Public

System Access Reform: A credible pathway to delivery

Information for you

Developing a ‘securable’ system access plan has been a central focus of the SNAP workstream. The assessment highlighted some key points about our current transmission system, and the targeted action and co-ordination required to establish a credible pathway together.

If you have any questions, please contact us.

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August 2026

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A central concept within our work on the Strategic Network Access Project has been building a "securable" system access plan.

This refers to a co-ordinated and flexible outage programme that maintains compliance with national security standards, ensures the system remains stable, operable and can accommodate normal uncertainties such as weather, network faults, third party consents, land and planning approvals, skills shortages and project delivery variations. Such plans are achievable but require a high degree of co-ordination and a system-wide approach to planning.

Earlier this year, NESO and TOs assessed the current situation and future actions required by using various data sources and information. Our work highlighted the following:

1. **An increasingly complex environment:** the transmission system is operating in an increasingly complex environment, where demand for system access is growing alongside more limited opportunities to take outages. This reflects wider changes in how the system operates, including the rapid growth of renewable generation, evolving power flows and a substantial increase in both new connections and essential network reinforcements.

2. **Impacted project timelines:** In addition, industry reforms to the connections processes are expected to add complexity to project timelines, leading to a further change (including potential acceleration) in planned outage activity.

3. **Uneven distribution of pressures:** Pressures on system access are not evenly distributed across Great Britain. Instead, they are concentrated in specific areas of the network where multiple projects and programmes come together. These locations require a particularly high level of co-ordination, as they can have a cascading impact on the rest of the outage plan. There is a credible pathway to managing the localised pressures which involves:
    - continued evolution in planning approaches including greater coordination across the whole system
    - improved readiness and alignment of projects
    - more flexible use of network access

Targeted action and co-ordination in all above areas will be key.



Working together

Ongoing collaboration between NESO, Transmission Owners, Distribution Network Operators, Customers, regulators and government will be essential to embed these approaches and ensure that system access is prioritised where it delivers the greatest overall benefit to the end consumer.

By taking the steps outlined in this update, the industry can move towards a more resilient, coordinated and adaptable approach to system access - supporting CP30 as an important milestone while enabling the longer-term transition to a secure, low-carbon energy system.