RESP Methodology
Areas for further development

02 March 2026, 1pm - 2.30pm

- Faith Natukunda, RESP Senior Manager, Technical Delivery
- Elgan Roberts, Strategic Lead - Wales
- Signe Swarttouw, Whole Systems Forecasting Analyst
- Nick Smith, Technical Delivery Manager
- Jonny Sadler, RESP Engagement and Communications Manager

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Agenda

1. Welcome, Housekeeping and Agenda Overview - Jonny Sadler
2. Overview of NESO, RESP and Methodology - Faith Natukunda
3. Network Planning Assurance - Faith Natukunda
4. Specification of Strategic Investment Need - Elgan Roberts
5. Whole System Optimisation - Signe Swarttouw
6. Spatial Context for Gas and Biomethane - Nick Smith
7. Q&A - Jonny Sadler
8. Next steps - Jonny Sadler

Link: Areas for Further Development

New feedback window open: RESP Methodology - areas for further development | National Energy System Operator

Key Terms

1. Distribution Network Operators
2. Gas Distribution Network Operators
3. Business Plans
4. Ofgem
5. Price Control
6. ED3

What is RESP?

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The What...

Our role

Working with the GB nations and regions to produce **eleven Regional Energy Strategic Plans (RESPs),** to ensure that local areas get the energy infrastructure they need to help meet local and national goals.

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RESP Nations & Regions

The Where...

- Scotland
- North East and Yorkshire
- North West
- East Midlands
- West Midlands

- Wales
- Central England
- East
- Greater London
- South East
- South West

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RESPs – why do we need them?

The Why...

1 **Local voices and needs** - ensure that local voices and needs are at the heart of the way we plan the energy system, paving the way to a **sustainable energy future**

2 **To drive investment** - ensure local areas get the **secure energy system** they need to realise local goals

3 **Ensure efficient network investment** - that **drives consumer value** by keeping bills low by looking at the whole energy system

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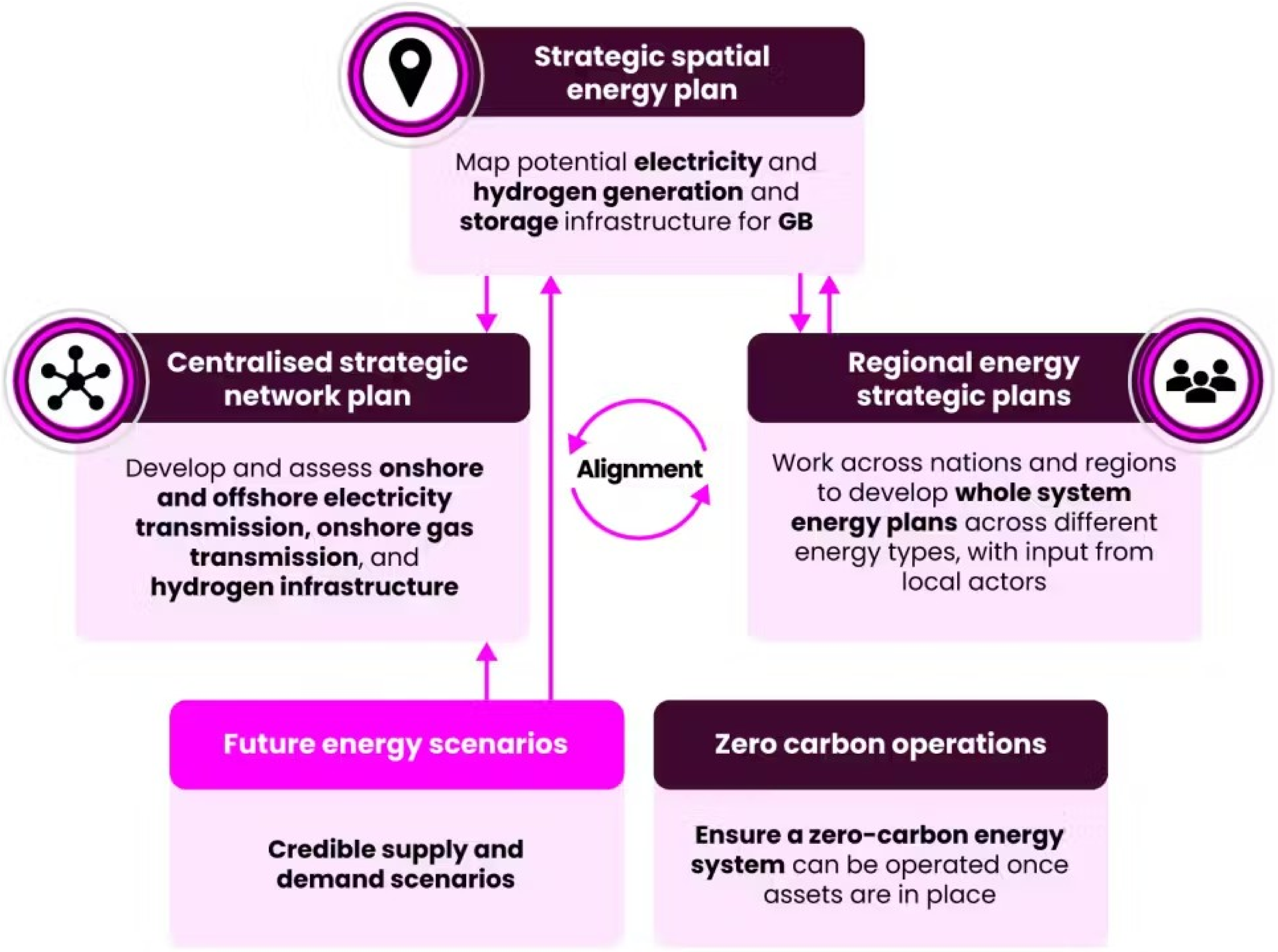
v3

Strategic energy planning (SEP)



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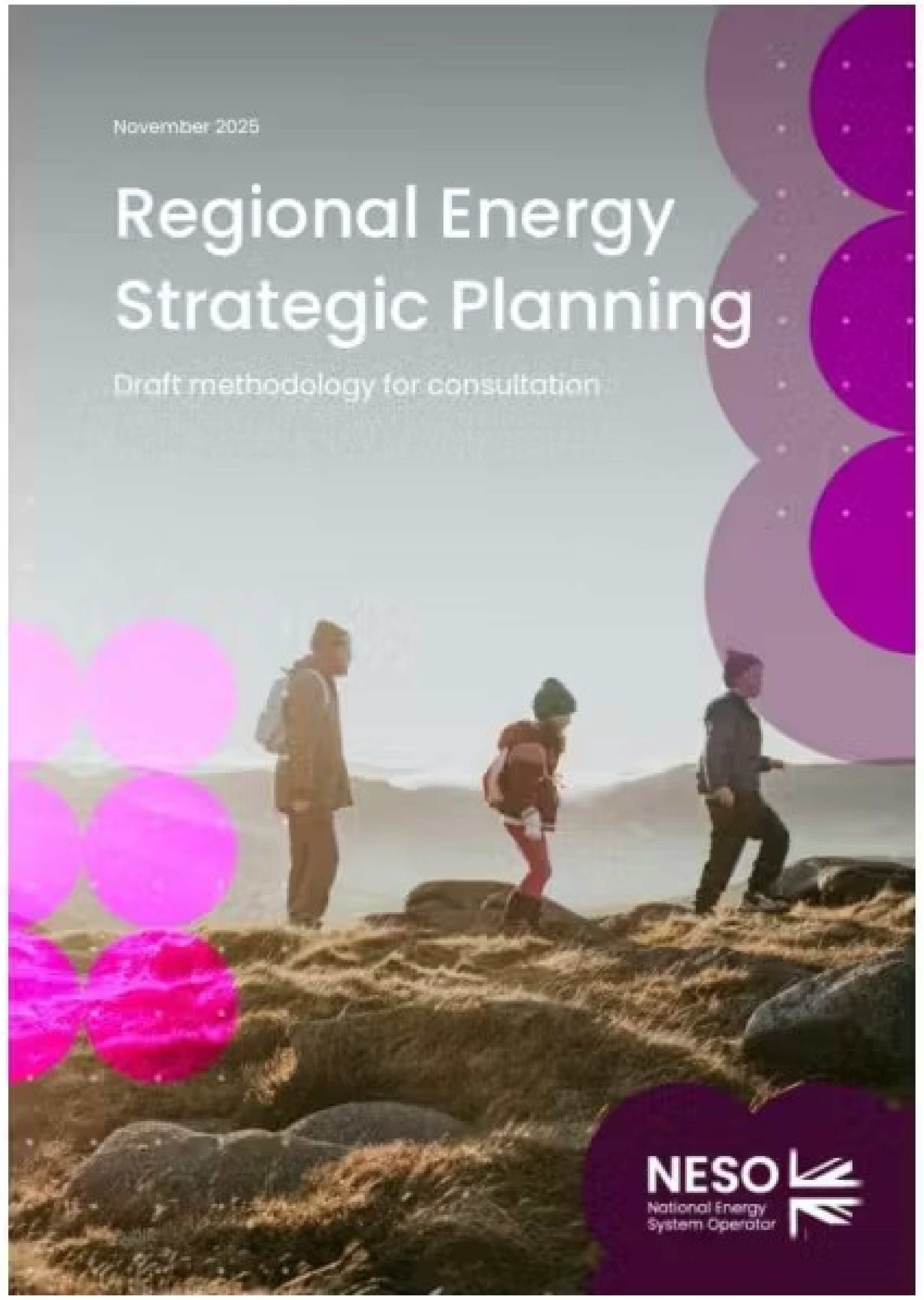
RESP Methodology

Methodology update

- Our RESP Methodology Consultation ran from 17 November 2025 to 16 January 2026
- Webinars: 1 launch, 6 deep-dives and 3 local authority-focused webinars (England, Scotland, Wales)
- **We received a total of 209 responses**
- The responses are being used to inform the development of the final methodology, due to be published summer 2026



Draft methodology:

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Areas for further development

We are continuing to work on some areas of the methodology:

- Specification of Strategic Investment Need
- Whole System Optimisation
- Spatial Context for Gas and Biomethane

Engagement Timeline

02 March - Methodology update published
03 & 06 March - Online interactive webinars
11.59pm Monday 16 March - Deadline for responses
Summer 2026 - Final Methodology published

These activities will support the development of the final RESP Methodology, due in summer 2026.

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Network Planning Assurance

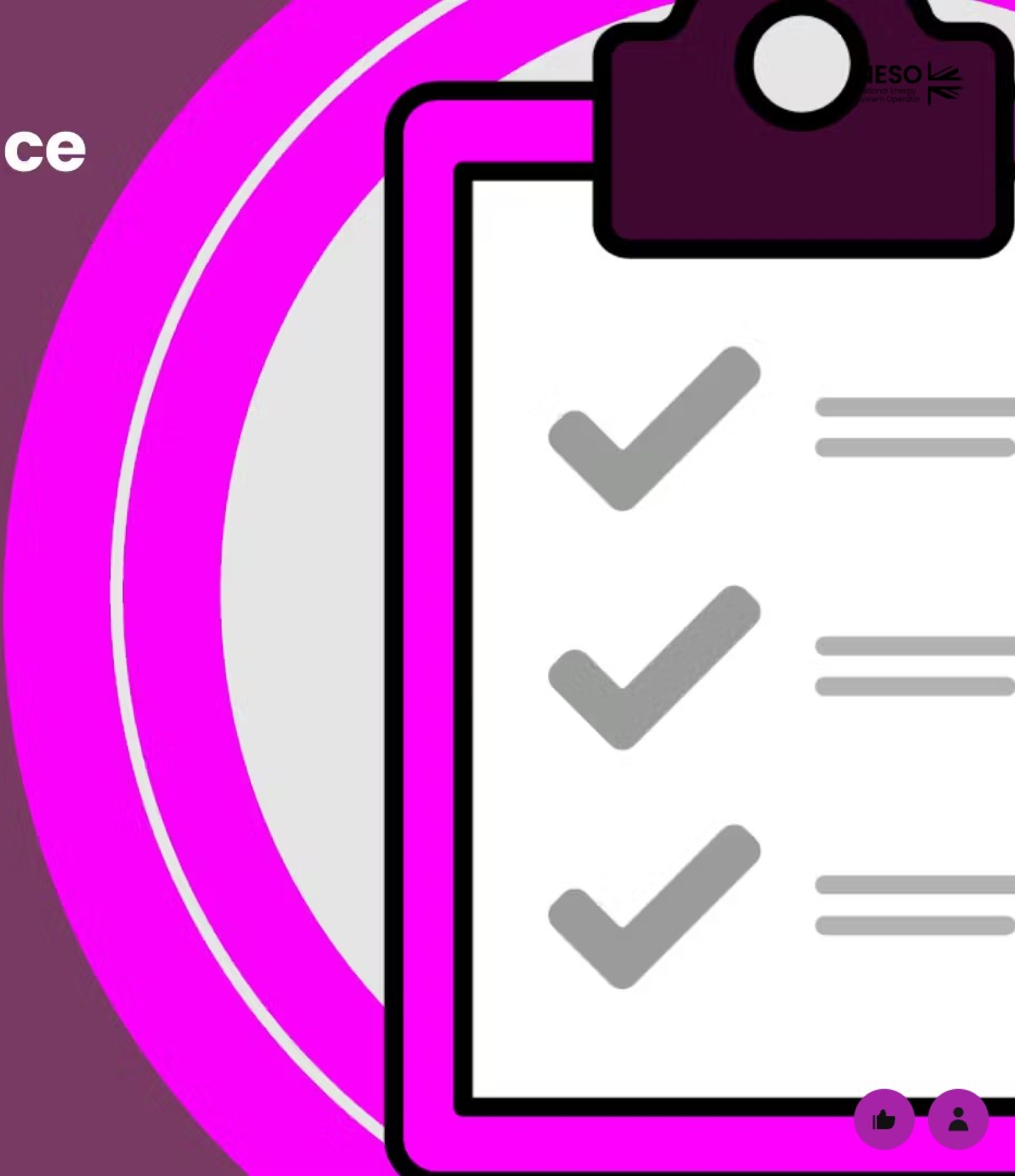
Network Planning Assurance

- We've been working with Ofgem to align our approach with the RESP Policy Framework and the new RESP licence and guidance.

- **Network Planning Assurance (NPA)** is a new activity to ensure gas and electricity distribution networks align with regional energy strategic plans (RESPs).

- NPA will sit within Ofgem's price control process, not the RESP production process.

- Ofgem will direct networks on how RESPs should be used in business plans, shaping NESO's future role in NPA.



Network Planning Assurance

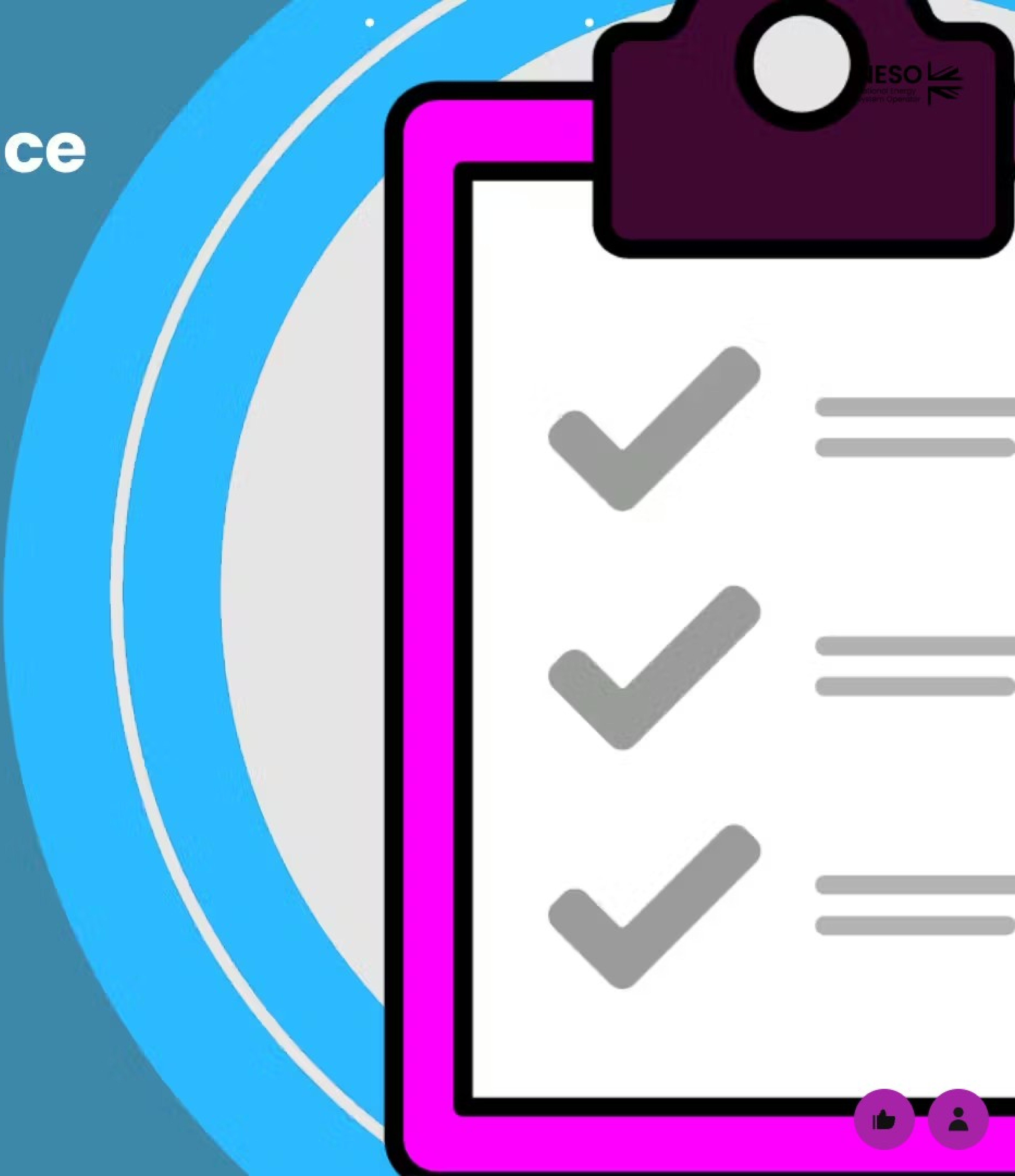
What this approach means in practice:

- As a result, the RESP methodology will move to a high-level, principle-based approach for NPA.

- Further NPA detail will be provided later by Ofgem, through price control or reopener processes.

- We have therefore not included gas-specific NPA detail in the document published today.

- The planned NPA webinar on 04 March will not go ahead; stakeholders will instead be invited to the RESP Technical Working Group in March/April 2026



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Specification of Strategic Investment Need

Elgan Roberts

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Specification of Strategic Investment (SI) Need

Further work has focused on clarifying the value-add from the SI Need process and the output delivered to the networks.

Areas of Further Work

	Topic	Proposed updates to draft methodology
1	Clarifying the value-add from the SI Need process	**NESO Proposes:** A clearer explanation in the 'Overview of Specification of Strategic Investment Need' section to make explicit that the SI Need component is not intended to identify all areas requiring strategic network investment across a nation or region, but instead focuses only on needs that are both **strategic and complex**, highlighting the added value NESO provides as the strategic energy planner for GB.
2	The output delivered to the networks ("the SI Need Specification)	**NESO Proposes:** An overall approach for producing SI Need specifications, including principles for engagement with networks and stakeholders, and clearly defining the roles and responsibilities within the process. Further refinement and definition of the expected output "the SI Need Specification", including the form and content of the SI Need specifications. To also include illustrative examples and a strengthened proposal for the needs case element that underpins the investment justification.

Clarifying the value-add from the SI Need process

In our proposed update we have clarified the following:

1. The **Strategic Investment Need component is not intended to identify all areas of strategic network investments** in a nation or region. The vast majority of investment needs (strategic or otherwise) will be informed through the Nations and Regions Context, Consistent Planning Assumptions, Pathways and Spatial Context.

2. Strategic Investment Need will focus only on **strategic and complex** needs where NESO can add value by identifying proactive, ahead-of-need investment to unlock development and growth.

3. NESO will add value as GB's strategic energy planner by **coordinating stakeholders**, enabling **effective information flow**, and **applying independent judgement** to specify areas of strategic investment need.

The output delivered to the networks: “the SI Need Specification”

In our proposed update we have:

1. Set out an approach and principles for interacting with the networks and other stakeholders to produce the specifications.

2. Further defined the output:
   - The content of the specifications of SI Needs that will be given to the networks.
   - The types of specifications with hypothetical examples.

3. Refined our proposal for the ‘needs case’ within the specification to justify the investment.

4. Set out the roles and responsibilities for producing the specifications.

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Whole System Optimisation

Signe Swarttouw

Whole System Optimisation

Further work has focused on clarifying the definition, scope and process of Whole System Optimisation in RESP

Areas of Further Work

	Topic	Proposed updates to draft methodology
1	Definition of whole system optimisation	**NESO Proposes:** A RESP definition of Whole System Optimisation that emphasises NESO's strategic planning role and clarifying that RESP will not produce a single mathematically optimal future system but instead will be used to support better-informed, principles-based decisions that account for whole system interdependencies.
2	Types of whole system opportunities	**NESO Proposes:** Whole system opportunities fall into two broad categories: 1. Strategic and Complex Opportunities → Where NESO progresses with an SIN Specification 2. Wider whole system coordination opportunities → Where NESO plays a convening and informing role
3	How opportunities emerge and progress	**NESO Proposes:** A clearer end-to-end explanation of how Whole System Optimisation opportunities emerge and move through the RESP process — from early signals and insights, to structured engagement with networks and local actors, to collaborative development of credible options, and on to comparison and progression (including when opportunities become Strategic Investment Needs or remain wider coordination cases).

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What is Whole System Optimisation in RESP?

Whole System Optimisation, as applied within RESP, refers to NESO's role as the independent strategic energy planner to **identify and assess opportunities** that deliver **improved overall energy system outcomes**, drawing on interactions **across vectors, geographies, actors and constraints**, where coordinated action will add value.

It is **not** about:

- Mathematically optimising the energy system for a single objective
- Prescribing detailed project level decisions
- Limiting the ability of networks to innovate in an ever-evolving energy system

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Types of whole system opportunities

1. Strategic and complex

- Strategic, complex and high value multi-vector or cross-network developments
- Multiple credible system options
- Require structured, principles-based comparison (e.g., through a cost-benefit analysis)

RESP Teams leads high-level option development and identifies a **preferred investment need** (via SIN specification)

2. Wider whole system coordination opportunities

- Opportunities where a whole-system perspective adds value
- Typically locally shaped (e.g. local policy direction, planning approaches, sequencing)
- Decisions remain with local or network actors

RESP Teams provide **evidence**, explain **system impacts**, and **convene** actors

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How opportunities surface and progress

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Spatial Context for Gas and Biomethane

Nick Smith

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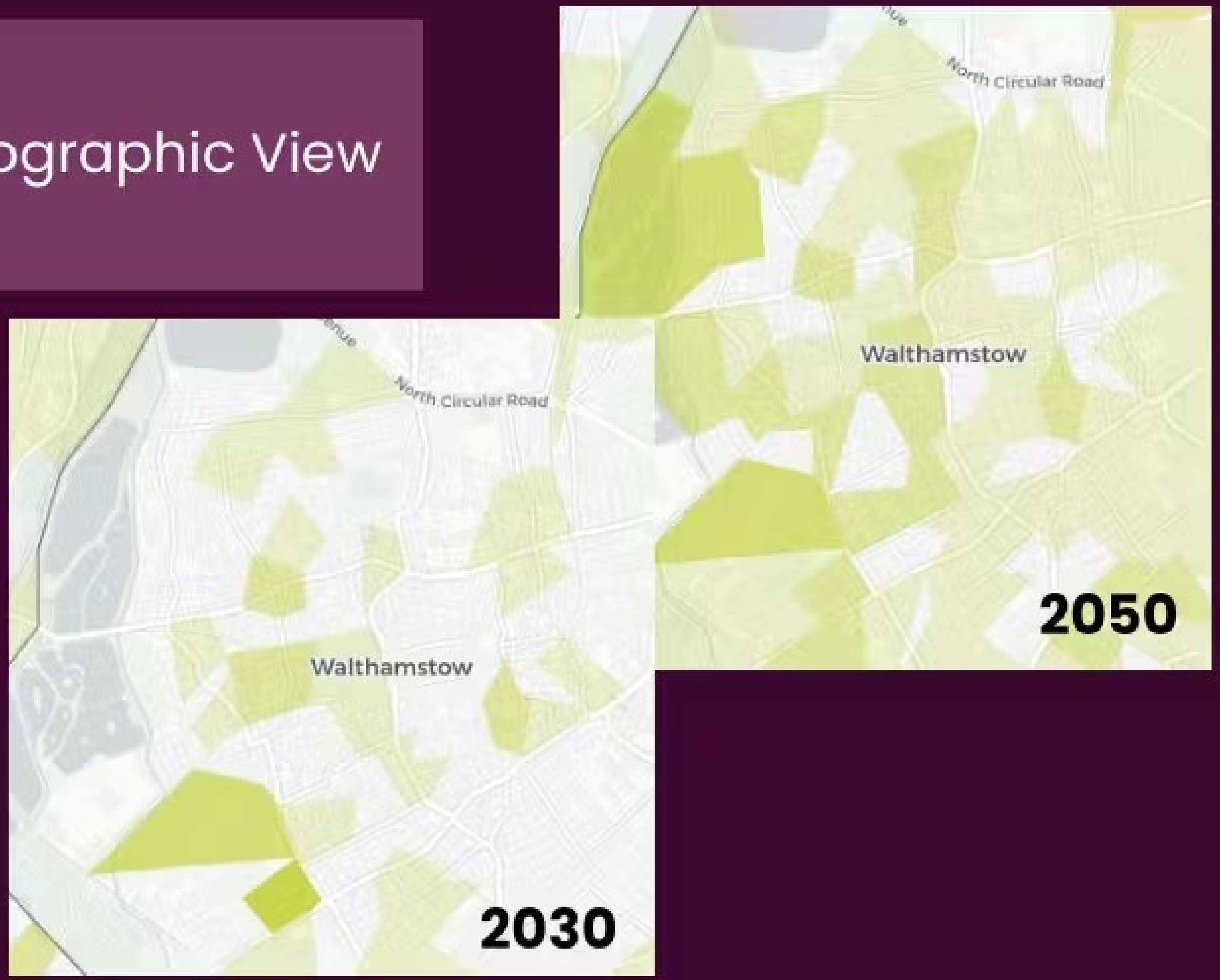
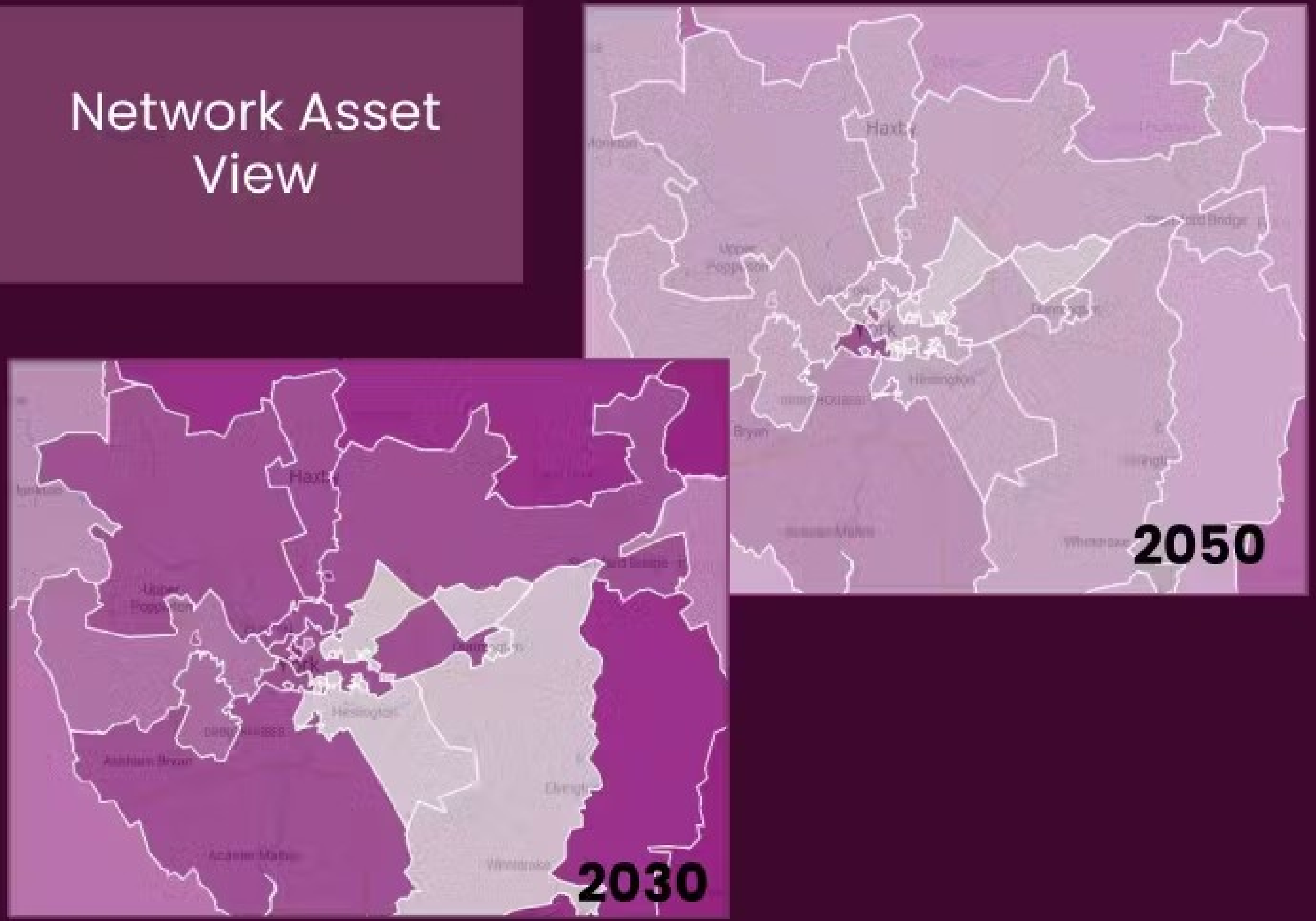
Spatial Context for Gas and Biomethane

The Spatial Context is a key geospatial component of the RESP. It provides a whole energy visualisation based on RESP Pathways through an accessible digital mapping tool and will use both **geographical** and **network asset** views to allow users to **interrogate system needs** *spatially* and *temporally*, including where potential constraints may emerge.

Geographic View



Network Asset View



Areas of Further Work

Areas of further work have focused on integration of Gas and Biomethane into Spatial Context, enabling the interrogation of system needs and acting as an input into the identification of Strategic Investment Needs.

	Topic	Proposed updates to draft methodology
1	Gas (Demand)	**NESO proposes:** GDNs utilise RESP Pathways and RESP Consistent Planning Assumptions (CPAs) to model peak gas demand (weather corrected) across their networks.
2	Biomethane (Supply)	**NESO proposes:** GDNs utilise RESP Pathways and RESP CPAs to model the interaction between projected biomethane supply and periods of minimum demand across their networks
3	Data Granularity	**NESO proposes:** • **For the Geographic View –** Visualise supply and demand related outputs for Spatial Context using the same granularity as RESP Pathways outputs (LSOA/Data Zone/MSOA etc). • **For the Network Asset View –** Visualise supply and demand related outputs for Spatial Context gas network down to Medium Pressure zones.

Areas of Further Work

The below diagram sets out an indicative process flow for coordinating data between NESO and GDNs for the purposes of developing Spatial Context.

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Interactive Webinars

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Interactive Webinars

Date and time	Topic and lead presenter
3rd March 10:00am – 11:30am	**Specification of Strategic Investment Need** Elgan Roberts
3rd March 1:00pm – 2:30pm	**Whole System Optimisation** Signe Swarttouw
6th March 10:00am – 11:30am	**Spatial Context for Gas and Biomethane** Nick Smith

Purpose:

1. NESO presents our updated proposals
2. NESO answers any clarification questions
3. Attendees provide feedback on our proposals

Agenda:

- Welcome (5 mins)
- Presentation (15 mins)
- Plenary Q&A (10 mins)
- Breakout workshops (30 mins)
- Feedback & discussion (25 mins)
- Next steps (5 mins)

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Interactive Webinars

1. Session format:

- Slides, Q&A + breakouts using Mural virtual whiteboard

2. Ask of participants:

- Read document in advance
- Come prepared to provide feedback

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How to respond

- Please submit your responses by **11.59pm on 16 March 2026**
- Please submit your response via the **Qualtrics platform:** https://nationalgrideso.fra1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8pJAMkj82VNpEyi
- If you are not able to submit via Qualtrics, please let us know at box.resp@neso.energy by 9 March 2026, at the latest.
- Responses are saved as you progress through the form, so you don't have to complete all questions at once. **Please note that they are only saved when you go to the next page of the survey.**
- You will be able to download a copy of your responses as a PDF at the end.
- FAQs are published on the RESP Methodology consultation section of the NESO website
- If you have any questions, please email: box.resp@neso.energy

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Q&A

How to respond

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Thank you for joining

Look out for future events

https://tinyurl.com/47vdf6jw

RESP web pages

https://tinyurl.com/yc7ddef6

NESO newsletter sign up

https://tinyurl.com/26k7a35u

Contact the team

box.resp@neso.energy

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