Places4People Planning Consultancy

# Rebuttal on planning matters on behalf of Bentley Parish Council and SGFS

Appeal reference: APP/D3505/W/25/3370515

Appeal under Section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 in respect of:
'Construction of a solar farm (up to 40MW export capacity) with ancillary infrastructure and cabling, DNO substation, customer substation and construction of new and altered vehicular accesses.'
Site address: Land at Grove Farm and Land East of the Railway Line, Bentley
Appeal by: Green Switch Capital Ltd

Ian Poole BA(hons) MRTPI

PLACES 4 PEOPLE PLANNING CONSULTANCY P4P

# 1. Introduction

1.1 I have prepared this rebuttal in relation to planning appeal reference APP/D3505/W/25/3370515 on behalf of the Rule 6 Party. It follows the exchange of Proofs of Evidence ("PoE") on 23 December 2025 between the appellant, Babergh District Council and the Rule 6 Party and is submitted in advance of the opening of the Inquiry on 20 January 2026. It solely addresses the content of the Planning Proof of Evidence of Paul Burrell on behalf of the appellant.

1.2 My rebuttal is not intended to be an exhaustive response on all matters and deals only with certain points where it is considered appropriate or helpful to respond in writing at this stage. Where a specific point has not been dealt with, this does not mean that these points are accepted, and they may be addressed further at the Inquiry.

1.3 The evidence that I provide in this rebuttal proof is true and I confirm that the opinions expressed are my true and professional opinions.

# 2. Planning Policy Assessment

2.1 Section 8 of Mr Burrell's proof provides an assessment of how he considers the proposal complies with relevant policies in the Development Plan.

2.2 I take issue with how some of the requirements of the development plan have been interpreted.

Policy LP25 – Energy Sources, Storage and Distribution

2.3 I note that Mr Burrell is suggesting that Policy LP25 is out-of-date because of the publication of the National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1) which has now been updated in December 2025. In particular he refers to paragraph 4.3.24 of EN-1 as being more recent than the Local Plan policy. However, this policy is primarily directed at NSIPs and, in any event, the wording in that paragraph is exactly the same as contained in the previous version of EN-1.

2.4 He also refers, in paragraph 8.21, to the "urgent national need" for renewable energy projects and how the requirements of LP25 to assess alternative sites are said not to be consistent with these more urgent objectives and imperatives.

2.5 I do not believe that the government have swept aside all other planning policies at a national level or all development plan policies purely so that an urgent national need for renewable energy can be met.

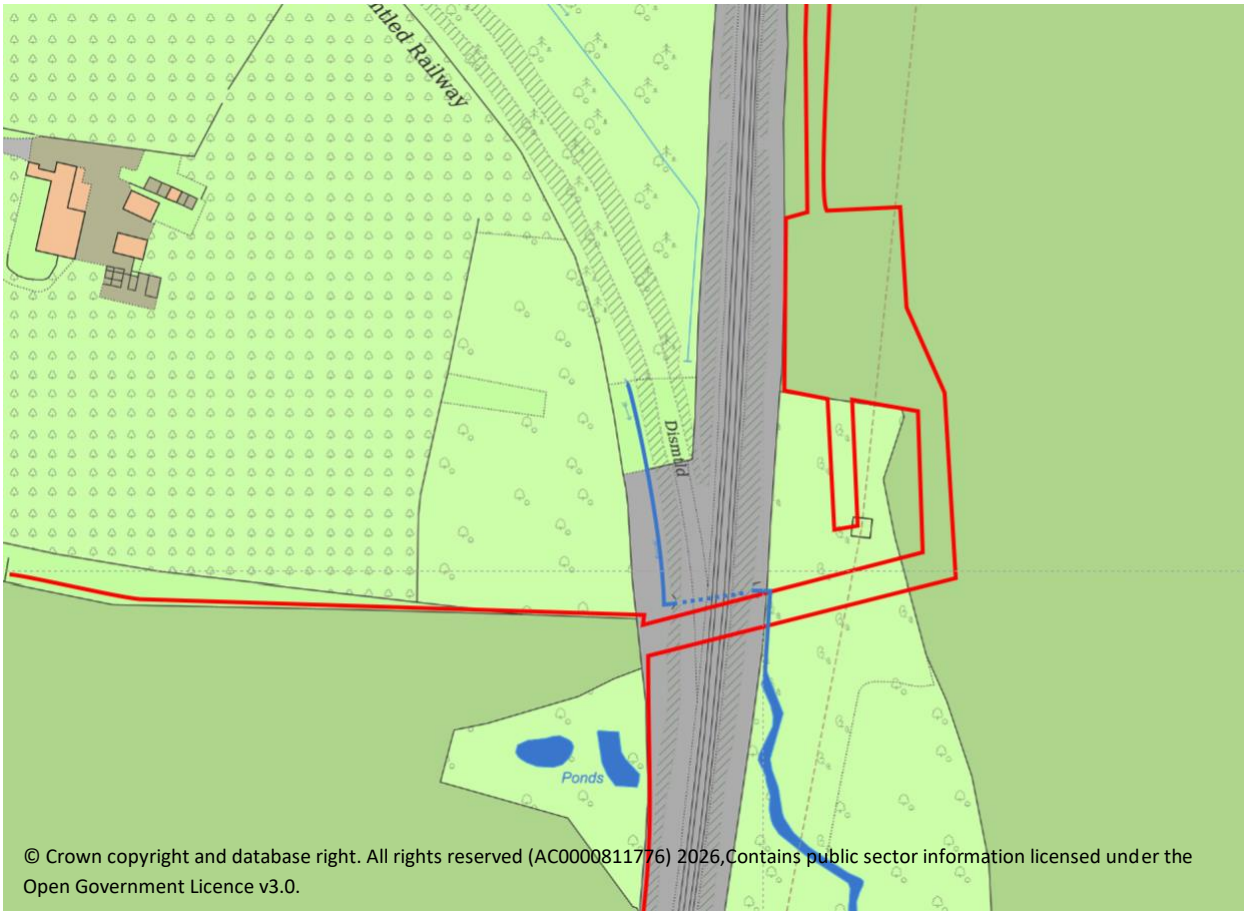
2.6 Mr Burrell states, in paragraph 8.27, that the alternative site process could delay deliverability of scheme prior to 2030. However, Appendix 1 of Mr Burrell's proof is a statement on Grid Reform by Qair, which notes that the Government's National Energy

System Operator (NESO) has placed the project in Gate 1, representing projects that "have not been allocated a firm connection date". The Appellant states that, should the project be granted planning consent, NESO will review the status of the project in Q2 2026 and that the scheme *would* be placed in Gate 2. That is conjecture at this stage and will depend upon the assessment made by NESO at that stage, having regard to a wide variety of considerations.

2.7 What is clear is that:

1. the Appellant has not entered into a Basic Access Protection Agreement in respect of its proposals to bore under the East Anglian Mainline Railway;
2. there are no publicly available geo-technical reports/feasibility studies, to demonstrate that the Appellant can safely bore under the railway line without risk of subsidence. The map below illustrates the site boundary (in red) and that the cable under the railway would also be in very close proximity to a fast-flowing watercourse at the point where the directional tunnelling is proposed
3. there is no evidence that agreements with other landowners with potential ransom positions (such as those on the east side of the railway) have been executed.

2.8






My proof of evidence highlighted that Network Rail only received an Asset Protection Initial Enquiry from the applicant on 7 November 2025. We do not know how receptive Network Rail would be to boring under this busy main line and when such a consent might be forthcoming. Clearly if the appeal is allowed it is still unclear whether the proposal would

progress to Gate 2 because it may still fail the 'readiness' requirement in not having all necessary agreements in place.

2.9 We do not know if NESO are aware of the unresolved matter of achieving the connection under the railway, which is clearly a fundamental consideration as to the ability and timeline to deliver the scheme.

2.10 Finally on this point, it can now clearly be seen that the grid connection issue is not a good reason for not undertaking a thorough assessment of alternative options in the district in accordance with LP25 where this policy is engaged. There will be many options, as there are numerous powerlines in the district (see Appendix to Rule 6 Statement of Case), many of which do not run through areas with the environmental constraints present at Bentley. I attach, as an appendix, two generic and unsolicited letters (with supporting explanatory notes) from solar developers/promoters. These indicate the range of options available: connecting to 132kV, 66kV or 33kV lines or a substation and that parcels of land as small as 30 acres (solarig) or 50 acres (opdenergy) can be considered. As noted in the Statement of Case and my main proof of evidence, a comprehensive alternative site assessment has not been undertaken by the Appellant.

POLICY LP19

2.11 Mr Burrell's proof states, in paragraph 8.48, that the scheme was designed "to respect the important aspects of the Conservation Area" and yet the scheme was designed before the Conservation Area was designated. Indeed, the Design and Access Statement, in paragraph 5.8.3, refers to a search of the Babergh and Mid Suffolk interactive mapping system that "established that the site does not sit within a Conservation Area". This further reinforces Rule 6 Party's view that the proposal does not - and cannot - have had proper regard to the presence of the Conservation Area.

DRAFT NPPF

2.12 My Proof of Evidence deliberately did not address the Draft NPPF (December 2025) given it is a consultation document that should be afforded limited weight – a point agreed by Mr Burrell.

However, in his evidence, Mr Burrell seeks to demonstrate how the appeal proposal conforms with draft national development management policies:

- S3: Presumption in favour of sustainable development
- S5: Principle of development outside settlements
- W3: Renewable and low carbon energy development and electricity network infrastructure
- N2: Improving the natural environment
- HE5: Assessing effects on heritage assets
- HE6: Proposals affecting designated heritage assets

- HE7: Decisions on non-designated heritage assets

Mr Burrell does not refer to Policy HE9: Conservation Areas, despite the site being wholly within the Bentley Conservation Area.

2.13 I agree that Draft **Policy S3** essentially refers the decision maker to Policy S5 in relation to the appeal proposal.

2.14 I agree that Draft **Policy S5** supports the provision of energy infrastructure projects outside settlements and that it is clear that this is not without caveats. The benefits of approving a proposal must not be substantially outweighed by adverse effects when assessed against the national decision making policies in the Framework.

2.15 The draft does not define "benefits" but it is clear from the evidence of Alison Farmer that the adverse effects of the proposal are so great that they substantially outweigh the benefits of the scheme.

2.16 In terms of Draft **Policy W5**, Mr Burrell draws attention to the application of substantial weight to renewable energy proposals. However, he omits to reference is paragraph 2 of the draft the policy that states "Where proposals for this form of development come forward outside areas which have been identified as suitable for them [renewable energy proposals] they should be acceptable when assessed against the national decision-making policies in this Framework, taken as a whole." In its current form, preceding Draft Policy W2 would require the development plan to identify "areas which are suitable for renewable and low carbon energy development and electricity network infrastructure" which, clearly, the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan does not currently do. As such, the appeal proposal would be required to be assessed against the full raft of decision making policies in the Draft NPPF.

2.17 Mr Burrell's proof continues by referring to draft Policies he considers relevant. He considers that the scheme complies with all requirements of the policy. He seems to overlook that the part b) requires that poorer quality agricultural land should be used in preference to higher quality and that part d) requires the conservation and enhancement of natural features of visual, historic or nature conservation value.

2.18 Draft **Policy HE9** supports the approval of proposals that preserve those elements of a conservation area that make a positive contribution to it (or which better reveal its significance). Conversely, I take this to mean that proposals that do not preserve such elements should be refused. The evidence of Alison Farmer demonstrates the proposals do not preserve such elements.

# 3. Government strategies and statements

3.1 A significant element of Mr Burrell's proof, some 11 pages, focuses on Government strategies and statements and the imperative need to deliver clean energy. But, by and large, these do not form part of the statutory development plan in which is the subject of section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Their materiality to the consideration of an application is a matter of judgement and will depend upon a variety of factors including their status, currency, transparency and robustness.

3.2 Reference is made to progress in delivering the government targets. I accept the Government's target is to deliver between 45 and 47 GW of solar power by 2030 as stated in the Clean Power 2030 Action Plan (Core Document D20). Latest published statistics suggest that in November 2025 there was operational capacity to generate 21GW from solar https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/solar-photovoltaics-deployment .

3.3 The latest published Department for Energy Security & Net Zero quarterly update of the renewable energy planning database (Q3, 2025) also reveals that in the 12 months to the end of Q3 2025, the UK approved 710 solar PV projects which will deliver a 5.5 GW of solar capacity.

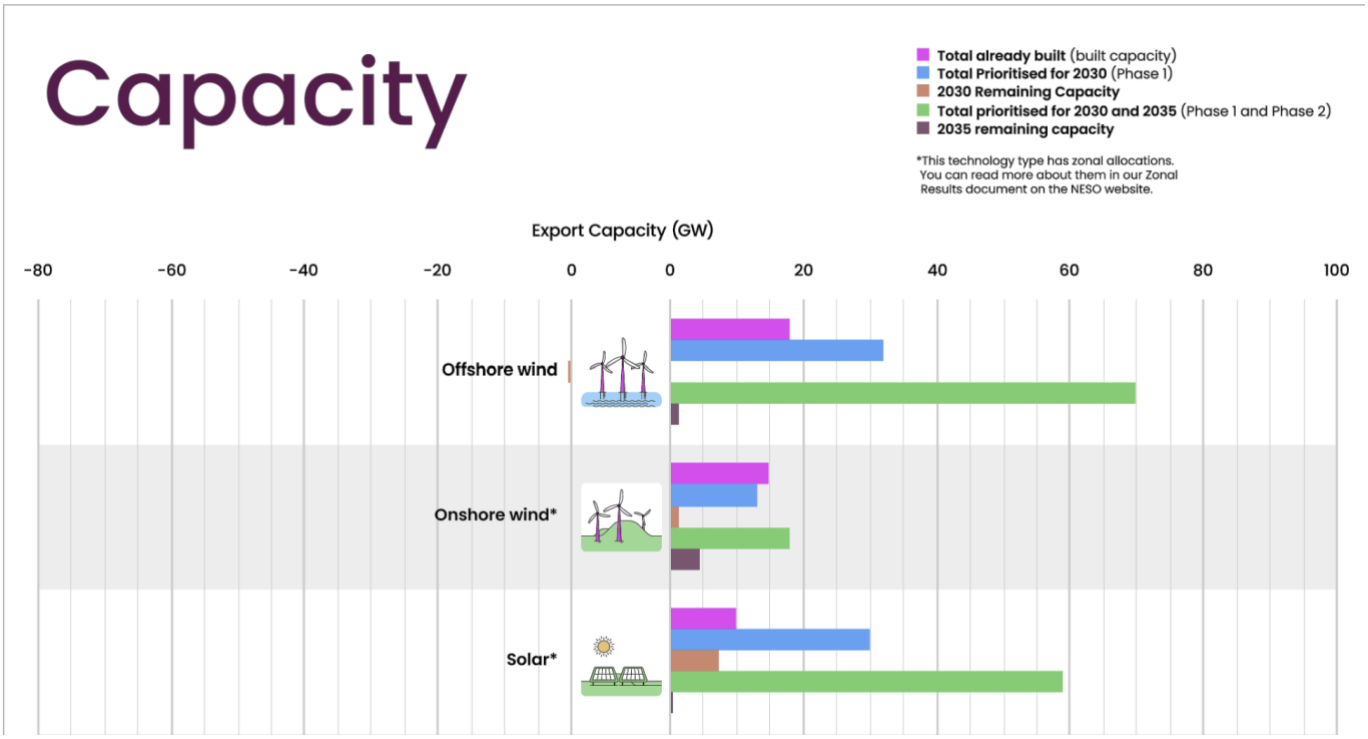
3.4 Even more up to date, the latest NESO article from December 2025 (NESO implements electricity grid connection reforms to unlock investment in Great Britain | National Energy System Operator) announces that a new delivery pipeline has just been confirmed, and will align with the new Ofgem approved process, meaning energy projects which are most developed and aligned to national targets, can progress. NESO gives the following detailed breakdown:

1. Solar power prioritized for 2030 (Gate 2, Phase 1): 29.9 GW
2. Solar power prioritized for 2035 (Gate 2, Phase 2): 29.1 GW
3. Gate 1, not prioritized: 35.9 GW [this includes the appeal scheme which is in Gate 1]

It is therefore safe to say that 21.1 (existing) + 29.9GW (Phase 1) = 51GW means the target will be met with a 4 GW surplus

3.5 NESO has also looked at grid capacity *after* Phase 1 and 2 are deployed and has published "Connection Reform Results"[1] (December 2025), which appear to demonstrate that, when the current Gate 2 solar projects are taken into account, there is only very limited capacity for any further schemes, as illustrated below. Even this may be overstated, as the built capacity figure starting point in the NESO data appears to be much lower than the 21GW deployment figure published by the Government for November 2025 (see above).

[1] https://www.neso.energy/industry-information/connections-reform/connections-reform-results




3.6 Given the data published by NESO, I question the emphasis placed by Mr Burrell on the imperative to deliver solar and, by inference, the need to set aside the impacts of the proposal in favour of national need. It is clear to me that there is sufficient supply coming forward under NESO's supervision to secure the Governments targets for solar within the available grid capacity. This means that schemes which have a range of adverse impacts such as the appeal scheme can – and should – properly be refused permission.

## 4. Mr Burrell's Other Material Considerations

4.1 Mr Burrell sets out, in paragraphs 11.10 to 11.16, seven planning appeal approvals that afford substantial weight to the provision of renewable energy. However, none of these approvals represent sites located in a conservation area. The weight to be afforded to the decisions in respect of this appeal is therefore minimal.

4.2 Mr Burrell sets out a number of conclusions in this section as to the weight that should be applied to identified matters. Overall, he concludes that the conflict with relevant policies of the development plan would not necessarily conflict with the development plan as a whole and that, even if it did, there are significant identified benefits that warrant the proposal being allowed "notwithstanding that conflict".

4.3 The Rule 6 Party fundamentally disagrees with this conclusion for the reasons set out in detail in my main proof of evidence.

# Appendix 1 - Unsolicited letters (with supporting explanatory notes) from solar developers / promoters

Solarig

[redacted]
Ipswich
Suffolk
IP9 [redacted]

Thursday, 13 February 2025

Dear [redacted]

**Re:** [redacted]
**Title Number:** [redacted]

Please excuse the direct approach, I wanted to reach out to you and express an interest in acquiring the land referenced above and believe you are the proprietor of the above site.

Solarig was established in 2005 and its principal focus is in the operation of renewable energy projects focusing predominantly on Solar PV and Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS). We are currently looking to acquire parcels of land in excess of 30 acres for solar to enable us to expand our operations within the UK.

We have identified your land as being suitable given its proximity to the substation and remaining capacity within the grid which would allow for a suitable connection (subject to obtaining the necessary consents).

What we can offer:

- **5-year option agreement with a non-refundable option fee**
- **Annual rent of £1,100/per acre** (subject to connection costs)
- **40-year lease term**
- **Professional and legal fees covered**

I would be happy to meet with you for an informal discussion and to answer any questions you may have regarding your land and what the next steps would involve.

Please do give me a call or drop me an email should you wish to discuss this further.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

**Henry Wallis**
**Land Acquisition Manager**
E-mail: land.uk@solarig.com / Tel: 0203 808 0087


Got One of These on Your
Land? Lets talk.....
!
Solarig

[redacted]
Ipswich,
Suffolk,
IP9 [redacted] :

amiejimolle@opdenergy.com
OPDENERGY
12 Hammersmith Grove
London
W6 7AE

08 July 2025
Ref.: AM/UKPN/202

Dear [redacted] .

***RE: Potential Solar Farm Development***

We're writing to express an interest in renting some of your land for potential solar farm development.

By way of an introduction, Opdenergy is an international renewable energy development, engineering and construction company, with vast experience in UK since 2012.

Opdenergy has developed over 300MW across Kent, East Sussex, Northamptonshire, Lancashire,... We are currently progressing a portfolio of solar farms across the UK on a subsidy-free basis thanks to the price and demand for renewably generated electricity, country energy dependency, and the drop on the capital expenditure of the projects. We have ambitions to deploy further 500MW of solar capacity over the coming years. Further details on OPDENERGY´S solar energy and the development process are provided in the enclosed leaflet or on our website: www.opdenergy.com.

After carrying out a careful selection process run by our engineers, we have identified some of your land as being potentially suitable for a solar farm near to grid infrastructure where we expect to have some free capacity left. This letter is an initial enquiry to determine whether this may be of interest to you and something you wish to consider further.

The first step is to apply to UK Power Networks a connection offer on your land to understand if a viable connection could be offered or not (depending on grid availability). We would only need from you a completed and signed Letter of Authority, attached to this letter. Please note this is **not binding** in any case, it only gives us permission to apply for the connection on your land.

We offer top market rental payments of approximately **£1,100 per acre per year index linked** in return for the lease of your land, which is guaranteed for the 40 years operational life of the solar farm.

We would cover all your agent / legal costs to agree the commercials and a the agreement is satisfactory for both ends, then initially seek to secure planning permission, at our own cost and risk.

Thank you for taking the time to read this, and I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully,

*Alexander M. Rosenberg*
*Business Development Manager - OPDENERGY.*
Email: amiejimolle@opdenergy.com

**International Renewable Energy Company**
Listed in the Spanish stock exchange

**+ 15 years**
of experience in the sector

**1,800 MW**
Operational capacity

**+ 13 GW**
of pipeline

**portfolio**
In solar, w ind and battery storage

## Company Overview

**Opdenergy** is an independent renewable energy producer, or IPP, in Europe, the United States and Latin America with more than 15 years of experience. The company develops, builds, finances, manages and operates high quality renewable energy projects in several countries. Only in the UK, we have developed +300MW (+12 solar farms) since 2012.

**Mission:** to satisfy techno-energy needs of the market with competitive and reliable solutions.

**Vision:** to be a global reference in energy projects, offering a high profitability to its shareholders and promoting sustainable development.

**Strategic pillars**

- Internationalisation.
- Dynamism and adaptability.
- Diversification of energy sources.
- Continuous improvement in project management.
- Maximise profitability of assets.

## The Development Process

Opdenergy manages the entire development process.

**1-** Determine a suitable place for a solar farm following a selected criteria.

**2-** Enter into an option to lease agreement, which would grant us a land lease once planning consent has been secured and we have confirmed a suitable grid connection.

**3-** Pay an option fee to the landowner. Opdenergy's planning team would then manage all the planning process.

**4-** Secure the funding, construct and commission of the solar farm and manage the project throughout its 30-35 years life.

**All with no cost or risk to the landowner.**

opdenergy

## Implications of hosting a Project

- Contribute to the UK´s energy stability and independence.
- Diversify Landowners' incomes (excellent guaranteed index linked rental payments in exchange for the land leasing).
- Predictable income that helps hedge against commodity cycles, farm input inflation and property tax increases.
- Boost Local tax revenues and create jobs.
- Dual land use. The land around and beneath the solar panels can be used for grazing.
- Biodiversity increase. The areas around the panels can be seeded with grass mix and wildflowers to develop biodiversity.

Interested in the benefits of hosting a solar farm and want to find out more?

## Contact us

**www.opdenergy.com**

## What is solar PV?

Solar Photovoltaic is a very widely used technology which harnesses the power of the sun to produce electricity. Solar PV benefits are being silent, having low visual impact, being relatively quick and easy to install and requiring Little maintenance.

A'ground mounted' Solar Farm involves the installation of solar panels on open land. The panels are mounted on racks up to 3m in height, which are arranged in south facing rows to maximise the amount of sunlight they receive. As light falls on the panels, it is converted into electricity, which is fed directly into the national grid.

A typical 25MW Solar Farm requires an area of 100 acres approximately and provides enough electricity to meet the annual demands of approximately 9,000 homes. The government recognises the important role Solar PV will play in delivering carbon reductions, energy security and affordable energy and is committed to seeing increased deployment. BEIS estimates that the solar capacity could grow up to 5 times by 2035. In addition, the Government´s new British Energy Security Strategy aims to produce 95% of Great Britain´s electricity from low carbon sources by 2030.

## What makes a Good Solar Farm?

- **Space.** At least 50 acres.
- **Sunlight.** Relatively flat or south facing and free of any item that could cause overshadowing.
- **Unconstrained.** Located outside landscape, ecological and heritage designations or potential visual impact on the area.
- **Grid Connection.** Close to a suitable 132kV/ 66kV/ 33kV line or substation for connection.
- **Accessible.** For articulated lorries for construction and maintenance.

energizing **the future**

# opdenergy

## Landowners Information Brochure

# Appendix 2 – NESO implements electricity grid connection reforms to unlock investement in Great Britain

# NESO implements electricity grid connection reforms to unlock investment in Great Britain

8 December

Press release - 08 December 2025

## Key facts

- Following 18 months of collaborative design between NESO, network companies, industry, Ofgem and government, the grid connections process is being transformed to enable up to £40bn in annual investment and strengthen Great Britain's energy security.
- The new delivery pipeline has been confirmed today, and will align with the new Ofgem approved process, meaning energy projects which are most developed and aligned to national targets, can progress...
- ...unlocking 283 GW of generation and storage, and 99 GW of transmission connected demand.
- By moving away from outdated first-come, first-served rules, developers and investors with ready-to-go projects will have the certainty they need to get building, create jobs and strengthen supply chains.
- This process helps ensure that in the future only what is needed will be built, meaning consumers don't pay unnecessary costs.
- Transforming the connections process isn't a silver bullet. Thousands of kms of new electricity lines and cables are required to ensure power can be delivered to homes and business, and planning reforms must be implemented to speed up decision-making.
- NESO will begin informing customers today of their status in the new delivery pipeline and Distribution Network Operators will similarly begin informing distribution level connecting customers of their status.

Great Britain's National Energy System Operator (NESO) has today [8th December 2025] confirmed the new pipeline of deliverable, shovel-ready projects that will be prioritised for connection to the electricity r orks. This marks the biggest reform of the grid connections process to-date, with the potential to

unlock £40bn of investment a year and helping deliver the UK government's target of Clean Power by 2030.

NESO has worked over the past two years with the UK, Scottish and Welsh governments, Ofgem, network companies and the energy industry to transform the connections process from the ground up. Around three thousand applications from projects wanting to connect have been assessed through the process.

The previous first-come, first-served model led to Great Britain's connections queue growing tenfold in five years, leaving more than 700 GW of generation and storage projects waiting for grid access – around four times what Great Britain requires to deliver secure, resilient, affordable and clean power in 2030.

Outdated rules meant that every project, whether it was ready-to-go or not, took up space in the queue.

Under the new process, projects are prioritised where they are aligned to national energy targets and are ready-to-build - such as those with planning permission or land rights.

From today thousands of generation and storage projects - from offshore and onshore wind to solar, battery storage and hydrogen – will be informed whether they are among the 283 GW of proje
move forward now.

In total, 132GW of projects are identified as aligned with the delivery of the UK government's Clean Power 2030 target. Together with the roughly 111GW of existing generation and storage already connected, these projects will support national targets for secure, clean and affordable energy.

A further 151GW of projects are identified as needed to meet Britain's needs by 2035 and strengthen our long-term energy security.  This sends clear signals to those investors and developers with ready-to-go projects, enabling them to get building to serve the future needs of society and the economy.

The new pipeline also includes almost 100GW of new or expanded transmission demand connections – enabling industry and businesses to expand and grow.

More than 300GW of projects in the old connections queue will not move forward to the next stage at this time. Some of these projects were not ready or were not aligned to national targets.

NESO will begin informing customers today if they are part of the new pipeline of projects that are prioritised for connection.  Projects may reapply in future application windows or if further space becomes available in the pipeline, subject to proving readiness and alignment to national targets.

This transformation of the connections process will accelerate progress, leading to jobs across Britain, strengthening supply chains and powering economic growth.

## ı ɣte O'Neill, Chief Operating Officer, NESO:

“Transforming the grid connections process is a vital first step in unlocking the capacity needs for a secure, affordable energy transition. These changes will cut grid bottlenecks by prioritising ready-to-build projects, giving certainty about when and where they can connect and unlocking billions in clean energy investment.

“These changes wouldn’t be possible without the collaboration of our partners over the last two years. Together, we’re laying the foundations for a resilient, efficient and future-ready energy system that delivers for British consumers and the economy.”

## Energy Secretary Ed Miliband, Department for Energy Security and Net Zero

“We inherited a broken system where zombie projects were allowed to hold up grid connections for viable projects that will bring investment, jobs and economic growth.

“To fix this we embarked on ambitious, once in a generation reforms to clean up the queue and prioritise the projects that are ready to help us deliver clean power by 2030.

“Every solar farm, wind farm or battery storage facility we connect to the electricity grid brings us closer to clean, homegrown, power that we control – so we can get bills down for good.”

## Jonathan Brearley, CEO, Ofgem

“We are embarking on the biggest transition our energy system has ever undergone. The destination is clear: a more stable electricity system, a system that is secure, and a system that is ultimately affordable for customers. The way we use energy is evolving. From AI-driven technologies and power-hungry data centres to the surge of electric vehicles on our roads and heat pumps in our homes, demand has reached unprecedented levels.

“Together we’ve cleared the gridlock and created a new pipeline that prioritises the projects Britain needs most. We are building grids as fast as the sector possibly can, while ensuring generation gets connected. Every step is focused on delivering real value for customers and creating an energy system that works for the future”

## Chris Stark, Head of Mission Control for Clean Power 2030

“Queuing is a very British tradition, but the queue to connect to Britain’s grid has held back our economy. This overhaul of the connections process is the single most important step we will take towards a clean power system. The energy projects our country needs now have the green light to deploy at a pace we haven’t seen for decades. This unlocks the modern, clean energy system Britain needs for 2030 and beyond.”

## re Jackson, CEO of Hydrogen UK

"We are pleased to see the results of NESO's Connections Reform. Hydrogen has an important role in the UK's Clean Power ambitions, supporting energy demand while driving industrial decarbonisation. The results open the door and free up space for further hydrogen innovation and accelerated project development.

"Hydrogen's standout advantage is its ability to store energy at scale, providing the flexibility and reliability needed to deliver power on demand and strengthen the resilience of our future energy system."

## Dhara Vyas, CEO of Energy UK:

"A stable, secure energy system depends on ensuring that we can connect more clean power generation to our grid in the coming years. Addressing the issues in the connections queue is critically important and today marks an important milestone with the announcement of a new project pipeline that will unlock investment across the country.

"The National Energy System Operator, Government, and the regulator have worked closely with industry to transform the connections process, and this reform is just the beginning. The energy industry is keen to see planning and environmental processes further streamlined to ensure projects and infrastructure are built out efficiently across the country. Continued efforts will drive investment and create jobs in communities throughout Great Britain, reduce our reliance on volatile gas p and, ultimately, lead to stable, affordable energy bills for households and businesses."

## Lawrence Slade, Chief Executive of ENA:

"This announcement from NESO marks a pivotal moment for the energy sector as a whole. The complex task of reforming the connections queue has required deep collaboration across the sector. Networks have played a critical role by working closely with customers and industry, conducting detailed evidence checks and providing timely submissions to NESO. Ultimately, this reformed connections process will mean fair and faster connections for GB customers."

## Shevaun Haviland, Director General of the British Chambers of Commerce:

"For too long, businesses have been impacted by lengthy queues to get connected to the grid, holding firms back as they look to expand or decarbonise.

"NESO's reforms to the grid will be enthusiastically welcomed by businesses. It is now critical that they lead to real-world delivery. Ensuring quicker connections to the grid and cutting queues are desperately needed so businesses can support economic growth across the UK."

**ENDS**

## About NESO

National Energy System Operator, NESO, is an independent, public corporation at the centre of the energy system taking a whole system view to help ensure where everyone in Great Britain has access to reliable, clean, and affordable energy.

For media enquiries please contact:

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## Notes to editors:

- Guidance on how the connections process has been reformed and how projects will now be held accountable for their future delivery and continued progress are set out in NESO's Connections Reform design documents and methodologies
- The next connections applications window will be held in the second half of 2026.
- Full details of the new connections project pipeline are published on NESO's website here – https://www.neso.energy/industry-information/connections-reform/connections-reform-results
- The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero set out in the Clean Power 2030 Action (Table 1, page 32 - DESNZ 'Clean Power Capacity Range') that by 2030 Great Britain requ 204GW-231GW by 2030.
- The following tables set out details of the new Connections delivery pipeline by technology

| Technology type | Prioritised for 2030 delivery | Prioritised for 2035 delivery | Gate 1 (not prioritised)* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Battery | 34.5 | 48.7 | 152.9 |
| Geothermal Power | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Interconnector | 3.6 | 9.7 | 1.2 |
| LDES | 4.6 | 4.5 | 4.6 |
| Low Carbon Dispatchable Power | 3.3 | 9.7 | 0.0 |
| Non -GB Generation | 1.8 | 1.8 | 0.0 |
| Nuclear | 3.3 | 3.3 | 0.0 |
| shore Wind | 32.1 | 37.8 | 4.5 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Onshore Wind | 13.1 | 4.8 | 13.4 |
| Other | 0.8 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Reactive compensation | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Run-of River hydro | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Solar | 29.9 | 29.1 | 35.9 |
| Tidal | 0.4 | 0.1 | 0.0 |
| Transmission Connected Demand | 11.8 | 86.7 | 0.0 |
| Unabated Gas | 4.2 | 1.8 | 3.8 |
| Wave | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |

*These numbers do not include projects which self-selected to not be prioritised and those pr which did not apply to the connections reform process.

- Projects that enter the delivery pipeline will be offered Gate 2 connections agreements in two tranches, either to support delivery of electricity generation by 2030 (Phase 1) or by 2035 (Phase 2).
- Projects that are not required by either 2030 or 2035 will be offered Gate 1 connections agreements and will need to meet contractual obligations as well as set criteria to be considered in future to join the project pipeline (Gate 2).
- On 6th November NESO launched its Demand Queue Call for Input (CFI) https://www.neso.energy/industry-information/connections/demand-queue-call-input-cfi
- Also, on 6th November Ofgem launched its Demand Connection Guidance - https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/guidance/demand-connections-update.