

Public

Connections methodologies update

An overview of final amendments to
the connections methodologies –
April 2025

Public

Contents

1. Context and Document Purpose.....	3
2. Overview of Changes to Connections Methodologies.....	5
A. Ofgem Decision and Recommendations Related Changes.....	5
B. Clarificatory and Typographical Changes.....	6
3. Next steps.....	6
Annex 1 – Table setting out the changes to the Connections Methodologies.....	7

Public

1. Context and Document Purpose

- 1.1 At the National Energy System Operator (NESO), we recognise the challenges facing our connections customers and the need to fundamentally reform the electricity transmission connections process in order to deliver Clean Power by 2030 and maintain an efficient transition to net zero.
- 1.2 On 20 December 2024 we submitted our ambitious plans to reform the electricity transmission connections process to ensure that the mix of projects in the reformed connections queue best reflects Great Britain’s (GB’s) Clean Power needs in 2030, whilst providing an efficient transition and clear investment signal to 2035, so that we maintain efficient progress towards net zero. This took the form of a package of proposed changes to relevant industry codes and the introduction of three new ‘connections methodologies’ that, together with changes to the electricity system operator (ESO) licence and relevant network company licences, will set the regulatory and commercial framework for the reformed connections process.
- 1.3 The three methodologies we proposed are the:
 - Gate 2 Criteria Methodology¹
 - Connections Network Design Methodology (CNDM)²
 - Project Designation Methodology³
- 1.4 On 14 February 2025 Ofgem published its ‘*Consultation on connection reform (TM04+) enablers, including a statutory consultation on modifications to licence conditions*’⁴. In that consultation Ofgem set out its minded-to intention to approve the three connections methodologies.
- 1.5 On 14 March 2025 we submitted a formal response to Ofgem’s consultation⁵.

¹ www.neso.energy/document/350236/download

² www.neso.energy/document/350241/download

³ www.neso.energy/document/350246/download

⁴ www.ofgem.gov.uk/consultation/consultation-connection-reform-tm04-enablers-including-statutory-consultation-modifications-licence-conditions

⁵ www.neso.energy/about/operational-information/our-consultation-responses

Public

- 1.6 On 21 March 2025 we published updated methodologies⁶ in response to limited updates related to Ofgem and Government, and to make clarificatory and typographical amendments. These were minor changes published in marked format to compare to the version we published on 20 December 2024.
- 1.7 **On 15 April 2025 Ofgem made their Decision on the Connections Reform Package (TMO4+)⁷, including approving the versions of the methodologies we published on 21 March 2025.**
- 1.8 As part of its Decision, Ofgem recommended a small number of minor changes to the methodologies. We have therefore taken the opportunity to make further minor amendments to the connections methodologies in the context of Ofgem’s Decision and recommendations. This document provides an overview of the changes we have made, and the reasons for those changes.
- 1.9 We have published ‘marked-up’ versions of the connections methodologies alongside this document, as well as clean versions of all three of the approved methodologies (incorporating the new marked amendments)⁸. The marked copies are marked from the versions published on 21 March 2025.
- 1.10 We will use the clean versions of the three methodologies for the upcoming ‘Gate 2 to Whole Queue’ process, which is due to start in July 2025. These connections methodologies should be read alongside the industry codes and the relevant network company licences, as together these set the regulatory and commercial framework for the reformed connections process.
- 1.11 We are also publishing the updated Readiness Declaration Template today and we will shortly be publishing several other documents to facilitate implementation of TMO4+, including the ‘Gate 2 to Whole Queue’ process. These include the updated ‘LoA Guidance’ and updated ‘Queue Management Guidance’.
- 1.12 For further details on the full ‘TMO4+’ arrangements, please see our [website](#)⁹.

⁶ [Connections Reform | National Energy System Operator](#)

⁷ [Decision on Connections Reform Package \(TMO4+\) | Ofgem](#)

⁸ [Connections Reform | National Energy System Operator](#)

⁹ www.neso.energy/industry-information/connections-reform

Public

2. Overview of Changes to Connections Methodologies

- 2.1 The connections methodologies changes fall into the following categories:
 - A. Ofgem Decision and Recommendations Related Changes
 - B. Clarificatory and Typographical Changes
- 2.2 In Annex 1 we have included a table setting out changes to the connections methodologies, the corresponding category, and the reasons for the changes.
- 2.3 In the accompanying marked-up connections methodologies, these changes are highlighted in green (with green strikethrough for deletions). These changes are compared to the 21 March 2025 connections methodologies.

A. Ofgem Decision and Recommendations Related Changes

- 2.4 As a result of the Ofgem Decision there are four minor areas of change as follows:
 - 2.4.1 Remove the information we added on ‘the Pause’ as a result of the minded-to decision i.e. as WACM1 (CMP435) and WACM7 (CMP434)¹⁰ process steps are no longer applicable. As we are still expected to publish the ‘EA Register’ (to the extent possible) we have also included this within the list of information we publish after queue formation.
 - 2.4.2 Provide assurance that projects eligible for Protection Clause 2a, and which have existing agreements to connect on or before 31 December 2027, will retain their connection dates and connection points.
 - 2.4.3 Simplify Protection Clause 3 so that projects/customers that (i) submitted planning on or before 20th December 2024 (ii) have no outcome by the closure of the CMP435 application window and (iii) achieve consent after the closure of the CMP435 window; are eligible to receive Gate 2 terms in a future CMP434 window even if this would breach zonal or GB permitted capacities.

¹⁰ No specific amendments to the connections methodologies are required as a result of ‘WACM2’ in CMP434 being the Ofgem Decision.

Public

- 2.4.4 Make minor consequential amendments to reflect (and to refer to) Government’s 7 April 2025 update to the CP2030 Action Plan Annex¹¹.

B. Clarificatory and Typographical Changes

- 2.5 We have made a small number of minor clarificatory and typographical changes in order to ensure that the connections methodologies are clearly understood by all stakeholders.

3. Next steps

- 3.1 The clean version of the three connections methodologies published today is the final version that will be used to implement the ‘Gate 2 to Whole Queue’ process i.e. CMP435.
- 3.2 Further information on the implementation of ‘TMO4+’ will be published over the coming weeks, before the opening of the ‘Gate 2 to Whole Queue’ evidence submission window, which is currently expected to open for transmission customers in July 2025, and for distribution customers (to their respective DNO or Transmission Connected IDNO) in May 2025. This is expected to include publication of guidance documents, FAQs and templates, as well as the running of a series of webinars for both transmission and distribution connecting customers.
- 3.3 We will publish the ‘Existing Agreement’ timetable with a minimum of 4 weeks’ notice before the opening of the ‘Gate 2 to Whole Queue’ evidence submission window for transmission customers. This will set out the timetable for the ‘Gate 2 to Whole Queue’ process.
- 3.4 We currently expect that the clean version of the three connections methodologies published today are the versions that we will use to implement the first ‘enduring’ (i.e. CMP434) application window, which we expect to open by the end of 2025. However, we intend to keep the connections methodologies under review, including to take account of any learning from the ‘Gate 2 to Whole Queue’ process, and to make any appropriate changes before the opening of the first enduring application window. If any proposed changes are material, we would consult on them formally before submitting updated versions of the connections methodologies to Ofgem for decision.

¹¹ www.gov.uk/government/publications/clean-power-2030-action-plan-solar-capacity-update-letter-to-neso

Public

Annex 1 – Table setting out the changes to the Connections Methodologies

The table below sets out the changes we have made, and the reasons for these changes.

A	Ofgem Decision and Recommendations Related Changes
B	Clarificatory and Typographical changes

Category	Methodology	Section(s)	Page(s)	Change	Reason
A	Gate 2 Criteria; CNDM	Gate 2 Criteria: 2.4, 8.1, 9.1 CNDM: 5.2, 5.18, 5.25, 7.2	Gate 2 Criteria: 10, 50, 68 CNDM: 23, 43, 53, 66	To remove the information that we added on 'the Pause' as a result of the minded-to decision. We have also added the EA Register into the list of information to be published after queue formation.	To align with the Ofgem Decision on CMP434 and CMP435.
A	Gate 2 Criteria; CNDM	Gate 2 Criteria: 6.2 CNDM: 5.4, 5.7	Gate 2 Criteria: 38, 39, 43 CNDM: 25, 32	To provide assurance that projects eligible for Protection Clause 2a, and which have existing agreements to connect on or before 31 December 2027,	To address Ofgem recommendations within the Decision.

Public

				will retain their connection dates and connection points.	
A	Gate 2 Criteria; CNDM	Gate 2 Criteria: 6.2 CNDM: 7.2, 7.3	Gate 2 Criteria: 41, 42, 44 CNDM: 66, 70	To simplify Protection Clause 3 so that projects/customers that (i) submitted planning on or before 20th December 2024 (ii) have no outcome by the closure of the CMP435 application window and (iii) achieve consent after the closure of the CMP435 window; are eligible to receive Gate 2 terms in a future CMP434 window even if this would breach zonal or national permitted capacities.	To address Ofgem recommendations within the Decision.
A	CNDM	5.4, 7.2	25-26, 66-67	To reflect and refer to the April 2025 update to the CP2030 Action Plan Connections Reform Annex.	To make minor consequential amendments to align with the Clean Power 2030 Action Plan Connections Reform Annex.
B	Gate 2 Criteria	6.2	43, 44	To clarify that the provision related to a customer not needing to resubmit relevant Queue Management Milestone	The requirement to resubmit relevant Queue Management Milestone evidence, for embedded (i.e. distribution-connected) projects was

Public

				<p>evidence, if it has already been provided, only applies to directly connected (i.e. transmission connected) projects.</p>	<p>referenced in the draft Gate 2 Readiness Declaration Template published on 11th April 2025, but as an oversight it was not referenced in the updated version of the Gate 2 Criteria Methodology published on 21st March 2025.</p> <p>The reason for this approach more generally is to minimise the risk of using out of date queue management information for embedded projects as the basis for determining whether those projects meet the protection clauses, The queue management arrangements for embedded projects have been in place for a considerably longer period of time than the queue management arrangements for transmission-connected projects. We therefore consider that it is reasonable and proportionate for DNOs and Transmission connected IDNOs to</p>
--	--	--	--	--	---

Public

					validate up to date milestone evidence for embedded projects.
B	Gate 2 Criteria; CNDM; Project Designation	Cover Page	1	Update publication date and explanation of tracked changes.	Consequential minor amendments.
B	Gate 2 Criteria; CNDM; Project Designation	How to Read Page and Purpose Page	ALL: 3 CNDM and PD: 5	Remove the 'subject to Authority approval' related text.	Consequential minor amendments.
B	Gate 2 Criteria	Contents Page	2	Update page references and remove Appendix 1.	Consequential minor amendments.
B	Gate 2 Criteria	How to Read Page	3	Add missing word (i.e. 'Queue').	Typographical correction.
B	Gate 2 Criteria	6.2	36-44	Update page numbering in titles to account for additional page.	Consequential minor amendments.
B	Gate 2 Criteria	6.3	46	Change Dispatchable Power Technologies to Low Carbon Dispatchable Power, to align with related wording elsewhere.	Minor consistency related correction.

Public

B	CNDM	5.19	45	Correct reference to Phase 2.	Typographical correction.
B	CNDM	7.3	70	Correcting cross reference and clarifying submission of planning consent must be followed by obtaining planning consent to be eligible for protection.	Minor consistency related correction.
B	Project Designation	1.1.5	5	Updated to reflect approval of licence condition and include relevant licence conditions.	Consequential minor amendments.
B	Project Designation	1.3.1	7	Description of Clean Power 2030 Action Plan updated to align with other methodologies.	Minor consistency related correction.
B	Project Designation	2.2 (D)	12	Missing superscript and footnote reference added; typo removed.	Typographical corrections.
B	Project Designation	3.5.1	21	Remove Ofgem approval related text.	Consequential minor amendments.
B	Project Designation	5.1	32	Typo – added an ‘a’ to the first sentence.	Typographical correction.