

Claire Whiteside
Northern Ireland Electricity Networks Ltd
120 Malone Road
Belfast
BT9 5HT

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

Date: 10 March 2026

Our Ref: NET/E/JF/1439

Dear Claire,

Application for consent to a longer period for the issuance of a Connection Offer at 410m South East of 14 Bearney Road Strabane, NIE Networks Reference: 25/10053.

Thank you for your letter received 5 March 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 **410m South East of 14 Bearney Road Strabane**. The extended period now applied for expires on **10 November 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 1 December 2025, for a Wind Generator (■■■■), meaning the existing Condition 30 (6) period expired on 1 March 2026.

The Application (made in the Letter) is for consent – under Condition 30(7) - for a longer substituted Condition 30 (6)(b) period out to 10 November 2026.

NIE Networks outlines in the application that small scale applications

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.

associated with Strabane main have progressed and the connection application is second in the circuit. NIE Networks says the Connections Offer for the first applicant in the queue will be issued on 12 May 2026.

NIE Networks comments that, with multiple jobs looking to link into Strabane main on the same circuit, further time is required to determine final capacity and reinforcements required. NIE Networks will be able to determine the required reinforcement by 10 August 2026, then will progress this application. NIE Networks then requires a further three months to complete a full HV and LV network study, and issue required paperwork, relating to the Connection Offer for this Connection Applicant.

Therefore, NIE Networks states it requires extension of the Condition 30 timeline to 10 November 2026.

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

- 1. As there are multiple jobs into Strabane Main all on the same circuit, NIE Networks require further time to determine final capacity and what reinforcement is required.*
- 2. NIE Networks will be able to determine required reinforcement and remaining capacity on 10th August 2026 and then will be able to progress this application.*
- 3. NIE Networks will require a further 3 months to determine this as the application will require a full HV and LV network study and time to issue required paperwork.*

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

We note, also, that whilst the Application was submitted to the Authority with the necessary information - as per the Authority's 2017 Electricity Connections Decision⁶ (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

⁶ Electricity Connections Decision FINAL.pdf.

that the connection application period (in this case) expired on 1 March 2026, and therefore the submission date (of the Application) of 5 March 2026 does not fulfil the stated expectations.

NIE Networks attempts to explain this delay after a follow up from the Authority on 9 March 2026 via email, stating that the customers first and second in the queue wanted to discuss potentially joining together as a project. NIE Networks noted in this correspondence “*we have heard no more progression on this so thought was best to apply for the extension.*”

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 3 March 2026. We note that this consultation was also sent past the licence standard date of 1 March 2026.

The Connection Applicant has not provided a response at the time of the Letter.

3. The Authority’s decision

In making our decision on the Application we have regard to:

- (a) our published Decision Paper Guidance⁷
- (b) our principal objective (and related statutory objectives) under Article 12 of the Energy (NI) Order 2003
- (c) the contents of the Application
- (d) the consultation with the Connection Applicant

Having considered the matter fully, the Authority hereby confirms that it provides the consent sought in the Application. It follows that the period under Condition 30(6)(b) of the Licence (in respect of the application for connection made by the Connection Applicant for the Wind Generator (■))

⁷ [Electricity Connections Review Decision Paper | Utility Regulator \(uregni.gov.uk\)](https://www.uregni.gov.uk/electricity-connections-review-decision-paper)

at **Lands 410m South East of 14 Bearney Road Strabane** is now extended until **10 November 2026**. We consider the Application justified for the reasons set out in the Letter.

We would also take this opportunity to confirm that the (extended consented to) period ending 10 November 2026 is a “long stop” date.

The obligation under Condition 30 of the Licence is (now), subject to applicable exceptions,⁸ to make a Relevant Connection Offer to the Connection Applicant for the Wind Generator (■) at **Lands 410m South East of 14 Bearney Road Strabane**, “as soon as practicable” and “in any event no later than” 10 November 2026. The Licence obligation is not (now) simply to offer connection terms by 10 November 2026.

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

⁸ Consonant with NIE Networks' licence obligations and its statutory duties set out in Articles 12 and 19 of the Electricity Order.