

Submission from Battletown Renewable Energy to Consultation on Phoenix Energy Gas Conveyance Licence Extension Proposal

Response: Phoenix Energy Gas Conveyance Licence Extension Proposal

Hi all,

In response to the consultation to extend Phoenix Gas conveyance License, I am writing on behalf of a number of local stakeholders. Namely; Bowtown Anaerobic Digester Green Energy Generating Station and John Steele&Son Agricultural Contractors.

We believe the extension of the license is very important for both the regional strategic net-zero goals and also the immediate local economy.

A. Firstly, in relation to the regional benefits:

The license extension will allow Green gas injection into the national grid via existing Phoenix Energy infrastructure. This approach supports decarbonisation and energy sustainability for Northern Ireland.

1. Decarbonisation of Energy Supply

- **Reduced Carbon Emissions:** Green gases like biomethane produce little to no CO₂ when combusted or used in fuel cells.
- **Support for Net-Zero Goals:** Helps achieve Stormont climate targets by replacing fossil-derived natural gas with renewable alternatives.
- **Carbon Capture Potential:** Green gas production methods, like biomethane derived from anaerobic digestion, can integrate carbon capture and storage.

2. Efficient Use of Existing Infrastructure

- **Grid Compatibility:** the extension will allow Bowtown Anaerobic Digester Green Energy Generating Station can inject directly into the grid with minimal modifications to Phoenix Energy pipelines.

- **Cost Efficiency:** Leveraging existing gas grids avoids the need for large-scale new infrastructure, reducing the costs of transitioning to renewable energy for Northern Ireland.

3. Circular Economy Benefits

- **Waste Utilisation:** Increasing biomethane production within the proposed Pheonix Energy extension area will increase the use of organic waste turning waste into energy and reducing landfill usage.

4. Energy Flexibility

- **Grid Balancing:** Gas injection helps manage seasonal variations in energy demand, providing a reliable backup to electricity.

5. Renewable Gas for Diverse Applications

- **Heating:** Provides low-carbon heating for homes and industries.
- **Industrial Use:** Decarbonises industrial users that rely on gas as an energy source.

6. Enhanced Energy Security

- **Domestic Production:** Green gases produced locally and injected into the Pheonix Energy extended license area reduces reliance on imported fossil fuels.
- **Diverse Supply:** A mix of renewable gases ensures a robust and diverse energy portfolio.

7. Job Creation and Economic Growth

- **Green infrastructure Development:** An extension of the license will promote growth in Bowtown Anaerobic Digester Green Energy Generating Station including additional employment for gas grid retrofitting and ongoing increased production.
- **Rural Economy Boost:** Biomethane production at Bowtown directly supports the local economy via additional jobs with John Steele&Son contracting. An extension will increase production and in turn increase job requirements locally throughout the supply chain including farmers and waste processors.

8. Improved Air Quality

- **Reduced Pollutants:** Burning green gases emits fewer harmful pollutants compared to fossil fuels, contributing to cleaner air in urban and industrial areas.

9. Public and Stakeholder Support

- **Consumer Choice:** Offers households and businesses access to renewable energy without major lifestyle changes.
- **Corporate Responsibility:** Aligns with corporate ESG goals by enabling businesses to access renewable gas for heating, production, and transport.

In Summary:

Green gas injection into the national grid transforms traditional gas networks into low-carbon energy systems, supporting environmental goals while leveraging existing infrastructure. It creates a pathway toward a sustainable and resilient energy future, aligning economic, environmental, and societal benefits

B. Secondly, in relation to specific local benefits:

Local small farms will significantly benefit from a license extension. Green gas injection into the national grid, particularly when producing biomethane has a number of benefits for the local economy.

1. Monetising Agricultural Waste

- **Revenue from Waste:** Farms can process organic waste like manure, crop residues, or food waste into biomethane through anaerobic digestion.
- **Waste Management Savings:** Reduces the costs of disposing of agricultural waste by converting it into a valuable resource.
- **Byproduct Use:** Digestate, a byproduct of anaerobic digestion, can be used as a nutrient-rich, organic fertiliser, lowering costs for chemical fertilisers.

2. Environmental and Sustainability Benefits

- **Improved Soil Health:** The use of digestate enriches soil with organic matter and nutrients, improving crop yields sustainably.
- **Carbon Footprint Reduction:** By injecting green gas into the grid, small farms contribute to national decarbonisation efforts.

3. Circular Economy Integration

- **Local Collaboration:** Bowtown Anaerobic Digester Green Energy Generating Station collaborates daily with nearby farms which in turn increases feedstock availability, provides direct employment and helps create economies of scale.

4. Job Creation and Rural Development

- **Local Employment:** Following from point 3, Bowtown Anaerobic Digester Green Energy Generating Station creates opportunities for on-farm jobs in plant operation, maintenance, and logistics along with a wider creation of jobs relating to feedstock growing. This will increase with the proposed license extension.
- **Skill Development:** Bowtown Anaerobic Digester Green Energy Generating Station encourages upskilling locally in renewable energy technologies and sustainable farming practices.

5. Better Compliance with Environmental Regulations

- **Waste Management Standards:** Participating in biomethane production helps farms meet stricter environmental regulations for waste disposal and emissions.
- **Good Agricultural Practices:** Promotes sustainable and environmentally responsible farming.

6. Improved Farm Reputation

- **Green Branding:** Participating in Bowtown Anaerobic Digester's renewable energy projects enhances local farm's image as environmentally responsible. This can increase if the license extension is granted.
- **Community Support:** Contributing to local green energy needs fosters goodwill within the community.

7. Long-Term Sustainability

- **Future-Proofing:** Providing the extension will allow Bowtown Anaerobic Digester to continue to invest in green gas production, ensuring the local economy remains relevant and sustainable in the long term.

Summary

Green gas injection offers local farms a practical way to generate additional income, improve waste management, and enhance sustainability while contributing to the national energy transition. It strengthens the economic viability of local farms, empowering them to thrive in a low-carbon future. The extension will allow an increase in biomethane production locally which will in turn help the local economy.