



UK Government

Changes to Energy Infrastructure Planning Application Fees

Consultation

Closing date: 27 January 2026



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General Information

Why We are Consulting

The Department of Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) is consulting on changes to fees for planning delivery services for energy infrastructure developments where DESNZ has primary legislative charging powers. This includes applications for development consent for energy infrastructure developments that are proposed as Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs)¹.

The Government's Clean Power 2030 Action Plan² emphasises the need to accelerate energy infrastructure delivery. To achieve this, the Action Plan outlines government's commitment to expand cost recovery mechanisms across relevant regimes to ensure that all organisations key to consenting have sustainable resourcing models which can match the demand of projects in the system³. Moreover, HM Treasury's guidance in Managing Public Money⁴ encourages departments to implement transparent and proportionate fee regimes that reflect the true cost of service delivery. DESNZ already charges fees for some of its planning functions, but they are not cost reflective and do not cover all functions. Therefore, in this document we are proposing the introduction of a comprehensive cost recovery model for DESNZ's planning delivery services, with a core proposal of a fixed fee model to generate revenue that will be used to resource the teams delivering the functions, to support timely energy infrastructure decisions. This is particularly important as volumes of all types of energy infrastructure applications are growing rapidly, in support of the national need for clean and secure energy supplies at affordable prices.

Other sector-specific consenting regimes exist across government, the proposals set out in this consultation relate solely to where DESNZ is responsible for processing energy infrastructure planning applications.

To support policy design, we are seeking views and supporting evidence from interested stakeholders on the following key areas:

- The proposed fixed fee model and potential alternatives for the future
- The proposed fee review cycles, associated cost adjustments and understanding implementation impacts
- The possibility of additional indicative or targeted timescales for the determination of non-statutory decisions
- The proposed implementation date of the new fee model and development of guidance to support the transition for applicants

¹ [Section 14 of the Planning Act 2008](#)

² [Clean Power 2030 Action Plan - GOV.UK](#)

³ [Clean Power 2030 Action Plan: A new era of clean electricity – main report - GOV.UK](#)

⁴ [Managing public money - GOV.UK](#)

DESNZ will analyse responses received and publish a consultation response in Spring 2026.

Consultation Details

Issued: 16 December 2025

Respond by: 27 January 2026

Enquiries to:

Energy Infrastructure Planning Delivery
Innovation & Performance Team
Department for Energy Security and Net Zero
6th Floor
3-8 Whitehall Place
London
SW1A 2AW

Email: planningdeliveryfees@energysecurity.gov.uk

Consultation reference: Changes to Energy Infrastructure Planning Application Fees

Audiences:

We welcome responses from anyone with an interest in this policy area. We envisage that this consultation will be of particular interest to:

- Current and future energy infrastructure developers
- Distribution Network Operators
- Institutions that finance energy infrastructure developments
- Other stakeholders that have a role or interest in planning processes delivered by DESNZ

Territorial extent:

The territorial extent of these proposals is England and Wales only. The planning delivery function is fully devolved in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

How to Respond

Responses will be most useful if they are framed in direct response to the questions posed, and with supporting evidence wherever possible or requested. When responding, please state whether you are responding as an individual or representing the views of an organisation. It is not necessary to answer every question.

We encourage respondents to make use of the online e-consultation wherever possible when submitting responses as this is the government's preferred method of receiving and analysing responses. However, responses via email and hard copy will also be accepted. Should you wish to submit your main response via the e-consultation platform and provide supporting information via email or hard copy, please be clear that this is part of the same response to this consultation.

Respond online at: <https://energygovuk.citizenspace.com/energy-security/energy-infrastructure-planning-application-fees>

or

Email to: planningdeliveryfees@energysecurity.gov.uk

We will conduct stakeholder engagement while the consultation is open. If you want to be included in these engagement events, then please contact DESNZ as soon as possible via the email above.

Confidentiality and Data Protection

Information you provide in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be disclosed in accordance with UK legislation (the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004).

If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please tell us, but be aware that we cannot guarantee confidentiality in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not be regarded by us as a confidentiality request.

We will process your personal data in accordance with all applicable data protection laws. See our [privacy policy](#).

We will summarise all responses and publish this summary on [GOV.UK](#). The summary will include a list of names or organisations that responded, but not people's personal names, addresses or other contact details.

We may share relevant data within government and other statutory bodies to aid policy development. DESNZ may also reach out to clarify responses.

Quality Assurance

This consultation has been carried out in accordance with the [government's consultation principles](#).

If you have any complaints about the way this consultation has been conducted, please email: bru@energysecurity.gov.uk.

Chapter 1 – Proposed New Fee Model

Background and Current DESNZ Fee Regime

The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) takes decisions on energy infrastructure planning processes under the Planning Act 2008⁵, the Electricity Act 1989⁶, and the Energy Act 2004⁷. Consenting decisions include, but are not limited to, Development Consent Orders (DCOs) for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) and Section 35 Directions in relation to projects of national significance under the Planning Act 2008.

Table 1 below details DESNZ's primary legislative powers for all energy infrastructure planning and consenting activities.

Table 1. DESNZ Legislative Powers & Consenting Activities

DESNZ Consenting Activity	DESNZ Primary Legislative Powers
Development Consent Orders (DCO) application A DCO is a planning consent required for NSIPs in England and Wales. In this document, reference to DCOs refer to the decision-making stage of the planning process which is undertaken by DESNZ i.e. when Examining Authority Reports are submitted.	Section 4 of the Planning Act 2008 Section 114 of the Planning Act 2008
Material Change An alteration to a DCO that goes beyond non-material changes.	Section 4 of the Planning Act 2008 Section 153 and paragraph 3, Schedule 6 to the Planning Act 2008
Non-Material Change A change to a DCO that is deemed non-material.	Section 4 of the Planning Act 2008 Section 153 and paragraph 2, Schedule 6 to the Planning Act 2008
Correction Order (CO) The mechanism by which the Secretary of State can correct minor errors, for example typographical or referencing errors in a granted DCO.	Section 4 of the Planning Act 2008 Section 119 and Paragraph 1, Schedule 4 to the Planning Act 2008

⁵ [Planning Act 2008](#)

⁶ [Electricity Act 1989](#)

⁷ [Energy Act 2004](#)

<p>Directions in relation to projects of national significance</p> <p>A formal Direction issued by the Secretary of State that allows a project, which may not otherwise qualify as a NSIP, to be treated as one.</p>	<p>Section 4 of the Planning Act 2008</p> <p>Section 35 of the Planning Act 2008</p>
<p>Discharging of requirements under a DCO - Provisions of individual DCOs</p> <p>The formal process for a consent holder to obtain approval for how requirements of their DCO will be met or discharged. Examples might include the discharge of financial and financial security arrangements, mitigation plans, and species and habitat monitoring reports.</p>	<p>Section 4 of the Planning Act 2008</p>
<p>Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPO)</p> <p>Authority from the Secretary of State to compulsorily acquire land or rights over land.</p>	<p>Section 188 and Section 60 of the Energy Act 2004</p> <p>Schedule 3 to the Electricity Act 1989 and Part 2 of the Acquisition of Land Act 1981.</p>
<p>Necessary Wayleaves and Tree Lopping Orders</p> <p>Authority to install and/or maintain electric lines and associated infrastructure on private land.</p>	<p>Section 188 of the Energy Act 2004</p> <p>Section 10 and Schedule 4 to the Electricity Act 1989</p>
<p>Section 36C variation to existing consents granted under Section 36</p> <p>A proposed variation to an existing Section 36 consent.</p>	<p>Section 36C(2)(b) of the Electricity Act 1989</p> <p>Section 36C of the Electricity Act 1989</p>
<p>Consent required for overhead lines</p> <p>Consent to install and keep installed electric lines above ground ('overhead lines') (including, where applicable, consideration of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) as part of a consent application).</p>	<p>Paragraph 1(3) of Schedule 8 to the Electricity Act 1989</p> <p>Section 37 of the Electricity Act 1989</p>
<p>Safety Zone</p> <p>The Secretary of State may declare a safety zone in relation to an offshore renewable energy installation. The safety zone restricts access and activities within a defined area surrounding the installation to prevent danger to life, property, or the integrity of the infrastructure.</p>	<p>Section 188, Paragraph 4(1) of Schedule 16 to the Energy Act 2004</p> <p>Section 95(2) of the Energy Act 2004</p>

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) screening and scoping opinions A screening decision is made by the Secretary of State to determine if a proposed development requires an EIA. A scoping opinion defines the scope and level of detail to be included in an EIA report.	Paragraphs 1(3), 2(3), 2(5) and 3(1) of Schedule 8 Electricity Act 1989
Transfer of Benefits Application seeking approval to transfer the benefit of a planning consent.	Section 4 of the Planning Act 2008, Section 153 and paragraphs 2 and 3 Schedule 6 to the Planning Act 2008 Section 36C(2)(b) of the Electricity Act 1989, Section 36C of the Electricity Act 1989

DESNZ's current fee regime has not been updated in a number of years and fees are not collected across all of the planning delivery services that DESNZ provides (Table 1). The current fee regime is therefore outdated and insufficient to properly administer the growing service demand across the energy sector to deliver government's mission to Making Britain a Clean Energy Superpower⁸ supported by our Clean Power 2030 Action Plan⁹ and Net Zero 2050¹⁰ ambitions. Demand is furthered by government's Plan for Change¹¹ commitment to fast-track decisions on at least 150 major infrastructure projects with support of planning reforms that will be introduced in the Planning and Infrastructure Bill¹². This has created significant pressures on departmental budgets and consequent challenges to find resources needed. Therefore, we are proposing the introduction of a comprehensive cost recovery model for DESNZ's planning delivery services, with a core proposal of a fixed fee model.

Proposed Fixed Fee Model

The proposed fixed fee model is designed to provide a predictable and administratively efficient charging structure for energy infrastructure applications for DESNZ planning delivery services. The proposed model has been developed through comprehensive internal reviews and analysis, drawing on best practices from across government, including fee models used by the Offshore Petroleum Regulator for Environment and Decommissioning (OPRED) and the Planning Inspectorate (PINS).

Under the proposed model, each consenting application type is assigned a weighting based on its estimated typical processing time, derived from professional judgement and validated through internal monitoring and formal governance processes. These weightings are used to

⁸ [Make Britain a Clean Energy Superpower - GOV.UK](#)

⁹ [Clean Power 2030 Action Plan - GOV.UK](#)

¹⁰ [The Climate Change Act 2008 \(2050 Target Amendment\) Order 2019](#)

¹¹ [Plan for Change - GOV.UK](#)

¹² [Planning and Infrastructure Bill - Parliamentary Bills - UK Parliament](#)

apportion total service delivery costs across estimated application volumes of a financial year, enabling DESNZ to recover the costs of planning delivery services for a given financial year.

DESNZ proposes to implement this fixed fee model in August 2026. Chapter 4 provides full details of timing implementation and the applications subject to new and updated fees.

The fixed fee model would be subject to an annual review cycle (explained in Chapter 2) under DESNZ governance processes. Fees would be adjusted as necessary to reflect fair and proportionate costs for delivering services. It is acknowledged that a fixed fee based on typical processing times will not reflect the actual processing time of each separate application. However, our view is this provides a figure that is both fair to individual applicants and reflective of DESNZ's total costs. We note that the time, cost, resources, and administrative effort required to charge a bespoke price per application would be prohibitive and disproportionate to any individual saving gained and that any benefit is outweighed by the simplicity and predictability of a fixed fee model. Alternative models are considered later in this document.

- 1. What is your view on DESNZ charging application fees that cover the cost of its planning delivery services in accordance with principles within HMT Managing Public Money guidance?**
 - a. I support this.
 - b. I do not support this.
 - c. Unsure.
- 2. Please provide details explaining your response to Question 1.**
- 3. Should a fee be introduced for all application types?**
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
- 4. If you have responded 'No' to Question 3, which application types should be exempt and why?**
- 5. Should all fees be based on a fixed charge?**
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
- 6. If you have responded 'No' to Question 5, what other charging model should apply and to which services?**

Calculation Methodology and Proposed Approximate Fees

Using a fixed fee model, the current approximate costs and application fees illustrated in this consultation have been calculated in accordance with HMT Managing Public Money¹³ guidance and would cover the cost of resources used in carrying out and supporting service delivery activities for financial year 2026/2027 (FY 26/27). These resources include items such as:

- Pay for dedicated staff and support staff, including line management
- A proportion of shared departmental functions and corporate services, such as Human Resources and Finance
- Internal and external (as required) legal services
- Expert technical services and routine maintenance of a digital portal

Resource categories required to fund DESNZ's planning delivery services are outlined in Table 2, including the current approximate costs to deliver timely decisions for forecasted application volumes in the financial year 26/27. In FY 2026/27, we intend to recover approximately £3.4 million through the introduction and increase of application fees, representing a partial recovery of the full service delivery cost of approximately £5.2 million. This figure reflects a pro-rata share of service delivery costs over an eight-month period, as fee income is not expected until August. The remaining costs will be funded from departmental budgets. These figures are subject to change ahead of the final fee publication in Summer 2026. Accordingly, the proposed fees outlined in the following section are illustrative and based on current planning service cost estimates.

Table 2. Planning Delivery Services Cost Categories with Calculated Approximate Costs for FY 26/27

DESNZ Cost Categories for Planning Delivery Services	Approximate Costs for FY 26/27 (£)	Cost Category Description
Staff Pay	3,109,300	Circa 52 Full-Time Equivalent staff and oversight of 1 Senior Civil Servant (SCS1)
Corporate Costs	921,700	Departmental overhead and non-pay related costs for 52 FTE staff
Legal Services	754,500	Internal and external services on casework

¹³[Managing public money - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/managing-public-money)

Information Technology (IT)	330,200	Annual maintenance for new DESNZ digital portal that will collect fees for applications (the portal design and build costs are not included) the cost for designing and implementing the portal is not included) and usage costs of North Sea Transition Authority portal (FY 2026/2027 only)
Professional Services	38,100	External technical expertise supporting application decisions
Total Approximate Cost	5,153,800	

To calculate the individual fixed fees for each application type, DESNZ plans to use the following inputs:

- **Estimated processing time** for a typical application in each category. These estimates are based on professional judgement and are not expected to change between now and the publication of the final fees.
- **Estimated number of applications** expected per application type in FY 2026/27. This determines the proportion of time the team will spend on each category of application. The forecasted applications numbers may be subject to change ahead of the publication of fees in 2026.

Using these inputs, DESNZ is able to estimate the total number of hours required to process all applications included within the fee model. This approach enables the department to identify the proportion of time allocated to each application type and, consequently, distribute the total cost of service delivery (current estimate £5.2 million) across those categories and then calculate a fixed fee per application.

Table 3. DESNZ Approximate Fixed Fee per Application Type for FY 26/27

As discussed, final fees will be published in Summer 2026. The table below provides an indicative overview of fee levels by application type.

Application Type	Weighting Factor % per Application Type (out of 100%)	Proposed Fee (£) per Application Type (rounded to the nearest £100)	Current Fee Charged (£)
Non - Material Change	1.3	11,300	6,891

Changes to Energy Infrastructure Planning Application Fees

Consent required for overhead lines (Section 37)	2.9	1,300	402.50 / 902.50 ¹⁴
Section 37 + EIA screening	6.2	2,300	60
Section 37 EIA Report	0.2	12,100	375
Necessary Wayleaves and Tree lopping Orders	45.4	4,300	236.50
Safety Zones	0.1	7,100	2000
Development Consent Order	39.0	100,600	0
Material Change	1.3	67,100	0
Compulsory Purchase Order	0.2	4,100	0
Section 35 Directions in relation to projects of national significance	0.6	4,600	0
Discharging of requirements under a DCO	1.6	8,200	0
Section 36C variation to existing consents granted under Section 36	0.5	12,600	0
Section 36C EIA Screening	0.1	3,900	0
Section 36C Scoping Opinion	0.1	7,000	0
Section 36C EIA Report	0.2	12,100	0
Transfer of Benefits	0.1	4,100	0

¹⁴ £402.50 for an overhead line with a nominal capacity not exceeding 132kV. £902.50 for an overhead line with a nominal capacity exceeding 132kV. See paragraph 1(3) of Schedule 8 to the Electricity Act 1989.

We are committed to providing a predictable and an administratively simple evidence-based charging model for both the department and applicants. A fixed fee model would enable DESNZ to start recovering full costs of planning delivery services from 1 August 2026, ensuring that costs are placed on the applicant and meeting the stated government goal of ensuring that planning functions are stable and sustainably resourced.

7. Should all fees be based on a fixed fee model?

a. Yes

b. No

8. Please explain in detail your response to Question 7.

Other Fee Structure Considerations

When developing the government's preferred fee model option, we considered a range of different models. The Department recognises that using the proposed fixed fee model for energy infrastructure planning applications, based on typical processing times, has some limitations reflecting particularly simple, complex or resource-intensive applications which would be charged the same typical processing time fee for their case type.

Increasing data collection provides an opportunity over time to refine and develop our approach. During the proposed annual review cycles, DESNZ will continue to consider if the emerging data might support alternative fee approaches, including but not limited to the following:

- Segmentation of fees based on individual application types and bespoke requirements
- A tiered fee approach with different fees to reflect resource intensity of applications
- A supplementary fee mechanism to a fixed fee, such as an additional hourly fee charged on applications that are significantly above the typical resources required for a type of application

We welcome feedback on these options from respondents.

9. What are your views on possible future segmentation of application fees based on improved data collection?

a. I support this.

b. I do not support this.

10. Please explain your response to Question 9.

11. If supported by data, DESNZ may consider a tiered fee model with varying fees to reflect the resource intensity of applications. What are your views on this?

a. I support this.

b. I do not support this.

12. Please explain your response to Question 11.

13. DESNZ may consider future additional hourly fees for applications that significantly exceed typical processing times.

a. I support this.

b. I do not support this.

14. Please explain your response to Question 13.

15. Are there alternative fee models that you think DESNZ should consider in the future? Please specify.

Chapter 2 – Fee Reviews and Impact Considerations

Proposed Annual Review Cycle and Adjustment of Fees

To ensure fees remain fair, proportionate, and reflective of actual service delivery costs, DESNZ proposes to undertake formal annual reviews of fees. As part of the first review cycle – or earlier if required ahead of the 1 August 2026 implementation – DESNZ will account for any changes arising from reforms outlined in the Planning and Infrastructure Bill¹⁵ once it passes through parliament. The outcome of any future reviews would come into effect in the subsequent financial year. If changes are required ahead of annual review cycles, separate bespoke arrangements will be developed for planning application processes that arise from new legislation and include a charging power.

Annual reviews will assess the accuracy of processing time estimates, forecasted application volumes, and cost allocations across all planning delivery services. These reviews will inform cost forecasts for the next financial year and respond to customer feedback, including on performance and data.

As part of this review DESNZ will also include an inflationary adjustment, ensuring that fees remain aligned with the evolving cost of service provision. DESNZ will apply a standard inflation uplift to core cost categories such as case worker pay, legal services, or IT systems maintenance using the latest data available to DESNZ including the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR)¹⁶ issued forecasts.

The iterative review approach reflects best practice in public sector cost recovery, as outlined in Managing Public Money¹⁷ and supports the government's commitment to building a resilient and well-resourced planning system. The review will be transparent, and the assessment of fees and the outcomes will be published with supporting evidence where adjustments are made. Any approved adjustments to fees will be communicated in detail on GOV.UK ahead of coming into effect the following FY.

If more robust data or other feedback supports changes or a new fee model following an annual review, these will be proposed in future consultations by the department before possible implementation. DESNZ is committed to an effective and efficient planning system and has dedicated resources that will continuously work to identify improvements as data or tools become available, helping to streamline processes and resources applied in energy infrastructure planning decisions.

16. Costs will be reviewed annually. Do you agree with this proposal?

¹⁵ [Planning and Infrastructure Bill - Parliamentary Bills - UK Parliament](#)

¹⁶ [Home - Office for Budget Responsibility](#)

¹⁷ [Managing public money - GOV.UK](#)

a. Yes

b. No

- 17. If you have responded 'No' to Question 16, how often should reviews be undertaken to support a sustainable funding model?**
- 18. What other steps would you like DESNZ to consider beyond publishing fees on GOV.UK to ensure transparency and accountability?**
- 19. What additional data could DESNZ collect and consider to support fee modelling reviews? Please specify.**
- 20. To help understand future application numbers in cost review cycles, do you have suggestions on how stakeholders or potential applicants can provide information on possible future application numbers and service demand?**

Impact Considerations

The purpose of introducing new and updated fees that reflect the cost of energy infrastructure planning delivery services is to ensure long-term sustainability and support efficient planning decisions amid increasing delivery demands. We recognise that changes to fees may have cost implications, and we want to ensure that the government is held to account by showing performance improvements in line with commitments made in 2024 with the department's Clean Power 2030 Action Plan¹⁸. See the following chapter for proposals on service delivery.

Through the following questions, we invite views on how these proposals might affect application behaviour, business types, technology sectors, cost distribution, and organisational planning. Your feedback will help us assess potential impacts and inform the development of a fair, considered, and effective fee structure.

- 21. Will the introduction of fully cost-reflective fees affect your motivation to submit an application?**
 - a. Yes**
 - b. No**
- 22. Please explain your response to Question 21.**
- 23. Would you consider these proposals to disproportionately impact certain types of businesses or technologies?**
 - a. Yes**
 - b. No**

¹⁸ [Clean Power 2030 Action Plan - GOV.UK](#)

- 24. Please explain your response to Question 23.**
- 25. Do you think the introduction of new and increased fees for applicants risks the cost being passed on to domestic consumers?**
- a. Yes**
 - b. No**
- 26. Please explain your response to Question 25. Furthermore, if you responded 'Yes', please detail and quantify the impact to domestic consumers.**
- 27. Do you think the introduction of new and increased fees for applicants risks the cost being passed on to non-domestic consumers?**
- a. Yes**
 - b. No**
- 28. Please explain your response to Question 27. Furthermore, if you responded 'Yes', please detail and quantify the impact to non-domestic consumers.**
- 29. How important is fee predictability for your organisation's planning and budgeting?**
- a. Very important**
 - b. Quite important**
 - c. Not very important**
 - d. Not at all important**
 - e. Unsure**
- 30. Do you have any additional evidence or views on the potential impacts, costs and benefits of the introduction of the fixed fee model?**

Chapter 3 – Service Delivery

Statutory and Non-Statutory Decisions

The Planning Act 2008¹⁹ sets out a clear framework for the consenting process, including statutory timelines for key stages with Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs). Once an energy infrastructure planning application is accepted by the Planning Inspectorate, the examination phase must be completed within six months, followed by a three-month recommendation period and then a final three-month decision window for DCOs by DESNZ Secretary of State aided by the Energy Infrastructure Planning Delivery team. These statutory timings are designed to ensure transparency and predictability in the delivery of major energy infrastructure. In some circumstances, DCO timelines can be extended at the discretion of the Secretary of State.

DESNZ also provides decisions for electricity Distribution Network Operators (DNOs) under the Electricity Act 1989²⁰ (Section 36C and 37). These consents do not have statutory decision timelines with the exception of the Environmental Impact Assessment²¹ stage (where such assessment is required).

Through ongoing reforms, DESNZ is working to streamline processes and ensure that infrastructure delivery meets both statutory obligations and public expectations. As part of reform consideration, DESNZ is considering whether and where the provision of indicative or target timescales for decision-making for applications made under the Electricity Act 1989 would assist applicants in the planning and administration of energy infrastructure projects.

31. Would you support a future introduction of indicative or target timescales for the determination of each non-statutory application type?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Unsure

32. Please provide reasons for your response to Question 31.

33. If you have responded 'Yes' to Question 31, please specify views on appropriate target determination periods and whether these should vary by application type.

DESNZ is considering how to best inform continuous improvement of planning delivery services, including tracking outcomes against statutory and non-statutory deadlines and ensuring value for money for effective use of public funds. Through monitoring of service metrics, we intend to evaluate the resources required to meet increasing energy infrastructure

¹⁹ [Planning Act 2008](#)

²⁰ [Electricity Act 1989](#)

²¹ [The Electricity Works \(Environmental Impact Assessment\) \(England and Wales\) Regulations 2017](#)

application volumes, ensuring that capacity continues to align with demand to support timely decisions. Our data-capturing capability will also be enhanced with the introduction of the new digital case-handling system (portal).

- 34. What additional delivery metrics or service agreements should DESNZ consider in planning delivery services to ensure efficiencies and achieve value for money?**

Innovation Opportunities for Service Efficiencies

DESNZ is committed to driving innovation and improving efficiency across energy infrastructure planning delivery services. DESNZ is currently undertaking a series of digital and process changes to accelerate delivery. These include the launch of an updated digital portal for energy infrastructure planning applications, the digitisation of certifications, and exploring the application of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools to streamline workflows, reduce administrative burdens, and improve data handling. Dedicated resources within planning delivery are also focused on embedding innovative and continuous performance improvements across delivery services. These efforts align with wider planning reforms under the Planning and Infrastructure Bill, which aim to accelerate NSIPs, reduce consenting times, and unlock investment in clean energy technologies.

- 35. What innovative opportunities should DESNZ consider to support efficiencies within planning delivery processes?**

- 36. As an organisation, do you plan to use innovative opportunities (e.g., AI) to prepare planning applications?**

a. Yes

b. No

- 37. Please provide details on your response to Question 36.**

Chapter 4 – Implementation and Support

Timing of New and Updated Fees

Subject to the outcome of this consultation and the implementation of secondary legislation, energy infrastructure planning applications (outlined in Table 3) that are received by DESNZ from 1 August 2026 will be subject to the new fees in the published fee schedule on GOV.UK. This includes DCO applications with Examining Authority Reports submitted to DESNZ on or after 1 August 2026. Also, any re-submissions of applications previously refused.

Applications for an EIA screening opinion for gas pipelines²² will not be subject to a fee as DESNZ does not currently have primary legislative charging powers. In addition, Correction Orders will be exempt from fees under this iteration of the model as they form part of DCO service delivery.

Ahead of implementation, we would like to understand:

- 38. What risks (if any) do you foresee with the proposed implementation timeline of 1 August 2026 for new and updated application fees?**
- 39. What transitional support would be helpful for DESNZ to offer applicants ahead of the introduction of new and updated application fees?**

Additional Guidance for Applicants

The government currently provides a range of guidance to support applicants preparing planning submissions for energy infrastructure projects, including both NSIPs and electricity distribution infrastructure. For NSIPs, the Planning Inspectorate's National Infrastructure Planning Guidance Portal offers detailed advice across all stages of the DCO process, from pre-application to post-decision²³. This is complemented by National Policy Statements (NPS), which set out the policy framework for decision-making on major energy developments²⁴. For infrastructure such as electric lines, additional tailored guidance is available to help applicants navigate environmental, land rights, and technical documentation requirements²⁵.

Upon transitioning into a full cost recovery approach for planning delivery services, we want to identify where additional aspects of guidance would be helpful for DESNZ to consider providing to best support robust applications capable of being assessed efficiently. For example, the

²² 'Environmental Determinations' under the Public Gas Transporter Pipe-line Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 1999.

²³ [National Infrastructure Planning Guidance Portal](#)

²⁴ [National Policy Statements for Energy](#)

²⁵ [Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects Advice on the Preparation and Submission of Application Documents](#)

need for further information requests to applicants is a factor that increases time and resources spent by case workers progressing applications.

40. What additional guidance would be helpful for DESNZ to include?

41. What else can be done to best support applicants in 'getting it right first time'?

General Feedback

DESNZ is committed to delivering a sustainable, cost effective, and efficient energy infrastructure planning delivery service. As part of this consultation, we welcome any additional views or comments that could be helpful for us to consider as we make decisions on the updated fee model for energy infrastructure consenting applications.

42. Do you have any other comments regarding the proposals in this consultation that you would like DESNZ to consider?

Consultation Questions

1. What is your view on DESNZ charging application fees that cover the cost of its planning delivery services in accordance with principles within HMT Managing Public Money guidance?
 - a. I support this.
 - b. I do not support this.
 - c. Unsure.
2. Please provide details explaining your response to Question 1.
3. Should a fee be introduced for all application types?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
4. If you have responded 'No' to Question 3, which application types should be exempt and why?
5. Should all fees be based on a fixed charge?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
6. If you have responded 'No' to Question 5, what other charging model should apply and to which services?
7. Should all fees be based on a fixed fee model?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
8. Please explain in detail your response to Question 7.
9. What are your views on possible future segmentation of application fees based on improved data collection?
 - a. I support this.
 - b. I do not support this.
10. Please explain your response to Question 9.
11. If supported by data, DESNZ may consider a tiered fee model with varying fees to reflect the resource intensity of applications. What are your views on this?

- a. I support this.**
 - b. I do not support this.**
- 12. Please explain your response to Question 11.**
- 13. DESNZ may consider future additional hourly fees for applications that significantly exceed typical processing times.**
 - a. I support this.**
 - b. I do not support this.**
- 14. Please explain your response to Question 13.**
- 15. Are there alternative fee models that DESNZ should consider in the future? Please specify.**
- 16. Costs will be reviewed annually. Do you agree with this proposal?**
 - a. Yes**
 - b. No**
- 17. If you have responded 'No' to Question 16, how often should reviews be undertaken to support a sustainable funding model?**
- 18. What other steps would you like DESNZ to consider beyond publishing fees on GOV.UK to ensure transparency and accountability?**
- 19. What additional data could DESNZ collect and consider to support fee modelling reviews? Please specify.**
- 20. To help understand future application numbers in cost review cycles, do you have suggestions on how stakeholders or potential applicants can provide information on possible future application numbers and service demands?**
- 21. Will the introduction of fully cost-reflective fees affect your motivation to submit an application?**
 - a. Yes**
 - b. No**
- 22. Please explain your response to Question 21.**
- 23. Would you consider these proposals to disproportionately impact certain types of businesses or technologies?**
 - a. Yes**
 - b. No**

- 24. Please explain your response to Question 23.**
- 25. Do you think the introduction of new and increased fees for applicants risks the cost being passed on to domestic consumers?**
- a. Yes**
 - b. No**
- 26. Please explain your response to Question 25. Furthermore, if you responded 'Yes', please detail and quantify the impact to domestic consumers.**
- 27. Do you think the introduction of new and increased fees for applicants risks the cost being passed on to non-domestic consumers?**
- a. Yes**
 - b. No**
- 28. Please explain your response to Question 27. Furthermore, if you responded 'Yes', please detail and quantify the impact to non-domestic consumers.**
- 29. How important is fee predictability for your organisation's planning and budgeting?**
- a. Very important**
 - b. Quite important**
 - c. Not very important**
 - d. Not at all important**
 - e. Unsure**
- 30. Do you have any additional evidence or views on the potential impacts, costs and benefits of the introduction of the fixed fee model?**
- 31. Would you support a future introduction of indicative or target timescales for the determination of each non-statutory application type?**
- a. Yes**
 - b. No**
 - c. Unsure**
- 32. Please provide reasons for your response to Question 31.**
- 33. If you have responded 'Yes' to Question 31, please specify views on appropriate target determination periods and whether these should vary by application type.**

- 34. What additional delivery metrics or service agreements should DESNZ consider in planning delivery services to ensure efficiencies and achieve value for money?**
- 35. What innovative opportunities should DESNZ consider to support efficiencies within planning delivery processes?**
- 36. As an organisation, do you plan to use innovative opportunities (e.g., AI) to prepare planning applications?**
 - a. Yes**
 - b. No**
- 37. Please provide details on your response to Question 36.**
- 38. What risks (if any) do you foresee with the proposed implementation timeline of 1 August 2026 for new and updated application fees?**
- 39. What transitional support would be helpful for DESNZ to offer applicants ahead of the introduction of new and updated application fees?**
- 40. What additional guidance would be helpful for DESNZ to include?**
- 41. What else can be done to best support applicants in 'getting it right first time'?**
- 42. Do you have any other comments regarding the proposals in this consultation that you would like DESNZ to consider?**

Next steps

The consultation closes on 27 January 2026, we will then review the responses received before issuing a consultation response in Spring 2026. We will continue to engage closely with stakeholders post this consultation.

This publication is available from: www.gov.uk/government/consultations/changes-to-energy-infrastructure-planning-application-fees

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