

XLINKS' MOROCCO-UK POWER PROJECT

Grid and Cable Connection Statement

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For Issue



XLINKS MOROCCO – UK POWER PROJECT

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

- 1.1.1 This Grid and Cable Connection Statement (the ‘Statement’) has been prepared for the United Kingdom (UK) elements of Xlinks’ Morocco UK Power Project (the ‘Project’). For ease of reference, the UK elements of the Project are referred to in this Statement as the ‘Proposed Development’
- 1.1.2 Xlinks 1 Limited (the ‘Applicant’) has prepared this Statement as part of an application for development consent for the Proposed Development. This includes the offshore elements within the UK Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and the onshore elements within the administrative area of Torridge District Council (and Devon County Council at the County level).
- 1.1.3 Section 37 of the Planning Act 2008 governs the content of an application for a development consent order, including the requirements for the necessary accompanying documents specified in the Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 (APFP Regulations).
- 1.1.4 The Applicant does not consider this document is necessary under Regulation 6 of the APFP regulations as the Proposed Development is not one of the prescribed types of projects, however the Applicant considers it a helpful document to support the application in accordance with Regulation 5(1)(q) of the APFP Regulations
- 1.1.5 A full description of the Proposed Development is provided in Volume 1, Chapter 3: Project Description (document ref. 6.1).

1.2 Contractual Agreements

- 1.2.1 Xlinks 1 Limited received two grid connection offers (one for each Bipole) from National Grid Electricity System Operator (NGESO)¹ in 2020. These have been subsequently amended, and novated in 2023 to the current Applicant.
- 1.2.2 The Applicant therefore has two Connection Agreements with NG ESO for connection of 3.6 GW into Alverdiscott Substation in two phases of 1.8 GW each:
- Bipole 1 - 1.8GW connection at Alverdiscott Substation signed 28 March 2024 NG ESO reference A/XLINKA/20/1506-EN(2)
 - Bipole 2 – 1.8GW connection at Alverdiscott Substation signed 28 March 2024 NG ESO reference A/XLINKP/20/1505-EN(2)
- 1.2.3 As such, the Applicant confirms that the Project will be directly connected to the National Electricity Transmission System (the ‘NETS’) at Alverdiscott 400 kV Substation.
- 1.2.4 The first connection to Bipole 1 is scheduled for 2023 and the second connection to Bipole 2 is scheduled for 2032.

¹ The Applicant notes that the National Grid Electricity System Operator (NGESO) recently changed names to the National Energy System Operator (NESO). Any reference to NGESO and/or NESO should be taken to refer to the same entity.

2 RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 Responsibilities for designing and building the Grid and Cable Connection

- 2.1.1 The Applicant has Connection Agreements with NG ESO for connection of 3.6 GW into Alverdiscott Substation in two phases of 1.8 GW each.
- 2.1.2 The development required at the existing Alverdiscott Substation site (referred to as the 'Alverdiscott Substation Connection Development'), is envisaged to include development of a new 400 kV substation, and other extension modification works to be confirmed and carried out by National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET). The Applicant anticipates that NGET would utilise land within the existing footprint of the Alverdiscott Substation site to facilitate this connection.
- 2.1.3 The Applicant expects to be responsible for designing and building the electrical connection up to the cable sealing end, the point where the Project's HVAC cables meet the 400 kV switchgear at the new National Grid 400kV Alverdiscott Substation Connection Development.
- 2.1.4 Under the terms of the connection agreements, NGET will be responsible for consenting, designing and building the new substation, which is anticipated to be within the existing 400 kV Alverdiscott Substation site.
- 2.1.5 Following discussions with NGET, the anticipated Alverdiscott Substation Connection Development will form part of a separate Town and Country Planning Act 1990 planning application taken forward by NGET.
- 2.1.6 Further information on the electrical connection is provided in Volume 1, Chapter 3: Project Description (document ref. 6.1) of the Environmental Statement.

2.2 Acquisition of land rights

- 2.2.1 The Applicant is currently negotiating an option agreement for freehold rights over the land on which the Converter stations and associated HVAC electrical connection will be located, up to the boundary of NGET's ownership of the existing substation.
- 2.2.2 As set out in the Statement of Reasons (document ref. 4.1), the Applicant is also seeking compulsory purchase powers through the DCO application to compulsorily acquire land and rights and impose restrictions to allow the Applicant to construct, operate and maintain the connection.
- 2.2.3 These powers are set out in Part 5 of the Draft DCO. These are described in the Book of Reference (document ref. 4.3) and are justified in the Statement of Reasons (document ref.4.1).
- 2.2.4 NGET already own the land on which the Alverdiscott Substation Connection Development is anticipated to be built and no acquisition of land or rights by NGET is anticipated to facilitate the Alverdiscott Substation Connection Development.
- 2.2.5 On this basis, noting that the land agreements for the Converter Site are still currently in negotiation, the Applicant considers that all land and rights would be in place pursuant to its Option Agreement, Land Agreement and/or any powers of

compulsory purchase that it may be granted in the draft DCO (document ref. 3.1) in order to deliver the Proposed Development, including the connection to the NETS.

3 CONSENT FOR THE CONNECTION WORKS

3.1 Proposed Development

- 3.1.1 The connection to the NETS forms part of the Proposed Development for which development consent is being sought via the DCO Application.
- 3.1.2 As such, the Applicant considers that, if the DCO is granted on substantively the same terms as those set out in the draft DCO (document ref. 3.1) then development consent for the Proposed Development, including the HVAC connection works into the existing Alverdiscott Substation Site, will have been secured.

3.2 Alverdiscott Substation Connection Development

- 3.2.1 The consent for the Alverdiscott Substation Connection Development will be sought by NGET following completion of their initial design phase. NGET have advised that they will seek consent for the development through a Town and Country Planning Act 1990 application, to be submitted to Torridge District Council in early 2026 to allow for completion of the new 400kV substation in time for connection by the Applicant.
- 3.2.2 The Applicant notes that the HVAC cable run from the Converter Site into the Alverdiscott Substation Connection Development is included in the Proposed Development.

4 CONCLUSION

Although not specifically required, the Applicant has provided this statement to support the application in accordance with Regulation 5(1)(q) of the APFP Regulations.

The Applicant considers that this statement provides confirmation to the Planning Inspectorate that:

- 4.1.1 The Applicant has secured connection agreements with NGESO for each of the Proposed Development's two Bipoles. Each connection agreement is for 1.8GW export to the national grid at the existing Alverdiscott 400 kV Substation site.
- 4.1.2 The Applicant will have the ability to procure the necessary land and rights in order to construct the HVAC electrical connection between the Project's two converter stations and the National Grid Alverdiscott Substation Connection Development.
- 4.1.3 Planning, and construction, of the new substation located at the existing Alverdiscott 400 kV substation is to be taken forward by National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET).