



Making a positive difference
for energy consumers

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Dear Paul,

Approval of the Second Transitional Centralised Strategic Network Plan (tCSNP2) Refresh Methodology 2025

Thank you for submitting the proposed tCSNP2 Refresh¹ Methodology to Ofgem² for approval. In this letter we set out our decision to approve the methodology.

Since the methodology was submitted to us on 31 March 2025, we have worked with NESO and Transmission Owners (TOs) to decide on a new timeline for this plan to account for wider developments on related areas such as the Strategic Spatial Energy Plan (SSEP) and the connections reform, and to strengthen the approach by which uncertainties due to the

¹ The Network Options Assessment (NOA) report required to be published by NESO as per its Electricity System Operator (ESO) licence condition C13 is also referred to as transitional CSNP (tCSNP) as these are a bridge to the full CSNP that is covered by licence condition C17. The next iteration of the NOA is called the second tCSNP2 Refresh as it's a refresh of the second transitional CSNP which was produced in March 2024.

² References to the "Authority", "Ofgem", "we", "us" and "our" are used interchangeably in this document. The Authority refers to GEMA, the Gas and Electricity Markets Authority. The Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (Ofgem) supports GEMA in its day-to-day work. This decision is made by or on behalf of GEMA.

connections reform and changes to offshore designs are considered in the tCSNP2 Refresh plan^{3 4}. We have also received your submission of the Centralised Strategic Network Plan (CSNP) methodology on 31 January 2026 and considered how it links with the tCSNP2 Refresh⁶. Our decision on the tCSNP2 Refresh Methodology depended on these wider interactions, and it would have not been possible to approve the methodology sooner. Now that we have greater clarity, we can decide on both the tCSNP2 Refresh and CSNP methodologies. We have previously indicated to your teams informally our agreement with the approach that has been set out in your submitted methodology, so that work on the development of the tCSNP2 Refresh can commence ahead of this formal approval. We will work closely with you to understand how aligned the tCSNP2 Refresh is with the SSEP, to inform network funding decisions.

We recognise the complexity of the technical challenges involved in developing this Methodology and acknowledge the high quality of engagement you have provided throughout.

Context

In accordance with licence condition C13.4 of NESO's Electricity System Operator (ESO) licence and the Decisions and Directions in Ofgem's letter from 30 July 2024⁷, NESO must submit the Network Options Assessment Methodology to Ofgem by 31 March 2025. In accordance with licence condition C13.6, Ofgem may approve the Methodology or direct NESO to develop it further⁸.

The second transitional Centralised Strategic Network Plan Refresh (tCSNP2 Refresh) will be published by 30 June 2026 and will plan the electricity transmission network needed in the 2030s. As part of this, it will reassess the network recommended by the second transitional Centralised Strategic Network Plan (tCSNP2) which was published in 2024, as projects have been developed further, to provide greater certainty on design, costs and delivery timescales. It will also consider the impact of the Connections Reform and changes to offshore network designs and potentially support the development of the delivery pipeline for the CSNP which is due to be published by December 2028. The CSNP will plan the electricity and gas transmission and hydrogen transport and storage networks out to 2050 and will be based on the SSEP.

Basis for approval

The Authority has reviewed the proposed tCSNP2 Refresh Methodology and considered whether it meets the requirements set out in licence condition C13 of the ESO licence. We have reviewed any

³ [Direction to NESO on Network Options Assessment and Centralised Strategic Network Plan methodology | Ofgem](#)

⁴ Delivery and implementation of the TMO4+ connections reform as per [Decision on Connections Reform Package \(TM04+\) | Ofgem](#)

⁵ [Offshore Coordination | National Energy System Operator](#)

⁶ <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/policy/approval-nesos-csnp-methodology>

⁷ [Direction to ESO relating to Standard Licence Condition \(SLC\) C27\(5\)\(b\) and C27\(12\)\(b\)](#)

⁸ [Licences and licence conditions | Ofgem](#)

changes and improvements made to the Methodology, compared to the 2023 Network Options Assessment (NOA) Methodology to ensure that the proposed Methodology continues to facilitate the development of an efficient, coordinated and economical system of electricity transmission.

We are pleased with the collaboration between Ofgem and NESO teams to design proportionate and useful sensitivity analysis that may be carried out by NESO to support effective funding decisions by Ofgem for the tCSNP2 Refresh plan.

Overall, we are satisfied that the submitted tCSNP2 Refresh Methodology meets the requirements set out in licence condition C13, and are supportive of the improvements, the new format, and the introduction of the concept of minimum design requirements. **We therefore approve the tCSNP2 Refresh Methodology.**

We request that going forward, NESO introduce a robust change control process that ensures that material changes in project costs, delivery dates, benefits, or external conditions are identified and their impact on previous recommendations are checked to ensure that the plan remains in the best interest of consumers. We have set out the same requirement in our CSNP Methodology decision, and the same change control process is expected to be applied to all network plans. This should be developed by December 2026.

We will work with you and TOs to decide which recommendations from the tCSNP2 Refresh can be baselined into the CSNP process after the plan is published.

The timeline of the tCSNP2 Refresh will follow the one set out in NESO's 03 December 2025 letter to Ofgem to request a new date for the plan, and our subsequent direction on 5 December allowing changes to the publication dates, and not those that are set out in the submitted methodology from March 2025.

Conclusion and next steps

Overall, we consider that the tCSNP2 Refresh Methodology meets the requirements of Part A of Licence Condition C13. Therefore, in accordance with paragraph 6(a) of C13, **we approve the tCSNP2 Refresh Methodology.**

We thank you for your leadership in developing the tCSNP2 Refresh and look forward to continuing to work with you on its successful development and delivery.

Yours sincerely,

Konark Anand
Head of Transmission Network Planning
For and on behalf of the Gas and Electric Markets Authority