Connections Reform Handbook Addendum:

Guidance Updates and Clarifications

July 2025

ena energynetworks association

NESO National Energy System Operator

Introduction

This document must be read alongside the *Connections Reform Evidence Submission Handbook*. It provides additional guidance to help customers complete their Readiness Declaration and submit the required supporting evidence.

This addendum sets out the top 10 lessons learned from evidence submitted to date through the DNO Evidence Gathering process, which opened on 20 May 2025.

The clarifications are designed to support both Transmission and Distribution connection customers with their Gate 2 to Whole Queue Readiness Declaration and associated evidence submission during the application window from 8–29 July.

Together, the handbook and this addendum aim to save you time and reduce the need for clarification queries during the busy Gate 2 to Whole Queue application period.

Top 10 lessons learned

The following topics reflect the most common areas where clarification has been required during the initial DNO Evidence Gathering process.

Customers are strongly encouraged to review these carefully before submitting their Readiness Declaration and associated evidence.

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1. Readiness through Planning route vs Land route

Handbook reference

Gate 2 Readiness Criteria overview

2.7 Part 3A – Gate 2 Readiness – Land

2.8 Part 3B – Gate 2 Readiness – planning

Do not submit Town and Country Planning evidence to demonstrate Readiness via the 'Planning' route. The only acceptable planning regime for the 'Planning' route is the Development Consent Order (DCO).

To clarify, there are four planning regimes:

1. Development Consent Order – applicable in England and Wales
2. Section 36 – applicable in England and Scotland
3. Development of National Significance – applicable in Wales
4. Town and Country Planning – applicable in England, Scotland and Wales

The 'Planning' readiness route is only available to projects that are:

- applying for planning consent through the DCO process

or

- pre-agreed with NESO or a Transmission-connected iDNO/DNO to follow an alternative planning route (see the section in the handbook titled 'Route only if pre-agreed with NESO or Transmission connected iDNO/DNO').

We expect most projects will use the 'Land' route. Very few are likely to follow the 'Planning' route.

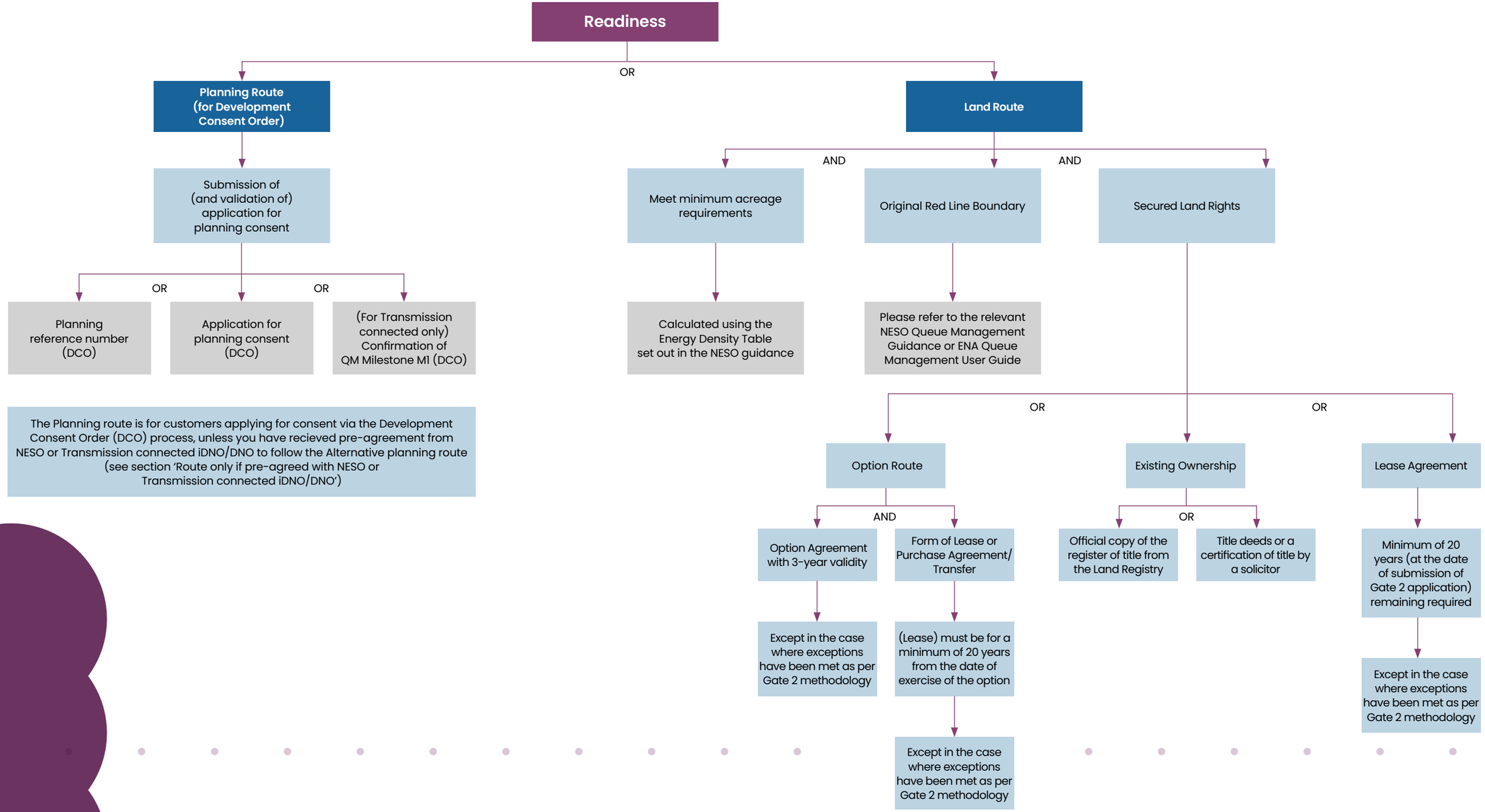
The 'Land' readiness route applies to most projects and requires evidence of secured land right rights. This includes submission of one of the following:

- an option agreement and form of lease or purchase agreement
- an existing land lease
- existing ownership

All projects – whether using the 'Land' or 'Planning' route – will inform in the Readiness Declaration which planning regime they have followed or intend to follow.

Projects with permitted development rights do not need to follow a specific planning regime. They should indicate that the project does not require planning consent.

Please see the visual overview of the 'Planning' and 'Land' evidence submission routes below.



2. Project site address (onshore and offshore)

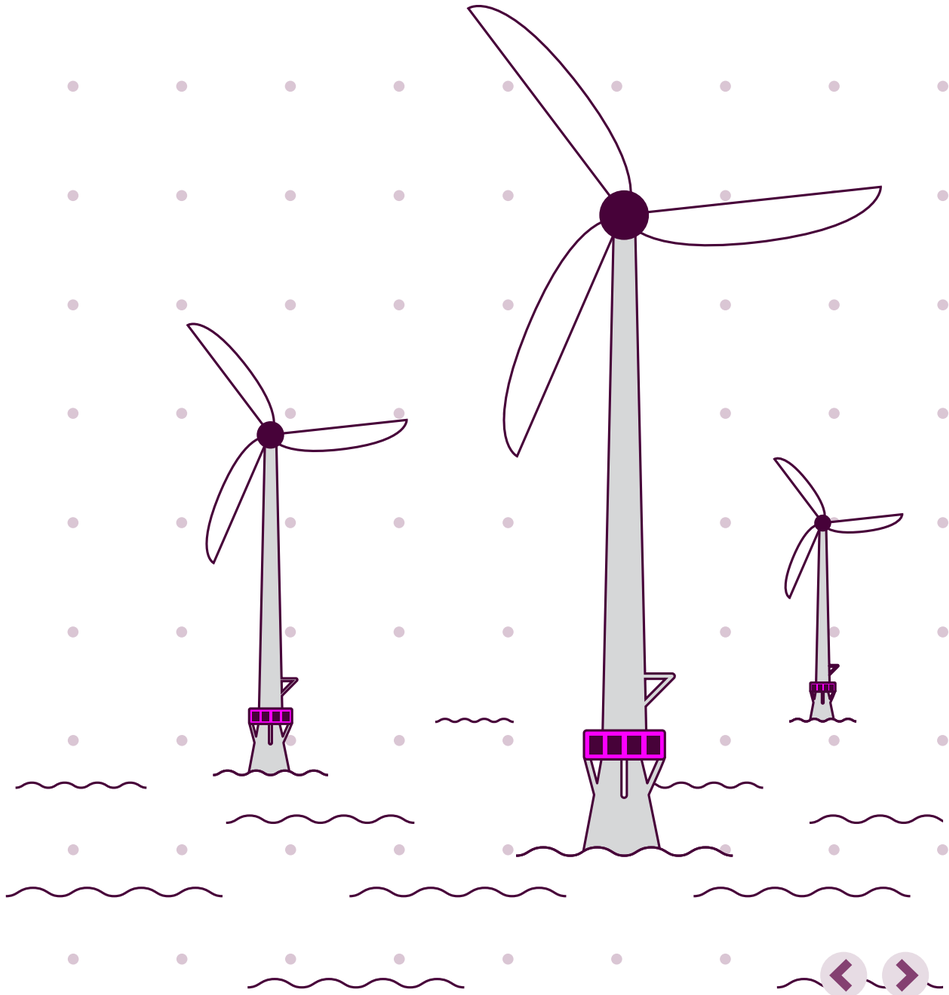
Handbook reference

Address of project site

A significant number of customer queries have asked for clarification on what constitutes an appropriate project site address.

For offshore projects, provide the address of the nearest onshore substation to the best of your knowledge, using publicly available information. You will not be penalised if, in practice, a closer substation is identified after submission.

For onshore projects, the address and postcode included in the Readiness Declaration must be a location within the project's Original Red Line Boundary. If the project site does not yet have a postcode, provide the nearest available postcode.



3. Installed Capacity and other capacity type definitions

Handbook reference

Installed Capacity requirements/Original Red Line Boundary document requirements/ Proposed Installed Capacity for each of the technologies you are seeking to meet Gate 2 Readiness via the planning route/Technology type and Installed Capacity information for projects with multiple connection stages/2.12 Part 7 – Information to be published on the Existing Agreement Register

A significant number of customer queries have asked for further clarification on which capacity values to provide for Installed Capacity.

Please refer to the table opposite for clarification on the types of capacity referenced in the Readiness Declaration and associated evidence submission, including definitions and where they are required.

Capacity Type	Definition	Where required
Installed Capacity	Installed Capacity is a new defined term in CUSC Section 11. The Installed Capacity value submitted must align with the CUSC definition and reflect the Project as set out in the Existing Agreement. Except for a limited set of permitted changes under the G2TWQ process (such as Advancement, TEC or Developer Capacity reduction, or moving some or all of the technologies/stages to Gate 1), no changes to the Project are allowed. Any other changes must be made through a Gated or Non-Gated Modification Application, as appropriate. **The CUSC definition is:** "The figure, based solely on the Original Red Line Boundary, representing the intended maximum amount of active power that the User's equipment or developer's equipment (as applicable) within that boundary is capable of exporting and/or importing. This is independent of Connection Entry Capacity, Transmission Entry Capacity or Developer Capacity, and any associated limitations on Active Power. Installed Capacity must be declared by the User/Applicant for each technology type (if more than one) and expressed in MW to one decimal place." Additional clarification: • For solar, Installed Capacity = sum of AC MW rating of inverters (not DC MW rating of panels) • For wind, Installed Capacity = sum of turbine MW ratings • For Transmission connected demand sites, convert MVA to MW using unity power factor	Required for each technology for Gate 2 Readiness
Registered Capacity	As defined in the Grid Code.	Not required for G2TWQ submission
Export Capacity	Defined in the Grid Code as Maximum Export Capacity. For Distribution connected projects, this is listed in your accepted Distribution connection offer. This term aligns with Developer Capacity as defined in the CUSC: "The MW figure as specified as such by a User in a BELLA or in a Construction Agreement entered into between The Company and a User in the category of a Distribution System directly connected to the National Electricity Transmission System as a consequence of a Request for a Statement of Works."	Only required if seeking protections or requesting a reduction in capacity
Import Capacity	Defined in the Grid Code as Maximum Import Capacity. Note: For battery technologies, if the import is for auxiliary use only, this value is not required.	Required only for BESS or LDES technologies

4. Original Red Line Boundary

Handbook reference

Original Red Line Boundary document requirements

The Original Red Line Boundary submission must meet the minimum requirements.

Submit your Original Red Line Boundary as a PDF. It must include all of the following mandatory evidence:

- Be clearly marked
- Indicate the scale and orientation used
- Explain any symbols, colours and abbreviations used
- State the site address, including postcode if available
- State grid coordinates (longitude and latitude in WGS84 format) to 3 decimal places, showing the northern, eastern, southern and western extremes of the project site.
  - Grid coordinates must be in decimal format (not degrees, minutes and seconds), and must include exactly 3 decimal places (for example: 58.013)
- Show the Installed Capacity (expressed in whole MW or to one decimal place) for each technology
- Show the total acreage secured within the Original Red Line Boundary for the project site.
  - The acreage must reflect only secured land
- Include any land granted under Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) powers and/or land under probate or subject to an application for confirmation, where applicable

Best practice example

Opposite is an illustrative example (not to scale) of an acceptable Original Red Line Boundary submission for a project with a single land parcel. Further examples can be found in Appendix 3 of the handbook.

J. Smith Generation Project Limited

Site Address:
Land South of Murton Substation, Pit Road, Murton, Seaham

Postcodes (nearest):
SR7 9JP

Technology Installed:
10.0MW of Battery Energy Storage System (Energy Arbitrage)

Land Acreage of site:
0.5011 Acres

Grid Coordinates (WGS84 Format):
Northerly Extreme Latitude: 54.806
Northerly Extreme Longitude: - 1.395

Easterly Extreme Latitude: 54.806
Easterly Extreme Longitude: -1.394

Southerly Extreme Latitude: 54.805
Southerly Extreme Longitude: - 1.396

Westerly Extreme Latitude: 54.805
Westerly Extreme Longitude: - 1.397

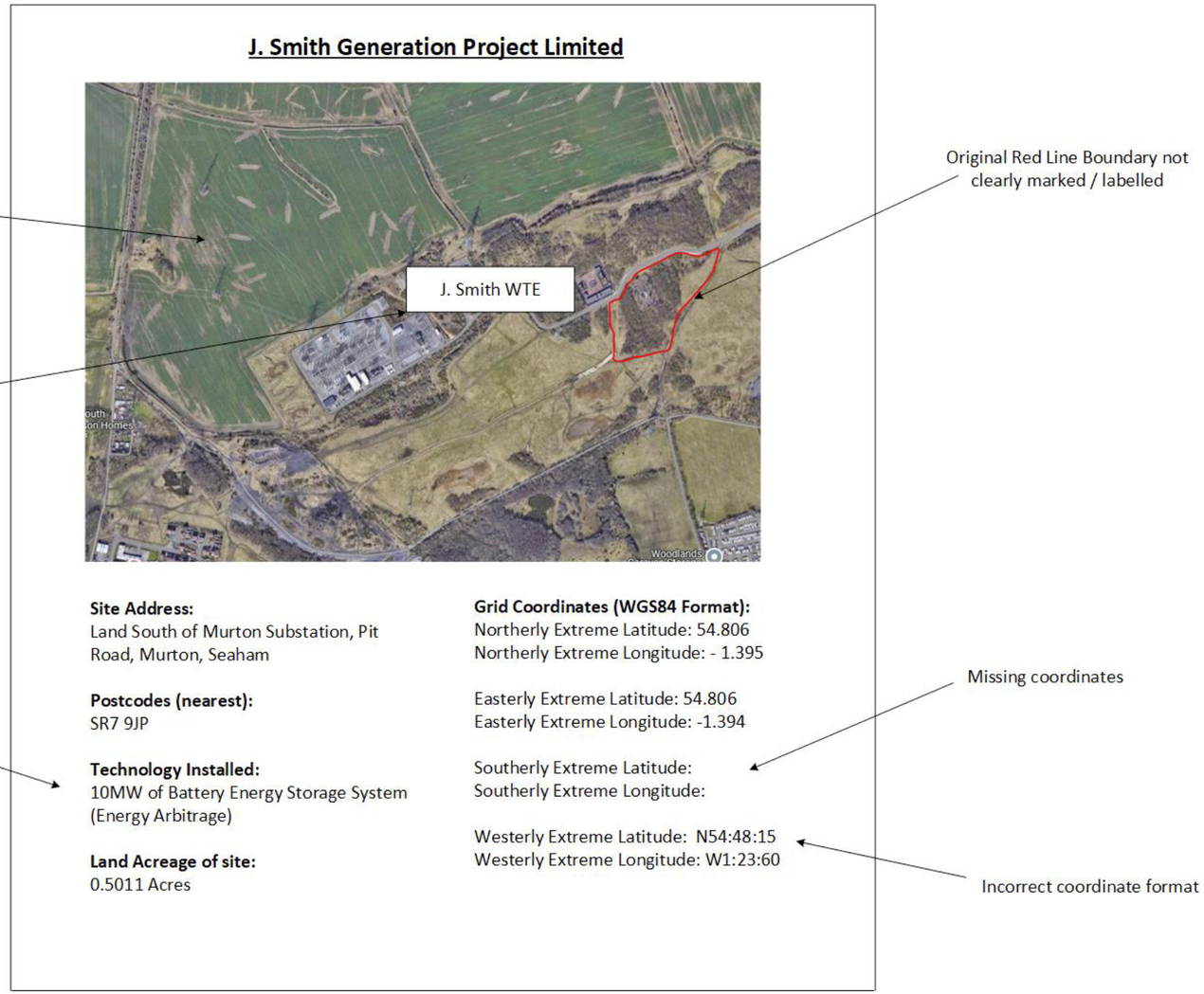
4. Original Red Line Boundary (cont.)

Handbook reference

Original Red Line Boundary document requirements

✖ Unacceptable example

Opposite is an illustrative example of an Original Red Line Boundary submission that would not meet requirements.



5. Original Red Line Boundary, including grid coordinates, for staged projects

Handbook reference

Original Red Line Boundary document requirements/Grid coordinate requirements

We have received a number of queries from staged projects regarding submission requirements for the Original Red Line Boundary, including grid coordinates.

Opposite is an illustrative example of an acceptable Original Red Line Boundary submission for staged projects with multiple land parcels. This is particularly relevant for grid coordinate submissions.

Example[1]:

Staged Original Red Line Boundary submission showing grid coordinates for each stage.

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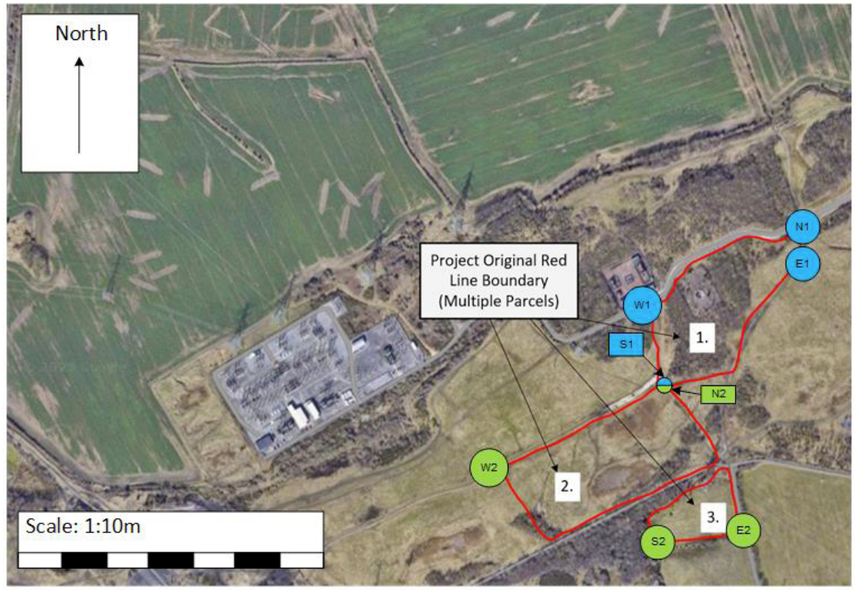

Site Address:
Land South of Murton Substation, Pit Road, Murton, Seaham

Postcodes (nearest):
SR7 9JP

Technology Installed:
Stage 1: 10.0MW of Solar PV
Stage 2: 20.0MW of Solar PV

Land Acreage of site:
Parcel 1: 0.5011 Acres
Parcel 2: 0.6011 Acres
Parcel 3: 0.2011 Acres

Total Acreage Stage 1: 0.5011 Acres
Total Acreage Stage 2: 0.8022 Acres

Grid Coordinates (WGS84 Format) Whole Site Area Staged Project – Stage 1:

Northerly Extreme Latitude: 54.806
Northerly Extreme Longitude: - 1.395 (N1)

Easterly Extreme Latitude: 54.804
Easterly Extreme Longitude: -1.395 (E1)

Southerly Extreme Latitude: 54.800
Southerly Extreme Longitude: - 1.394 (S1)

Westerly Extreme Latitude: 54.802
Westerly Extreme Longitude: - 1.400 (W1)

Grid Coordinates (WGS84 Format) Whole Site Area Staged Project – Stage 2:

Northerly Extreme Latitude: 54.805
Northerly Extreme Longitude: -1.396 (N2)

Easterly Extreme Latitude: 54.803
Easterly Extreme Longitude: -1.394 (E2)

Southerly Extreme Latitude: 54.802
Southerly Extreme Longitude: -1.397 (S2)

Westerly Extreme Latitude: 54.803
Westerly Extreme Longitude: -1.399 (W2)

Grid Coordinates (WGS84 Format) Whole Site Area Staged Project – Stage 2:

Northerly Extreme Latitude: 54.805
Northerly Extreme Longitude: -1.396 (N2)

1 Acreage per land parcel is not mandatory. Only the total acreage of the project site — including by stage, if relevant — is required.

5. Original Red Line Boundary, including grid coordinates, for staged projects (cont.)

However, as illustrated opposite, it is also acceptable for a staged project to provide the same grid co-ordinates for each stage, provided they reflect the extremes of the full project site. In this case, the same coordinates would be entered for each stage. This overlap is acceptable for the purpose of duplication checks.

For the purpose of readiness, projects with multiple stages, must upload a separate Original Red Line Boundary and grid coordinates for each stage via the NESO portal. However, it is also acceptable to use the same Original Red Line Boundary and the same grid coordinates for each stage, provided this still shows the installed capacity per technology and the acreage for each stage. These submissions are used solely to assess whether each stage meets the Gate 2 Readiness Criteria.

For Transmission connected projects, the Original Red Line Boundary and Installed Capacity across all stages will be used to assess ongoing compliance with the '50% Rule' in CUSC Section 16. This means a project can move Installed Capacity between the Original Red Line Boundaries of different stages. Only Installed Capacity located outside the Original Red Line Boundary of the entire project counts towards the '50% Rule'

Section 4.1.2 of the *Queue Management Guidance* has been updated to clarify this position on an enduring basis.

Example[2]:
Staged Original Red Line Boundary submission using a single set of extreme grid coordinates.

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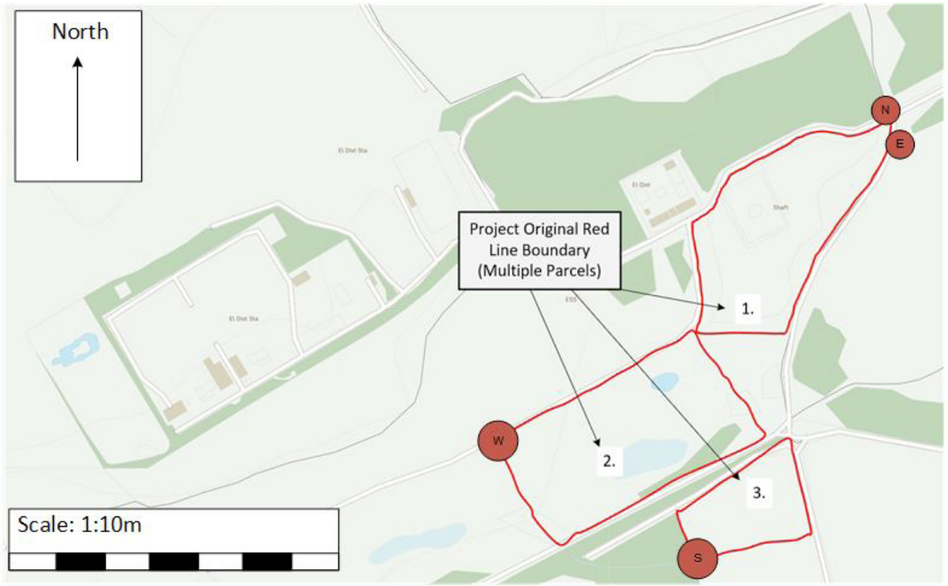


Site Address:
Land South of Murton Substation, Pit Road, Murton, Seaham

Postcodes (nearest):
SR7 9JP

Technology Installed:
Stage 1: 10.0MW of Solar PV
Stage 2: 20.0MW of Solar PV

Land Acreage of site:
Parcel 1: 0.5011 Acres
Parcel 2: 0.6011 Acres
Parcel 3: 0.2011 Acres

Total Acreage Stage 1: 0.5011 Acres
Total Acreage Stage 2: 0.8022 Acres

Grid Coordinates (WGS84 Format) Whole Site Area staged project, submitting the same extreme coordinates per stage:
Northerly Extreme Latitude: 54.806
Northerly Extreme Longitude: - 1.395 (N)

Easterly Extreme Latitude: 54.804
Easterly Extreme Longitude: -1.395 (E)

Southerly Extreme Latitude: 54.800
Southerly Extreme Longitude: - 1.394 (S)

Westerly Extreme Latitude: 54.802
Westerly Extreme Longitude: - 1.400 (W)

2 Acreage per land parcel is not mandatory. Only the total acreage of the project site — including by stage, if relevant — is required.

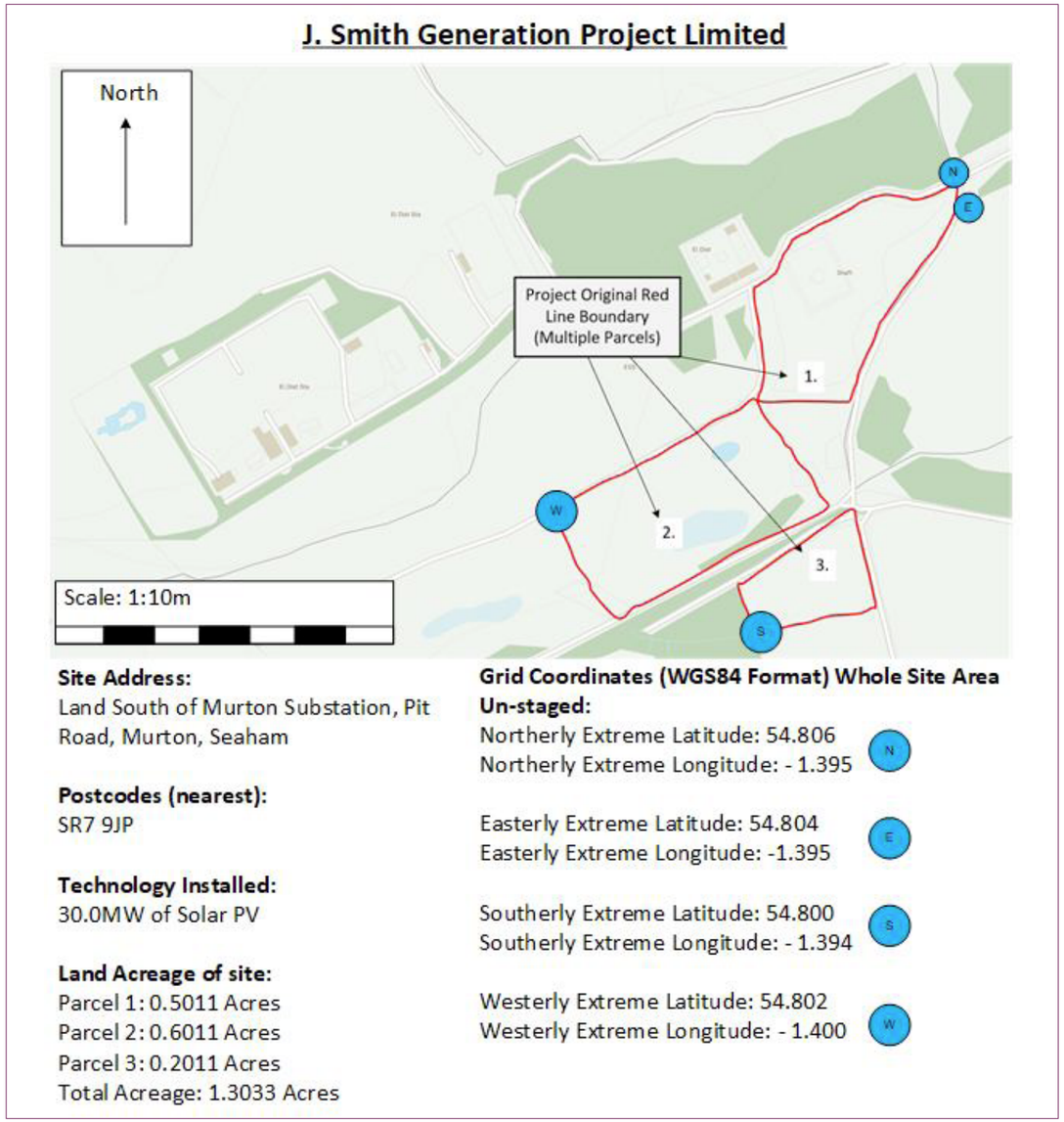
6. Grid coordinates for projects (not staged) with multiple land parcels

Handbook reference

Original Red Line Boundary document requirements/Grid coordinate requirements

A number of queries have been received from projects with multiple land parcels regarding submission requirements for the Original Red Line Boundary, particularly in relation to grid coordinate submissions.

The example[3] opposite illustrates what is expected in an Original Red Line Boundary submission for projects that are not staged but include multiple land parcels. This is particularly relevant for the submission of grid coordinates.



3 Acreage per land parcel is not mandatory. Only the total acreage of the project site — including by stage, if relevant — is required.

7. Total acreage for projects with multiple land parcels or hybrid projects

Handbook reference

Original Red Line Boundary document requirements/Minimum acreage requirements

A number of queries have been received regarding the submission of total acreage. Please refer to NESO's *Letter of Authority (LoA) Guidance* for requirements, including for projects with multiple land parcels or hybrid projects.

For the Original Red Line Boundary submission, you must include the total acreage secured within the boundary for the project site, including for hybrid projects.

The total acreage must meet the minimum acreage requirement for each technology type, in line with the minimum acres per MW set out in the Energy Density look-up table in the *LoA Guidance*. NESO has published updated figures indicating the appropriate acreage per MW (or square kilometres if offshore) by technology type.

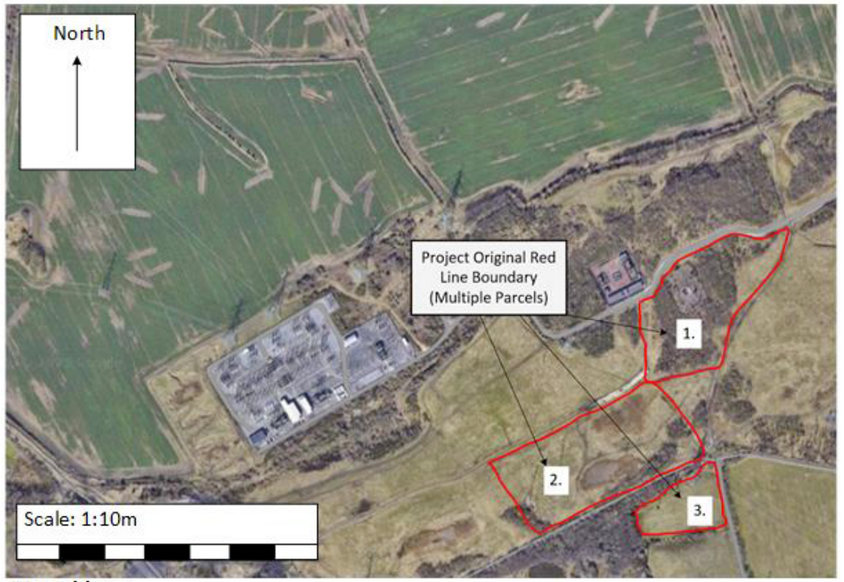
For hybrid projects, you should calculate the minimum acreage for each technology separately and then combine these figures to give the total minimum acreage required for the project.

An illustrative example[4] is provided below of what would be expected within an Original Red Line Boundary submission for total acreage for a project with multiple land parcels.

When checking minimum acreage, NESO will multiply the installed capacity for each technology by the applicable energy density figure and sum these values to determine the minimum required acreage for the full project.

You must also refer to the *LoA Guidance* for full instructions when preparing your minimum acreage submission.

J. Smith Generation Project Limited



Site Address:
Land South of Murton Substation, Pit Road, Murton, Seaham

Postcodes (nearest):
SR7 9JP

Technology Installed:
30.0MW of Solar PV

Land Acreage of site:
Parcel 1: 0.5011 Acres
Parcel 2: 0.6011 Acres
Parcel 3: 0.2011 Acres
Total Acreage: 1.3033 Acres

Grid Coordinates (WGS84 Format) Whole Site Area:
Northerly Extreme Latitude: 54.806
Northerly Extreme Longitude: - 1.395

Easterly Extreme Latitude: 54.804
Easterly Extreme Longitude: -1.395

Southerly Extreme Latitude: 54.800
Southerly Extreme Longitude: - 1.394

Westerly Extreme Latitude: 54.802
Westerly Extreme Longitude: - 1.400

4 Acreage per land parcel is not mandatory. Only the total acreage of the project site — including by stage, if relevant — is required.

8. Staged projects further information

Handbook reference

Staged Existing Agreement reference requirements

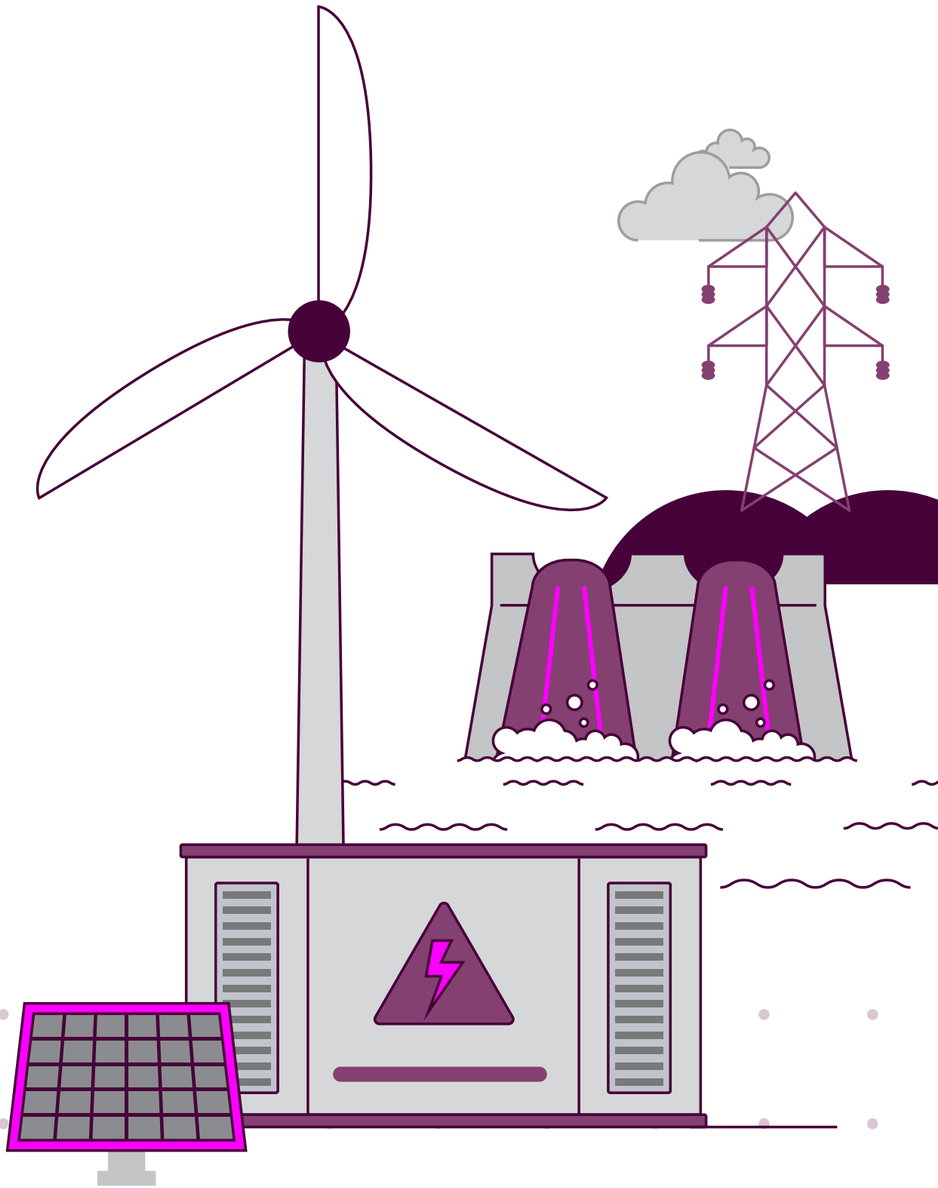
This clarification applies primarily to Transmission connected or Large Distribution connected Embedded Generators. Most Small and Medium Embedded projects are not expected to be staged.

The NESO connections portal will display each stage of a project that has either a firm or enduring non-firm connection date, as defined in your Existing Agreement with NESO. Within the portal, customers can indicate for each technology in each stage whether they intend to:

- proceed with a Gate 2 application
- request a Gate 1 offer
- remove the technology from the project

If all technologies within a stage are removed, that stage will be removed from the submission.

For any technology proceeding with a Gate 2 application, you will be able to submit Readiness information and associated evidence for each stage, as well as Strategic Alignment details for each technology within that stage.



9. Confirmation of land interests – minimum requirements

Handbook reference

Confirmation of land interests

Meeting the minimum requirements for submitting evidence of land interests is mandatory.

The 'Land' readiness route is expected to apply to most projects. Projects must provide evidence of secured land rights through one of the following:

- option agreement and form of lease or purchase agreement
- existing land lease
- existing ownership

If you are submitting evidence based on an option agreement (unless the exception applies – see the relevant section in the handbook), the agreement must be valid and meet the minimum submission requirements.

If you include both an option agreement and a lease (where the option has not yet been exercised and the lease is attached), only the option agreement needs to be signed. The signature must be from both parties or, if executed in counterpart, the part signed by the landowner.

If the evidence is based on an existing lease, it must be signed by both parties, or the part signed by the landowner if executed in counterpart.

It is not necessary for the entity holding the land rights to be the same as the entity signing the Director or Authorised person declaration. However, if they differ, you must provide a formal letter from the landholder confirming how the User/Applicant has the necessary land rights.

The handbook notes that land status information may be redacted for commercial sensitivity. However, even with redactions, the submission must meet all minimum requirements, including having the necessary signatures.

10. Director/Authorised person declaration

Handbook reference

Director/Authorised person declaration

We have received many queries on how to submit the Director or Authorised person declaration.

The declaration is included in the NESO Readiness Declaration excel template. Refer to the table below for the route for submitting the declaration based on your relevant network operator.

For Transmission connected and Large Embedded generators, the declaration is submitted directly to NESO via the NESO portal.

For Small and Medium Embedded generators, follow the submission route advised by your relevant Distribution network company or Transmission connected independent Distribution network company.

Network Company	How Customers Should Submit Their Director/Authorised Person Declaration
National Energy System Operator	The NESO portal includes the declaration text and options to upload: 1) the Director's signature; or, only where there is no statutory director 2) the Authorised person's signature and supporting evidence (where applicable). Signatures must be uploaded as PNG files.
Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks	Upload the NESO Readiness Declaration template to the SSE portal, fully completed, with the Director's signature in the Excel.
SP Energy Networks	Submit the completed NESO Readiness Declaration Excel file to the relevant SPEN email address, with the Director's signature included in the template.
Northern PowerGrid	Use the Northern Powergrid Customer Connections portal to read and accept the Director's declaration by ticking the confirmation box.
Electricity North West	Submit the completed NESO Readiness Declaration Excel file, including the Director's signature, to the designated Gate 2 mailbox.
UK Power Networks	Complete the NESO Readiness Declaration Excel file with all required fields. The statutory Director or Authorised person must then log into the UKPN portal to sign the declaration and submit the evidence.
National Grid Electricity Distribution	Use the letter template in the NGED online form and submit a signed version on your company's headed paper.
Transmission connected iDNO	**Eclipse Power:** Submit the completed NESO Readiness Declaration Excel template with Director's signature. A separate one-page signed and dated letter with the declaration text (as per Part 4 of the Readiness Declaration Excel document) is also acceptable. **Green Gen Cymru:** Please contact GGC via their website, email (CustomerConnections@greengencymru.com), or your Connections Manager if known.

ENA
Energy Networks Association
4 More London Riverside
London
SE1 2AU
United Kingdom

energynetworks.org

NESO
Faraday House
Warwick Technology Park
Gallows Hill
Warwick
CV34 6DA
United Kingdom

Registered in England and Wales
No. 11014226

neso.energy