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# Introduction

Introduction to the methodology  
annexes

## I. Purpose

1. This document provides details of the options assessment methodology which describes how NESO assesses the required levels of network transfer, the reinforcement options provided by the transmission owners and non-TO developers to meet this requirement and recommends options for further development.
2. This methodology describes the end-to-end process, from the analysis to the publication of the onshore options assessment as the transitional Centralised Strategic Network Plan (tCSNP2) Refresh report in January 2026.
3. The methodology meets our licence condition C13 Network Options Assessment (NOA).
4. Appendix A of this methodology contains the roles and responsibilities of NESO and TOs for this process.
5. It is important to note that whilst NESO recommends progressing options to meet system needs, any investment decisions remain with the Onshore Transmission Owners (TOs) or other relevant parties, as appropriate.

## II. Key changes for 2025/26

1. **Our methodology's new format** - To enhance readability and understanding of the methodology, we have introduced a new format for this year's documentation. Our summary methodology provides a concise and high-level explanation of the tCSNP2 Refresh process whereas the annexes and appendices contain detailed descriptions of each process within the tCSNP2 Refresh. This new structure allows for easier navigation and access to information, ensuring a more comprehensive understanding of the methodology.
2. **Concept of minimum design criteria** - The tCSNP2 Refresh will assess options further developed by the TOs following tCSNP2 (Beyond 2030) that meet design requirements, for entry into the first delivery pipeline ahead of CSNP. Projects within the delivery pipeline would be eligible to receive the necessary pre-construction funding from Ofgem. This is further discussed within the Options Development annex.
3. **Enhanced data quality assurance checks** - We've been conducting quality assurance checks of the data we put into the previous NOA process. We've expanded the methodology to describe these checks of earliest in-service dates (EISDs) and build on our challenge and review meetings with the TOs.
4. **Sensitivity studies** - Our process has always allowed for sensitivity studies which are described in our Options Assessment annex. We are extending their use to help with funding decisions.
5. **Interconnector capacity analysis** - In tCSNP2 Refresh the base level of interconnection will include all the projects currently operational and those with Cap and Floor Windows 1 and 2. We will also include all the projects that were given positive decision from Cap and Floor Window 3.

### III. How to read this document

1. These annex documents provide in-depth details of the options assessment process in the tCSNP2 Refresh. This is aimed at stakeholders wishing for that level of detail and therefore it provides more detailed technical explanations. However, we have also produced the main summary document that you might find a useful overview.