



**Armagh Banbridge & Craigavon
Borough Council**

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Natasha Sayee
SONI LTD
12 Manse Road
Belfast
BT6 9RT

Our Ref: SONI TDP Cons March22
Date: 14 March 2022

Dear Natasha,

Re: Draft Transmission Development Plan, Northern Ireland 2021-2030 Consultation

Thank you for your email received 18th January 2022, regarding the above, inviting the Council to comment on the draft Transmission Development Plan Northern Ireland (TDPNI) by 15th March 2022 in accordance with Article 22 of European Directive 72/2009 and Conditions 18 and 40 of the SONI Transmission System Operator Licence.

The Council welcomes the opportunity to comment on the draft TDPNI 2021-2030. It is noted that SONI has a pivotal role to play in the implementation of Northern Ireland's new Energy Strategy, in particular, to achieving an average of at least 70% of our electricity from renewable sources by 2030, which is an important step towards net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. It is fully recognised that this transition will require investment in the transmission network to ensure secure, safe, delivery of power to residents and businesses within the borough.

The Council notes the Network Asset Replacement Projects and Development Projects in the South East Planning Area for the next decade, including an estimated completion date of 2025 for the North South Interconnector Development. As you may be aware at a Special Meeting of Council, held on 21 September 2015, the Council opposed the project in its current form and called on the Governments, both North and South, the Utility Regulators and the power companies, to listen to the concerns of local residents and businesses and have the project undergrounded. It is stressed that Council's position on this matter remains unchanged.

The Council considers that supporting the needs of residents, the local economy and protecting the environment should be central considerations in SONI's assessment of the operational needs of the electricity grid in Northern Ireland to 2030.

Please be advised that the Council is preparing its Local Development Plan – Draft Plan Strategy which will set out strategic growth for the borough for the next 15 years. To support this growth, it needs to be underpinned with the necessary infrastructure and the Council will be further engaging with SONI on this matter.

In addition, the Mid South West Region Growth Deal identifies the importance of infrastructure and in particular the need for affordable green energy to support businesses and economic growth within the region. It is essential that businesses within the borough have access to an affordable, reliable supply of energy to be competitive on an international scale.

I trust the above comments will be fully considered. Please be advised that this is a draft response on the matter as it is still going through the Council's approval and ratification process. If the Council has any additional comments, these will be forwarded in due course, but no later than 30 March 2022.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'H. Stoops', is positioned above the typed name.

Helen Stoops
Principal Planning Officer

On behalf of Damian Mulligan
Head of Planning