



DIRECTION BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR ENERGY SECURITY AND NET ZERO ("THE SECRETARY OF STATE") UNDER SECTION 35 OF THE PLANNING ACT 2008 RELATING TO THE MARRAM ENERGY STORAGE AND DECARBONISATION HUB ("MESH") PROJECT

1. By a letter to the Secretary of State received on 14 August 2025, to which was attached a "Written Request for a Section 35 Direction under the Planning Act 2008" ("the Request"), EnergyPathways PLC ("the Applicant") formally requested that the Secretary of State exercise the power, vested in him under section 35(1) of the Planning Act 2008, to direct that certain elements of the MESH Project (which is described in the Request) be treated as development for which development consent under the Planning Act 2008 is required.
2. The Secretary of State notes that the Request of 14 August 2025, supplemented by a further letter from the Applicant of 31 August 2025, relates to the following elements of the MESH project, for the purposes of this direction:
 - a multi-day duration Long Duration Energy Storage (LDES) and low-carbon flexible power generation facility including: (i) an offshore unmanned platform containing 200 MW air compression facilities, heat exchange and air expansion equipment, and a 350 MW low-carbon flexible power generation facility using hybrid hydrogen and gas turbines and power systems; (ii) offshore subsea subterranean salt caverns for compressed air storage and thermal energy storage; (iii) an unmanned offshore mono-pile platform to house dry wellheads for the salt caverns; and (iv) offshore and onshore control rooms for SMART-grid Artificial Intelligence (AI) integrated energy management systems;
 - an onshore facility for producing low-carbon hydrogen by methane pyrolysis, with a production capacity of up to 90 MW or 20,000 tpa, including a fluidised bed reactor system for producing high purity synthetic graphite with a production capacity of up to 60,000 tpa, and associated gas purification, waste heat recycling, decarbonised power and energy storage systems;
 - an onshore facility for producing low-carbon ammonia by the Haber-Bosch process, with a capacity of up to 110,000 tpa, including associated facilities for high purity nitrogen separation and production, waste heat recycling, decarbonised power and energy storage systems and ammonia storage and distribution facilities;
 - onshore gas processing facilities, comprising decarbonised electrical compression systems suitable for use in connection with the offshore storage and export of natural gas, low-carbon hydrogen, or blended natural gas and hydrogen; and

- infrastructure to connect one or more of the above elements to (i) each other; (ii) other elements of the wider MESH Project; (iii) the UK's natural gas National Transmission System and National Electricity Transmission System; (iv) other public or private natural gas or electricity network infrastructure; (v) potential offtakers of outputs from the above elements (such as hydrogen, graphite and ammonia) or means of conveying those outputs to such offtakers (including the proposed Project Union hydrogen network); and (vi) suppliers of inputs to them (such as natural gas and electricity), and including electric lines, electricity substations, pipe-lines and other installations used in the conveyance of gases,

3. Noting the above, the Secretary of State is satisfied that—

- the Proposed Development sits within one of qualifying infrastructure fields listed in section 35(2)(a)(i) (energy) and will, when completed, be wholly within England, waters adjacent to England up to the seaward limits of the territorial sea or the Renewable Energy Zone (in relation to which the Scottish Ministers do not have functions);
- the Proposed Development is of national significance;
- the Proposed Development does not fall within the existing definition of a “nationally significant infrastructure project” and therefore it is appropriate to consider use of the power in section 35(1) of the Planning Act 2008; and
- the Applicant's request constitutes a “qualifying request” in accordance with section 35ZA(11) of the Planning Act 2008.

4. Having considered the details of the Applicant's proposals as set out in the Request and the Applicant's letters of 14 and 31 August 2025, the Secretary of State concludes that the Proposed Development is nationally significant, for the reasons set out in the Annex below.

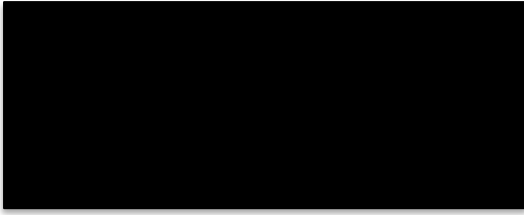
5. The Secretary of State considers that if the details of the Proposed Development change, before submitting any application to the Planning Inspectorate, the Applicant may wish to seek confirmation from the Secretary of State that the development that is the subject of the proposed application is the same as that for which the Direction is hereby given.

6. The Secretary of State has taken the decision within the conditions as required by sections 35A(2) and (5) of the Planning Act 2008, and issues this Direction accordingly under sections 35(1) and 35ZA of the Planning Act 2008.

7. THE SECRETARY OF STATE DIRECTS that the Proposed Development is to be treated as development for which development consent is required.

8. This Direction is given without prejudice to the Secretary of State's consideration of any application for development consent which is made in relation to the proposed Development.

Signed by



David Wagstaff
Deputy Director – Energy Development
For and on behalf of the Secretary of State for Energy Security & Net Zero

25 September 2025

ANNEX

REASONS FOR THE DECISION TO ISSUE THE DIRECTION

The Secretary of State is of the opinion that the Direction should be issued because

- The Proposed Development is of national significance, taking into account (i) the proposed scale of its outputs; (ii) the fact that some of the technologies to be used in it may well be being deployed at commercial scale for the first time in the UK; (iii) its potential to provide "whole system" and cross-vector solutions to the country's pressing needs for decarbonised energy and industrial production.
- The Proposed Development could play an important role in enabling an energy system that meets the UK's commitment to reduce carbon emissions and the Government's objectives to create a secure, reliable and affordable energy supply for consumers.
- Progressing the Proposed Development through the Planning Act 2008 development consent process would provide the certainty of a single, unified consenting process and fixed timescales.