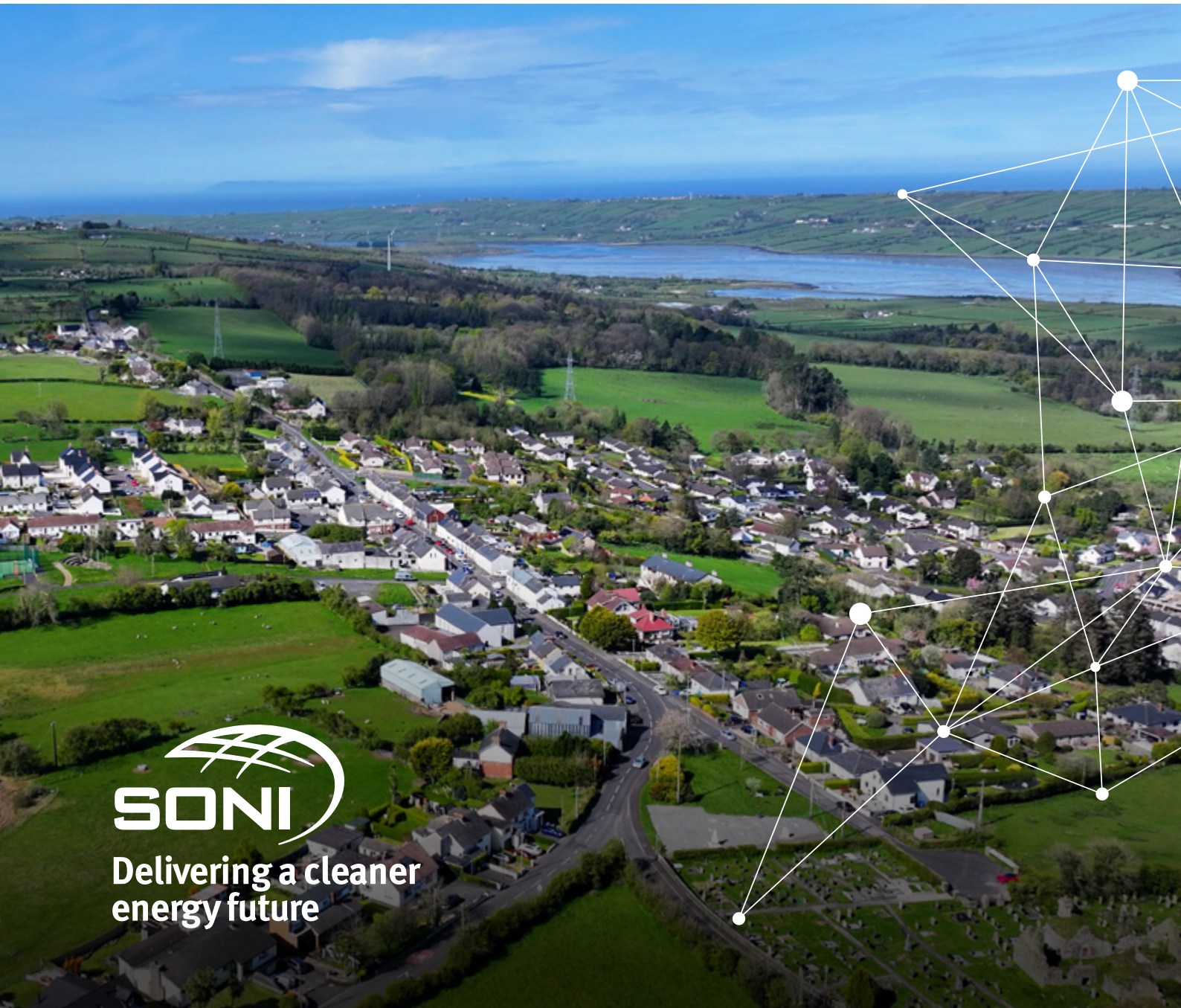


Strategy 2025-2031



Delivering a cleaner
energy future

Meeting Northern Ireland's energy needs, today and in the future



Foreword

The publication of the Northern Ireland Energy Strategy and the passage of the Climate Change (Northern Ireland) Act were seminal moments in our net zero journey.

Northern Ireland has made significant progress in recent history, being among the most successful power systems globally in the integration of renewable energy.

Our new collective objective in Northern Ireland to ensure that 80% of all electricity consumed comes from renewable sources by 2030, and our wider 2050 net zero obligations, is hugely challenging in its scale, pace, and complexity whilst also ensuring a just transition.

Our collective success to date in achieving renewables targets has been built on whole system collaboration between government, industry, regulatory partners, elected representatives and wider society both in a Northern Ireland and Single Electricity Market (SEM) context. Ambitious, challenging stretch targets are important to focus minds on further detailed collaboration to succeed in the next phase of our journey to decarbonise our society and economy.

It does, however, offer untold opportunities to transform the energy sector in Northern Ireland to deliver a cleaner, more secure, and affordable energy future for everyone, and the potential to foster sustainable, green economic growth which will create the jobs of the future.

As we reach the middle of the decade, SONI is entering into a new, exciting phase on our journey as Northern Ireland's Transmission System Operator.

We are building new capacity and capability in our organisation to deliver on our mission to be a strong and effective Transmission System Operator working for everyone in Northern Ireland. This new phase marks a pivotal period in our organisation's history and presents significant potential for change and innovation. We are actively looking at a more plan-led approach and how this could help us more effectively deliver against the challenges ahead.

During this period, I believe SONI will be uniquely placed in the Northern Ireland energy sector to work closely with key partners to progress the considerations of what is needed to deliver the ambitious net zero targets and, drive forward a tailored approach to the planning and operation of the energy system. This includes our relationship with EirGrid, our counterpart in Ireland, as System Operators and Market Operators to support the functioning of the All-Island Single Electricity Market.

Our Strategy 2025-2031 sets out how we intend to play our part in a transformative whole energy system, coupled with a whole society effort, to meet Northern Ireland's renewable energy and net zero ambitions and realise the potential of a cleaner, affordable, more secure energy future for everyone.

We know we can't do this by ourselves. With five years until 2030, our new multi-year Strategy is a vital opportunity to engage meaningfully with partners to align on a compelling vision for the future, the strategic investment priorities required to get us there and how we accelerate the delivery of this collective vision together.

This Strategy, developed in collaboration with our key partners and after an extensive programme of engagement, sets out our mission, values and strategic delivery objectives. It provides a strategic framework to drive the development and delivery of our detailed multi-year Business Plan with purpose, ambition and integrity. We sincerely thank everyone who has engaged with

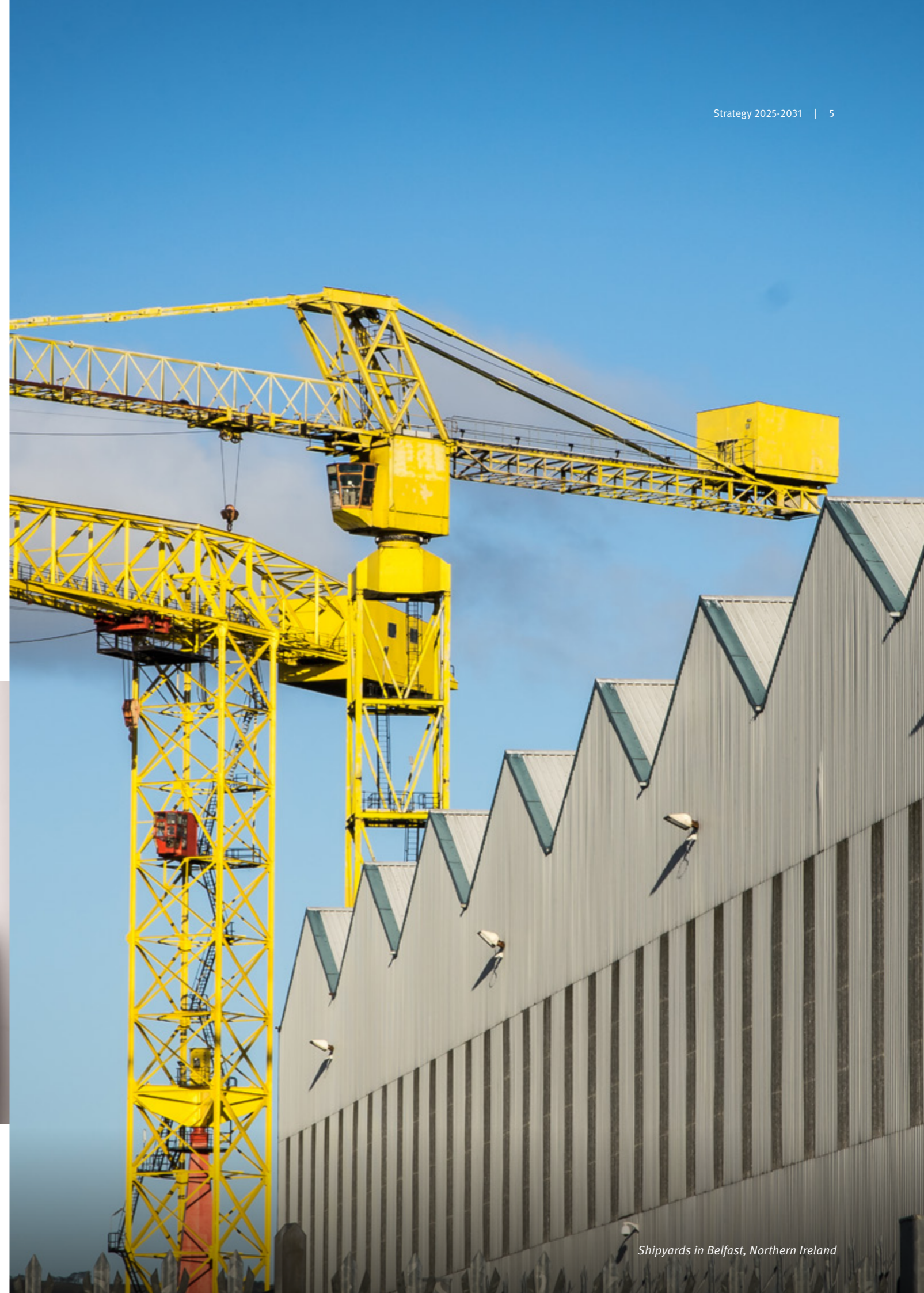
us throughout this process and in particular those who provided responses to our consultation. We have taken on board the feedback received in finalising our strategy.

This is a pivotal moment for SONI and by working together with our key partners across society, industry and government, we can enable a cleaner, affordable and more secure energy future for everyone in Northern Ireland.



Alan Campbell

System Operator for Northern Ireland (SONI)
SONI Ltd.



Our vision for the future

Our Present Role

Our primary role relates to the electricity transmission system and markets. We recognise the importance of enhanced collaboration in order to deliver decarbonisation. Our future work will require much closer working together with NIE Networks in its capacity as Transmission Asset Owner and Distribution System Operator as well as the Gas TSOs to ensure the alignment of investments in both the electricity and gas systems

Our Wider Role

SONI intends to take on a wider role than in the past. Our strategic ambitions are based on a whole system approach with a clear focus on collaborating closely with all stakeholders to ensure the needs of the Northern Ireland consumer are met. We want to enhance our role and move to a plan led approach and act as a trusted adviser using evidence-based methods.

Our future work will require much closer working together with NIE Networks in its capacity as Transmission Asset Owner and Distribution System Operator as well as the Gas TSOs to ensure the alignment of investments in both the electricity and gas systems

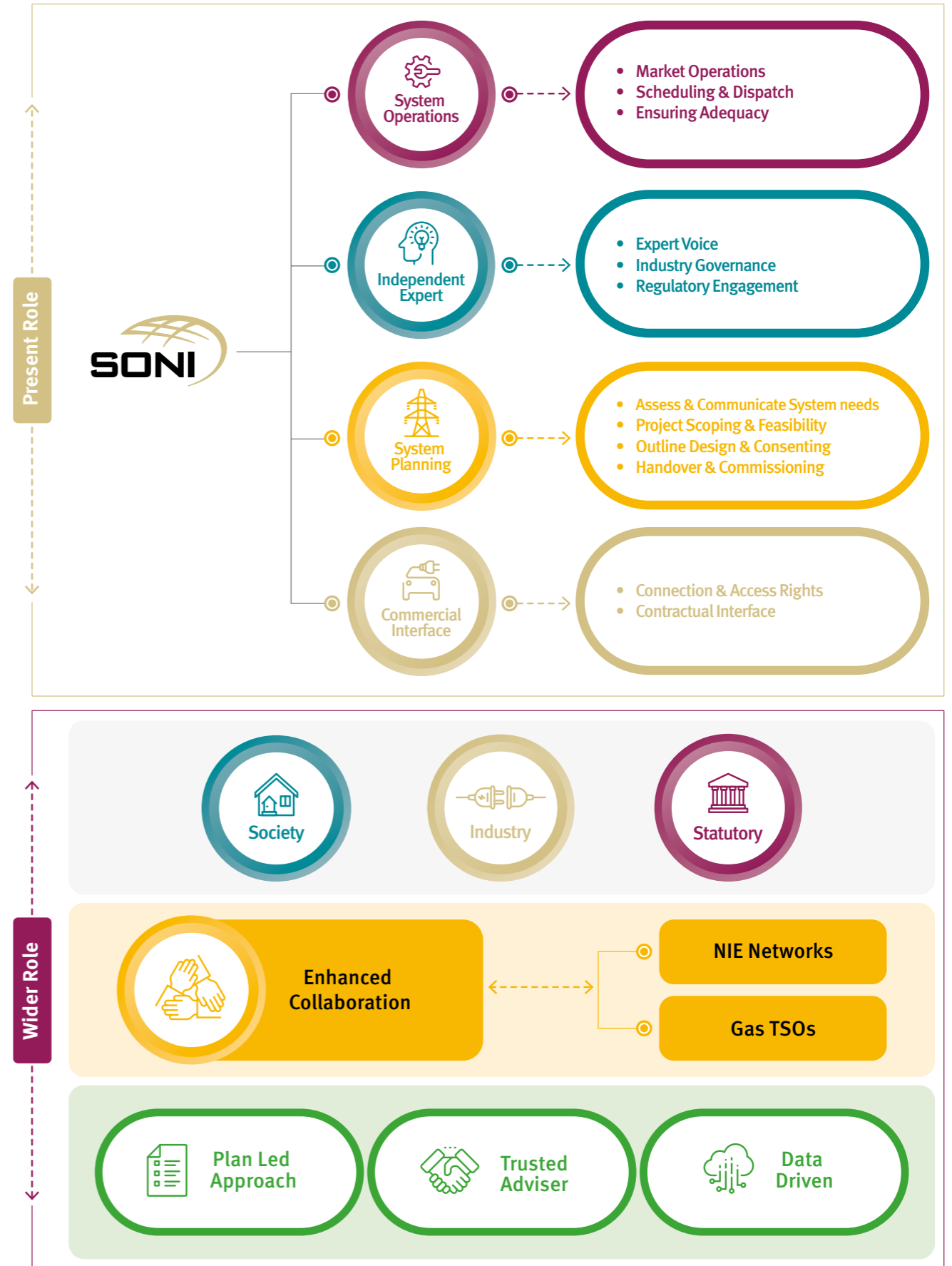


Figure 1 SONI's Present and Wider Roles

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About Us

SONI (System Operator for Northern Ireland) is Northern Ireland’s electricity Transmission System Operator (TSO)



We operate the transmission system to ensure that power can flow safely, securely and reliably from where it is generated to where it is needed in homes, farms, businesses and public services across Northern Ireland.

We do not generate or sell electricity, nor do we own any of the assets associated with Northern Ireland’s electricity grid. In delivering our role, we are licensed and regulated by the Utility Regulator.

We also work closely with EirGrid, our counterpart in Ireland, as System Operators and Market Operators to support the functioning of the All-Island Single Electricity Market, which is overseen by the regulatory authorities in both jurisdictions through the Single Electricity Market Committee.

Our role in operating the electricity grid extends beyond the present and is growing in importance. As the Transmission System Operator, we also have the vital job of planning for Northern Ireland’s energy future.

We advise on the future direction of the power system, plan the changes and investments that are required, in both an operational and physical context and deliver on these plans through key projects and initiatives.

Embedded within each of these interrelated activities is a need to partner with statutory bodies, industry, and society to meet the energy needs of today as well as those in the future. Both NIE Networks and the Gas TSOs are key partners in these activities.

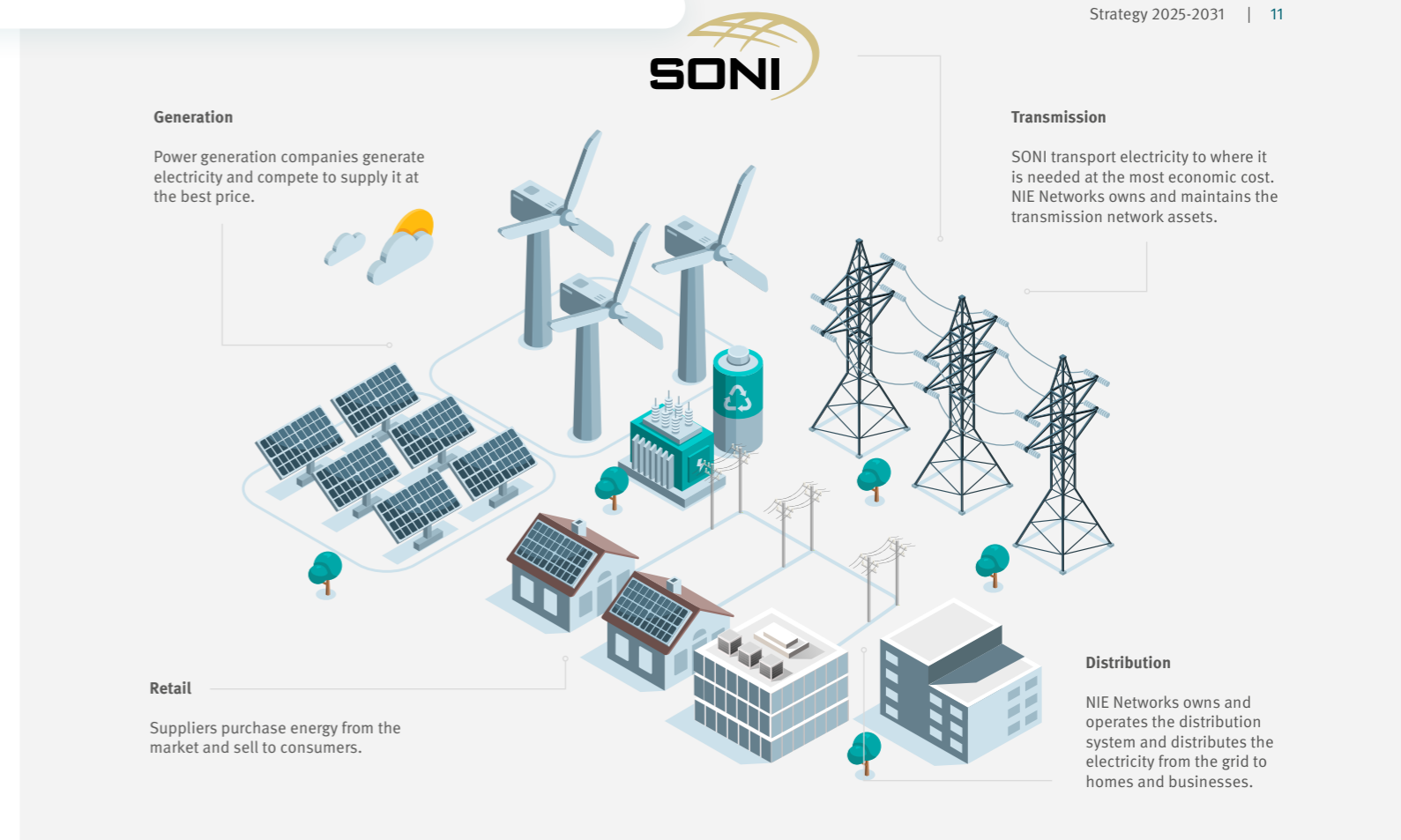


Figure 2: The structure of the electricity system in Northern Ireland

Following the introduction of new obligations in relation to Governance and independence, SONI appointed a new, independent Board, in October 2023, to drive a fresh vision and direction. Our Board has led in the development of a new organisational design to build further expertise and capability to deliver on that vision and direction.

SONI introduced a new executive team and management structure over the summer of 2024. The team will lead on the implementation of the SONI strategy and equip our organisation with the leadership, purpose and accountability to succeed in this next phase of our journey.

The expertise and capability of our people empowers us to develop the balanced solutions required, within the confines of our legal and licence obligations, to successfully decarbonise our society and economy, ensuring the consumer is at the heart of Northern Ireland’s energy transition.

We see our people as one of our key assets and we will continue to grow, develop and invest in our teams to ensure we have the capacity and capabilities to meet the challenges and ambitions set out in the strategy. This will be a key aspect of the SONI multi-year business plan and will be fundamental to the success of SONI in the future.

In summary, our position within the energy system means we have the ambition to be a trusted adviser to government, industry and regulatory partners in the pursuit of our collective net zero ambition. This will be best achieved through enhanced collaboration and engagement. We have set out some of our key strategic activities that support the delivery of the Northern Ireland Energy Strategy in the table below.

Energy Strategy Pillar	Examples of strategic enabling activity
Placing you at the heart of our energy future	<p>We published an enhanced Public Engagement Model and Landowner Charter to ensure local communities and landowners are at the heart of our plans.</p> <p>We have piloted new deliberative community engagement initiatives to enable local communities to co-develop our plans for the grid.</p> <p>We published our first public Stakeholder Engagement Strategy, recognising the need for even greater collaboration going forward.</p>
Grow the green economy	<p>Through projects like “Energising Belfast”, the “Mid Antrim Upgrade” and “Connect West” we are planning the future of the grid to facilitate green economic growth and an increase in demand for clean, green electricity.</p> <p>We continue to work closely with Northern Ireland’s business community to understand their needs as the driver of the green economy.</p>
Do more with less	<p>We continue to develop Northern Ireland’s grid on a “least cost, technically feasible” basis, protecting the investment made by consumers and targeting projects which deliver the most value.</p> <p>We are engaging with the Utility Regulator to move towards a plan-led approach, rather than being reactive, which we consider will deliver more efficient outcomes for consumers and industry.</p>
Replace fossil fuels with renewable energy	<p>We continue to provide timely connection offers across an increasing number of technology types to meet our renewable energy ambitions and we plan the future of the network, working closely with NIE Networks to enable the integration of more renewable energy.</p> <p>We support government in the delivery of key enabling policies, including the Offshore Energy Action Plan, and provide data and insight for key programmes such as the Climate Action Plan and Carbon Budgets.</p> <p>Through initiatives such as Low Carbon Inertia Services, we are developing the tools, through the implementation of our operational roadmap, to reduce our reliance on conventional fossil fuel generation while maintaining a safe, secure and reliable supply of electricity. The SEM was among the first systems in the world to reach 75% System Non-Synchronous Penetration.</p>
Create a flexible, resilient and integrated energy system	<p>In collaboration with EirGrid the Shaping Our Electricity Future Roadmap was specifically designed as a key enabler of the Energy Strategy, setting out everything we need to do to transform the power system to enable Northern Ireland’s renewable energy ambitions. It sets out a roadmap across networks, operations, markets and the engagement needed up to 2030.</p> <p>We published Tomorrow’s Energy Scenarios which set out potential integrated pathways to a net zero power system from 2030 to 2050.</p> <p>We continue to engage with Northern Ireland’s Gas Transmission System Operators to work towards further whole system energy planning.</p>



Belfast City Hall at night

Developing Our Strategy

We understand that meeting Northern Ireland’s collective renewable energy ambitions can only be achieved through significant collaboration and partnership working.

That’s why we undertook an extensive engagement process, led by our Board, to co-develop a vision for the future with our employees and our partners across government, industry and society.

This process of engagement has been integral in enabling us to gain a better understanding of the opportunities, challenges and priorities that are important today and will shape Northern Ireland’s energy sector in the future. We outline the key milestones in this process below.

01

A **comprehensive body of desk-based research** to understand the intricacies, challenges, and opportunities in Northern Ireland’s energy landscape, as well as examining the best practices implemented by other Transmission System Operators (TSOs) across Europe.

02

An extensive body of **quantitative and qualitative independent research directly with Northern Ireland consumers**.

03

Led by the SONI Board, and supported by our Executive Team, we undertook a detailed process of **qualitative and quantitative engagement with our employees** to garner their experience, expertise and insights on our internal challenges and potential areas for growth.

04

We engaged with **partners through an external survey and a series of one-to-one in-depth conversations** to understand our stakeholders’ priorities and challenges and to listen to their ambitions for our future.

05

We facilitated a number of **workshop events with industry and the business community** to understand how we can support their objectives.

07

As a strategic framework, which sets out our purpose and strategic ambitions, this Strategy will **fundamentally inform the development and delivery of the multi-year Business Plan** that forms the basis of our next Price Control.

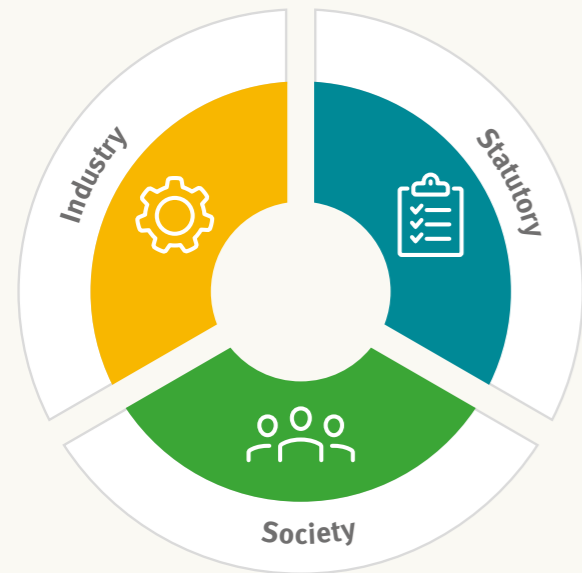
08

The publication of our final Strategy will not mark the end of our engagement, collaboration and partnership. We will **continue to engage extensively throughout** the delivery of our ambitions in the coming years.

06

Led by the SONI Board, we collated this **feedback to develop this Strategy** for consultation. The feedback from this consultation now shapes our final Strategy.

Current Context



Northern Ireland’s energy landscape is undergoing a transformative shift towards sustainability and decarbonisation, targeting 80% electricity from renewable energy sources by 2030 and net-zero emissions across the sector by 2050.

Northern Ireland has made significant progress so far and has been historically world-leading in the integration of renewable energy onto our electricity system. Northern Ireland and Ireland, as a small all island-based power system, was among the first power systems in the world to be able to operate with 75% renewable energy at any one moment in time. Collectively, we achieved our 2020 renewable energy target of 40%, a year early in 2019. This progress was realised through detailed and enduring collaboration across the whole energy system.

Achieving the next phase of collective progress towards 80% by 2030, and net zero by 2050 requires a transformation of the energy system that is unprecedented in its scale, pace and level of complexity.

To meet this increased ambition, we recognise that significant further and accelerated progress is needed through whole system collaboration.

This section summarises some of the key drivers and challenges faced across the sector through the lens of each of our key partner groups.



Society

Electricity demand in Northern Ireland is anticipated to significantly increase by 2050, potentially doubling or even tripling. This is primarily driven by population growth, the demands of our economy and the electrification of transport and heating.



Industry

Industry is increasingly seeking to meet statutory objectives in line with the overall net zero commitments. To do this, businesses are seeking clarity on the future direction of energy provision, energy mix and how this will impact them.

Increasing numbers of businesses and developers want connections to the grid to provide new sources of renewable energy. These connections need to be planned and implemented in a way that encourages innovation and entrepreneurship whilst being managed in a strategic, coordinated, timely and cost- effective way.



Statutory

Government and regulatory bodies have critical roles in setting Northern Ireland’s energy targets and ensuring that entities such as SONI have the resources and guidance to fulfil legislative responsibilities as well as net-zero and decarbonisation objectives.

The pressure to deliver on these commitments is increasing, placing greater emphasis on the need for clear multi-year plans as well as a shift towards policy innovation and agility and accelerated delivery.

Policymakers and regulatory authorities must be supported with robust data-driven evidence and technical expertise to track progress and inform decision-making.

Strategy Overview

Our Strategy 2025-2031 is built around our collective purpose, our ambition for the future, and the enabling actions we need to take to realise this ambition. We have set out a number of key strategic goals and delivery themes that will drive our approach.

We have endeavoured to build a strategic approach that is forward-thinking, collaborative, innovative and aligned to the needs of the energy system, wider society, and our people.

This approach is designed to set us on the best possible course to deliver on our aspiration to be a strong and effective Transmission System Operator enabling a cleaner, affordable, more secure energy future for everyone in Northern Ireland.

We have summarised our Purpose and Strategic Ambitions below and we discuss these in the following sections.



Our Purpose

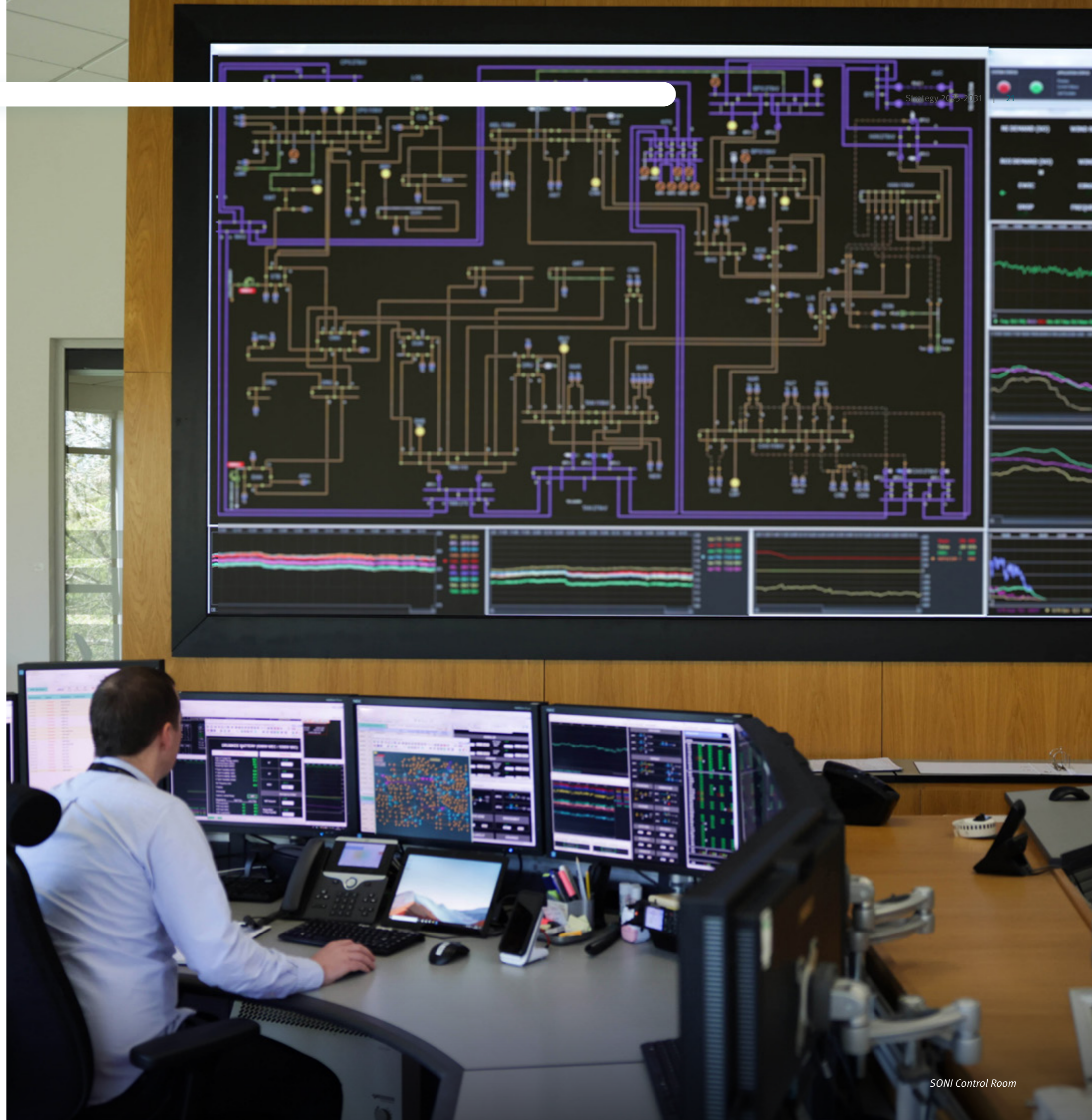
“Meeting Northern Ireland’s energy needs, today and in the future”

Our purpose reflects our dual commitment of delivering on our responsibilities today as well as enabling a cleaner, affordable, more secure energy tomorrow.

We recognise that we cannot do this on our own. Delivering best outcomes for Northern Ireland will require greater consideration of the energy system as a whole and as such our key relationships with NIE Networks and the Gas TSOs² will be crucial. Strong collaboration and coordination will be central to the successful delivery of our strategy.

Our knowledge, experience and expertise and our intention to have wider enhanced collaboration means we can support Northern Ireland’s needs in the present, and our position within the energy system means we can support decision-makers to develop the energy policies for the future.

² There are two Gas TSOs in Northern Ireland, GNI (UK) and Mutual Energy Limited



Our Strategic Ambitions

Our mission is to be a strong and effective Transmission System Operator working for everyone in Northern Ireland.

We want to grow in our role as a trusted adviser to the government and energy sector in Northern Ireland to support the delivery of a cleaner, more secure, affordable energy system.

To achieve this, we have identified strategic goals and delivery themes across each of our four core areas of responsibility. These four core areas span our activities in real-time to the long-term.

More specifically, we: Advise, Plan, Deliver & Operate.

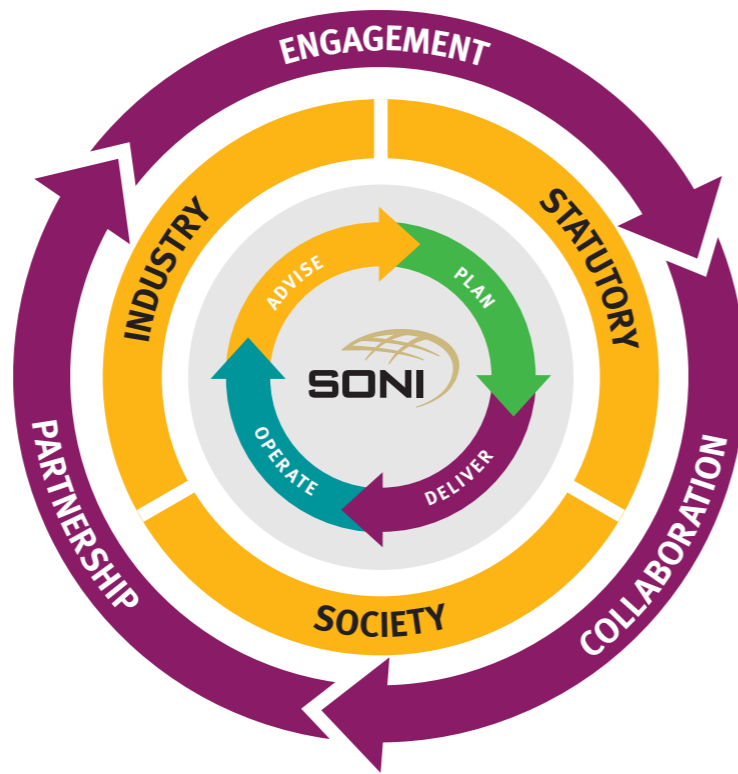


Figure 3: Our Strategic Ambitions




Advise

SONI's advisory role will be pivotal in shaping the energy landscape of Northern Ireland for the future. We want to build on trust with our partners in the guidance we provide.


This requires absolute confidence in our ability to balance the needs and aspirations of all our stakeholders who often have differing, and sometimes competing, priorities. Our role allows us to develop balanced solutions.

We intend to deliver on this objective through robust data-led evidence, underpinned by open and transparent engagement which captures different perspectives and ensures alignment across the electricity and gas systems.


Our three key Strategic Goals are:



Be an independent, trusted adviser on electricity systems and markets.



Develop, use and share data and technical expertise to inform policy, provide evidence-based guidance and challenge the status quo where appropriate.



Advise on the development of new deliverable pathways to achieve future energy goals and targets.

To enable this objective, we have identified the following **Strategic Delivery Themes**:

- 1. Support the delivery of the Energy Strategy** – We will continue to engage with the Department for the Economy (DfE) and other stakeholders to support the delivery of the Annual Energy Strategy Action Plans and the wider Energy Strategy.
- 2. Provide expert independent advice to support the development of key enabling policies** – Utilising our knowledge, experience and expertise in operating and planning the power system, we will provide key contributions in the coming years in areas such as moving to a plan-led approach, the introduction of system flexibility and the development of a strategic spatial plan for the electricity transmission system. We believe that this will act as a catalyst for a multi-party development of a Strategic Spatial Energy Plan for Northern Ireland. We will also support government with the development of key enabling policies in areas such as smart systems and flexibility, interconnection and hydrogen.
- 3. Enhance our data offer** – We will ensure that the information, data and evidence SONI provides continues to be reliable, robust and that the data is more easily accessible.

Plan

We are committed to planning the optimal future design of the electricity network and the all-island electricity markets.

Design must take place collaboratively and be guided by a vision to futureproof the grid and the energy system, underpinned by shared assumptions and outcomes.

Early involvement and integration of our industry, statutory and regulatory partners in the planning process will offer a clear line of sight for the future, guide future investment decisions and accelerate implementation in the delivery phase.

Our three key Strategic Goals are:



Provide leadership in the planning of the electricity system and markets now and in the future.



Build our research and innovation capabilities to support evidence-based decision making.



Streamline decision making and accelerate delivery.

To enable this objective, we have identified the following **Strategic Delivery Themes**:

- 1. Meeting Northern Ireland's future generation needs** – We will further evolve and improve our methodologies to forecast future demand for electricity and the associated generation requirements to plan for Northern Ireland's energy needs. This forecasting is vital for sending signals to the market to ensure it delivers the generation we need. Over the coming years, we will implement and improve the National Resource Adequacy Assessment approach to replace the Generation Capacity Statement based on best practice across Europe. In addition to the above, the need for long duration storage, low carbon inertia and other flexible services will be crucial. We will work closely with partners to support the development of the relevant policies to enable Northern Ireland future needs.
- 2. Transmission Forecasting** – robust, reliable and accessible data on the power system is vital enabling information for industry. Over the coming years, we will continue to provide key information such as the Ten-Year Transmission Forecast Statement to support industry with planning and investment decisions.
- 3. Undertake the Tomorrows Energy Scenarios initiative** – Looking beyond 2030, Tomorrow's Energy Scenarios outlines a range of potential pathways for Northern Ireland's clean energy transition, with specific focus on what this means for the electricity transmission system from 2030 to 2050. We will continue to publish new iterations in the coming years alongside the associated comprehensive System Needs Assessment. Tomorrow's Energy Scenarios is a crucial initiative to support the development of more detailed plans, including the Transmission Development Plan for Northern Ireland.

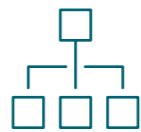
Deliver

To enable Northern Ireland’s collective renewable energy ambitions, the transmission system needs to be transformed, in a physical and operational context, at a scale, pace and level of complexity that is unprecedented.

The continued evolution of the transmission system will see the development of new, innovative systems, the integration of new technologies and the requirement for new infrastructure and connections. Timely and successful delivery of this network transformation, while maintaining a safe, secure and reliable supply of electricity, is crucial for enabling a cleaner, affordable, more secure energy future for everyone.

Whether it be in the operational integration of new technologies, for the design and implementation of critical new IT systems or developing the transmission network, the highly interdependent nature of the energy system in Northern Ireland means that government, industry, regulatory partners and civic society will need to work closely together to ensure success.

Our three key Strategic Goals are:



Accelerate our delivery focus ensuring appropriate systems, resources and timescales are in place.



Balance the transition to new systems in a safe, secure and just way.



Deliver the transition in collaboration with communities and stakeholders, creating shared goals across the energy sector.

To enable this objective, we have identified the following **Strategic Delivery Themes**:

- 1. Deliver the Shaping our Electricity Future Roadmap** – Shaping Our Electricity Future is our roadmap to transform the power system to enable Northern Ireland’s renewable energy ambitions. It was developed following extensive stakeholder engagement to understand the electricity system investments required to facilitate decarbonisation while ensuring security of supply up to 2030. The roadmap includes a considerable programme of work across four pillars: Operations, Networks, Markets and Engagement. Over the coming years, we will continue to work with the Shaping Our Electricity Future Advisory Council to deliver on this ambitious programme of work.
- 2. Deliver on the Transmission Development Plan** – The Transmission Development Plan sets out an ambitious package of infrastructure upgrades over a ten-year period. The project proposals detailed within the Plan, such as the North-South Interconnector, the Mid Antrim Upgrade and the Connect West project outline essential upgrades which will help to improve the reliability and strength of the electricity network. It will also help to bring the cost for consumers down over time as it will enable us to bring more cleaner, renewable sources of electricity onto the system and reduce our reliance on fossil fuels. While the timescales for this vast programme of infrastructure upgrades are profoundly challenging,

we will continue to work closely with NIE Networks on a joint delivery programme. We have also recognised the urgent need for change in our processes. We have listened to the concerns of the industry, and we are developing an Action Plan for Change which outlines proposals to significantly reduce grid development timescales and move to a plan-led approach. We will also engage with the Utility Regulator and NIE Networks to progress a streamlined approach for approvals for transmission works.

- 3. Implement our Operational Roadmap 2030** – Our Operational Roadmap is a pivotal plan to enable the power system to operate in a fundamentally renewables-based context. It identifies the operational changes required, and the programme of work to enable them. Over the coming years, we will continue to deliver on key projects, such as Low Carbon Inertia Services, energy storage initiatives and Scheduling and Dispatch to ready the power system for a cleaner energy future.

Operate

As Northern Ireland’s Transmission System Operator, our priority is always to operate the electricity network to ensure that power can flow safely, securely and reliably from where it is generated, at the power stations, wind farms and solar farms, to where it is needed in homes, businesses, farms and public services across Northern Ireland.

This includes real-time management of the power system and collaborating closely with our partners to maintain system balance and responding to outages or disruptions promptly and safely.

We will continue to operate the Single Electricity Market in conjunction with EirGrid, taking careful coordination to ensure robust and fair market operation that benefits consumers.

Our **three key Strategic Goals** are:



Operate the power system safely, reliably, and economically on a continuous basis.



Develop and implement new capabilities, technologies, and operational tools to ensure maximum efficiency and effectiveness for a net-zero power system.



Improve data accessibility for everyone throughout the wider energy system by focusing on collaboration and data exchange, with a commitment to good data quality and data governance.

To enable this objective, we have identified the following **Strategic Delivery Themes**:

- 1. Security of supply** – We will continue to operate the system securely, safely and efficiently in line with our operational standards and deliver the value for money for consumers. We will continue to evolve and improve our emergency planning in line with best practice standards. We will work with government and regulatory partners on a strategic security of supply programme, working with industry to support the timely delivery of new generation and scope new demand flexibility initiatives to support the power system to manage peak demand.
- 2. Efficient operation of the market** – Working closely with EirGrid, we will continue to operate the All-Island Single Electricity Market and facilitate the necessary support functions in areas such as auctions and settlement based on the governing parameters set by the Regulatory Authorities and the SEM-Committee. Over the coming years, we will implement our Strategic Markets Programme² and advocate changes to the market to deliver better outcomes for Northern Ireland consumers.
- 3. Future Arrangements of System Services (FASS)** – The existing system services arrangements (DS3³) were designed to meet the 2020 renewable targets of 40% RES-E and will not be sufficient to deliver the required capability to achieve the Northern Ireland target of 80% renewable generation by 2030. Attracting investment and procuring sufficient volumes of system services capability from both existing service providers and new prospective providers, will be critical to meeting Northern Ireland’s energy targets.

² Strategic Markets Programme – the strategic markets programme covers Full EU integration, Post Brexit Trading Arrangements & Balancing Market Reform

³ DS3 - <https://www.soni.ltd.uk/industry/transmission-system/system-services>

Engagement, Partnership and Collaboration

Recognising the crucial importance of working together across every level of the energy system, the foundation of our Strategy’s success will be built on engagement, partnership and collaboration.

Our commitment is to build deep, constructive, and transparent working relationships with our partners, understanding their goals and working collaboratively to achieve our collective ambitions.

We will help them better understand our role as the Transmission System Operator and the need for us to develop balanced solutions that account for the priorities of all our stakeholders.

We will prioritise three core elements as key strategic drivers that need to be met in a balanced and proportionate way: Security, Sustainability, and Affordability.

Our **three key Strategic Goals** are:



Promote a culture of consistent, meaningful and high-quality engagement, reinforced with actions and clear decisions.



Build knowledge and trust across all partner groups through regular engagement and transparent decision making.



Seek opportunities proactively for deeper working with society and collaboration across the system to align goals, simplify relationships and improve co-ordination.



To enable this objective, we have identified the following **Strategic Delivery Themes**:

1. **Stakeholder Engagement Strategy** – We will develop and publish a new multi-year Stakeholder Engagement Strategy and a series of annual action plans. This will include a programme to drive a culture of continuous improvement in our approach to engagement, collaboration and partnerships.
2. **Awareness and understanding of our role** – Given our expanding role to support Northern Ireland to meet its renewable energy ambitions, we will undertake a new programme of outreach and public awareness communications to support all our stakeholders to better understand our role.
3. **Best practice engagement techniques** – Building on recent success, we will continue to explore options to implement best practice in our engagement with local communities. We will implement our new Public Engagement Model and Landowner Charter and a new community forum model to deliver best in class public engagement.



Concluding Remarks

This Strategy marks a new milestone in our journey as Northern Ireland’s Transmission System Operator.

It has been co-developed following an extensive programme of engagement because we recognise the importance of collaboration and partnership in delivering on our core purpose and supporting Northern Ireland’s wider collective renewable energy ambitions. We are thankful to everyone who has engaged with us throughout this process and in particular those who provided responses to our consultation.

This Strategy reaffirms our mission to be a strong and effective Transmission System Operator, working for everyone in Northern Ireland. It sets out a clear purpose, ambitions to deliver on our four key areas of responsibility, and a series of goals and delivery themes to drive everything we do.

It provides a framework for how we will deliver against the extensive programme of work which will be set out in our multi-year Price Control Business Plan.

We understand that we can’t deliver this Strategy or our Business Plan on our own. Only by fostering further, deeper engagement, collaboration and partnership across the whole system can we deliver on our commitments. To deliver we will also need to build on our existing capability and employ new skills and talents and continue to invest in our systems.

By working together, we can collectively realise the huge societal, environmental and economic potential of Northern Ireland’s energy transition and deliver a cleaner, affordable, more secure energy future for everyone.

Our new strategy will facilitate projects, initiatives and workstreams, that will help us achieve our key strategic goals. We plan to measure our performance via future Annual Forward Work and Business Plans and Performance Reports.

Appendix A: Summary of our Purpose, Ambitions, Goals and Delivery themes

Ambition	Key Strategic Goals	Strategic Delivery Themes
Advise	<p>Be an independent, trusted adviser on electricity systems and markets.</p> <p>Develop, use and share data and technical expertise to inform policy, provide evidence-based guidance and challenge the status quo where appropriate.</p> <p>Advise on the development of new deliverable pathways to achieve future energy goals and targets.</p>	<p>Support the delivery of the Energy Strategy – We will continue to engage with the Department for the Economy (DfE) and other stakeholders to support the delivery of the Annual Energy Strategy Action Plans and the wider Energy Strategy.</p> <p>Provide expert independent advice to support the development of key enabling policies – Utilising our knowledge, experience and expertise in operating and planning the power system, we will provide key contributions in the coming years in areas such as moving to a plan-led approach, the introduction of system flexibility and the development of a strategic spatial plan for the transmission electricity system. We are hopeful that this will act as a catalyst for a multi-party development of a Strategic Spatial Energy Plan for Northern Ireland. We will also support government with the development of key enabling policies in areas such as smart systems and flexibility, interconnection and hydrogen.</p> <p>Enhance our data offer – We will ensure that the information, data and evidence SONI provides continues to be reliable, robust and that the data is more easily accessible.</p>

Ambition	Key Strategic Goals	Strategic Delivery Themes
Plan	<p>Provide leadership in the planning of the electricity system and markets now and in the future.</p> <p>Build our research and innovation capabilities to support evidence-based decision making.</p> <p>Streamline decision making and accelerate delivery.</p>	<p>Meeting Northern Ireland’s future generation needs – We will further evolve and improve our methodologies to forecast future demand for electricity and the associated generation requirements to plan for Northern Ireland’s energy needs. This forecasting is vital for sending signals to the market to ensure it delivers the generation we need. Over the coming years, we will implement and improve the National Resource Adequacy Assessment approach to replace the Generation Capacity Statement based on best practice across Europe. In addition to the above, the importance of solutions for long duration storage, low carbon inertia and other flexible services are expected to increase. We will work closely with partners to support the development of the relevant policies.</p> <p>Transmission Forecasting - robust, reliable and accessible data on the power system is vital enabling information for industry. Over the coming years, we will continue to provide key information such as the Ten-Year Transmission Forecast Statement, in line with our licence requirements, to support industry with planning and investment decisions.</p> <p>Undertake the Tomorrows Energy Scenarios initiative - Looking beyond 2030, Tomorrow’s Energy Scenarios outlines a range of potential pathways for Northern Ireland’s clean energy transition, with specific focus on what this means for the electricity transmission system from 2030 to 2050. We will continue to publish new iterations in the coming years alongside the associated comprehensive System Needs Assessment. Tomorrow’s Energy Scenarios is a crucial initiative to support the development of more detailed plans, such as the Transmission Development Plan for Northern Ireland.</p>

Ambition	Key Strategic Goals	Strategic Delivery Themes
Deliver	<p>Accelerate our delivery focus ensuring appropriate systems, resources and timescales are in place.</p> <p>Balance the transition to new systems in a secure, safe and just way.</p> <p>Deliver the transition in collaboration with communities and stakeholders, creating shared goals across the energy sector.</p>	<p>Deliver the Shaping our Electricity Future Roadmap - Shaping Our Electricity Future is our roadmap to transform the power system to enable Northern Ireland’s renewable energy ambitions. It was developed following extensive stakeholder engagement to understand the electricity system investments required to facilitate decarbonisation while ensuring security of supply up to 2030. The roadmap includes a considerable programme of work across four pillars: Operations, Networks, Markets and Engagement. Over the coming years, we will continue to work with the Shaping Our Electricity Future Advisory Council to deliver on this ambitious programme of work.</p> <p>Deliver on the Transmission Development Plan – The Transmission Development Plan sets out an ambitious package of infrastructure upgrades over a ten-year period. The project proposals detailed within the Plan, such as the North-South Interconnector, the Mid Antrim Upgrade and the Connect West project outline essential upgrades which will help to improve reliability and strengthen the electricity network. It will also help to bring the cost for consumers down over time as it will enable us to bring more cleaner, renewable sources of electricity onto the system and reduce our reliance on fossil fuels. While the timescales for this vast programme of infrastructure upgrades are profoundly challenging, we will continue to work closely with NIE Networks on a joint delivery programme. We have also recognised the urgent need to change. We have listened to the concerns of the industry and acted. We are developing an Action Plan for Change which outlines proposals to significantly reduce grid development timescales and move to a plan-led approach. We will also engage with the Utility Regulator and NIE Networks to progress a streamlined approach for approvals for transmission works.</p> <p>Implement our Operational Roadmap 2030 – Our Operational Roadmap is a pivotal plan to enable the power system to operate in a fundamentally renewables-based context. It identifies the operational changes required, and the programme of work to enable them. It is refreshed every two years to acknowledge any relevant changes. Over the coming years, we will continue to deliver on key projects, such as Low Carbon Inertia Services, Future Arrangements for Systems Services, Long Duration Energy Storage and Scheduling and Dispatch to ready for the power system for a cleaner energy future.</p>

Ambition	Key Strategic Goals	Strategic Delivery Themes
Operate	<p>Operate the power system safely, reliably, and economically on a continuous basis.</p> <p>Develop and implement new capabilities, technologies, and operational tools to ensure maximum efficiency and effectiveness for a net-zero power system.</p> <p>Improve data accessibility throughout the wider energy system by focusing on collaboration and data exchange, with a commitment to good data quality and data governance</p>	<p>Security of supply – We will continue to operate the system securely, safely and efficiently in line with our operational standards and deliver the best value for money for consumers. We will continue to evolve and improve our emergency planning in line with best practice standards. We will work with government and regulatory partners on a strategic security of supply programme, working with industry to ensure the timely delivery of new generation and scope new demand flexibility initiatives to support the power system to manage peak demand.</p> <p>Efficient operation of the market – Working closely with EirGrid, we will continue to operate the All-Island Single Electricity Market and facilitate the necessary support functions in areas such as auctions and settlement based on the governing parameters set by the Regulatory Authorities and the SEM-Committee. Over the coming years, we will implement our Strategic Markets Programme and advocate changes to the market to deliver better outcomes for Northern Ireland consumers.</p> <p>Future Arrangements of System Services (FASS) - The existing system services arrangements (DS3) were designed to meet the 2020 renewable targets of 40% RES-E and will not be sufficient to deliver the needed capability to achieve the Northern Ireland target of 80% renewable generation by 2030. Attracting investment and procuring sufficient volumes of system services capability from both existing service providers and new prospective providers, will be critical to meeting Northern Ireland’s Energy Targets.</p>





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