



PRESS RELEASE

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UK's first Energy Innovation District launches in the North West

A NEW DISTRICT to boost productivity and foster innovation in the energy sector has been launched. The Energy Innovation District – the first of its kind in the UK – sees generators, energy-intensive manufacturers, innovators and academics combine forces to create a joined-up solution to the UK's energy challenge.

Established by the industry-led Cheshire Energy Hub, the District spans the industrial heartland from Ellesmere Port toward Runcorn, where over 5% of the UK's energy is consumed. The overarching aim is to provide secure, low-carbon and low-cost indigenous energy from the North West, unlocking over 33,000 jobs and £7billion in capital investment.

Ged Barlow, Chair of the Cheshire Energy Hub and Managing Director at C-Tech Innovation, said:

“The Energy Innovation District is a British first – a place where energy generators are working hand-in-hand with business to attract investment, boost productivity and increase the competitiveness of our industries.

“It will be unique in that it will embrace and develop new technologies across a range of generation methods and actively explore how this can directly benefit industry.

“Energy usage is at the bedrock of successful enterprise and manufacturing. We're encouraged by the Government's support for integration as part of the Industrial Strategy and the District responds directly to this need for a more coordinated approach.”

The District clusters existing and new assets in the area and will become home to advances in energy technology, including heat networks, low-carbon transport, electricity networks, the hydrogen economy and energy storage.

Leaders behind the District are now working with the Government to establish a national blueprint for how energy and industry work together – which could be replicated in other parts of the UK. Increased incentives, improvements to regulatory systems and backing for emerging technologies are being sought to bring this exemplar forward.

It is anticipated the move will stimulate around £2.3billion GVA into the region each year, with around 480 hectares of land within the district available for development.

Christine Gaskell, Chair of Cheshire & Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership, said:

“Energy is increasingly a top priority for business and Cheshire and Warrington has some of the country's most energy intensive businesses. At the same time we have a strong set of energy generation assets and expertise with the likes of Thornton Science Park, EA Technologies at Capenhurst and the UK's leading nuclear services cluster at Birchwood which means that we are perfectly placed to develop the UK's first Energy Innovation District.

“The Energy Innovation District will put the region at the forefront nationally in ensuring that we can provide stable, secure and affordable energy to businesses in Cheshire and Warrington, which is vital to our continued economic growth.”

A website (www.energyinnovationdistrict.com) and brochure has today been published, supported by organisations including Cheshire West and Chester Council, the University of Chester's Thornton Science Park, and land and development leader the Peel Group.

ABOUT THE ENERGY INNOVATION DISTRICT

The Energy Innovation District is an existing and developing cluster of energy-related industries. This includes largescale energy assets, energy-intensive industries and Research and Development destinations.

The District will set the blueprint for creating a new energy system – ensuring a supply of secure, low-carbon and low-cost energy helps unlock supply chain and global investment opportunities.

The District includes:

- **Storengy UK Underground Gas Storage Site:** Storengy UK has invested £350m and is committed to invest a further £150m to double the size of its facility to develop the largest onshore gas storage facility in the UK
- **Protos:** £170m has been invested in enabling infrastructure and energy generation – including a 21MW biomass facility and a 57MW wind farm
- **Essar Oil (UK) Ltd:** the Stanlow Manufacturing Complex plays a key part in the national economy, producing over 16% of the UK's transport fuels – employing over 900 people
- **Encirc:** the state of the art contract bottling facility is the largest of its kind in Europe and produces container glass for the food and beverage industry – employing over 300 people
- **URENCO UK Ltd:** uses world-leading centrifuge technology to provide uranium enrichment services to generate low carbon nuclear energy – employing over 300 people
- **CF Fertilisers:** the UK head office and manufacturing plant over 1 million tonnes nitrogen fertilizer to support grass and arable farming across the UK – employing over 400 people
- **Thornton Science Park** – the University of Chester has created a £17m Intelligent Energy Systems Demonstrator
- **Capenhurst Technology Park:** owned by URENCO (UK) Ltd, the park is a centre for technology and energy focused enterprises, including C-Tech Innovation, EA Technology, Enrichment Technology Ltd and Flowgroup plc

The Energy Innovation District seeks to work with Government on issues including:

- **The provision of an electrical micro-grid that connects electricity generating assets directly to large industrial users to provide secure, low carbon and lower cost electricity;**
- **Developing heat networks to support local communities and business;**
- **Promote hydrogen, along with carbon capture and storage, as a means of decarbonising the gas network;**
- **Providing a network of charging and hydrogen refueling stations to encourage the uptake of electric vehicles; and**
- **To stimulate the deployment of innovative energy technology and to develop a skilled workforce through work with the University of Chester, local colleges and the Cheshire Energy Hub Graduate Programme**

www.energyinnovationdistrict.com

ABOUT THE CHESHIRE ENERGY HUB

The Cheshire Energy Hub is an energy sector support organisation, funded and strategically driven by industry. Its members work collaboratively to advance the skills agenda and energy initiatives in the region. Members include C-Tech Innovation, EA Technology, Encirc, Essar Oil UK, Peel Environmental, Protos, Storengy UK, and URENCO, together with the Cheshire and Warrington LEP, Cheshire West and Chester Council and the University of Chester's Thornton Science Park.

GUIDANCE FOR EDITORS

- This press release is issued under strict embargo until Friday 22nd September 2017
- Interview candidates for the Energy Innovation District are available. Please get in touch via the contact details below to further arrangements.

MEDIA CONTACTS

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