

Electricity
Distribution

Working with National Grid Electricity Distribution

Guidance for Independent Connection Providers on EHV Connections

NGED is committed to working constructively with ICPs to support competition in connections, customer choice and the successful delivery of connection projects.

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nationalgrid

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This document should be read alongside the relevant policies, the Framework Network Access and Adoption Agreements (FNA&AAs), the scheme-specific Site Specific Agreement (SSA), NGED technical standards and applicable industry requirements.



1. About This Document

This document sets out the obligations and expectations that apply to Independent Connection Providers (ICPs) delivering Extra High Voltage (EHV) connection projects on the National Grid Electricity Distribution (NGED) network, where NGED will adopt the completed assets.

It does not introduce any new policies, procedures or technical requirements. The established connections process remains unchanged. This document is a practical reference for ICPs and customers, bringing together existing requirements in one place to support consistent, high-quality and safe project delivery.

It covers Stages 3 to 5 of the connection process: pre-construction and design submission, construction, and energisation. Stages 1 and 2 cover offer acceptance and initial planning, and are addressed in the connection documentation issued directly to the customer.

This document should be read alongside:

- the relevant NGED policies and Standard Techniques, including NC2F/6 and NC2M/5
- the Framework Network Access and Adoption Agreements (FNA&AAs)
- the scheme-specific Site-Specific Agreement (SSA)
- NGED technical standards
- applicable industry requirements, including the Competition in Connections (CiC) Code of Practice.

All NGED policy documents are available via the Technical Information Document Library.

2. The Role of ICPs on Our Network

An Independent Connection Provider is a company that can design, construct, or both design and construct new electricity network connections. By delivering the contestable elements of EHV connection projects, ICPs give customers choice and additional delivery capability alongside NGED.

When a customer chooses to appoint an ICP, the ICP takes on responsibility for delivering the contestable works.

This is a collaborative process where timely delivery relies upon early communication between ICP and the Customer's named NGED contact. Please do check assumptions, raise queries or anticipated difficulties at the earliest opportunity to enable us to help where needed.

NGED retains responsibility for non-contestable works and for the inspection, approval and adoption of assets built by the ICP.

This document covers connections where the customer has chosen DNO adoption.

IDNO adoption arrangements are not covered here.



ICPs are encouraged to raise concerns or difficulties with their NGED project contact as early as possible.

3. Agreements and Accreditation

There are three mandatory requirements that must be met before an ICP can work on our network. All three must be in place at the relevant point in the project. The table below sets out what each one is, what it covers and when it is required.

Agreement or Accreditation	What it covers	Scope	Required before
National Electricity Registration Scheme (NERS)	Verifies the ICP's competence to deliver specific types of connection work. Administered by LRQA.	NERS Accreditation for the relevant scope of works (design and/or the specific construction elements required for the new connections).	Offering connection services to any customer or working on any LDNO[CE1.1] network.
Framework Network Access and Adoption Agreement (FNA&AA)	The agreement between NGED and the ICP setting out the obligations the ICP will meet when working on our network.	One agreement per ICP, covering all schemes within NGED's licence area.	Start of design or construction works on NGED network.
Site Specific Agreement (SSA)	Sets out the specific works the ICP will carry out as part of a particular connection. Issued per scheme as an appendix to the FNA&AA.	One SSA per project.	Commencing any construction activity on site.

These three instruments work together with two key controls NGED applies throughout the process:

- **Design approval:**
NGED reviews and approves the ICP's proposed design before construction begins, to confirm it meets our standards.
- **Inspection of works:**
NGED inspects works on site to confirm they are consistent with the approved design and the NGED policies and standards, before agreeing to energise and adopt.

4. Our Shared Principles

While our respective roles differ, NGED and ICPs share the same goal: to deliver safe, high-quality connections for customers in a timely manner. The six principles below set the foundation for how we work together.

Safety first

No project outcome is more important than the safety of customers, contractors, ICP personnel and the public.

Safety obligations are not negotiable and apply at every stage of a project.

Right first time

Designs, submissions and construction activities should be complete, accurate and compliant at the first attempt.

Incomplete or non-compliant submissions add time and cost for all parties.

Early engagement

Risks, issues and programme concerns should be raised as soon as they are identified, not when they have already caused delay.

Early communication gives all parties the best chance of resolving problems before they affect the project.

Transparency

Programme dates, dependencies and responsibilities should be clearly understood by all parties at all times.

Where plans change, all affected parties should be informed without delay.

Ownership

Each party should actively manage the activities within their own control.

Do not assume that another party will identify or resolve issues that fall within your scope.

Policy compliance

Design and construction of electrical connections must comply with NGED policies at all times.

No deviation from policy is acceptable unless agreed in advance by all parties.



5. How the Connection Process Works

EHV ICP connections follow a five-stage process. The table below provides a brief description of each stage and confirms which party holds obligations at each point.

Stage	Description	ICP involved?
Stage 1: Offer Acceptance	The customer accepts NGED's connection offer (Option 2 / Section 15 offer). The contract between the customer and NGED is established. NGED begins internal scheme preparation.	No. The ICP is not usually appointed at this stage.
Stage 2: Planning	The customer progresses milestones, surveys are completed, and NGED carries out internal planning and coordination.	No. The ICP has no formal obligations at this stage, though appointment can occur at any time.
Stage 3: Pre- Construction and Design Submission	The ICP is appointed. An initial design meeting takes place between the ICP and NGED. The Customer can be part of this and any meetings during the project if they wish to. The ICP prepares and submits designs for NGED review and approval. Preparation for construction begins, including SSA execution and procurement of plant and materials.	Yes. ICP obligations begin at this stage.
Stage 4: Construction	The ICP and customer carry out works on site. NGED completes non-contestable works in coordination with the ICP's programme. NGED carries out inspections throughout.	Yes. ICP and Customer obligations are active throughout. ICP is acting on behalf of the Customer and is the customer's contractor.
Stage 5: Energisation	The ICP provides all required documentation. The pre-booked outage takes place. NGED energises the connection and adopts the assets built by the ICP.	Yes. ICP must ensure documentation is complete and contestable works are finished before the outage.

ICPs are usually appointed by Customers during Stage 3, though this can happen earlier.

Customers remain ultimately liable for the acts, omissions and delays of their ICPs during and after completion of the work. Customers are advised to remain informed of their ICP's progress on site.

The ICP must be appointed and confirmed to NGED before any design submission is made.

The appointed ICP is the Customer's contractor and therefore it is for the Customer to maintain a client responsibility. ICPs are not appointed by NGED and it is therefore not for NGED to manage ICPs. The Customer is ultimately responsible for the appointed ICP and we strongly recommend that the Customer stays informed on the ICP's progress on the contestable works.



6. Stage 3: Pre-Construction and Design Submission

At this stage, the ICP is appointed by the customer, an initial design meeting takes place to align project understanding, and design submissions are prepared and submitted to NGED for review and approval. Preparation for construction also begins, including execution of the SSA and procurement of plant and materials.

6.1 Pre-Construction Obligations

Obligation	Detail	Policy or Reference	What happens if this is not met
Hold current NERS accreditation	The ICP must hold valid NERS accreditation for all relevant elements of works to be carried out for the new connection. This covers design, construction, or both, depending on the scope of the ICP's appointment. Accreditation is administered by LRQA.	NERS / LRQA	Only NERS-accredited ICPs may design and/or construct contestable works. Works cannot proceed without this.
Have a signed FNA&AA in place	A Framework Network Access and Adoption Agreement must be signed with NGED before commencing any contestable works. Contact the Connections Policy team if this is not yet in place.	FNA&AA	No design or construction work may begin. This is a condition that must be met before any works on our network.
Provide correct contact details to NGED	All relevant contact details must be provided to NGED to ensure that points of contact are established for each part of the contestable works. Details must be kept current throughout the project.	FNA&AA	NGED cannot progress scheme-specific matters. Works will not proceed until contact details are confirmed.
Sign a Site Specific Agreement (SSA) before construction begins	An SSA must be signed for each scheme before any construction activity commences. The SSA is issued per scheme as an appendix to the FNA&AA.	FNA&AA / SSA	No construction activity may commence until the SSA is signed.

6.2 Design Submission Obligations

Obligation	Detail	Policy or Reference	What happens if this is not met
Follow policy NC2F/6 and all other relevant policies	All design submissions must follow the requirements of NC2F/6 and any other relevant policies throughout the design submission process. NGED's approved templates must be used throughout.	NC2F/6	Failure to follow the design submission process will cause delays to construction.
Use NGED's approved templates	Design submissions must use NGED's approved templates at all times. Templates are available on the Technical Information Document Library.	NC2F/6	Submissions not using approved templates will be automatically rejected.
Review and respond to NGED design feedback	All comments raised by NGED in a design submission response must be fully addressed before resubmission. Non-compliance must be resolved, not deferred.	NC2F/6	Failure to address feedback adds unnecessary iterations and causes delays to construction. Repeat failures will be logged on the ICP Issue Register.



7. Stage 4: Construction

At this stage, the ICP and customer carry out works on site. NGED completes non-contestable works in coordination with the ICP's programme of works. The ICP programme of works must be reviewed and agreed by NGED as per Milestone 6 (M6). NGED carries out formal inspections of ICP works throughout construction.

Obligation	Detail	Policy or Reference	What happens if this is not met
Provide a full programme of works at least 5 working days before works commence	A full programme of works must be provided to NGED a minimum of 5 working days before any works commence on site.	FNA&AA 13.3 and 13.4	NGED will not be able to arrange the relevant inspections in time, and will ask for openings/uncovering of works at a later stage. This can have significant financial implications and cause delays.
Provide programme updates for any project variations, with a minimum of 5 working days' notice	Programme variations must be provided in a timely manner for any project changes, with a minimum of 5 working days' notice, to avoid delays to the project. Any programme variations must be provided in accordance with the FNA&AA, otherwise they may be rejected.	FNA&AA 13.3 and 13.4	Without an accurate, current programme NGED cannot coordinate non-contestable works or schedule inspections. Delays caused by lack of programme visibility are the ICP's responsibility and the Customer's liability.
Carry out all contestable works to approved NGED standards and manage CDM on site	All contestable works must be carried out in accordance with approved NGED standards and all other relevant regulations, including CDM and HSE requirements. NGED will not enforce CDM obligations on behalf of the ICP, and will not inspect sites where the relevant controls and management systems are not in place.	CDM Regulations 2015 / NGED Engineering Policies	NGED will not inspect sites where CDM controls are not in place. NGED staff may leave site where these obligations are not being met.
Be available for inspections and address any inspection failures	The ICP must be prepared for inspections to be carried out by NGED at any point during construction. In the event of inspection failures, the ICP must be prepared to make any and all alterations required under policy NC2M/5.	NC2M/5	Failed inspections will be recorded. Works cannot progress past the relevant stage until inspections are passed. Repeat failures may be escalated.

8. Stage 5: Energisation

At this stage, the pre-booked outage takes place, NGED energises the connection and adopts the assets built by the ICP. All required documentation must be received and verified by NGED before the outage will proceed. Customers must also ensure G99 documentation is submitted and the Connection Agreement is signed prior to energisation.

Obligation	Detail	Policy or Reference	What happens if this is not met
Provide all required documentation for energisation	A full suite of as-built drawings, Inspection and Test Plans (ITPs) and a commissioning plan must be provided to NGED. All other documentation required under NC2M/5 and any other relevant policies must also be submitted. This list is not exhaustive — do not assume that as-built drawings, ITPs and a commissioning plan are sufficient in all cases.	NC2M/5 and all applicable policies	Energisation will not proceed until all required documentation has been received and verified by NGED. See hard stop below.
Ensure contestable works are completed on time	All contestable works must be completed in line with the agreed programme so that the pre-booked outage can proceed as planned.	FNA&AA	Where contestable works are not complete, the outage may need to be rescheduled. Rescheduling costs and programme delays are the responsibility of the party that caused them.
Support project closure after energisation where required	Where post-energisation activities remain under ICP involvement, the ICP must maintain effective communication with NGED and fully support the completion of all job closure activities.	FNA&AA	Outstanding closure activities will be tracked and followed up by NGED's project team.

9. Standards and Compliance



ICPs are encouraged to raise concerns or difficulties with their NGED project contact as early as possible.

Where NGED identifies that an ICP has not met the required standards, or where the ICP is unable to demonstrate compliance with applicable requirements, we will engage with the ICP to understand the circumstances and agree an appropriate way forward.

In most cases, matters can be resolved through early discussion at a local level.

We would always rather address an issue collaboratively before it affects the project than deal with consequences after the fact.

ICPs are encouraged to raise concerns or difficulties with their NGED project contact as early as possible.

When considering how to respond to a compliance issue, NGED will take account of:

Nature, severity and frequency

Whether the issue is isolated or part of a pattern, and the seriousness of the concern.

Actions taken by the ICP

Whether the ICP has acknowledged the issue and taken steps to address it.

Potential impact

The effect on safety, network integrity, customer outcomes and other stakeholders.

Contractual and accreditation obligations

The ICP's obligations under the FNA&AA and the terms of their NERS accreditation.

Where concerns remain unresolved, or where there is a material risk to safety, network integrity or customer outcomes, NGED may escalate the matter through the appropriate governance channels.

Connections Policy may initiate formal engagement where there are ongoing concerns about standards, performance or conduct.

Where appropriate, matters may also be referred to the relevant accreditation or assurance body, including LRQA, for independent review.

Responsibility for delivering the scheme in accordance with the required standards remains with the ICP at all times. NGED will provide reasonable support and guidance, but that does not transfer or reduce the ICP's obligations.



10. Our Commitment

NGED is committed to working constructively with ICPs to support competition in connections, customer choice and the successful delivery of connection projects.

We will provide clear guidance, timely design feedback, scheduled inspections and transparent communication throughout the project. Where issues arise, our preference will always be to resolve them collaboratively. We want projects to progress, and we will help where we can.

While we will provide support and reasonable assistance, the responsibility for delivering the scheme to the required standards rests with the ICP. By working together and maintaining high standards of safety, quality and compliance, we can deliver good outcomes for customers and maintain confidence in the connections process.

11. Who to Contact

Use the details below to identify the right contact for your query.



New connection enquiries

Connections Application Team:
nged.newsupplies@nationalgrid.co.uk



Schemes in delivery or under active development

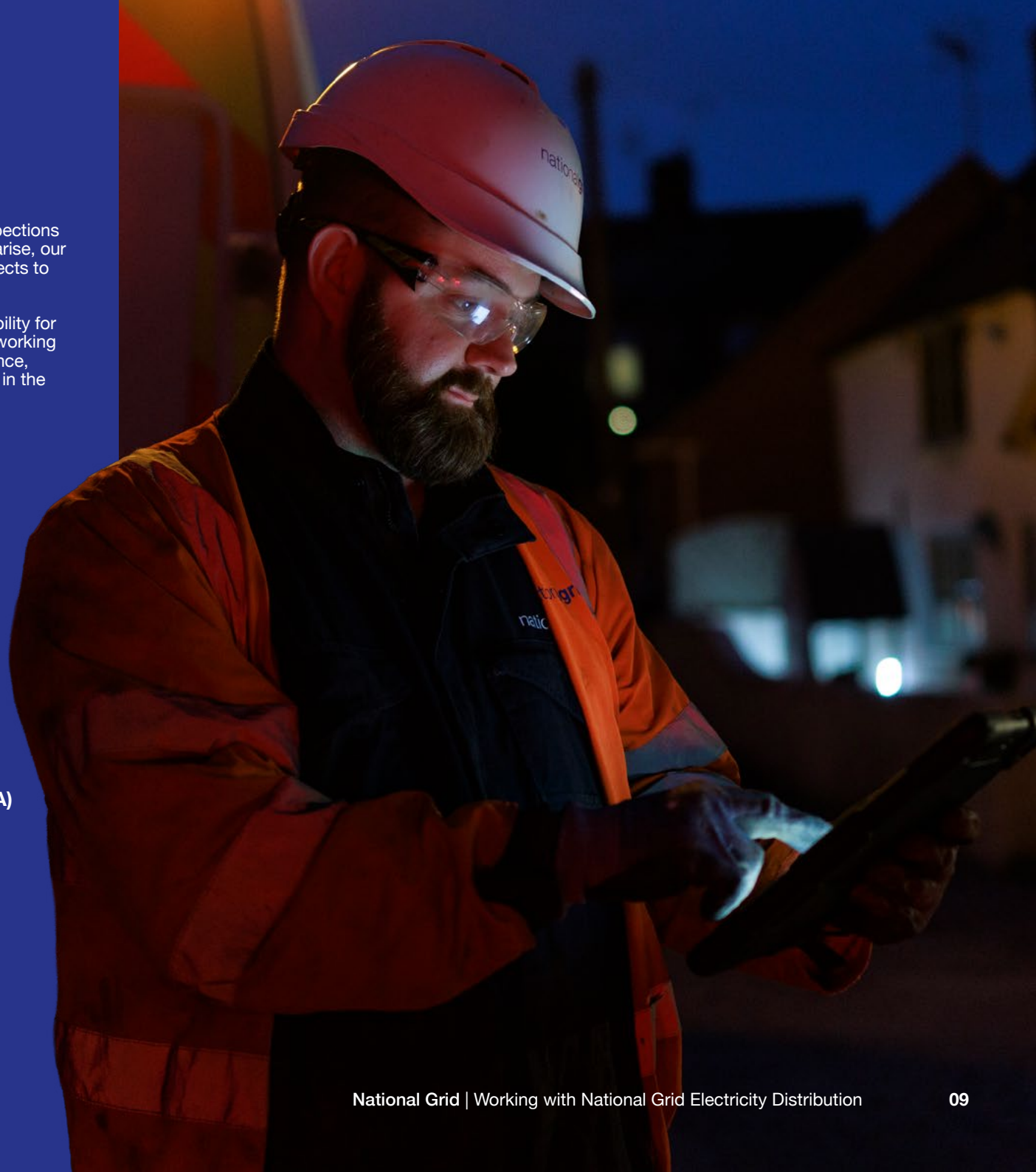
Contact your relevant PND team or Major Projects:
nged.pndeastmidlands@nationalgrid.co.uk
nged.pndwmids@nationalgrid.co.uk
nged.pndswales@nationalgrid.co.uk
nged.pndswest@nationalgrid.co.uk



Connections policy queries (e.g. NC2F, FNA&AA, SSA)

nged.connectionspolicy@nationalgrid.co.uk

All NGED policies referenced in this document are available via the Technical Information Document Library.



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