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By Email Only: Claire.Whiteside@nienetworks.co.uk

Date: 02 March 2026

Our Ref: NET/E/JF/1429

Dear Claire,

Application for consent to a longer period for the issuance of a Connection Offer at 15 Realtons Road Trillick, NIE Networks Reference: 23/12412.

Thank you for your letter received 12 February 2026 (the **Letter**) setting out an application (**the Application**) made by NIE Networks Limited (**NIE Networks**) for an extension to the period within which NIE Networks is required to make a connection offer (**the relevant Connection Offer**) for a Wind Generator (■), at **15 Realtons Road**. The extended period now applied for expires on **1 March 2026**.

In this letter we shall refer to the person making the application for the relevant Connection Offer as the **Connection Applicant**.

1. The Application

The Letter describes the relevant background¹ to the Application. Reference is made to Condition 30 of NIE Networks' licence authorising participation in the activity of distribution (**the Licence**).²

¹ What follows is a summary of the Application. It is not intended to be a complete rehearsal. All parts of the Application have been considered in making the decision set out in this correspondence. Failure to mention parts of the Application (or related correspondence) should not be taken as representing any failure to have regard to those parts.

² [NIE Distribution Licence](#).

Condition 30 (6) (of the Licence) provides that (barring specified exceptions) ³ NIE Networks is obliged to make an offer for connection to the distribution system *as soon as practicable* and (by operation of Condition 30 (6)(b)) *in any event within 3 months*

“after receipt by [NIE Networks] of an application containing all such information in relation to the required connection as [NIE Networks] may reasonably request.”

Condition 30 (6) is to be read alongside and reflects the provision made in Article 20(3) through to Article 20(5) of the Electricity (NI) Order 1992 (the **Electricity Order**).

Condition 30 (7) of the Licence allows NIE Networks to make an application to the Authority⁴ (following requisite consultation) for a consent (in writing) that the period specified in Condition 30 (6)(b) shall be substituted by a longer period and subject to any conditions as specified in the consent.

Significantly, the making – or grant - of a Condition 30(7) type application does not alter NIE Networks’ licence obligation⁵ (under Condition 30(6)(a)) to make a connection offer *as soon as practicable*. The primary obligation (recorded in Condition 30(6)(a) of the Licence and Article 20 the Electricity Order) - to make a connection offer *as soon as practicable* - remains.

NIE Networks states as part of the Application, that it received a valid application (for the Relevant Connection Offer) from the Connection Applicant on 6 December 2023, for a Wind Generator (■■■■), meaning the Condition 30 (6) period would expire on 6 March 2024. NIE Networks then, on the basis of unusually high volumes of applications, and a need for more time to determine if capacity was available, sent an application for extension of the Condition 30 period to 11 July 2024, to the Authority. The application was approved by the Authority on 6 March 2024.⁶

³ Recorded in Article 21 of the [Electricity \(NI\) Order 1992](#) (the **Electricity Order**): see Condition 30(6) (d) of the Licence.

⁴ In this correspondence we use the words “us” “we” “our” “UR” “Utility Regulator” and “Authority” interchangeably to refer to the Northern Ireland Authority for Utility Regulation.

⁵ Which aligns with the statutory duties reflected in Articles 19 and 20 of the Electricity Order.

⁶ [2024.03.06 REDACTED DL C30 Realtons Road.pdf](#).

The Application (made in the Letter) is for consent – under Condition 30(7) - for a longer substituted Condition 30 (6)(b) period out to 1 March 2026.

SONI confirmed to NIE Networks, on 6 March 2024, there was no available capacity at Enniskillen Main. This would have meant the Connection Applicant had no option for an export connection, and could have either accepted a zero export connection or withdrawn. However, on 1 August 2024, NIE Networks was informed by SONI it was going to reassess Enniskillen Main capacity, via reassessment of its methodology concerning Bulk Supply Points.

NIE Networks comments that *“as the capacity was to be reassessed it was not reasonable to remove applications from the queue until we heard the outcome from SONI.”* It was highlighted in the application that on 1 July 2024, NIE Networks and SONI both met with the customer first in the queue, due to concerns raised. During this, the issues associated with making the connection offer and the queue process were explained.

The SONI capacity reassessment was sent to NIE Networks on 22 August 2025. It indicated that, under a revised methodology, there would be capacity available for the connection applicant at Enniskillen Main. NIE Networks then carried out 33kV Network studies at each primary substation associated with Enniskillen Main and confirmed distribution capacity for the connection applicant on 5 September 2025.

At that time, three months was allocated for the progression of design and quotation of a connection offer to the connection applicant. NIE Networks projected this would occur by 5 December 2025. NIE Networks states the project was placed ‘on hold’ from 11 September 2025 to 23 September 2025, to revise the Single Line Diagram. NIE Networks also comments that on 24 October 2025 the Connection Applicant *“was contacted about significant 11kV rebuild at Ballinamallard West which would be chargeable to the customer.”* NIE Networks then presented final options to the connection applicant on 18 December 2025, giving them 30 days to decide on the next steps. The customer has since decided to proceed with the quote, as of 6 January 2026.

Reflecting the points above, NIE Networks explains the rationale for seeking the consent sought in the Application will allow:

1. *“NIE Networks was waiting for Enniskillen Main capacity outcome and was unreasonable to remove projects at this time from the Generation Queue.*
2. *NIE Networks need 3 months to progress design and quotation once capacity was confirmed by SONI*
3. *NIE Networks have kept customer informed and are meeting again with customer on 18th February 2026 on their land to assess 33kV options.”*

NIE Networks states not granting the extension would result in a refusal to connect and would prevent ■■■ connecting to the network.

The Condition 30 period for the making of an extension offer had been extended to 11 July 2024. NIE Networks is wrong in its interpretation of the obligations under Condition 30 and the related “licence standard”. The long stop Condition 30 period – in this case – expires on 11 July 2024, unless and until we grant the Application. Condition 30 (6) states that a connection offer should be refused, or accepted, as soon as practicable, but in no event later than three months after receipt of an application containing all such information in relation to the required connection, as the Licensee may reasonably request.

It is not clear from the wording of the application whether NIE Networks considered the application to be on hold from 6 March 2024 to September 2025, while waiting for the SONI reassessment of capacity. From the information provided, NIE Networks appears instead to treat the ‘on hold’ period as running from 11 September 2025 through to 6 January 2026. However, the Authority does not consider this to be the correct interpretation of Condition 30, given, as per the terms of Condition 30 (6), NIE Networks says it received a valid application on 6 December 2023, implying that all reasonable information had been received from the Connection Applicant. The Condition 30 timeline was later extended to 11 July 2024. Extra time required beyond 11 July 2024, to await the results of the SONI assessment, corrections or further activity relating to the Design and Quotation of a Connection Offer, could have informed an application for extension of the Condition 30 period.

The Condition 30(6)(b) long stop period is fixed, until moved by a written consent or further written consent granted by the Authority, pursuant to an application (or further application) under Condition 30(7). Any such application must proceed based on the existing (Condition 30(6)(b)) long stop period expiry date.

It follows that we can only (and do) consider the Application as an application (under Condition 30(7)) for consent to further extend the Condition 30(6)(b) long stop period (for the making of a Relevant Connection Offer) out to 1 March 2026, from 11 July 2024. There is no prejudice to the Connection Applicant in proceeding on this basis.

We note, also, that whilst the Application was submitted to the Authority with the necessary information - as per the Authority's 2017 Electricity Connections Decision⁷ (the **Decision Paper Guidance**) – it was not received in line with the expectations set out in the Decision Paper Guidance.

The Decision Paper Guidance states that the Authority “*would expect to receive a request from the licensee at least two weeks before the end of the three month connection application period.*” The Authority considers that the connection application period (in this case) expired on 11 July 2024, and therefore the submission date (of the Application) of 12 February 2026 does not fulfil the stated expectations. The Application offers no explanation for the departure from the expectations set out in the Guidance.

2. Consultation associated with the Application

Condition 30(7)(a) of the Licence provides that NIE Networks must consult with the Connection Applicant when making an application (for extension) under Condition 30(7).

The Application sets out such consultation with the Connection Applicant, via email of 15 October 2025 (we note that this consults upon an extension to 17 December 2025).

NIE Networks then emailed the applicant on 21 January 2026 stating, “*I have your job progressing and your quote is due 1st March 2026.*”

The Connection Applicant replied to the initial email on 6 January 2026 stating, “*can you go ahead and quote this as we plan to proceed.*” Then the Connection Applicant sent another reply on 21 January 2026, thanking NIE

⁷ Electricity Connections Decision FINAL.pdf.

This decision will be published and placed on the Register in the normal way.

Please do return to us should you require any clarification.

Yours sincerely,



Jillian Ferris

Head of Networks

Duly authorised by the Authority