

NEWS RELEASE

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Competition for licence to build new gas pipeline to the west of Northern Ireland launched

The Utility Regulator today launched the licence application process to bring gas to the towns of Strabane, Omagh, Enniskillen, Derrylin, Dungannon, Coalisland, Cookstown and Magherafelt.

The competition will see upwards of £200m invested in a new gas pipeline to the west of Northern Ireland. The pipeline will allow up to 40,000 new customer connections and has the potential to generate an additional £200 million of economic benefits, from energy savings and reduced greenhouse gas emissions.

Jenny Pyper, Chief Executive of the UR welcomed the competition launch,

“This expansion is a vote of confidence in the natural gas industry in Northern Ireland. It will bring the benefits of natural gas to domestic and commercial consumers in the west of Northern Ireland. This significant investment will provide choice, strengthen the competitiveness of the Northern Ireland energy market and promote further investment.”

It is expected that the grant of the licence to build the gas pipeline will be awarded in the Autumn of 2014.

Enterprise, Trade and Investment Minister Arlene Foster highlights the importance of this project for Northern Ireland

“I welcome today’s launch of the licence competition by the Utility Regulator for taking natural gas to the main towns in the West. I look forward to appointment of a licensee in due course, and the beginning of design and planning activities, which should see the early provision of new gas infrastructure to give business and domestic consumers additional energy choice.”

“I also look forward to the contribution to the local economy which will be provided by construction works to lay new gas pipes and connect energy consumers to the gas network.”

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Photo caption: UR Chief Executive Jenny Pyper and Enterprise, Trade and Investment Minister Arlene Foster launch the gas to the west competition.

Notes to Editors:

- The Utility Regulator is the independent non-ministerial government department responsible for regulating the electricity and gas industries and water and sewerage services in Northern Ireland.
- In January 2013, the Northern Ireland Executive [announced](#) up to £32.5m of subvention for the project.
- Further information on the gas to the west competition can be found at www.uregni.gov.uk
- For further information please contact Barbara Stevenson on 028 9031 6343/07794 965922 or Greg Irwin on 028 9031 6348/07794 965911.