



## Comhairle Chontae Uíbh Fhailí Offaly County Council

### Green Energy & Technology

Power generation sites, grid infrastructure, staff skilled in energy production are all legacies of peat-fired electricity production. Offaly's rich heritage of energy generation is contributing strongly to a green energy transition.

### Rhode Green Energy Park

ESB's giant cooling towers at Rhode have given way to Rhode Green Energy Park which is set to embrace a number of co-located green energy projects.

Rhode Green Energy Park has 13 serviced sites. As it has been established on the site of a former ESB power station, there is an opportunity to tap into the National Grid. Adjacent to the park, a cluster of co-locating green energy projects are emerging. Rhode is situated to the East of Co. Offaly, a 45-minute drive to the M50.

Bord na Mona's Mount Lucas wind farm and amenity is nearby and there are plans throughout the County for solar farms, additional windfarms, biomass/gasification projects and spin-off industries using excess heat. These spin-off industries include green energy driven data centres and horticultural produce grown in polytunnels.

In 2020, Offaly County Council and North Offaly Development Fund CLG commissioned RPS to undertake an Opportunity Assessment Report for Rhode in North Offaly. The full report, together with a recording of a briefing session outlining the key points are available below.

Rhode Opportunity Assessment Report : [Rhode Opportunity Assessment.pdf \(size 14.6 MB\)](#)

Energy Cross Roads Presentation : [link to presentation](#)

In summary, the three strategic objectives emerging as the most promising ways to develop the Rhode Green Energy Park opportunity further are:

1. **Strand 1:** Energy decarbonisation/ innovation hub built around renewable energy, hydrogen and electricity system integration.
2. **Strand 2:** Eco-Industrial Park model whereby large-scale energy intensive employment – for example data centres, agri-food, horticulture, bio-economy – develops around the electricity and heat resources available.
3. **Strand 3:** Educational/ Innovation/ Centre of Learning for renewables and electricity grid: to improve awareness within the community of how the energy transition is happening, for collaboration with stakeholders across the Midlands Region and to create partnerships with Third Level Institutions.

## Green Energy Transition

Offaly has transitioned from peat-fired electricity to green energy production. Offaly has 650MW of operational or permitted renewables. These include: wind, solar, hydrogen electrolyzers, biomass methanisation, and synchronous compensator. The pipeline of additional projects may raise this to c1GW of renewable energies.

## Battery Storage

Offaly has 300 MW of permitted battery storage. Lumcloon Energy has two BESS (Battery Energy Storage Systems) in West Offaly – Shannonbridge 100MW BESS and Lumcloon 100MW BESS. These are scheduled to enter commercial operation in 2021. These BESS projects utilise high power batteries to provide System Services to suit the Irish power system needs, under the DS3 System Service programme. The projects are being developed in collaboration with South Korean conglomerate Hanwha Energy Corporation, who bring a wealth of experience and expertise in the deployment and operation of BESS.

## Offaly: Green Energy County

- ✓ Pipeline of green energy projects to c1GW
- ✓ Grid infrastructure
- ✓ Emerging clusters of co-locating green energy businesses
- ✓ Bord na Mona/ESB Green Strategies
- ✓ Central Location
- ✓ Pro-Active County Council & Local Enterprise Office
- ✓ Just Transition Momentum & Focus
- ✓ Stakeholder and Business collaboration
- ✓ CSR Opportunities to create sustainable jobs & support vibrant communities

## Just Transition

In July 2019, the European Commission confirmed its agreement to the inclusion of the Midlands region in the “Platform for Coal and Other Carbon Intensive Regions in Transition”. Membership enables the Midlands region to avail of assistance with the development of strategies and projects for the region, focusing in particular on the employment challenges faced by workers affected by decarbonisation.

The Government of Ireland Just Transition Fund 2020 was established as an initial response to these challenges. It is administered by the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (DCCA). Grant funding (of c. €30 million) has already been announced in two separate strands for successful projects from across the Midlands that

will contribute to achieving a Just Transition to a low carbon, climate resilient economy. A number of the projects funded are in the green technology and renewable sectors.

The Midlands Regional Transition Team (MRTT), of which Offaly County Council is a proactive member, is working to develop transformative projects with the support of Project Ireland 2040 funding streams and the European Just Transition Fund.

## Space to Grow

A potential c.1GW of renewable energy generation and storage, only 30 - 80 km from the Greater Dublin Area presents an unprecedented opportunity for large energy users and employers to establish in the Midlands. In addition, by locating in Offaly, large energy users will join a dynamic eco-system of green energy companies, and also can fulfil CSR obligations in investing in an area most affected by the accelerated cessation of peat harvesting and peat fired power generation.

For further information or to discuss setting up a green energy/technology business in Offaly, please contact Local Enterprise Offaly on [info@leo.offalycoco.ie](mailto:info@leo.offalycoco.ie) or check out [www.offaly.ie](http://www.offaly.ie)



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