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Connections Reform

Consultation Response Proforma

Your feedback is important to this process. Please take this opportunity to provide any feedback that you may have. To aid your response, each question is linked back to the relevant document for ease of reference.

Please provide your feedback using this Proforma and sending an electronic copy to **box.connectionsreform@nationalenergyso.com** by **5pm** on the closing date of **2nd December 2024**.

We encourage early submission ahead of the deadline where possible to aid the processing of responses.

Respondent Details	
Name	Oliver Johnson
Organisation	AtkinsRéalis
Email Address	Oliver.Johnson@AtkinsRealis.com
Phone Number	+44 20 7088 8729
Which category best describes your organisation?	<input type="checkbox"/> Consumer body <input type="checkbox"/> Demand <input type="checkbox"/> Distribution Network Operator <input type="checkbox"/> Generator <input type="checkbox"/> Industry body <input type="checkbox"/> Interconnector <input type="checkbox"/> Storage <input type="checkbox"/> Supplier <input type="checkbox"/> System Operator <input type="checkbox"/> Transmission Owner <input type="checkbox"/> Virtual Lead Party <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other
Is this response confidential?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes – I do not wish for this response to be shared publicly; however I understand it will be shared with Ofgem <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No – I am happy for my response to be available publicly

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Section 1 – Policy

You can find the relevant information in the **Great Britain's Connections Reform: Overview Document**

1. Do you agree with our intention to align the connections process to Government's Clean Power 2030 Action Plan?
You can find the relevant information in Section 2 – Context
N/A

2. Do you agree with our proposal for overall design 2 (that the reformed connections queue should be limited to and prioritised to only include ready projects that align with Government's Clean Power 2030 Action Plan, NESO Designated Projects, and directly connected demand projects outside the scope of Government Clean Power 2030 Action Plan)?
You can find the relevant information in Section 5 – Our overall preferred connections reform design
N/A

3. Do you think all 'ready' projects should be included in the reformed connections queue (overall design 3)? If so, how would you propose that we mitigate risks to consumers or developers of material misalignment to the SSEP?
You can find the relevant information in Section 6 – Assessment of alternative design for connections reform
N/A

4. Do you agree that the reformed connections queue should initially focus on the 2035 time horizon?
You can find the relevant information in Section 4 – Key building blocks for aligning connections to strategic energy plans
N/A

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Implementation Questions

You can find the relevant information in the **Great Britain's Connections Reform: Overview Document**

5. Do NESO's preferred options against each of the variables discussed in the Overview Document best deliver efficient alignment to Government CP30 Plan?
You can find the relevant information in Section 5 – Our overall preferred connections reform design and Section 7 – Further variables and options to align connections reform with strategic energy planning
N/A

6. Do the methodologies deliver our preferred options against each of the variables?
You can find the relevant information in Section 3 – Overview of framework of codes and methodologies for connections reform
N/A

7. Are there key policy areas that are not covered by our preferred options against each of the variables or that would not be delivered by the methodologies?
You can find the relevant information in Section 5 – Our overall preferred connections reform design and Section 7 – Further variables and options to align connections reform with strategic energy planning
N/A

8. Do you agree with our approach to managing project attrition between 2025–2030, and 2031–2035, whilst ensuring that the SSEP can deliver maximum benefits to GB consumers?
You can find the relevant information at Section 7 – Further variables and options to align connections reform with strategic energy planning
N/A

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Connections Network Design Methodology

You can find the relevant information in the [Connections Network Design Methodology – Detailed Document](#)

9. Do you agree with the approach to applying the Gate 2 Readiness Criteria and the Gate 2 Strategic Alignment Criteria to the existing queue and future Gate 2 Tranches?

N/A

10. Do you agree with the approach to managing advancement requests?

N/A

11. Do you agree with the approach to reserving Connection Points and Capacity at Gate 1?

N/A

12. Do you agree with the approaches to reallocating capacity when 2030 pathway projects and 2035 pathway projects exit the queue?

N/A

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Gate 2 Criteria Methodology

You can find the relevant information in the **Gate 2 Criteria Methodology – Detailed Document**

13. Do you agree with the following elements of this Gate 2 Criteria Methodology?

- a. Gate 2 Readiness Criteria – Land (Chapter 4)
- b. Gate 2 Readiness Criteria – Planning (Chapter 5)
- c. Gate 2 Criteria Evidence assessment (Chapter 8)
- d. Self-Declaration Templates (Chapter 9)

Please insert your answer here for a). N/A

Please insert your answer here for b). We do not agree with the methodology, see rationale in question 14 response.

Please insert your answer here for c). N/A

Please insert your answer here for d). N/A

14. Do you agree that the alternative route of meeting the Gate 2 Readiness Criteria should be only limited to projects that seek planning consent through the Development Consent Order route?

We do not agree that the Readiness Criteria should be limited to DCO projects alone. This limitation is likely to exclude projects consented through other regimes that are of equal if not greater readiness when compared to DCOs. We believe the following consenting routes should also be included:

- *Given consent via DCO is not available in Scotland, projects in Scotland consented via section 36 of the Electricity Act, or projects consented through the Town and Country Planning Act where they are below the 50MW section 36 threshold, should be included.*
- *Projects in Wales below the 350MW DCO threshold which applies in Wales should be included, whether consented via Development of National Significance process (planned to be replaced by Welsh Infrastructure Consents), or below 50MW, consented through the Town and Country Planning Act.*
- *Projects in England, below the 50MW DCO threshold, consented through the Town and Country Planning Act should be included.*

We believe without this widening of the planning readiness criteria the Gate 2 reform is likely to exclude a range of projects that would look to use the planning readiness criteria to qualify for Gate 2.

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Project Designation Methodology

You can find the relevant information in the **Project Designation Methodology - Detailed Document**

15. Do you agree that the categories of projects that we have identified are the appropriate ones to potentially be designated?

N/A

16. Do you agree with the proposed criteria for assessing Designated Projects?
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N/A

17. Do you agree with the indicative process NESO will follow for designating projects?

N/A

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Additional Questions

18. Do you have any other comments (including whether there was anything else you were expecting to be covered in these documents)?

N/A
