

Planning for new energy infrastructure: revisions to National Policy Statements

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About SuperNode and Superconductors

SuperNode, headquartered in Dublin, Ireland, is a global technology development company that designs and delivers cutting-edge, superconducting cable systems for bulk electricity transmission.

Conventional transmission cables are limited in terms of current levels which in turn limit their power transfer capability. Networks based upon superconducting cable systems can move larger quantities of power over longer distances with smaller and less obtrusive infrastructure, without electrical losses and at significantly lower voltages. SuperNode's technology will connect electricity markets in a way that facilitates the integration of large-scale renewables and the achievement of a decarbonised pan-European energy system.

SuperNode was founded in 2018 by Dr. Eddie O'Connor and renewable energy developer Mainstream Renewable Power Ltd. SuperNode is jointly owned by Dr. O'Connor and Norwegian green investment group AKER Horizons.

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1. Introduction

SuperNode welcomes the opportunity to respond to the **Planning for new energy infrastructure: revisions to National Policy Statements**. The National Policy Statements are fundamental to the deployment of renewable energy infrastructure, and it is of paramount importance that the revised National Policy Statements (NPSs) not only reflect our current net zero ambitions but are future proofed and reflective of the vast changes our energy system will need to go through to achieve net zero by 2050.

2. Question 6.

Do you agree with new guidance added to Section 2.8 of draft EN-5 on the inclusion of strategic planning as a consideration to support the needs case for electricity network infrastructure?

Yes

SuperNode is pleased to see the inclusion of strategic planning as a consideration to support the needs case for electricity network infrastructure, using network plans from the ESO as a needs case for planning approval. This measure is likely to streamline current processes by avoiding duplication given that it will no longer be necessary to obtain both regulatory approval and planning approval for projects.

This said, we would like Government to explicitly state this measure is expected to reduce timelines in practice.

3. Question 7.

Draft EN-5 includes a strong starting presumption for overhead lines for electricity networks developments outside nationally designated landscapes, which was consulted on in 2021. Do you agree?

No.

We do not believe there should be a starting presumption for any technology over another. It is important to maintain technology neutrality, avoiding assumptions about the appropriateness of any particular technology without a comprehensive evaluation of the specific circumstances.

Embracing a technology-neutral stance allows for a thorough assessment of the various available options for electricity network developments. It acknowledges that different technologies may have unique advantages and disadvantages depending on factors such as geographical location, environmental impact, efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and community considerations. By avoiding preconceived biases toward specific technologies, decision-makers can make informed choices that align with the goals of sustainability, reliability, and efficiency.

While overhead lines have historically been a prevalent choice for electricity networks, it is important to remain open to alternative options such as underground cables, subsea cables, or emerging technologies that may offer improved performance, reduced environmental impact, or enhanced

resilience. Assessing the suitability of each technology based on its merits ensures that decisions align with the best available evidence and are not predetermined by assumptions.