

Project Brief: Installation of New Biomass Heating System at Aura Leisure Centre, Letterkenny

Donegal County Council invites tender submissions for the design, supply, installation, commissioning and handover of a new biomass heating system to replace the existing oil-fired system as the primary heat source for Aura Leisure Centre, Sallaghagrane, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal. The project is to be delivered as a design and build contract, with the successful tenderer responsible for developing and delivering a complete, compliant and operational biomass solution.

1. Project Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this project is to provide a modern, efficient and sustainable biomass heating system that will significantly reduce reliance on fossil fuel as the primary heat source for the facility. The project supports Donegal County Council's climate action and energy performance objectives and is intended to provide a robust renewable heat solution suitable for the operational demands of a public leisure centre.

- Replace the existing oil system as the primary heat source with a biomass heating system.
- Provide a reliable renewable heat solution capable of integrating with the existing boiler house and services infrastructure.
- Ensure the system is efficient, maintainable and suitable for long-term operation by the facility operator.
- Provide an appropriate back-up heating arrangement for periods when the biomass system is unavailable, offline or under maintenance.
- Support compliance with renewable heat funding, climate action and energy management requirements.

2. Background

Aura Leisure Centre opened in 2007 with an operational biomass system. This system operated until approximately 2014, when it was damaged following flooding due to its basement location. The proposed replacement system is to be located at ground level to avoid recurrence of this issue and to improve access, operation and maintenance. The existing facility that housed the previous biomass system, including storage, loading arrangements and service connections, may be considered for reuse where suitable. Tenderers may alternatively propose a new self-contained solution where this provides a better technical, operational or value-for-money outcome.

Tenderers shall review the available photographs, existing site information and detailed specification documents when developing their proposals. Any proposed reuse of existing structures, storage areas, loading arrangements, connections or services shall be fully assessed by the tenderer and clearly described in the tender submission.

3. Contract Type and Pricing Requirement

The contract will be procured as a design and build contract. The tenderer shall provide a fixed price lump sum for the complete design and delivery of all project elements required to provide a fully operational biomass heating system. The fixed price shall include, but is not limited to, design, surveys, assessments, statutory compliance, location and layout, structural requirements, fuel storage, fuel loading arrangements, integration works, installation, commissioning, testing, training and handover.

The tender submission shall clearly identify all assumptions, exclusions, risks, dependencies and interfaces with the existing building services. Any proposal requiring enabling works, civil works, structural works, service diversions or operational restrictions shall be clearly set out and included in the tendered lump sum unless expressly stated otherwise in the tender documents.

4. Scope of Works

- Design, supply and installation of a new ground-level biomass heating system.
- Assessment and integration with the existing boiler house and existing heating infrastructure.
- Provision of appropriate biomass fuel storage and safe, practical loading arrangements.
- Structural, civil, mechanical, electrical and controls works required for the complete installation.
- Provision of a back-up heating arrangement to maintain facility resilience when the biomass system is unavailable.
- Full integration with the existing Building Management System.
- Testing, commissioning, demonstration, staff training and handover documentation.
- Operation and maintenance information suitable for facility staff and future maintenance providers.
- The tender is to include for a maintenance contract for 2 years initially to cover warranty, parts, labour and servicing.

5. Technical and Operational Requirements

The new biomass system shall be designed to operate as the primary heat source for the leisure centre. The design shall be suitable for the heating and hot water demands of the facility and shall be developed with due regard to reliability, ease of operation, maintainability, safe access, fuel delivery logistics, plant replacement, fire safety, ventilation, environmental performance and operational continuity.

The installation shall be fully integrated with the existing BMS and shall be easily managed and controlled by facility staff. The user interface and control strategy shall be clear, practical and suitable for day-to-day operation. The tenderer shall include for all controls, sensors, communications, alarms, graphics, set points, trend logging and operator training required to ensure effective management of the new system.

6. Funding, Compliance and Climate Action Requirements

The project has been approved under the SEAI Support Scheme for Renewable Heat programme. The principal aspiration of the project is to eliminate fossil fuel as the primary heat source for the facility and provide a more efficient renewable heating system that supports Donegal County Council's obligations under the Local Authority Climate Action Plan and wider energy management objectives.

Tenderers shall include for all documentation, technical information, commissioning records, maintenance proposals and administrative support required to support the Council's participation in the Support Scheme for Renewable Heat. A proposal for ongoing maintenance and administration of the scheme shall form part of the tender submission.

7. Tenderer Experience and Key Qualification Requirements

Tenderers shall demonstrate relevant experience in the design and installation of biomass heating systems in operational leisure centres or comparable high-demand public facilities. Tenderers shall also demonstrate knowledge and previous experience of projects involving the Support Scheme for Renewable Heat, including ongoing compliance, maintenance and administration requirements.

Tender submissions should include details of relevant project references, proposed design team and installation team, proposed maintenance arrangements, programme, risk management approach, health and safety approach, commissioning methodology and aftercare support.

8. Site Visit and Tender Information

A site visit is strongly advisable before submitting a tender price. Donegal County Council will facilitate a site meeting upon request. Tenderers should refer to the wider tender documentation for contact details, site access arrangements, drawings, photographs, existing services information and any detailed specification requirements.