrial base.

The National Energy System Operator has recognised that gas-fired generation will continue to provide essential backup as Britain moves towards cleaner electricity. The Government's Clean Power 2030 plan also acknowledges the need to retain gas capacity while reducing its use.

For e2 Energy Partners, the message is clear: decarbonisation and energy security must be delivered together.

Renewables are the future. But the transition must work today.

Renewable energy offers enormous opportunities to reduce emissions, decentralise generation and give businesses greater control over their long-term energy costs.

However, wind and solar generation are weather-dependent. Delivering reliable electricity around the clock requires a combination of generation sources, storage, grid infrastructure and sophisticated energy balancing.

Future technologies, including small modular nuclear reactors, advanced batteries and potentially nuclear fusion, could transform how electricity is generated and stored.

But Britain's manufacturers need energy security now, not at some undefined point in the future.

A distributed renewable energy network, supported by appropriate backup generation and storage, can reduce reliance on centralised infrastructure and help businesses take greater control of their energy supply.

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The answer is not to choose between fossil fuels and renewables. It is to build an energy system that uses both intelligently while progressively reducing emissions.

Stephen Todd: "We cannot gamble Britain's industrial future on an energy system that isn't ready."

Stephen Todd, Head of Partnerships at e2 Energy Partners, said:

"We have become so obsessed with arguing about whether energy is green or brown that we are losing sight of what actually matters: can we keep the lights on, keep our factories running and keep British industry competitive?

"Net zero is a desirable destination. But ambition alone does not build infrastructure, develop storage technology or guarantee electricity supply.

"Fossil fuels still have a role to play. That is not an argument against renewables. It is an acknowledgement that we need a reliable energy system today while we build the cleaner energy system of tomorrow.

"With AI and data centres driving a new industrial revolution, our electricity requirements are only going to increase. We cannot afford to get this wrong.

"At e2, we believe in building distributed renewable energy networks, generating energy closer to where it is consumed and shaping and balancing supply around the actual needs of businesses.

"We need to stop treating energy security and decarbonisation as competing objectives. They are two parts of the same challenge.

"This isn't about abandoning net zero. It's about making sure we still have a manufacturing industry left when we get there."

A call for a more practical energy transition

e2 Energy Partners is calling for greater emphasis on distributed generation, investment in grid infrastructure, energy storage and long-term energy security for Britain's industrial sector.

The company believes businesses should be empowered to secure their own renewable generation, supported by an energy system capable of delivering reliable electricity when renewable output falls short.

The transition to cleaner energy must continue. But it must be built around the operational realities of the businesses and industries that underpin the British economy.

Britain does not need to choose between a green future and a secure energy supply. It needs an energy strategy capable of delivering both.

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