

Public

Ref: FOI/26/065

National Energy System Operator
Faraday House
Gallows Hill
Warwick
CV34 6DA

InformationRights@neso.energy
www.neso.energy

8 June 2026

Dear requester

Request for Information

Thank you for your request for information which was received by NESO on 3 June 2026. Your request has been considered under the EIR because information relating to connections falls within the definition of 'environmental information' at Regulation 2(1)(c) of the EIR.

Request

You asked us:

The scheme is identified on your PDF file "Existing Agreements Register" as Gate 2 and is named as Shuttleworth BESS, 99.9MW. Padiham.

Unfortunately, I cannot understand or see where this Battery Energy Storage System has fulfilled the criteria for Gate 2 acceptance.

The information I am requesting is stated below.

1. I request information on whether or not the applicant Renewable Connections Ltd has been offered a confirmed, written, signed contract to connect, by Electricity North West or by any other body, ie DNO, District Network Operator?

a. If so, what is the connection date?

b. What is its position number in the queue for the area / zone it is in?

c. Have they entered into a signed contract to connect?

2. I am requesting all data on Renewable Connections Ltd and their submitted information to satisfy a Gate 2 connection ?

3. If planning permission is given by the planning inspectorate, what is the earliest date that this particular BESS scheme will be allowed to connect to the Padiham Bulk Supply Point (BSP)?

4. If Renewable Connections Ltd fail to construct the scheme & are unable to connect by the offered connection supply date, what are the consequences to them, under your guidelines & protocols?

a. fines?

b. the scheme is discarded, as unviable?

c. or will they be allowed further options, if so what will the alternative options be?

d. please give in detail the best & worst case scenario for Renewable Connections Ltd?

Summary response

We can confirm that NESO holds some information in scope of your request.

However, as we explain in more detail in our full response to your request, provided below in compliance with the EIR, NESO is unable to disclose information on individual projects, except where information is already publicly available.

Further to the above, the project that you are enquiring about is at distribution level and the connection agreement will be held with the Distribution Network Operator (DNO) and not NESO. We therefore hold limited information in scope of your request, and you may wish to contact the DNO, SP Electricity North West, to request information.

Our response

Public authorities subject to the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR) are required to:

- confirm whether they hold recorded information in scope of a request for environmental information
- provide access to that information.

We can confirm that we hold some information in scope of your request.

As you note in your request, there is an entry on the [Existing Agreement \(EA\) Register](#) for *Shuttleworth BESS*. The entry for *Shuttleworth BESS* on the EA Register confirms that this project applied for Gate 2. It does not confirm whether the project has received, or will receive, a Gate 2 offer.

The EA Register details projects with existing connections agreements (with NESO or with a DNO) that applied for "Gate 2" in the [Connections Reform](#) process (further information on Connections

Reform has been provided in the 'advice and assistance' section of this response) where the developer consented to the inclusion of a project in the EA Register. This register *does not* outline any outcomes or results of the connections reform process.

NESO cannot provide any further information relating to specific developers or their projects other than that which is made publicly available.

The right of access to information provided by the EIR is subject to certain exceptions. Where an exception applies to information in scope of a request, the public authority may withhold from disclosure that information. We are engaging the exception provided by Regulation 12(5)(e) of the EIR which states that a public authority may refuse to disclose information to the extent that its disclosure would adversely affect the confidentiality of commercial or industrial information where such confidentiality is provided by law to protect a legitimate economic interest.

Information is covered by Regulation 12(5)(e) if:

- The information is commercial or industrial in nature;
- Confidentiality is provided by law;
- The confidentiality is protecting a legitimate economic interest;
- The confidentiality would be adversely affected by disclosure.

Information relating to specific developers and projects is commercial in nature and our use of this exception is primarily in respect of the potential consequence to the developer's commercial interests.

Whilst we review each request that we receive on a case-by-case basis, you will see from the responses published on our [Disclosure log | National Energy System Operator](#) that our decision to refuse your request is consistent with our decisions on similar requests for other projects.

Energy projects are developed by commercial companies and are independent of NESO and the respective transmission owners (TOs) and distribution network operators (DNOs). These development projects are competitive processes, including for funding from investors and any available government funding where applicable.

Given the competitive arena in which renewable energy projects are developed and implemented, a developer would not expect their commercial information to be published. This would, in effect, make it available to other developers who could use it to undermine future bids for other renewable energy projects.

NESO is bound by the confidentiality obligations under the Connections and Use of System Code (CUSC) and cannot share information about individual projects. Projects with existing connection agreements to the distribution network that wished to apply for Gate 2 contracts submitted their evidence to DNOs, who submitted it to NESO on their behalf. This information was provided to us by DNOs in confidence under the terms of the CUSC for the purposes of the Gate 2 to Whole Queue process.

NESO also falls within the scope of the Utilities Act 2000 and Section 105 of that Act makes it a criminal offence to disclose information: a) obtained under the Utilities Act 2000 and any other key energy legislation such as the Gas Act 1986 and the Electricity Act 1989, subject to specific exceptions; and b) where the information relates to the affairs of any individual or any particular business during the lifetime of the individual or so long as the business continues to be carried on.

You may find it helpful to know that this kind of confidentiality obligation is not limited to the energy sector. There are equivalent provisions in legislation governing other sectors (e.g. the Water Act 1989, the Telecommunications Act 1984, the Airports Act 1986, and the Broadcasting Act 1990). In our opinion, the information in question which is held by our Connections Team is subject to the restrictions at Section 105 of the Utilities Act and does not fall within any of the limited exceptions to that duty of confidentiality. Beyond this, there is also a common law duty of confidentiality based on the expectations of the developers.

All exceptions in the EIR are subject to a public interest test.

NESO acknowledges that there are a number of public interest arguments in favour of disclosing the requested information. There is a public interest in renewable energy development, particularly where the construction and development of such projects may have an impact on local areas. The general public may be interested in the dates and times of construction, the connection dates, and the timelines and scope of developments.

There is a public interest in ensuring no specific developer is materially disadvantaged through disclosing confidential commercial information, which is not released in respect of other projects. This ensures that there is a level playing field across all projects.

NESO has a public duty under our licence to facilitate competition within the energy market and there is a recognised public interest in allowing competition in the energy industry. Increased renewable energy projects are crucial to the Government achieving its net zero and clean

energy targets and anything that unjustifiably inhibits that competitive development runs counter to these goals.

NESO is the designated independent system operator and planner under the Energy Act 2023 and must remain independent, fair, and consumer focused. Disclosure could erode trust within the sector, hampering NESO's role and our ability to drive forward reforms and initiatives that would bring benefits to consumers and to the environment.

Having weighed up these public interest arguments, our opinion is that the balance of the public interest lies in maintaining the exception and withholding the information for this project. NESO is ensuring that it is being as transparent as possible through the Connection Reform process, whilst preserving the commercial confidentiality owed to the developer and ensuring that NESO meets its legal and licence obligations.

The use of the EIR exception for similar information relating to the connection of windfarms was the subject of a Decision Notice (Reference IC-127537-Q8R6) from the Information Commissioner. Whilst we consider every request for information on a case-by-case basis, the Information Commissioner's analysis of the connections process and the application of this exemption is helpful context. This decision upheld the use of the exception by the National Grid Electricity System Operator prior to our transition to NESO. The full decision is available on the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) website.

This concludes our response to your request.

Further Information

For information, NESO's role is to manage the flow of electricity across the transmission network. NESO's Connections team is responsible for leading and facilitating the process by which customers connect to and make use of the transmission system. For more information on the Connections process and the roles of key market participants, please see [NESO's role in Connections | National Energy System Operator](#).

NESO, in collaboration with the networks, industry, government and Ofgem has delivered a transformational change to the way that the grid connections process operates.

Information on Connections Reform is available here:

- [Connections Reform | National Energy System Operator](#).
- [About Connections Reform | National Energy System Operator](#)

A key part of this reform is the introduction of the new Gate 2 to Whole Queue (G2WQ) process, which ensures that only projects that are ready to go and are aligned to the [UK Government's Clean Power Action Plan](#) progress through to the new connections delivery pipeline.

The Gate 2 Criteria Methodology and Connections Network Design Methodology can be found here:

- [Connections Reform design documents and methodologies.](#)

On 8 December 2025 NESO began informing Customers of the outcome of their applications and published the results of the new connections delivery pipeline. Further detailed results data was published in January 2026. The published information provides a high-level view of the reformed pipeline. NESO will not be disclosing information on the status of individual projects at this time.:

- [Connections Reform Results | National Energy System Operator.](#)
- [Connections Reform: Detailed Results Data](#)

On 13 February 2026 NESO, Transmission Owners (TOs), Distribution Network Operators (DNOs) and wider delivery partners jointly confirmed updates to the delivery timeline for Connections Reform: [Connections reform timeline | National Energy System Operator.](#)

Next steps

If you are dissatisfied with our handling of your request, you can ask us to review our response. If you want us to carry out a review, please let us know within 40 working days and quote the reference number at the top of this letter. You can find our procedure here: [Freedom of Information and Environmental Information Regulations | National Energy System Operator](#). The ICO's website also provides guidance on the internal review process: [What to do if you are dissatisfied with the response | ICO](#).

If you are still dissatisfied after our internal review, you can complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). You should make complaints to the ICO within six weeks of receiving the outcome of an internal review. The easiest way to lodge a complaint is through their website: www.ico.org.uk/foicomplaints. Alternatively, they can be contacted at: Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, SK9 5AF.

Thank you for your interest in the work of the National Energy System Operator (NESO).

Regards,

The Information Rights Team, National Energy System Operator (NESO)