

Connections Reform

What Next: Post Notifications Customer Handbook

December 2025

Change log:

9 December 2025: Update to chapter 2 to clarify battery/LDES import and export information. Update to chapter 5 to add additional clarity for hybrid projects.

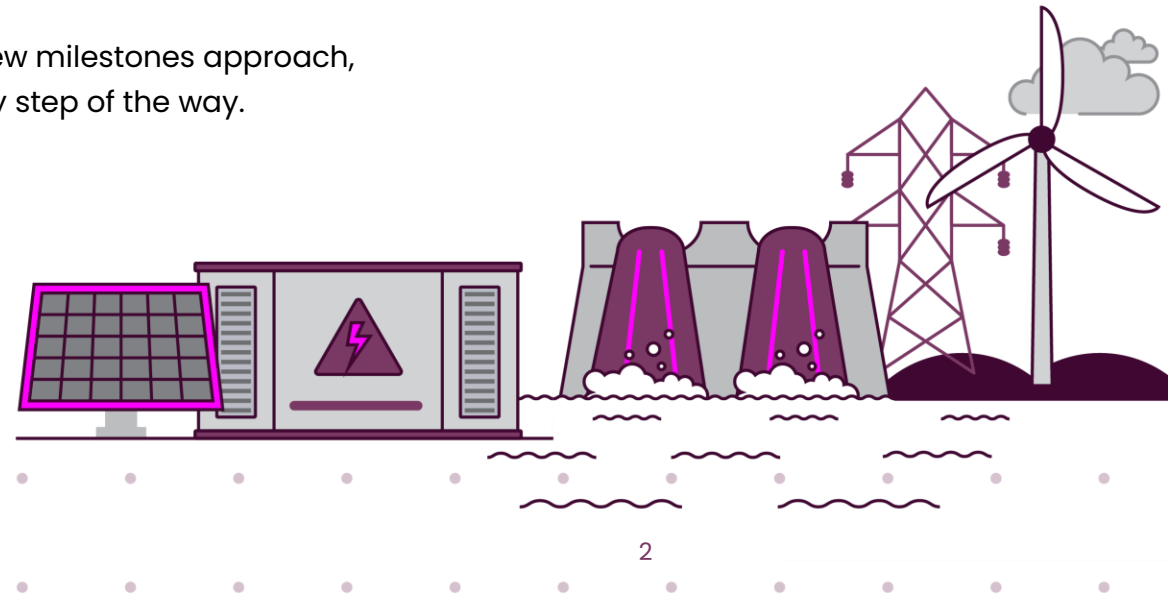
Welcome to your Connections Reform handbook

You have received your notification – what happens next?

This handbook is designed to guide you through the next steps in the Connections Reform process as we move towards sending out offers, supporting you through to energisation and preparing for the next application window.

Inside, you will find essential information to help you understand what is coming, what actions you may need to take and how to stay on track. Our aim is to make the process clear and straightforward, so you can feel confident about what is ahead.

This handbook will evolve over time. As the programme progresses and new milestones approach, we will add additional chapters to keep you informed and supported every step of the way.



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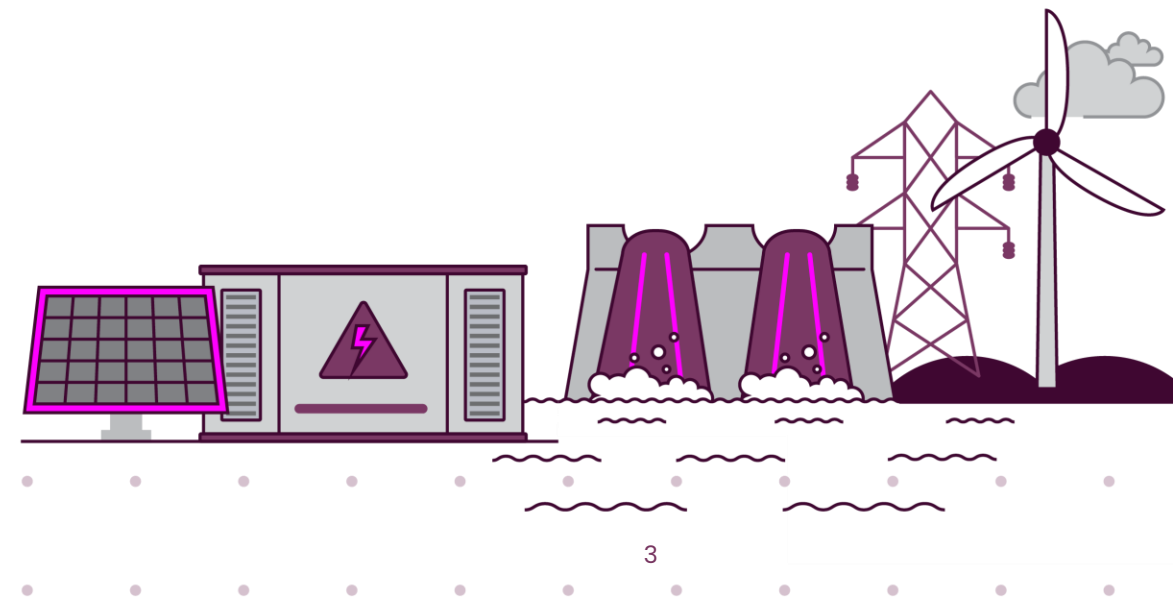
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Chapter 1

What Connections Reform set out to do

We have worked collaboratively with industry, government and Ofgem to design connections reform, to unlock Britain's clean energy future. We have been proud to lead this process together with Great Britain's networks. It is a first-of-its-kind undertaking, and while it has not always been easy for you, our customers, we have, together, achieved something transformative.

The old system created a queue that grew tenfold in five years, and exceeded 700 GW. That is four times what we need by 2030 and double what we need for 2050. Ready-to-build projects were held back by long delays, unable to contribute to our clean power and economic goals. Connections reform set out to change this by introducing clear milestones, annual application windows and more predictable process. To make this work, we had to take bold action to clear gridlock and prioritise those ready to build, and needed, so the system works for everyone.

Following the first part of the connections reform process, the pipeline of ready-to-go projects now sits at 381.5 GQ.

These changes are designed to bring the certainty and investor clarity you have asked for. Clearing Britain's gridlock is essential to unlocking £40 billion a year in private investment, supporting supply chains and creating the jobs and industries of the future.

We recognise that this journey has been challenging. It is the first time anyone has undertaken this work, and your engagement, feedback and patience have been invaluable. You have helped shape a system that will be easier to navigate and better aligned with Great Britain's energy and economic ambitions.

So, what is next for connections reform? Our focus is now on making this an enduring process that stands the test of time. We are committed to learning from everything in the past year to make the application process as smooth as possible for customers. That means clearer guidance, simpler steps, simpler language and a system that works predictably for everyone.

These connections reforms only work because of the quality and commitment you have shown. Thank you for everything you have done so far, and for continuing to work with us as we turn ambition into reality.

Chapter 2

Understanding your notification

When you receive your Connections Reform notification, it is natural to have questions about what it means for your project and what happens next. This chapter is designed to help you make sense of your results and guide you through the key information in your notification document.

What your notification tells you

Your notification confirms the outcome of the Gate 2 to Whole Queue (G2TWQ) process for your project. It sets out whether each stage or technology within your application has been given Gate 1 or Gate 2 status, following the initial readiness checks and the queue formation process.

Stage	TEC	Refined Technology Type	Strategic Alignment Category	Protected Status	Installed Capacity	Gate	Phase	Detailed Checks Status
<Stage 1>	<xxMW>	<Technology>	<Category>	<Y/N>	<xxMW>	<2>	<2>	<Met criteria for detailed checks>
<Stage 2>	<xxMW>	<Technology>	<Category>	<Y/N>	<xxMW>	<2>	<1>	<Subject to detailed checks>
<Stage 3>	<xxMW>	<Technology>	<Category>	<Y/N>	<xxMW>	<1>	<n/a>	<n/a>

You will see your results clearly laid out in a table showing:

- **Stage:** The part of your project being assessed.

- **Transmission Entry Capacity (TEC):** Stage TEC found within a customer's existing agreement or reduced stage TEC, if requested within the G2TWQ process. If you are a demand-only customer, the TEC capacity will be intentionally shown as 0.
- **Refined Technology Type:** This is the technology which has been derived from your original contracted technology based on the information you have provided within your Gate 2 Application.
- **Strategic Alignment Category:** This is the Clean Power 2030 Action Plan (CP30) category that your refined technology type belongs to for queue formation.
- **Protected Status:** Whether your project has protected status. Protected status means a project has been given priority to receive a Gate 2 offer despite the old queue being restructured.
- **Installed Capacity:** The intended maximum amount of Active Power that the Developer's Equipment would be capable of exporting and/or importing as entered by the customer within the G2TWQ process.
- **Gate:** Whether your project is at Gate 1 (not yet ready or needed) or Gate 2, (the new project pipeline)
- **Phase:** This relates to the CP30 phase allocation, i.e. Phase 1 (2026–2030) or Phase 2 (2031–2035). This does not necessarily mean that the connection date offered will always be within these dates. The phase relates to 'firm' or 'enduring non-firm' connection date.
- **Detailed Check Status:** Whether your project has met all detailed checks or is subject to them as still going through the process. The detailed check process runs in parallel with the queue formation process that has determined your results. If you have not yet passed all the detailed checks, we will be in touch with you to provide extra information. Current data shows us that failing detailed checks is rare, but if you do not pass them, you will receive a Gate 1 ATV.

What your results mean

Gate 2 – Met Criteria for Detailed Checks: Your project has met the readiness and strategic alignment criteria. You will receive a Gate 2 Modification Offer soon.

Gate 2 – Subject to Detailed Checks: Your project must complete further checks before an offer can be made. We will contact you with the outcome.

Gate 1: Your project did not meet the strategic alignment criteria at this point. You will receive a Gate 1 Agreement to Vary (ATV), but you can apply again in future windows.

If you see the same technology and stage listed more than once, this may indicate that your project is partially protected or that you have accepted a 'split offer' to progress part of your application through Gate 2. You will already be aware of these details if this applies to you.

Please note that the capacity shown in the table above is provided on an indicative basis, and the final capacity will be included in your Gate 2 Modification Offer alongside your connection date. If you requested advancement either into a phase or within a phase, you'll find out the outcome in your offer. Advancement is not finalised until you receive your formal offer.

A note on interim non-firm dates

As set out above, the 'phase' relates to 'firm' or 'enduring non-firm' connection date. Some projects and connection contracts have an 'interim non-firm' connection date, which is sometimes called a 'temporary non-firm connection'.

Where relevant, 'interim non-firm' connection dates will be included in the offer issued as a result of the G2TWQ process and will be confirmed at the same time as your 'firm' or 'enduring non-firm' connection date. As 'interim

non-firm' connection dates are earlier than 'firm' connection dates, this means that any 'interim non-firm' connection date(s) confirmed in your Gate 2 offer could be before 2030, even where you have been provided with a Phase 2 queue outcome in the table above.

For the avoidance of doubt, this therefore means that your queue formation notification only relates to your 'firm' or 'enduring non-firm' stage(s) and it does not include any information related to any (if any) earlier non-firm stage(s).

A note on import only / export only batteries or Long Duration Energy Storage (LDES)

When reading the results table for battery or LDES projects that are co-located with demand or generation there is an important nuance.

As a follow up to the application process we asked all relevant projects whether their storage was import only, export only, or import and export. Some battery or LDES stages were submitted or requested as import-only or export-only.

Where developers said relevant storage was import only and co-located with demand it is treated as final demand only and did not count towards the battery or LDES category for strategic alignment.

Where developers said storage co-located with generation was export only it did not count towards the battery or LDES category for strategic alignment. This means that these stages can become Gate 2 and this will be noted the results table. However, because they cannot both charge and discharge, the developer may wish to withdraw them from the process.

In some projects with multiple technologies (for example, a primary technology such as solar, plus a battery), the results table may reference stage or project TEC. That TEC value can be higher than the MW shown for a single queue item, particularly where one technology is Gate 1 and a battery/LDES stage is Gate 2 and import/export only.

For the avoidance of doubt, where an import only or export only technology stage is in this situation, it is considered to be 0MW from a queue formation perspective, as it does not have import or export rights, as appropriate. This is also the case from a Gate 2 Modification Offer perspective. This is irrespective of what Project/Stage TEC is included in its row in the table.

This does not change your Gate outcome; it simply reflects how capability was entered during queue formation.

If your battery's capability changes (for example, you modify from import-only to import/export), you can request the appropriate modification through the usual channels, and we'll treat it under the established processes.

Chapter 3

What to do when you get your offer or ATV



When you receive your notification from Connections Reform, it marks an important milestone in your project's journey. What happens next depends on the outcome of your application, and you will receive either a formal offer (known as a Gate 2 Modification Offer) or an Agreement to Vary (ATV). Understanding the difference between these documents and what you need to do with each is essential.

Receiving an Agreement to Vary (ATV)

If your project did not meet the Gate 2 criteria, you will receive a Gate 1 Agreement to Vary, or ATV. The ATV is a legal agreement that changes the terms of your existing contract. It suspends all obligations within your existing agreements and any information populated within existing appendices, such as your previous connection date, is made indicative only until a Gate 2 agreement is signed for the project. The Gate 1 ATV explains why your project was classified as Gate 1, typically because a User submitted a Gate 1 Notification or the project did not meet the readiness or strategic alignment criteria at this stage.

You will need to sign and return the ATV via email to box.connectionsoffers@neso.energy within four weeks (28 days) . If you have any queries regarding your Gate 1 ATV, please direct them to box.connectionsoffers@neso.energy – this channel is specific only to Gate 1 ATVs, if your queries are related to connections reform processes, methodologies or Gate 2 Modification Offers, they should be directed via our Connections Portal.

If you have placed cash security, you will be asked to provide up-to-date bank details so NESO can process your refund, which will be issued within six weeks of receiving your signed ATV, please refer to your Gate 1 offer letter for further details. The ATV also allows you to reapply in future application windows, once you are able to meet the necessary criteria.

Receiving a Gate 2 Modification Offer

If your project has met all the necessary criteria at Gate 2, you will receive a Gate 2 Modification Offer. This is a formal contract/ATV that sets out your confirmed connection date, works, cost, technical information and the next steps required to progress your project. It is important to read this document carefully, as it contains specific instructions and deadlines.

Once you have reviewed your offer, you will need to sign and return it within 90 days. It is important to follow the process outlined within each project's offer letter as we are rolling out additional digital functionality for E-Signing at various stages, therefore some earlier offers will be required to return signed documents via our customer portal and others will receive a signing envelope via email from our portal, allowing digital signatures. Any queries and communications regarding the Gate 2 Modification Offer should be raised via the Connections Portal. Further detail will be communicated as soon as possible regarding the Post-Offer TQ (technical query) process and engagement. NESO and TOs are currently finalising the process for pre/post offer engagement and TQs.

After signing, you will be required to place the necessary securities (financial guarantees) within 30 days. If you have previously placed a cash security, you will be guided through providing your bank details so that any required refunds or adjustments can be processed. The offer is your gateway to progressing your project towards connection, and timely action is crucial.

When you will get your offer

Project Type	Timeline
Gate 2 projects connecting up to and including 2030	No later than end of Q2 2026
Gate 2 projects connecting up to and including 2035	No later than end of Q3 2026
Gate 1 (projects that did not meet Gate 2 requirements)	Issued from November 2025 for those who self-selected Gate 1; further ATVs will continue to be issued into 2026

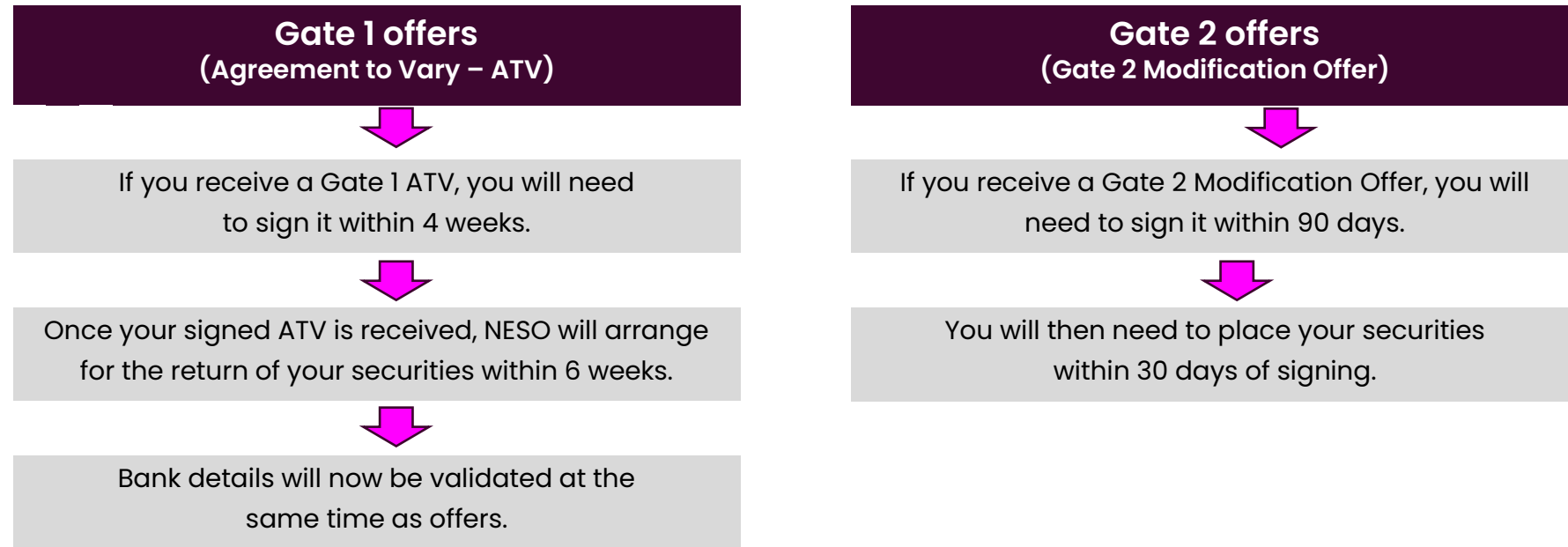
These dates apply to projects that applied directly to NESO. Projects that applied to DNOs should refer to their DNO’s timeline.

What you should do next

After receiving your offer or ATV, take the time to read your documents carefully. Each one is tailored to your project and contains important instructions and deadlines. Make sure you understand what is required and contact NESO if you have any questions or need clarification.

If you are due a refund of cash security, ensure you provide a recent bank letter or statement (dated within the last six months) in a non-editable format, such as PDF, as instructed in your letter. Follow the guidance provided for submitting documents and raising any queries.

This process is new for everyone, and NESO is here to support you, and as further information is finalised, NESO will ensure swift and clear communication. Taking prompt and careful action will help ensure your project continues to move forward smoothly, whether you are progressing with a new offer or preparing to reapply in the future.



Chapter 4

Fees and securities

Fees and securities are essential financial requirements within the NESO electricity connections process.

- **Fees** are payments that customers make at specific stages, such as when submitting an application or progressing through key milestones. These fees cover the administrative and operational costs of processing and managing connection requests.
- **Securities** are financial guarantees, such as cash deposits or bonds, that customers provide to NESO. Their purpose is to confirm that customers are committed to their projects and can cover costs if a project is cancelled. Requiring securities protects the system and other customers from the risks associated with speculative or non-committed applications.

A new post-connections reform process

Connections Reform introduces a new framework for fees and securities to support a fair, transparent and efficient queue management process.

A core principle of the new framework is clarity and transparency Fees and securities are structured to reflect the true cost and risk of progressing a connection application, ensuring that all customers are treated equitably.

The framework also includes important safeguards, such as the 'securities freeze' and clear refund processes, which protect customers during the transition to the new policy arrangements.

In addition, the proposed introduction of the Progression Commitment Fee (PCF), is intended to ensure only committed projects move forward, reducing delays and ensuring we only build what is needed

Fees

A new part of the framework is the proposed PCF, which is being introduced through code modification CMP448 and subject to approval by Ofgem. The PCF is designed to be a measure of queue health and if activated encourage unviable projects to exit and committed and aligned projects only to stay. It is part of wider reform policy that supports progress towards delivery of the UK's clean power targets.

The PCF is triggered only if a cumulative generation threshold of 6.5 GW of terminated projects at Milestone 1 (M1) is reached. If triggered NESO will undertake further analysis and decide on whether to activate which Ofgem will then have final approval on.

If the PCF is activated, generation projects that sit between Gate 2 and M1 are required to post additional securities based on a calculation charge per MW (subject to Ofgem approval in December 2025.)

Only if a project terminates or reduces capacity at M1 is the PCF payable, once a project successfully passes M1 the PCF security is refunded.

Securities

The process for securities is linked to a project's progress through the gates.

For Gate 1, securities are not included in offers. Customers moving to Gate 1 may be eligible for a refund of previously lodged securities.

For Gate 2, securities are included in the offer, and customers must place the required securities within 30 days of signing.

To provide certainty during the transition to the new framework, NESO has implemented a 'securities freeze' from January 2025 to July 2026. During this period, no new securities requirements are imposed. The freeze remains in place until the status of Gate 1 or Gate 2 is confirmed.

- For Gate 1, the freeze ends when the customer receives their Agreement to Vary (ATV), and the refund process begins.
- For Gate 2, the freeze ends when the new securities requirements are issued with the Gate 2 offer.

The timing of the first security payment depends on when Transmission Owners (TOs) begin spending on attributable works. Customers are required to place the necessary security 30 days after signing their agreement if TO spend has commenced.

The amount of the first security payment varies and may range from zero to several million pounds, depending on TO spend

Requirements are updated every six months. If both the PCF and securities apply at the same time, this will only occur if PCF is activated and for generation projects that sit between G2 and the [M1 milestone](#).

Refunds are processed after NESO receives both the countersigned ATV and valid bank details. For non-cash securities, NESO will issue a cancellation notice. The purpose of the securities freeze is to provide certainty and protect customers during the transition to the new framework while NESO and Ofgem finalise the long-term arrangements.

Refunds and liabilities

Customers who move to Gate 1 and have previously lodged securities will receive a refund once they provide valid bank details and a countersigned ATV. Refunds are issued within six weeks of the ATV being signed, in line with statutory requirements.

Securities and liabilities are updated with each Gate 2 offer, and any additional securities required must be placed within 30 days.

For embedded projects, NESO has frozen securities requirements from DNOs or Transmission connected iDNOs as part of the securities freeze. Customers should check with their DNO or iDNO for specific arrangements.

Stage	Fee/Security	Trigger/Timing	Customer Action
Application	Application Fee	Before offer issued	Pay on invoice
Gate 1	Securities Refund	On ATV issue and bank details provided	Provide bank details and countersign ATV
Gate 2	New Securities	Within 30 days of offer	Place required securities
PCF	Progression Commitment Fee	On PCF activation timeline	Pay as per notification
Freeze	Securities freeze	Jan 2025 to July 2026	No action unless notified

Chapter 5

Information for co-located (i.e. hybrid) projects

Treatment of hybrid projects

A co-located site (i.e. a hybrid project) is one where different technologies and/or fuel types, including storage and demand, are installed at the same site or Power Station and connected to the GB electricity system. Hybrid projects are treated as separate assets for the connections reform process and capacity purposes.¹

Each technology within a co-located / hybrid setup is assessed individually against:

- Permitted capacity limits under Clean Power 2030 (CP30) pots.
- Transmission Entry Capacity (TEC) or Developer Capacity

Project position and milestone obligations are applied per technology, not to the combined site. For example, applicants were required to meet the total minimum acreage requirements for each of the technologies (as opposed to joint). In addition, if one technology exceeded the 2035 permitted capacity, that element will not receive a Gate 2 offer, even if the other technology qualified.

NESO have not prioritised, or deprioritised projects based on whether they involve co-location – the Government's Clean Power 2030 plan sets out requirements for different technologies in different zones. It does not indicate a preference for co-location and we have not discriminated between projects based on whether they involve co-location.

In the queue formation process, hybrid projects (co-located projects that include a combination of more than one technology) were managed based on how they interact with the system.

In other words, if a hybrid project contains a battery, its assessment against CP30 pots depends on import/export capability, as follows:

¹ <https://www.neso.energy/document/215466/download>

Export only: If a hybrid project (e.g. storage and generation) intended only to export to the transmission system (that is, import capacity is behind the meter), it only counted toward the permitted capacity total for the generating technology.

- In this case, the battery was treated as part of the generation asset for queue purposes and did not compete for CP30 storage pots.
- Milestone obligations and securities will follow the rules for the generating technology.

Import and export: If a hybrid project comprising of storage and an additional technology (or technologies) intended to both import and export to the transmission system, it was considered as contributing to the permitted capacity totals for both storage and the additional technology (or technologies).

- Here, the battery is considered an import- and export-capable asset, so it did compete for CP30 storage pots.
- This means the battery element will have its own milestone obligations and securities, separate from the generation technology.

Import only: The methodology was initially silent on how an ‘import-only’ energy storage system would be treated as it only refers to ‘export-only’ storage and generation. However, we confirmed in our November 2025 update², that following the same logic of behaviour and impact on the system, an energy storage system that is co-located with demand and that only imports directly from the network should not contribute to the energy storage system permitted capacity.

- In this case, the battery was treated as part of the demand asset for queue purposes and did not compete for CP30 storage pots.

² <https://www.neso.energy/document/371986/download>

- Milestone obligations and securities will follow the rules for the demand technology.

Additional information to help you understand your offer

Hybrid projects were required to meet Gate 2 readiness criteria for each technology type that is part of the facility. This means that applicants may receive different offers for each technology type. However, it is important to note that if one technology type did not make it into the Gate 2 process, it did not disadvantage the other technology type, provided it met the Gate 2 criteria. For sites with a hybrid set up (with one technology being Gate 1 and one being Gate 2), new Data Registration Code schedules are required for the Gate 2 Technology only.

Customers were permitted to remove a technology type from an existing contract under CMP435 (only in the case of hybrid (or staged) projects). In this event the applicant will have received an offer(s) based on the remaining technology(ies). Note that where the applicant requested a reduction in Transmission Entry Capacity (TEC) or Developer Capacity in the Readiness Declaration, they will be liable for a cancellation charge in accordance with CUSC Section 15.

Chapter 6

Where to send queries or complaints

We recognise that receiving your queue outcome or G2TWQ notification is an important step in your project's journey. The Connections Reform has introduced significant changes, and while outcomes may differ from previous expectations, NESO is committed to supporting all customers with respect, fairness, and transparency.

The move away from the first-come, first-served approach followed extensive consultation with stakeholders, investors, and government. With Ofgem's approval, the new framework focuses on prioritising projects based on readiness and strategic value for Great Britain. NESO has put robust measures in place to ensure a fair and reliable process at every stage.

From 5 December, the pipeline is finalised: no new projects can be added or reordered. This ensures integrity and fairness for all. Additional application opportunities will open next year.

Please refer to the *Connections Reform FAQs* on our [Connections Reform](#) webpage for more detailed information on queue methodology and outcomes.

Submitting a query or complaint

If you are a NESO customer (directly connected or large embedded customer)

To ensure that customers can raise, track and manage any contact with us easily, NESO will only respond to communications regarding queue outcomes submitted via the Connections Portal.

When you access the portal, you will be able to raise a case and select the contact about a "application related question" option and select the relevant application ID relating to your enquiry.

You will be routed to a form in order to complete key information that will help us to review, investigate and address your request as quickly as possible:

1. Please select either “connections reform query” (if requesting further information of clarification on data or queue outcome) or “connections reform complaint” if you have supporting evidence and believe there has been an error in the data used, that may have subsequently impacted your outcome
2. Please select the case type “connections reform queue outcome”. Please do not use this category if you are contacting us about anything other than your queue outcome
3. Use the subject box and supporting free-text box (2000 character limit) to provide a succinct summary of the specific request or resolution you are looking for
4. Please ensure you attach any relevant supporting data or documentation as evidence. Without this we will not be able to progress your case

If you are a DNO customer (small or medium embedded)

If you are a distribution network customer and submitted your initial evidence via your DNO, any queries relating to your queue outcome should be raised directly with them in the first instance as they are best placed to support you with specific queries. Your DNO will be able to raise any escalations or complex issues with NESO on your behalf to ensure an efficient resolution can be reached. Please refer to your DNO’s query and complaint process for next steps.

What happens next

Once you submit your enquiry to us, NESO will acknowledge receipt of your case and aim to respond within **two working days** with a clear update. We have dedicated teams working to answer and investigate your queries. They will ensure you are kept up to date throughout the handling of your case to resolution. Please note as we are expecting high volumes of contact following notifications, it may take a little longer to fully resolve more complex

cases. We appreciate your patience and want to reassure you that we are committed to working together with our customers to provide the right clarity on outcomes.

We want to be clear that the pipeline is final and cannot be changed. No project can be added or re-entered, including as a result of a complaint or dispute. If, after receiving NESO's final response, you remain dissatisfied, you have standard formal dispute routes available to you.

Our commitment to you

NESO is committed to transparency, equity and continuous improvement. Whilst we will not be able to take action on any challenges to industry approved policy and methodology, all feedback will be considered as we work with Government and partners to refine processes for future application windows.

Thank you for working with us to help provide you with a clear, and timely service to address your questions and concerns. For more information, see our dedicated queries and complaints page.

Chapter 7

What chapters are coming next

As we continue to support customers through the Connections Reform journey, the next chapters of this handbook will focus on two key areas:

- Queue Management Milestones
- Preparing for the Next Application Window

We are committed to making this handbook as useful and relevant as possible. NESO will continue to monitor customer feedback and queries, and we will use your input to select and develop future chapters. Thank you for engaging with the Connections Reform programme and for helping us shape the guidance and support we provide.

If you have suggestions for topics you'd like to see covered, please let us know through the Connections Portal.

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

Registered in England and Wales No. 11014226

[neso.energy](https://www.neso.energy)

