



Renewed UK Government focus brings opportunities for renewables

Words: Marcus Davies Bateman, UK Director, Comanos

The UK's new Labour government is accelerating renewable energy opportunities with its Planning and Infrastructure Bill. Backed by over £1bn in funding, the bill cuts bureaucracy, enabling rapid development and investment in renewables, reshaping the nation's green economy.



- **Fast tracked development:** reducing red tape, speeding up approvals for housing and energy infra projects, especially in previously restricted green and grey belt areas.
- **Sustainability at the core:** mandating renewable energy integration in all new developments, pushing the UK closer to its clean energy goals and reshaping the real estate landscape.
- **An unlocking of investment:** freeing up significant investment potential in real estate and renewables, fuelling growth, innovation, and employment across the sector.

The Bill has had an overwhelmingly positive reaction from the sector, with the CEO at The Association of Real Estate Funds, Paul Richards, suggesting that, 'the Planning & Infrastructure Bill is a gamechanger for real estate. It cuts through bureaucracy, paving the way for sustainable developments that align with our vision for a greener future.'

How can wind and other renewable energy providers benefit?

With the aforementioned investment and ambitious government plans in the offing, the real estate and real assets landscape is set for rapid expansion and innovation.

This means greater opportunities for organisations in renewable energy development across wind and solar farms, battery storage systems and other technologies, as well as through increased innovation in prop-tech, building sustainability materials, and other advances across the built environment. We will see a focus on:

- **Increased opportunities for investment:** significant government funding and private investment will drive growth in renewable energy projects, offering lucrative opportunities for companies to expand their portfolios. Green belt land in the UK provides a huge opportunity, positioned within commutable distance of major UK cities like London, Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool and Newcastle.
- **Enhanced focus on energy security and sustainability:** investing in renewable energy not only aligns with global sustainability goals but also ensures long term energy security and cost savings for operations.
- **Real estate development:** the identification of suitable real estate for renewable energy projects, which involves engaging with landowners and navigating the complexities of land acquisition and grid connections.
- **Talent acquisition and development:** as the demand for skilled professionals in renewable energy soars, companies will need to attract, retain and develop the top talent in the sector.

We're mere months into the new Government in the UK, and changes are aplenty. The Labour government has wasted little time in implementing new policies, proposing a new Planning and Infrastructure Bill set to transform how housing and other assets are developed across the UK.

The red tape that surrounded planning approvals, the restrictions on building across green and grey belt land, and the long drawn out bureaucracy that engulfed processes and discouraged developers and investors is set to go. This means an opportunity for development with renewables at the heart.

What changes has the UK Government been making?

The UK government has announced over £1 billion for the sixth Contracts for Difference (CfD) allocation round, with £800 million directed towards offshore wind projects. This record investment aims to secure up to 50 GW of offshore wind by 2030, supporting up to 480,000 jobs and solidifying the UK's position as a global leader in renewable energy. Additionally, the Green Industries Growth

Accelerator, with a funding boost to over £1 billion, will drive advanced manufacturing and support clean energy supply chains.

Looking ahead, the Labour government has pledged to make the UK a clean energy superpower by creating Great British Energy, a publicly owned company. This initiative is part of Labour's Green Prosperity Plan, which aims to generate 100% clean power by 2030, save UK households £93 billion, and create 650,000 jobs. Labour also plans to invest in the National Wealth Fund to finance infrastructure supporting low carbon projects, focusing on expanded ports and enhanced grid infrastructure.

Simply put, the UK is on a drive to create a new, sustainability focused green economy.

What specifically is included in the Planning and Infrastructure Bill?

The Planning and Infrastructure Bill has stemmed from the frustrations felt by investors, planners, landowners and more at the bureaucratic processes that have engulfed the space over the past decade. The Bill will feature:

Those who identify and pursue these opportunities early will not only be at the forefront of the sector and investments into it, but will also see a 'first mover advantage' when it comes to the recruitment of professionals in the area; being able to access the brightest talent, before it becomes a hyper competitive space and salaries for the top talent continue to rise.

An understanding of real estate will be key

In a space so new, it's understandable that there are supply and demand issues. Simply put, with the rapid development and unlocking of potential in the UK, it's hard to find the talent needed to keep pace with this change.

This is where those with expertise or at least some experience in the field, who are open to learning more and benefitting from the significant investment in renewables, are going to be at the forefront of the sector as it expands. Individuals working in the real estate sector will make the transition to either become renewable energy specialists or will become more skilled in the space, as the land acquisition and town planning, asset and investment management, and construction landscape changes and take on greater influence from the renewable space.

In terms of job titles, we're likely to see increased demand for experts like:

- **Land acquisition managers:** specialists in securing prime land for large scale renewable projects, proficient in complex negotiations and optimising land use for maximum project impact.
- **Planning consent specialists:** professionals who streamline the

planning approval process, ensuring renewable energy projects clear regulatory hurdles swiftly and efficiently.

- **Investment managers:** strategists who diversify investment portfolios with a balanced exposure to energy transition opportunities alongside traditional real estate assets.
- **Project & development managers:** leaders capable of driving large scale renewable projects from concept to completion, while embracing innovation and sustainability.
- **Grid engineers:** experts in securing and optimising grid connections for renewable projects, with a crucial focus on negotiating early connections to meet the UK's 2030 clean energy targets.
- **Energy analysts:** specialists in assessing and optimising energy efficiency and sustainability metrics, ensuring projects meet stringent environmental goals.
- **Sustainability consultants:** advisors guiding organisations towards greener practices, integrating innovative sustainability solutions across all aspects of development.

All or just some of these positions could be involved in any renewable energy development project, either on a permanent or temporary basis.

How Comanos can help with renewables recruitment

Our parent company, Cobalt Recruitment, has recruited for the majority of these roles as a



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specialist consultant to the real estate market for over 23 years across the world.

Comanos, part of the Cobalt Group, is playing a pivotal role in bridging the talent gap in the renewable energy sector in the UK, United States and across continental Europe from our headquarters in Germany. We offer specialised recruitment services across a spectrum of roles, in response to the escalating demand and mounting pressure on real assets to meet green energy targets, and in the development of new real assets with renewable energy at the heart of them. These include M&A and corporate finance positions, land and planning, development and construction, and asset management roles. We can help through our:

- **Expert recruitment services:** we specialise in connecting top talent with leading companies in renewable energy and real estate, ensuring you have the expertise needed to drive your projects forward.
- **Industry insights and guidance:** our deep industry knowledge and insights from forums like the UK's Real Estate Investment and Infrastructure Forum (UKREiif) provide you with the latest trends and opportunities, helping you make informed strategic decisions.
- **Tailored support:** we offer personalised guidance and support, from the identification of roles to job descriptions, sourcing, and interviewing of candidates, to ensure that you get the best talent for your organisation to help you achieve your goals.

Get in touch with me below; I'd be delighted to see how Comanos can assist.

Email: MDB@comanos.co.uk

Phone: +44 (0)7488821918

www.Comanos.co.uk

