

Ofgem Connections Delivery Board

December 2024 Meeting Minutes

Tuesday 30 January 2025 – 13:00 – 15:00

MS Teams Meeting

Attendees

Role Category	Representative	Organisation
Chair	Jack Presley Abbott	Ofgem
Technical Secretariat	David Boyer	Energy Networks Association
	Kyle Smith	Energy Networks Association
	Natasha Sardinha	Energy Networks Association
National Energy System Operator (NESO)	James Norman	National Energy System Operator
	Robyn Jenkins	National Energy System Operator
	Sara Carter	National Energy System Operator
	Karen Thompson-Lilley	National Energy System Operator
	William Kirk Wilson	National Energy System Operator
Distribution and Transmission Network Operators	Steffan Jones	Electricity North West
	Mark Adolphus	UK Power Networks
	Andrew Scott	SSE Distribution
	Paul Glendinning	NPg
	John Twomey	National Grid Electricity Transmission
	Gareth Hislop	SP Energy Networks
	Christina Logan	SSE
	Susana Neves e Brooks	National Grid Electricity Distribution
UK Government	Paul Hawker	Department for Energy Security and Net Zero
	Katherine Lovewell	Department for Energy Security and Net Zero
	Ian Thel	Department for Energy Security and Net Zero
	Daniel Zwolinski	Department for Energy Security and Net Zero
CPAG Chair	Merlin Hyman	Independent Chair of Connections Process Advisory Group (CPAG)
National Governments	Chris Hewett	Solar Energy UK
	Barnaby Wharton	Renewable UK
	Pamela McBride	Scottish Government
	Eleanor Hoare	Welsh Government
Energy Regulator	Meadhbh Taylor	Ofgem
	Alasdair MacMillan	Ofgem
	Neal McLaughlin	Ofgem
	Fiona Booth	Ofgem
	Flora McEwan	Ofgem
	Klaudia Starzyk	Ofgem
	Salvatore Zingale	Ofgem
	Lee Wilkinson	Ofgem
	Jon-Paul Bignold	Ofgem
	Rory Fulton	Ofgem
	Liam Cullen	Ofgem
	Lily Furber	Number 10
	Molly Crosby - HMT	HM Treasury

Key Summary

Agenda Item 1 – Welcome and update from Chair

- There was a 7GW (Gigawatts) increase in the contracted queue last month. It now stands at 753GW in December with the queue still dominated by renewables and storage. 0.5GW of connections were delivered last month.
- The Pause was introduced to the connections queue at transmission level and it includes distribution connections with transmission impact process. Distribution connections applications remain open.

Agenda Item 2 - CAP Action Area Summary Update and POAP

- CAP 3.1 – Raise Entry Requirements: ENA informed the increased entry requirements have gone live. They are continuing to monitor that and starting to collect data for applications that are arriving, that have been improved or that are being discussed with applicants because they do not meet the requirements.
- CAP 3.2.1 – Ofgem requested the addition of a new core metric to the core metric update column which was to display the number of projects which have missed a milestone and are in the project remedy period and have got 60 days to rectify.
- CAP 3.3.1 : Chair queried why this action is Amber and NESO confirmed the reason for this is due to tranche 2 in England and Wales being on hold until the outcome of CP30. NGET added that this is being included with the re-study work for CP30.
- CAP 3.4 – Better Allocate Available Network Capacity:
Chair was satisfied with the green status. Ofgem queried how the projects which are starting to connect now play out going forward i.e. what the future of technical limits within the new connections process could look like. The SCG lead responded that DNOs collectively have to complete the work they have in progress and then revise technical limits, rulebook and compliance document and then pause until its understood what the queue looks like post connections reform.
- CAP 3.5.4 - Ofgem also requested an update from ENA on the Transmission Charging Reform work. ENA responded that DNOs collaborated on the options and how they take them forward which was put into a paper shared with Ofgem. CPAG Chair aired a view that from a TMO4+ perspective; clarity on transmission reinforcement for distribution projects would be helpful.
- CAP 3.6 – Longer Term Models – Chair mentioned everyone is aware that aligning Strategic Planning and Connections reform is in line with Clean Power 2030.

Actions:

- 3.2 Tec Sec to contact NESO for figures relating to CMP376 to add into tracking slides and to add a column for the core metric update.
- Plan on a Page: ENA to remove Plan on a Page 2024.

Agenda Item 3 – Specific Updates from the 6 CAP areas (papers)

Agenda Item 3 CMP434 and 435 proposals submitted update – For Information NESO

- NESO provided a verbal update on CMP434 and 435 proposals; and papers published (Gate 2 Methodology, Project Designation Methodology, Connections Network Design Methodology Consultation Summary Report, Impact Assessment for Connections Reform, Connections Network Design Methodology (CNDM) and Connection Reform Data Impact Assessment)
- There were several calls for clarity and tweaks to be made to the new process.

Agenda Item 3 - Licence Consultation Update – For Information Ofgem

- Ofgem provided a quick update on the consultation responses and the general approach towards the statutory consultation: Ofgem received 30 responses to their policy consultation published last year and general stakeholders were supportive of the policy intent stated there. There was agreement that changes to licence conditions Ofgem identified are necessary to enable implementation of TMO4+ and further clarifications were proposed.

Agenda Item 3 - Connections Reform Implementation Hub Update – For Information NESO

- NESO introduced everyone to the Connections Reforms Hub confirmed its design to enable collaboration between NESO, TOs and I/DNOs within the guardrails of the set of policy design in the TMO4+ code mods and methodologies and decide how best to effectively implement that reform design into NESO's operational processes.

Agenda Item 3 - Update on Financial Instruments Code Mod – For Information NESO

- NESO informed they are going to publish a newsletter and a more significant update next week. The key messages shared were that NESO have taken on board the feedback they received to their call for input.

Agenda Item 3 - Update on TIA Code mod – For Information NESO

- NESO confirmed that TIA code mod has been raised, this being the proposed raising of the transmission impact assessment threshold in England and Wales from 1MW to 5MW. Ofgem granted urgency on 22nd January and now NESO have progressed into workgroups.

Actions

- NESO to check and send out how joining one of the working groups would work in practice via ENA Secretariat on the request of Solar Energy UK.

Agenda Item 3 – CDB 2025 – Open Discussion

- The Chair opened a discussion on the future of CDB, mentioning the purpose of the CDB has been predominantly about delivery of actions that were articulated alongside government in the action plan and a lot of those have been delivered. It includes a tracking function and has also been a space to provide updates on TMO4+. The Chair's view is the CDB achieved its objectives and its purpose, and opened up for discussion from the board.

Agenda Item 4 – Review of Core KPIs and Development

- The outstanding actions from previous meetings was reviewed, no outstanding actions were marked red indicating no critical attention was required.

Action – ENA to Check data on breakdown on technologies in the 55.39GW figure along with the script and share at the next CDB.

Agenda Item 5 – Outstanding actions from previous meeting

- The outstanding actions from previous meeting was reviewed, no outstanding actions were marked red indicating no critical attention was required.

Agenda Item 6 – AOB & CDB schedule

- The date and time of the next CDB meeting was noted 27th February 2025 at 13.00.

1. Welcome & Update from Chair

JPA

Ofgem opened the call by outlining the agenda, welcoming old and new attendees.

A monthly context was provided, highlighting that last month the queue was increased to 739GW, denoting a 7GW increase. Pointing out that the CDB focus is not only reducing the queue but also getting projects connected as quickly as possible.

The agenda was discussed, with no objections.

2. CAP Action Area Summary Update and POAP

JPA, Board

The summary of each CAP area was given, noting that full detailed reports were shared in the meeting pack.

Summary information included:

- Status updates
- Plan on Page
- Initiatives in design, implementation, and benefit stages
- KPIs and tracking
- Any major decisions required.

Summaries were provided, with detailed status reports taken as read.

Connections Reform – “TMO4+”

- NESO flag that the RAG 2 status for CR3.1 and 3.2 are amber, due to the need to lock down financial instruments code mod and the paper later in the meeting will go into more detail but there is potential for them to turn to green even without a financial instruments code mod.

CAP 3.1 – Raise Entry Requirements

- ENA report this CAP action as complete ENA informed the increased entry requirements have gone live. They are continuing to monitor that and starting to collect data on applications that are arriving, that have been improved or do not meet the requirements to proceed.

CAP 3.2 – Removing Stalled Projects

- CAP 3.2.1 – CMP376 - Ofgem request the addition of a new core metric to the column which was to display the number of projects which have missed a milestone and are in the project remedy period.
 - **Action** -Tec Sec to contact NESO for figures relating to CMP376 to add into tracking slides and to add a column for the core metric update.

CAP 3.3 – Better Utilise Existing Network

- CAP 3.3.1 : Amber status and reason for this is due to tranche 2 in England and Wales being on hold until the outcome of CP30.

CAP 3.4 - Better Allocate Available Network Capacity

- No comments or questions.

2. CAP Action Area Summary Update and POAP

JPA, Board

CAP 3.5 – Improve Data & Processes; Sharpen Obligations & Incentives

- CAP 3.5.4 – ENA reported progress on the transmission charging reform saying they discussed with the CDB, DNOs and SCG and spent time assessing what the options might look like, then put it in a paper which has been shared with Ofgem. Discussions are ongoing. CPAG Chair aired a view that from a TMO4+ perspective; clarity on transmission reinforcement for distribution projects would be helpful.
- Ofgem requested an update on the policy of Technical limits and what the future of this would look like after connections reform implementation. The chair of SCG responded that the policy will continue, but any policy development should be halted until the connection queue is readjusted, but an enduring solution would be developed after connections reform is implemented.
- Ofgem enquired about SGT cost apportionment review as industry would need a policy network to support Ofgem. The CDB Chair noted that Ofgem has proposed additional resources for the charging team to address and devise an enduring solution, but also find temporary solutions in the interim.
- The CPAG chair noted that technical limits and SGT are interlinked, considering that in the Project Progression stage, if some projects drop out the remaining projects need to share the costs of reinforcement works.

CAP 3.6 – Longer-term models; align with strategic planning.

- No comments or questions.

The plan on a page (POAP):

- Request from Chair to remove 2024 Plan on a Page slide.

New Actions

1	Tec Sec to contact NESO for figures relating to CMP376 to add into tracking slides and to add a column for the core metric update.	Feb CDB	Tec Sec
3	ENA to remove 2024 Plan on a Page Slide	Feb CDB	ENA

3. Specific Updates from the 6 CAP areas (papers)

NESO, SCG,
Board

CMP434 and 435 proposals submitted update – For Information NESO

- NESO sent their final recommendations and proposals on CMP 434 and CMP435 to Ofgem on 20th December 2024 and published them publicly. Since the last CDB, Government published its CP30 Action Plan which had a connections reform

3. Specific Updates from the 6 CAP areas (papers)

NESO, SCG,
Board

annex. In that annex it's set out the permitted capacities for the technologies that are in scope. NESO also published the three methodologies; Gate 2 Methodology, Project Designation Methodology and the Connections Network Design Methodology and an Impact Assessment.

The Impact Assessment looked at 2 parts:

- 1) The impact of readiness and what readiness would do in terms of reducing the queue and then looking at some trends, for example, how that compares to the future energy scenarios.
 - 2) Looking at the strategic alignment criteria and what impact that would have both at a GB level where things are GB technology and in the 2030 and 2035 permitted capacities, but then also looking for the three sort of zonal projects on shore wind, short duration batteries and solar and what the impact would be across transmission and distribution across each zone.
- NESO published detailed data that sits behind that and more granular data around which GSPs match to which zones and how the geographic boundaries sit across each of the zones.
 - NESO also published a Consultation Summary Report, which was setting out what the responses were to the consultation and then setting out NESO's views against each of those main themes of responses, including anything they changed in the methodologies.
 - NESO ran a webinar in January to talk through the methodologies, Consultation Summary Report, Impact Assessment for Connections Reform, Connections Network Design Methodology (CNDM) and Connection Reform Data Impact Assessment. The focus was on the changes since the version consulted on in November. There was good contribution from the DNO community. Slides and video of the webinar have been published and they are currently working on the FAQ document which NESO hope to publish shortly.

Questions and Comments

Solar Energy UK have the following questions:

- 1) They question the 2030 and 2035 capacity figures as they can see there's no adjustments made to reflect what's happening on the ground, with projects ready to connect and ones through planning. Highlighting they are comfortable with the 2030 figures but, were a bit of a surprise by 2035 figures, as they seem to go back to the FES assumptions that were in the November 5th initial scenarios, highlighting this not being what is occurring in the market. In their view that's potentially down playing the role of solar and batteries, as there's no battery transmission connections at all post 2030; but there definitely is battery transmission post 2030. They are in conversation with DESNZ about this who think there needs to be some mechanism to bridge that gap, because there will be projects which want to connect to 2031/32, which investment decisions are required shortly.

3. Specific Updates from the 6 CAP areas (papers)

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2) There is some concern from their members dealing with distribution connected projects, whether to what extent the distribution queue management and strategic alignment to CP30 will exactly mirror what's happening at transmission. If it doesn't, then projects might get through the gates on the transmission side, but then be told by the DNO they are not needed and so that's a concern from a number of members as well.

NESO responded to the first question on the 2030 and 2035 numbers and agreed that the 2035 numbers are based on the FES but not an entire reproduction of the FES. Various changes were made including to onshore wind, for example, that are quite different to the FES and there was some flow through from the changes to 2030 numbers through to the 2035.

NESO continued, particularly for batteries, they anticipate that there will be more batteries or more capacity of batteries protected and in the queue through the capacity market contracts and through having secured planning consent than the 2035 upper range of 29 GW. They suspect it will probably be nearer 35 GW of batteries. So there is already quite a bit of attrition and an extra capacity built in from the 2035 FES figures.

NESO will look at that again in their SSEP Methodology Consultation which closed recently. They will look at what that right permitted capacity distribution is for all the technologies from the 2030 period through to probably 2040. NESO still need to confirm exactly what the time scale for SSEP is but the anticipation is it will look at the 2030 to 2040 period and that can increase the permitted capacities.

On the second query on queue management ENA provided the following update: the key point is that the queue management as described and outlined in the CNDM will be the overriding rule in terms of the position management for customers that are embedded but are part of the TMO4+ gate and process. DNOs and the SCG are very much going through the ways in which there can be any alignment between the distribution activities that aren't engaged in the TMO4+ process but are inherent to participating in the TMO4+ process to also be aligned with the transmission as much as possible for clarity.

Renewable UK comment they are getting a lot of feedback and concerns from industry around how the onshore wind numbers look particularly in Scotland, highlighting the view being taken by developers in Scotland is if one looks at the 2030 pipeline and the capacity currently contracted for connection, there is only around 700MW on top of that from 2030 to 2035, the Scottish developments are clearly much larger than that. Whereas in England the pipeline is not near meeting the capacities assigned in England, this is particularly at transmission. Developers in Scotland are seeing this as a moratorium in Scotland. So some clarity about how those numbers have been reached and any flexibility in that particular between technologies or zones is really important as a lot of their members are saying they have no idea what's happening in 2030 and are under the impression they don't have a project anymore.

For clarity Renewable UK are seeking the following; firstly, how the numbers have been reached. Then they would like to know how the rules of flexibility to transfer essentially capacity between zones would work.

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CPAG Chair also commented there are some projects that lose out in this process and questioned if there anything else it can be done one can do to ensure that those projects that have invested quite a lot of money, continue to progress. If they need to wait to SSEP it will be a couple of years delayed and whatever the mechanism or approaches, that's the kind of question that's coming across from those points in industry. They asked if when the Gate 2 to the whole queue process occurs are NESO committed to publishing some data and telling people which phase they're in, etc. after that process. Is there more clarity on when Gate 2 to whole queue process would finish and when that data would then be available.

NESO responded saying that during the process of gate 2 to the whole queue, they will provide individual developers in the summer, with their status i.e. have they met Gate 1 or Gate 2, are they in Phase 1 or Phase 2 if they've met Gate 2. That will then be articulated in terms of connection dates and reinforcement works in the offer that they receive in late 2025, however they will know in the summer of 2025 whether they've met Gate 1 or Gate 2 and which phase they are in. NESO is working through the exact timetable and have an update on the Implementation Hub that they are working on with all networks which is looking at all this i.e. what is the real detailed granular timetable that goes through between Ofgem decision and offers, due to all of these ongoing factors, NESO is unable to currently commit to a date.

CPAG Chair acknowledges there's a huge amount of work from the NESO up to this stage and before Christmas, hence recognising and congratulating everyone on that.

On the Pause, Renewable UK mentioned they received feedback from members that the challenge at Distribution level is there has been an erratic approach to the pause and the Ofgem letter said the distribution application process will continue as normal, although applications won't be passed on to NESO after 29th January. Highlighting different DNOs have approached this in a completely different way. Some DNOs put it on their website, while other DNOs are communicating it quite well, but members also get a completely different approach to the pause and that's been really difficult and complex. Renewable UK's suggestion is there needs to be a really common approach to ensure everyone is on the same page.

ENA thanked Renewable UK for raising this and agreed they can raise that and discuss in the SCG as they aren't aware of any variances in operation activities for the implementation of the pause. ENA requested they email through a few of those details outlined, so this can be reviewed at the SCG and check if there are areas of misalignment or if it was just areas of communication needing to be more consistent. ENA continues to respond confirming all networks are fully invested in the Implementation hub and therein there is both a customer offers and management of those focus work stream, on how those things can happen in a consistent way but also market communications more generally focused that ENA believe is really important.

3. Specific Updates from the 6 CAP areas (papers)

NESO, SCG,
Board

Licence Consultation Update – For Information Ofgem

Ofgem provided an update on the consultation responses and the general approach towards progressing to statutory consultation: Ofgem received 30 responses to their policy consultation published last year and general stakeholders were supportive of the policy intent stated there. There was agreement that changes to licence conditions Ofgem identified are necessary to enable implementation of the offer plus and further clarifications were proposed.

The key concerns around the NESO licence related to methodologies, their objectives and governance process, particularly in light of methodologies not being codified. Greater clarity was requested in the licence as to what the obligation is, particularly in Gate 1 offer provision stage and how different types of projects would be treated.

A significant number of comments were provided in relation to the distribution licence and this was expected, as previously Ofgem consulted on the policy intent only. There was a high interest from stakeholders and what specific licence text changes are going to be introduced to enable DNOs to implement the new process at distribution. There was a general concern that DNOs could be in breach of the non-discrimination clause as they will be assessing applications against readiness and strategic alignment criteria. Ofgem have been engaging with DNOs through ENA since to understand the concerns better and ensure that the licence provides the regulatory support needed. They will address all these concerns in the statutory consultation and the approach to the three licences is to provide additional clarity where it's been requested by industry. They will also ensure that objectives and obligations as well as the language used in the licence is consistent across the three licences and the wider regulatory framework.

For all licence modifications Ofgem are proposing, they are ensuring these are aligned with TMO4+ codes and methodologies. If they are approved, so that all these changes work together, whether it's with regards to terms and definitions or specific obligations. Ofgem would like to avoid duplication and are intending for the licence to act as a backstop and finally the key objective for Ofgem is that licences are not only enforceable but also give licensees the confidence that the right provisions are in place to allow them to discharge the new obligations set out by codes and methodologies (if approved), and also that users are clear on what they can reasonably expect, specifically for TMO4+ go live.

Though not currently anticipated, there may be further changes required further along the way after the reform is implemented. So Ofgem will continue to monitor the licence framework.

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Ofgem concluded saying they will publish the statutory consultation very soon. It will be open for a four week period, giving stakeholders an opportunity to provide any final feedback.

Questions and Comments

SSE Transmission mentioned their team fed in and it was suggested it would be really helpful to maybe do some licenced drafting workshops. They provided a high volume of comments and are aware this leads to a huge amount of work for the team to do at the back end and it might speed things up if some workshops could be held before it goes out for consultation. They appreciate the time pressure to hit the deadlines and the purpose is to try to make the overall process as smooth as possible.

Ofgem agreed the timeline is very tight and they are very close to lockdown on the drafting now and the purpose of having the policy conference is to flush out those comments and those issues. They expressed confidence in consulting on in the stat con appropriately addresses the comments received. They requested SSE to inform them if they should be expecting anything they haven't heard yet.

SSE confirmed it wasn't anything new and just wanted to ensure they don't send Ofgem another list of suggested changes because of any interpretations of the previous response.

Ofgem mentioned post statutory consultation, Ofgem can still make tweaks based on what they consult on in their final decision as long as it doesn't materially divert from the policy intent that they have consulted on.

Connections Reform Implementation Hub Update – For Information NESO

NESO introduced everyone to the Connections Reforms Hub and explained it was set up to collaborate between NESO and the networks within the guardrails of the set of policy design in the TMO4+ code mods and methodologies looking at how best to effectively implement that reform design into NESOs operational processes. The customer is at the centre of all decisions made and as they are conscious of the amount of interactions and the implications of customers in the process of where possible.

NESO went on to say that although they set the connections reform hub to look at implementing connections reform, the intent is post reform to carry on collaborating with networks within the hub to carry on continuous improvement to connection customer enhancements as part of the application and offer process.

NESO walked everyone through the work packages they are focusing on in terms of the connections reforms hub:

- Customer communications at the market level basis is a key work stream.

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- End to End process Design work stream - looking at the timeline between now and offers at the end of December and really make sure everyone is aware of all of the swim lanes of all of the activities that need to be done between DNOs, iDNOs, NESO and the TOs throughout this timeline in order to understand where those there's risk to those activities, immediate issues or where there's crossover in terms of some of the work stream activities.
- securities and commercial risk.
- engineering assessments which is fundamental
- Evidence submission and Assessment looking to answer questions such as; What is the evidence that needs to be submitted? What does that look like in practise? How is it going to be collated? And then the second part of that will look be looking at how NESO are going to assess the submissions.
- Issuing offers.
- Customer query resolution.

NESO feel as a sponsors steering group, these work streams really capture the essence of the critical paths, but they will continue to be testing this over the coming months. So lots to do in a short amount of time. But the meetings NESO have had so far have been really fruitful, really proactive, really great coming together and collaborating.

Questions/Comments

CPAG Chair applauded NESO on the Connections Reforms Hub and put forward their view that when industry works closely with DNOs, iDNOs and TOs in making detailed design decisions; its much quicker and easier to get to good decisions. They wanted to know if NESO envisages engaging with industry in the process.

NESO responded that there will probably be opportunities in terms of one element that they are doing, which is called the Model Office where they are looking to bring some customer insight into playing through some of the processes and seeing any pinch points for working through. NESO acknowledged the CPAG Chair input and offered to look to see whether they can incorporate some of that in the Model Office because that will kind of help with the end to end understanding customer journey throughout all of these work streams.

Solar Energy UK view was customers need to be engaged in the entire process else what NESO thinks is customer process focus may not be customer focused from the customer's perspective.

NESO requested everyone to feed back any pain points and they would ensure they are understood in all of the work streams, but very happy to do more comprehensive updates or some deep dives as and when it's needed.

Update on Financial Instruments Code Mod – For Information NESO

3. Specific Updates from the 6 CAP areas (papers)

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NESO informed they are going to publish more detail within a newsletter and provide a more significant update early February. The key messages shared were they have taken on board the feedback that was received through the call for input. They reconsidered the mod and have amended it accordingly and intend to still introduce a mod and take that through to panel and then go through the work group process, if the panel agree to the mod being taken forward. NESO believe a mod is needed to support connections reform overall. They have reshaped it in terms of what it looks like and are hopeful people will support this new reshaping of it. In the newsletter next week there will be more information on what the reshaping is. Discussed benefits for England and Wales vs. Scotland –touching on technical limits, effects of changing thresholds on current and future customers and to ensure security of supply.

Update on TIA Code mod

NESO update was the TIA code mod has been raised and this is the raising of the transmission impact assessment threshold in England and Wales from 1MW to 5MW. Ofgem granted urgency on 22nd January and now NESO have begun workgroups.

There were some questions around why this isn't being applied in Scotland to the same extent and NESO think there are good reasons and Scottish TOs have articulated these. Generally the workgroup are progressing through with this with a view to ultimately getting to submitting a Final Modification Report (FMR) to Ofgem by the 28th March, for decision and implementation importantly before the Gate 2 to the whole queue window opens as it would then change the scope of what embedded projects are in scope of Gate 2 to the whole queue. Anything below 5MW in England and Wales would no longer be in scope of connections reform.

Questions and Comments

Ofgem informed NESO they made it clear in their approval letter to grant urgency to this mod, noting that the mod is purely focusing on codifying the TIA threshold in England and Wales, raising it from 1MW to 5MW. Ofgem indicated through code mod discussions one of the Scottish TOs has updated the workgroup to make them aware they will be looking to increase the threshold on a non-codified basis potentially. Ofgem requested if a Scottish TO could comment on their thoughts on the 200KW limit, which is 25 times below the proposed lower threshold in England and Wales as part of this mod. If it was the case that this review would be prior to Gate 2 to whole queue.

SSE said the reasons for the different threshold in Scotland than to England and Wales is because they have a different network there i.e. 132KV at transmission. A high instance of radial networks and a different set up in terms of what's behind and at the GSPs is the technical reason why the limits are lower; which is about security of supply on the system in Scotland. A recent review was done to increase those thresholds, and they did not

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expect to be in a position of confidence to make any further change ahead of Gate 2 but expressed a commitment to keep this under constant review.

In support to the update provided by SSE; SPEN pointed out there's SPT's patch, they have 5.6GW of customers on load management schemes from the distribution customers impacting the transmission. Given the difference in network, and if they raise the threshold, that would impact the transmission network which would in turn affect those customers who are operating under that regime to their detriment. So currently for future customers, it might be a possibility, but for present customers and particularly against that capacity element it needs to be taken into account. They informed there is more detail on this which they are happy to share.

CDB Chair inquired what the previous threshold was before 200KW and Solar Energy UK confirmed it was 50KW and was of the view if there's a way of looking at for future customers it would be helpful to increase the threshold as there is a massive demand for not just commercial rooftop solar, but also community projects. In addition to this it is a significant barrier for a large number of projects. In that light, they would like to welcome accelerating this.

Solar Energy UK also mentioned they have a couple of generators who are involved in this working group and inquired if there is scope for more observers to participate in this. NESO offered to check with their codes team and explained one can join as a voting member (which has closed as per their understanding) of how the code mod process works or as an observer where there is an opportunity to engage.

CPAG Chair added having a conversation about the Scottish threshold is valuable. They felt NESO/Ofgem have responded positively, moved rapidly and considers this a big win; they acknowledged and thanked everyone involved.

CDB 2025

The Chair mentioned the purpose of the CDB has been predominantly about delivery of the actions that were articulated alongside government in the action plan and a lot those have been delivered. It includes a tracking function and has also been a space to provide updates on the TMO4+ proposals. The Chair's view is the CDB achieved its objectives and its purpose. Then going forward, they no longer have an action plan with loads of actions that need to be delivered. So, with this in mind asks the board what is the purpose of this group going forward? if the CDB was needed at the same regularity? or needed altogether keeping in mind the CPAG which is developing the specifics, the SCG at the ENA and the Implementation Hub. The questions were would the CDB add any value and

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what needs to be done to provide items there to make it add value. The chair was keen to hear everyone's views.

Questions and Comments

Solar Energy UK expressed the support at the CDB has been valuable as the generators contributed to these discussions. Dialogues with other network communities is very valuable. Their members really value that the fact that they sit on the CDB and they obtain a lot of useful information and can raise things at this level. For connections delivery they need to have projects which are generating electricity into the network and that is delivery; it's not the action plan. So their view is having a forum where generators, networks and regulators are having those conversations is really, really important.

They also saw this as a forum where news ideas or areas can be brought in or if there's something which someone thinks is working very well and our members say actually it's not working how they think it is; this can be brought to the forum. In their view, the implementation phase is just as important as the policy design phase they are going through now.

Renewable UK echoed Solar Energy UK and voiced that the opportunity for industry to raise the challenges they face at the CDB as they go through implementation phase is really useful. Their view was there is some detail which can be got into at the CDB which might not take place the CPAG/SCG and other forums. Hence it would be good to bring those various groups implementation up as well bring that feedback from industry and networks and everyone else together. The CDB is valuable and the CAP action plan needs to be looked through and few other areas addressed. They concluded by saying the CDB doesn't need to be monthly however it is considered as useful. They were open to have a discussion on the format, frequency of discussion and voiced the forum is useful to bring everything together.

NGET was of the same opinion as the others and voiced the CDB has been really successful. Their view was it's coming to the end of this particular phase and everyone needs to think if there a Phase 2 and if so, what it looks like.

A combination of reflections offered were:

- The CDB has been very centred on the transformation needed to the regulatory rules and that has been successful and there's an element of what did success look like coming into this and a lot of it is about how we bring connection dates in for customers. Hence now looking at how is that going to be tracked, are the things that are going to be changed delivering the outputs that we expect and how that's going to be managed.

3. Specific Updates from the 6 CAP areas (papers)

NESO, SCG,
Board

- The regulatory rules is still an area with lots of improvements in the delivery landscape such as system access, planning, etc. perhaps looking at how we improve connection and connection dates across the industry that needs to come together.

- CDB has been very generation focused and is of the view they are in a seesaw between generation starting to hopefully get better and strategic demand and data centres particularly come in to focus with more generators now changing to become data centres.

CDB Chair agreed the CDB has been focused on the policy and the regulatory framework to enable it and the question was if this was solved. Commenting on the delivery landscape the CDB chair questioned if this is still the purpose of the board, acknowledging that we should avoid duplication of intent in respect to other forums. NGET spoke about the delivery landscape and the question is if this is the purpose of the board or it makes it too broad. Chair view was this probably sits in the Electricity Network's Delivery Board forum.

CPAG Chair agreed with a lot of what the others said before and thinks there has been a lot of value. They are moving to a different stage and it makes sense to have a refresh. Agrees with the kind of delivery of the Plan on a Page and the focus of the group should be on the numbers that were actually delivered. At the moment they are connecting 0.5GW a month and it needs to be 1.5GW a month to meet CP30 target. So more focus on delivery is important and that might need a bit for refresh of membership as well.

ENA raised that as part of the CDB refresh and review is continuing to track KPIs where they can measure things which is important as some dashboards show where they have made real impacts in terms of genuine date acceleration, etc. and can measure the benefits there and not just policy or reform milestones. Some of those solutions being tracked have been embedded in BAU, some of them being paused or will be reshaped as we go through the implementation of TMO4+ this year, as part of the refresh CDB should consider what is best put on and tracked at each CDB.

Solar Energy UK expressed it's clear everyone is lining up behind the Clean Power action plan. They know the ranges of technologies which they are trying to connect by which time. Hence tracking these will be useful from their perspective. They believe the Clean Power Team see themselves as custodians of that plan in terms of what power they trying to get on the system. What is done at CDB is very important for their delivery. Those two things that will be important as well as the Electricity Infrastructure Board in DESNZ, which really only looked at transmission. It doesn't look at the distribution side and CDB forum talks about distribution a lot more.

3. Specific Updates from the 6 CAP areas (papers)

 NESO, SCG,
Board

The Chair mentioned Ofgem is involved in working with the Clean Power units who are setting up their governance. Ofgem are looking to feed in what they are going to deliver and they are looking at the data side which could be a really crucial input.

CPAG Chair inquired if the End to End review and low carbon technology should be part of the forum. Ofgem agreed and informed that work on the End to End Review is expected to ramp up beyond end of Q1 and the consultation closes in a couple of weeks.. Ofgem can see this forum as being very useful for progressing some of the actions that are going to come out of the end to end review going forward.

SSE commented that the more the CDB is distribution focused, the less value the forum will have from TOs in terms of attendance. Suggestion was to keep in mind who the audience is wanted on the call and the topics for discussion.

The Chair agreed and said there is a question about also if they are structured in different ways, then they have to be quite clear on the agenda and split it where required.

New Actions

1	Renewable UK to share some feedback from their members with ENA so they can see the different DNO approaches to communicating the Pause.	Feb CDB	Renewable UK
2	Check and send out how joining one of the working groups as an observer would work in practice via ENA/ ENA Secretariat on the request of Solar Energy UK.	Feb CDB	NESO

4. Review of KPI development and monitoring

DB

The discussion on KPI development and monitoring comprised a run through of two main slides, the SCG developed joint T&D dashboard highlighting key data trends and the updated CDB dashboard containing the impacts of various reforms across the connection process.

SCG T&D Dashboard Summary:

Overall, the contracted queue did increase this month by 7GW compared to the previous month, the rate of new applications and acceptances continue to be high, with 753GW currently in the queue; 42GW being demand and 711GW from export and storage. In December 16.5GW of new connections offers were accepted.

The queue continues to be dominated by renewables (348GW, 46% of the queue) and storage (262GW, 35% of the queue) far exceeding GB energy needs for net zero.

Networks are connecting customers at pace.

There remains significant capacity that networks can accommodate without delay, including over 55.39GW of distribution connecting customers that have no dependency on transmission works, and 53.3GW of transmission connecting projects that have been offered connection dates in the next three years. Actual connection of these projects will be subject to customer timelines, milestone management, attrition rates and other factors (e.g. supply chain).

However, the significant (and growing) queue continues to result in connection delays for customers:

28% of transmission offers in December met the requested connection date, with an average difference between offered and requested connection date at transmission of 58 months for the month of December.

68% of distribution capacity contracted is dependent on or being assessed for transmission reinforcements

CDB Impacts Dashboard Summary:

- **Accelerated Connection Dates:** Progress has been made in accelerating connection dates for projects, primarily through technical limits at distribution and offers at transmission. 10.4 GW cumulative capacity across Transmission and Distribution (T&D) accelerated by an average of six years, with much more expected to follow.
- **Capacity Released:** Reforms, particularly for storage at distribution, have enabled more efficient use of network capacity, reducing the reinforcement needed and allowing more customers access to the network. 32.5 GW cumulative capacity released across T&D.
- **Removal of Non-Progressing Projects:** The queue management measures already agreed and in place have effectively removed over 11.8 GW of non-progressing projects across T&D from the queue, enhancing the efficiency of the connection process.
- **Customer Service:** There has been a monthly increase in meeting requested connection dates at transmission, emphasising the need for continued focus on improving the connection process. 28% of transmission connections were offered their requested connection date as of December 2024. The average delay, from requested date to date provided, for the remaining 72% of applications is currently approximately 58 months for December.

Questions and Comments

UKPN brought to everyone's notice that 55.39 GW is a big number with no reinforcement or Distribution reinforcement only, nothing going on with transmission. It's with DNO customers and distribution network operators, etc. to connect and it triggers the questions which is a lot of the good work everyone has collectively done and continue to do has

been the supply side enabling viable schemes to connect to a network in the most efficient way.

They asked if there is a reason these projects are still there and how we can assist to get some of these schemes to come forward. Reason for this being that in the UKPN queue they have had viable schemes sitting in Part 2 of their Appendix G for some years and they are not coming forward and not seemingly wanting to connect so if the market doesn't step up and take advantage, then they are not going to be where they need to be end of 2030.

Ofgem agreed it was a good point and a big number and questioned why they are just sat there and not showing up for connections. They asked if anyone knows the reason for this or if there is any issue and why customers aren't wanting to connect sooner and starting to basically collect revenue from their investment.

CPAG Chair considered this quite a big question about renewable and clean power, business models and invest ability and returns, etc. and that's different in different market segments between wind, solar storage, non- duration storage, floating wind, etc. They all have their own sort of dynamics and drivers and at the bigger scale a lot of this is driven by the CFD mechanism. No energy project, whether that be renewables or conventional, anything is built in this country without some kind of support underwriting mechanism so the scale of the CFD pot and the auction price and things is a dominant factor and how much stuff will come through when there are other for example perhaps batteries as an unusual segment to the market and there is no subsidy scheme.

Different regions across different areas of the market, it's very much of the Clean Power Action Plan to address some of those barriers. Essentially it comes down to in each segment of the market, how confident are investors that they're going to make a return on their investment at a reasonable rate against the risk rate and that varies. It's a reasonably positive picture, but not in all segments at all times and the critical question will be the next CFD or auction rounds coming up. How big is that? And if at the same time the government decides to as it seems to be thinking of doing introduce major market reform against, how does the market respond to that and if they will respond. That would have a big impact as well on the queue. So lots of issues about the viability and of the of the market and size of the investment.

NESO commented that smaller projects which are likely to be within the 55GW would not be projects which go through CFD.

Solar Energy UK said there are many solar projects that don't need a CFD. They get the built merchant and with PPA. They were interested in knowing the breakdown technologies in the 55.39GW figure if that could be shared with the script it would be really helpful. Anecdotally, they know of two or three solar and battery projects which claimed to Solar Energy UK that they're ready to connect and they have been for some time and the local DNO has not completed that process.

ENA offered to check the data on technology breakdown.

UKPN made a point that 55.39GW is a big number against 0.48 GW and the Chair stressed the whole goal is to increase the rate of connections so if we can focus on the things that can connect rather than the process for future connections as well that would benefit consumers because we're connecting low carbon quicker and moving towards the

mission of clean power. There's a real question about whether there are quicker wins which have been missed.

Actions

1	Check data on breakdown on technologies in the 55.39GW figure along with the script and share at the next CDB.	Feb CDB	ENA
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5. Outstanding actions from the previous meeting

DB

The segment on outstanding actions began with a review of the progress made on previously identified actions. It was noted that no outstanding actions were marked as red, indicating critical attention was not required immediately.

The amber outstanding action - ENA noted this is an ongoing between them and NESO to follow up on the CMP376.

6. AOB, CDB Schedule, and date of next meeting

JPA, DB

Several AOB topics were raised:

- The meeting Schedule and Agenda for next meeting – There was confirmation that next CDB would be 27th February 2025.
- Next CDB will include how to structure the CDB through 2025. Ofgem will provide options, proposals, suggestions for agreement for discussion.

The Chair thanked the board for attendance and closed the meeting.

7. Appendix A

Plan on a Page - October 2024

Plan on a Page - October 2024								Owner			SCG, NESO, DESNZ Ofgem					
Action Area	Owner	Initiative	2023	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov		
CAP 3.1 - Raise Entry Requirements	NESO	3.1.1 – Introduce letter of authority at transmission (LoA)	Design	Voluntary + Phase 1 Mod							Implementation and Benefits					
	NESO	3.1.2 - Identify, assess, bring forward proposals to strengthen entry requirements	Included in TMO4+													
	SCG	3.1.2 - Identify, assess and bring forward proposals to strengthen entry requirements	Design						Implement			Benefits				
CAP 3.2 - Remove Stalled Projects	NESO	3.2.1 – CMP376 implementation – transmission queue management	Design	Implement					Benefits							
	SCG	3.2.2 – Monitor application of queue management at distribution	Design	Implement					Benefits							
	NESO	3.2.3 - Bring forward recommendations to improve certainty and progression of customers holding capacity	Included in TMO4+													
CAP 3.3 - Better Utilise Existing Network	NESO	3.3.1 - Forward recommendations to optimise existing network capacity	Design			5-point plan: Implement acceleration for non-firm storage and where revised network modelling allows							Benefit			
	SCG	3.3.1 - Forward recommendations to optimise existing network capacity	Design	Implement	Benefits											
	NESO	3.3.2 – Review scope for improvements in CPAs for optimised planning	Design						Detailed design / prepare to implement from January 2025							
	NESO	3.3.3 – Review the scope of enabling works	Design						Detailed design / prepare to implement from January 2025							
CAP 3.4 - Better allocate available network	NESO	3.4.1 – Effectively allocate capacity released in short-term	Included in TMO4+													
	SCG	3.4.1 – Effectively allocate capacity released in short-term	Design													
	NESO	3.4.2 – Approach to allocate capacity with strategic planning	Included in TMO4+													
CAP 3.5 - Improve Data and Processes	SCG	3.5.1 – A single digital view of network data for connection customers	Design			Implement			Benefits							
	SCG	3.5.2 – Process for T impacts of D connections	DFTC Design			detailed design			Prepare to go Live from January							
	SCG	3.5.3 – Agreed 'technical limits' across identified GSPs	Implement			Benefits & Further implementation for Phase 2 and Scotland.										
	SCG	3.5.4 – Identify and resolve inconsistencies	Design						Implementation and further design on additional an							
	Ofgem	3.5.5 – Review incentives, obligations and requirements	Undertake review of connection incentives, obligations and requirements													
CAP 3.6	NESO / DESNZ / Ofgem	Develop Longer-term Connection Process to align with strategic planning, transmission build acceleration and future market reforms including REMA	Ongoing													
TMO4+ - first ready, first connected process reform	NESO	TMO4+ proposal development and implementation	TMO4 to TMO4+ design			Proposal			End-to-end process – detailed design, SOPs, training							
	NESO	CUSC and STC code modifications for TMO4+ (re-baselined)	Design		Proposal		Workgroups									
	NESO	Transitional offers (renamed from 'ligh-touch')	1?		Design			Set-up			1: New Apps - Implemented			2: Mod A Progression		

Plan on a Page - 2025

Plan on a Page - 2025								Owner			SCG, NESO, DES Ofgem			
Action Area	Owner	Initiative	2024	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
CAP 3.1 - Raise Entry Requirements	NESO	3.1.1 – Introduce letter of authority at transmission (LoA)		Implementation and Benefits										
	NESO	3.1.2 - Identify, assess, bring forward proposals to strengthen entry requirements		Included in TMO4+										
	SCG	3.1.2 - Identify, assess and bring forward proposals to strengthen entry requirements		Benefits										
CAP 3.2 - Remove Stalled Projects	NESO	3.2.1 – CMP376 implementation – transmission queue management		Benefits										
	SCG	3.2.2 – Monitor application of queue management at distribution		Benefits										
	NESO	3.2.3 - Bring forward recommendations to improve certainty and progression of customers holding capacity		Included in TMO4+										
CAP 3.3 - Better Utilise Existing Network	NESO	3.3.1 - Forward recommendations to optimise existing network capacity		Benefits										
	SCG	3.3.1 - Forward recommendations to optimise existing network capacity		Benefits										
	NESO	3.3.2 – Review scope for improvements in CPAs for optimised planning		Detailed design / prepare to implement from January 2025										
	NESO	3.3.3 – Review the scope of enabling works		Detailed design / prepare to implement from January 2025										
CAP 3.4 - Better allocate available network	NESO	3.4.1 – Effectively allocate capacity released in short-term		Included in TMO4+										
	SCG	3.4.1 – Effectively allocate capacity released in short-term		Design										
	NESO	3.4.2 – Approach to allocate capacity with strategic planning		Included in TMO4+										
CAP 3.5 - Improve Data and Processes	SCG	3.5.1 – A single digital view of network data for connection customers		Benefits										
	SCG	3.5.2 – Process for T impacts of D connections		Being picked up within Grid Code modification										
	SCG	3.5.3 – Agreed 'technical limits' across identified GSPs		Benefits & Further implementation for Phase 2 and Scotland.										
	SCG	3.5.4 – Identify and resolve inconsistencies		Implementation and further design on additional areas										
	Ofgem	3.5.5 – Review incentives, obligations and requirements												
CAP 3.6	NESO / DESNZ / Ofgem	Develop Longer-term Connection Process to align with strategic planning, transmission build acceleration and future market reforms including REMA		Ongoing										
TMO4+ - first ready, first connected process reform	NESO	TMO4+ proposal development and implementation												
	NESO	CUSC and STC code modifications for TMO4+ (re-baselined)		Ofgem consideration										
	NESO	Transitional offers (renamed from 'ligh-touch')		Decision & Notice period										
				Implement										

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