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Sent: 18 May 2026 08:34
To: Secretary of State (Ed Miliband) [REDACTED]@energysecurity.gov.uk>
Cc: Andrew Snowden MP <[REDACTED]>; Shanks, Minister (Energy Security) [REDACTED]@energysecurity.gov.uk>; McCluskey, Minister (Energy Security) [REDACTED]y@energysecurity.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]@fylde.gov.uk; [REDACTED]@southribble.gov.uk
Subject: Integrated Alternatives for the Fylde and Penwortham Offshore Transmission Corridors

Dear Secretary of State,

I am writing regarding the ongoing planning applications for the transmission assets associated with the Morgan and Morecambe Offshore Wind Farms and Ørsted's East Irish Sea Transmission Project connecting into the National Grid infrastructure at Penwortham.

I welcome your recent decision to extend the statutory deadline to September 2026 in order to obtain further information. This provides an important opportunity to reassess whether the current "piecemeal" approach to offshore wind connections represents the most efficient and least disruptive long-term solution for Lancashire communities.

Under the present proposals, multiple independent cable corridors are planned across Fylde and Wyre, with potentially significant impacts on agricultural land, rural communities, local businesses, tourism, and transport infrastructure.

As the Department reviews the applications, I respectfully urge consideration of the following strategic alternatives:

1. Accelerate an Integrated Offshore Grid (OMSO-style model)

Rather than allowing individual developers to construct separate radial trenches from different landfall points, including Blackpool and Fleetwood, the Department should encourage these projects to connect into a shared offshore "hub" platform in the Irish Sea. This would enable a consolidated High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) connection to make landfall, significantly reducing the scale of required onshore infrastructure and cumulative local disruption.

2. Upgrade Marine Routing Capacity

The current land routing appears to exist largely because the immediate coastal substations lack sufficient thermal capacity. By prioritizing strategic subsea marine routing, National Grid could potentially run cables further south entirely underwater, entering the mainland at locations with stronger grid capacity. This would help avoid extensive disruption across the agricultural greenbelts and residential areas of the Fylde coast.

3. Mandate Strict Co-Location and Coordinated Digging

If a land corridor toward Penwortham remains the only viable path due to existing legal agreements, the Development Consent Orders (DCO) should enforce strict coordination between developers. The Planning Inspectorate should require Ørsted and the Morgan/Morecambe consortium to utilize a single, shared trenching timeline. By pre-installing shared multi-duct conduits via Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD), the land would only need to be opened once, thereby reducing prolonged and overlapping disruption to local communities.

4. Careful Consideration of the “Do Nothing” Project Rejection Option

If integrated offshore transmission or improved marine routing cannot be achieved, it is important that cumulative local impacts are fully weighed before consent is granted. The transition to clean energy is essential, but infrastructure delivery should seek to minimise avoidable long-term environmental and economic disruption to host communities.

Furthermore, as the UK develops longer-term energy strategies, including the advancement of the UK Fusion Strategy and the STEP programme at West Burton, it is important that major transmission infrastructure decisions remain adaptable and future-proofed. The government should carefully consider whether large-scale, fragmented radial cable corridors represent the most efficient long-term model for the North West energy system, particularly as future generation and grid technologies continue to evolve.

For technical insight regarding the maturity and long-term trajectory of UK fusion development, Professor Sir Ian Chapman, Chief Executive of UK Research and Innovation, may be well placed to advise.

The current extension provides an opportunity to pursue a more integrated and strategically coordinated infrastructure model for the North West, one that supports both energy security and responsible environmental stewardship.

Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to any response from the Department.

Yours sincerely,

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