

**Public**

Ref: FOI/26/068

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Dear requester

**Request for Information**

Thank you for your request for information which was received by NESO on 20 January 2026. Your request has been considered under the Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) because the requested information falls within the definition of 'environmental information' at Regulation 2(1)(c) of the EIR.

**Request**

You asked NESO:

*The 3 projects I am interested in getting the Gate 1 or Gate 2 status details are:*

- *The Droves/Island Green Solar*
- *Highgrove/RWE*
- *Shipdham Airfield Battery and Solar/ Regener8 Power*

....

*Please email back or state when these details will appear on your website.*

**Summary response**

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

You stated in your email that you have received the requested information for the project 'Shipdham Airfield Battery and Solar' from the developer.

We are aware that RWE have published information relating to the *Highgrove* project on their website: [High Grove Solar Farm | RWE in the UK](#).

We are therefore issuing a response to your information request in relation to the project 'The Drovers' only.

### **Our response**

We can confirm that we hold recorded information in scope of your request. However, NESO cannot disclose information on the status of individual projects, except where it is already publicly available.

As you are aware, NESO's TEC Register is a publicly available list of projects that hold contracts for Transmission Entry Capacity (TEC) with NESO. These include existing and future connection projects and projects that can be directly connected to the National Electricity Transmission System (NETS) or make use of it.

We understand the project that you are interested in to be on the [current TEC Register](#) (accessed 18 June 2026) with project name 'The Drovers (formerly Swaffham PV & BESS)'

The TEC Register is published twice weekly, and is updated when contracts are signed or terminated, and when contractual milestones are met. The TEC register does not yet show the outcome of the G2TWQ process for all projects. If a project has been made a Gate 1 or Gate 2 offer this will be updated on the TEC Register once the Gate 1 or Gate 2 agreement has been countersigned by NESO. Until that point, the field specifying Gate 1 or Gate 2 will remain blank.

The [Existing Agreement \(EA\) Register](#) details projects that applied for "Gate 2" in the Connections Reform process, where the developer consented to the inclusion of a project in the register. The Register *does not* outline any outcomes or results of the connections reform process i.e., inclusion in the EA Register *does not* confirm that a Gate 2 offer has been made.

There is an entry for the project named 'The Drovers (formerly Swaffham PV & BESS)' on the EA Register.

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

Regulation 12(5)(e) of the EIR 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 part of your request is consistent with our decisions on similar requests for other projects.

Commercial companies develop generation and demand projects and are independent of NESO and the respective transmission owners. These development projects are competitive processes, both for the rights to connect to the transmission network and also 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 disclosed except within the publicly available information that NESO routinely publishes. This would, in effect, make it available to other developers.

Connection offers are made substantially in the form and under the terms of the Connection and Use of System Code (CUSC). The CUSC has exhibits containing proformas of the documents which set out the main content of the connection agreements with a developer, and you can find the CUSC and the proformas on our website: [Connection and Use of System Code \(CUSC\) | National Energy System Operator](#). NESO is bound by the confidentiality obligations under the CUSC and cannot share the specific terms put in place with a developer.

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 and where they have not disclosed it themselves. 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 generation is crucial to the Government achieving its net zero and clean energy targets and anything that unjustifiably inhibits the competitive development of that renewable generation 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 exemption and withholding the information for this project. NESO is ensuring that it is being as transparent as possible through the Connection Reform process and will not publish information where there would be an adverse effect on any party. The information in the TEC Register confirms where there is a project covered by an agreement. Where a project has received a Gate 1 or Gate 2 offer that information will be made available

through the TEC Register once the offer is countersigned. Where a developer has consented to the information being made publicly available, the Existing Agreements register confirms whether a project applied for Gate 2 through the G2TWQ process. The CUSC information outlines the substantial content of connection agreements whilst preserving the commercial confidentiality owed to the developer and ensuring that NESO meets its legal and licence obligations. Projects are also subject to planning processes during which relevant information would be published.

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.

### **Advice and assistance**

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 (G2TWQ) 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. The published information provides a high-level view of the reformed pipeline and further detailed results data was published in January 2026:

- [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](http://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)