

Lessons from Australia and New Zealand

PUTTING COMMUNITIES AT THE HEART OF UK STRATEGIC ENERGY PLANNING

**Dr Rebecca
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fellowship**



This Fellowship was born out of a question that has increasingly shaped my work on renewable energy planning: how can we deliver the scale of energy infrastructure needed for the net zero transition while ensuring that local communities are genuinely involved in shaping the changes that affect them, and that they benefit from the transition

Dr Rebecca Windemer

Foreword

About the Churchill Fellowship

The Churchill Fellowship is a UK charity which supports individual UK citizens to follow their passion for change, through learning from the world and bringing that knowledge back to the UK.

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About Rebecca

Dr Rebecca Windemer is an award-winning renewable energy sector expert with over a decade of experience leading research and informing policy development on planning, community engagement, and social acceptance of renewable energy. She holds a PhD in environmental planning, and is an experienced public speaker.

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Executive summary

Strategic spatial energy planning creates an opportunity to involve communities earlier, give them a meaningful role in shaping decisions, and ensure that host communities share in the benefits of development.



The UK is entering a new phase of energy system planning, with spatial approaches intended to better coordinate where energy infrastructure is developed. This Fellowship focused on the potential role of communities and stakeholders within this emerging approach. It asked how strategic energy planning can help increase infrastructure delivery while giving communities a meaningful role in shaping change and ensuring that places hosting infrastructure can meaningfully benefit from it.

To explore this, I examined a range of approaches in Australia and New Zealand, covering strategic energy planning, transmission planning, infrastructure consenting, community engagement, cumulative impacts and local benefits. More than 50 people from government, industry, network companies, local authorities, community organisations and academia contributed to the research, alongside site visits and document review.

Overall, the findings suggest that the UK's transition to a more strategic energy system changes the point at which key decisions are made and therefore creates an opportunity to involve communities much earlier, before individual projects and infrastructure options become established. It thus provides the opportunity to create a model in which communities are better informed, meaningfully involved and able to benefit from the changes taking place in their areas. However, achieving this will require changes to current planning, engagement and delivery processes.



Ten key recommendations for strategic energy planning in the UK

1.

Plan for communities as well as infrastructure. Ensure the UK Strategic Spatial Energy Plan considers and coordinates the cumulative impacts of multiple developments on host communities.

2.

Invest in local engagement capacity. Establish dedicated local capacity in areas expecting significant energy infrastructure development to support ongoing engagement and access to information.

3.

Develop a more strategic approach to community benefits. Coordinate benefits across projects and support longer-term local priorities, alongside localised grant opportunities.

4.

Establish a UK Energy Infrastructure Commissioner. Create an independent, trusted point of contact for communities, providing a source of independent information and oversight.

5.

Invest in upskilling local communities. To help local communities be able to meaningfully participate in the planning process.

6.

Plan early for local economic participation. Involve local businesses early, provide sufficient lead times and support local supply chains to access opportunities.

7.

Connect regional energy planning with regional planning. Link regional energy planning more clearly with regional planning through Spatial Development Strategies.

8.

Make certainty, rather than speed alone, the objective of accelerated consenting. Combine clear processes and timescales with meaningful, early community engagement.

9.

Give communities a meaningful role in shaping future strategic energy plans. Involve communities and other stakeholders before scenarios and options are established, with a transparent link between engagement and decisions.

10.

Give communities greater visibility of the future development pipeline. Help them understand the scale and likely timing of change in their local area.

Contents

1.	Introduction: the opportunity for strategic energy planning	7
2.	Planning and communities: lessons from Australia's Renewable Energy Zones	11
2.1	Cumulative impacts	14
2.2	The challenge of phantom projects	15
2.3	The value of local voices	15
2.4	Use of local businesses	17
2.5	Planning for meaningful community benefits	17
3.	Lessons from energy planning in New Zealand	19
3.1	Regional energy planning	20
3.2	Fast-track approvals: balancing speed, certainty and participation	22
4.	Planning the grid for the future: lessons from Australia and New Zealand	24
4.1	International approaches to transmission planning	25
4.2	Engaging people in planning the grid	27
4.3	Local level engagement in transmission applications	28
5.	Building community confidence and capacity	30
5.1	Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner	31
5.2	Australia's Developer Rating Scheme	32
5.3	Lessons on wider public engagement	33
6.	Recommendations for putting communities at the heart of UK strategic energy planning	34
6.1	Recommendations on SSEP implementation	35
6.2	Recommendations for building community capacity	36
6.3	Recommendations for changes to the planning system	37
6.4	Recommendations on future Strategic Energy Planning (RESP's, CSNP and future versions of the SSEP)	39
7.	Appendix	39
	List of organisations that participated in this research	39



1.

Introduction: the opportunity for strategic energy planning

This Fellowship was born out of a question that has increasingly shaped my work on renewable energy planning: how can we deliver the scale of energy infrastructure needed for the net zero transition while ensuring that local communities are genuinely involved in shaping the changes that affect them, and that they benefit from the transition?

The UK has been embarking on a major change in the way energy infrastructure is planned. The country's first [Strategic Spatial Energy Plan \(SSEP\)](#), due to be published in 2027, and the subsequent [Regional Energy Strategic Plans \(RESs\)](#) and [Centralised Strategic Network Plan \(CSNP\)](#) represent an important opportunity to move towards a more coordinated, strategic energy system. If implemented well, strategic energy planning has the potential to deliver better outcomes for communities, provide greater certainty for developers and decision makers, and support the rapid expansion of the infrastructure needed to meet the UK's clean energy ambitions.

At the same time, however, the SSEP is being developed against a backdrop of growing political and public debate about the pace and scale of energy infrastructure deployment. Opposition to renewable energy developments, battery storage facilities and new electricity transmission infrastructure is high in many parts of the UK. This raises an important question: how can strategic planning really involve communities and help ensure that they experience tangible local benefits?

It was this question that motivated my Fellowship project, I wanted to explore how the local opportunities presented by strategic energy planning can be realised in practice. My concern was that if communities are not genuinely involved in shaping decisions, or do not see meaningful local benefits from new infrastructure, then strategic planning may not reduce opposition or delays, and in some cases it could risk reinforcing them.

To explore these issues, I travelled to Australia and New Zealand to examine how they are addressing the relationship between strategic energy and grid planning, infrastructure delivery and community engagement, and to identify lessons that could inform the UK's approach.

I wanted to explore how the local opportunities presented by strategic spatial energy planning can be realised in practice.



Research in Australia

I chose Australia for this research due to the similarities between its Renewable Energy Zones (REZ) approach and the UK's SSEP. Although the SSEP is not a direct replica of the REZ model, both seek to move towards a more coordinated approach to planning generation, storage and network infrastructure. REZs bring together multiple generation projects alongside strategic investment in transmission infrastructure.

While the overall concept is consistent across Australia, REZs differ considerably between states in terms of their governance arrangements, delivery models and approaches to community engagement. My aim was to understand the different approaches used to coordinate these large-scale programmes and manage the relationship between major infrastructure development and community acceptance. During the research I focused on three state-based approaches: New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland.

Research in New Zealand

Although New Zealand is not currently taking a strategic approach to energy planning in the same way as the UK, it provides useful examples of community engagement, planning reform and transmission planning that offer lessons for the UK context.

One of the key challenges for implementing the SSEP will be how communities are involved in decision making, and how the plan interacts with the planning system.

I was therefore particularly interested in understanding the experience of accelerated planning processes in New Zealand.

My approach

The purpose of this research was not to identify a model for the UK to replicate, but to identify approaches and lessons that can inform the UK's emerging strategic planning framework.

The research was based primarily on qualitative, semi-structured in-person interviews with more than 50 participants from across the energy sector in Australia and New Zealand. Interviewees included government officials, renewable energy developers, transmission companies, regional governments, community engagement practitioners, academics, not-for-profit organisations, individual topic experts and community representatives. With participants' consent, interviews were recorded and transcribed to support subsequent analysis. A list of participating organisations is provided in Appendix 1. To preserve anonymity, individuals are not named and quotations are not attributed to specific organisations.

The interviews were complemented by site visits to renewable energy and transmission projects, as well as the locations of proposed developments, allowing me to observe how planning and engagement approaches operate in practice. I also reviewed relevant policy documents, reports and guidance to provide additional context and support the analysis.

This report presents the key findings from the research, illustrated through examples and case studies from both countries. Rather than following a chronological account of my travels, it is organised around the themes that emerged consistently across the research.

The report concludes with a set of recommendations for how strategic energy planning in the UK can be shaped in ways that genuinely involve local communities and deliver meaningful local benefits. The development of the SSEP represents a significant opportunity; the challenge now is to ensure that we make the most of it.

A framework for meaningful community involvement

The research identified six characteristics of meaningful community involvement in strategic energy planning:

1. **Early:** Communities are involved before strategic options and major decisions are established.
2. **Informed:** People have access to clear, accessible and independent information.
3. **Influential:** Engagement can shape scenarios, assumptions, options or decisions.
4. **Ongoing:** Relationships continue from strategic planning through to project delivery.
5. **Place-based:** Local knowledge, circumstances and priorities inform planning.
6. **Beneficial:** Communities hosting infrastructure have opportunities to share in the benefits of development.

These findings provide a framework for the lessons explored throughout this report and underpin the recommendations for the UK.

My study involved speaking to experts across New Zealand and in the Australian States of Queensland, Victoria and New South Wales.





2.

Planning and communities: lessons from Australia's Renewable Energy Zones

Renewable Energy Zones (REZs) are designated areas where renewable energy generation can be developed at scale alongside the transmission infrastructure required to connect projects to the electricity network.

REZs are areas identified for coordinated development of large-scale renewable generation, storage and the transmission infrastructure needed to connect projects to the electricity network. Rather than planning individual projects independently, REZs seek to coordinate development in areas with strong renewable energy resources, enabling shared infrastructure, economies of scale and greater certainty for developers and investors.

The concept was developed through the Australian Energy Market Operator's (AEMO) [Integrated System Plan](#), which identified areas with high-quality renewable energy resources and highlighted the need for coordinated investment in transmission infrastructure to support the country's energy transition. Since then, several Australian states have developed their own REZ programmes, adapting the model to reflect their respective policy objectives, governance arrangements and electricity systems.

Although the overarching concept is consistent across Australia, the implementation of REZs varies considerably between states, particularly in approaches to network delivery, community engagement, benefit-sharing and the role of government in coordinating development. This Fellowship focused on three state-based approaches that offer contrasting models of REZ delivery: New South Wales (NSW), Queensland and Victoria (see table 1).

Table 1: Renewable Energy Zones explored in this project

State	Approach
New South Wales	Five REZs have been declared and are coordinated by EnergyCo, a dedicated government agency responsible for strategic planning, transmission coordination and stakeholder engagement. NSW uses competitive access schemes to manage which generation and storage projects connect to the network. Projects awarded access rights pay access fees that contribute to the Community and Employment Benefit Program.
Victoria	VicGrid leads a state-led approach to REZs. The 2025 Victorian Transmission Plan proposed six onshore REZs and a separate Gippsland shoreline zone. Five onshore zones and the shoreline zone have since been declared, with boundaries informed by technical assessments and community consultation. Victoria has placed a strong emphasis on early engagement and is developing competitive access arrangements that will assess developers against expectations for community and Traditional Owner engagement and social value. Its approach includes regional community benefit funds and arrangements to support benefits for Traditional Owners. Victoria's new grid access rules make it significantly harder for developers to connect outside of a REZ by requiring such proposals to explicitly prove that their project will not impact the network for projects within the REZ.
Queensland	Queensland initially adopted a REZ model, but this was replaced in 2025 by Regional Energy Hubs (REHs). The revised approach retains coordination of shared transmission connections but is more market-led, with hub declarations intended to respond to private sector development activity and community expectations. The Queensland Renewable Energy Roadmap was published in October 2025, removing the former legislated targets of 70% renewables by 2032 and 80% by 2035. Separate planning reforms introduced in 2025 require wind farms, solar farms above 1 MW and battery storage facilities above 50 MW to undertake a Social Impact Assessment (SIA) and enter into a Community Benefit Agreement (CBA) with the relevant local government before a development application can be lodged.

While REZs are primarily intended to improve the coordination and efficiency of renewable energy development, they also change the relationship between developers, government and host communities. Coordinating multiple projects within a defined area creates opportunities for earlier engagement and a more strategic approach to community benefits. However, concentrating development can also intensify cumulative impacts and increase expectations around local participation and benefit-sharing.

New South Wales demonstrates the value of coordinating development and benefits across a REZ. Through EnergyCo, strategic planning, transmission delivery and aspects of community engagement are coordinated at a regional level. However, some interviewees reflected that wider community engagement in the first REZ did not begin early enough, highlighting the importance of involving communities from the outset of strategic planning. EnergyCo's [Community and Employment Benefit Program](#) aims to extend its coordinated approach to benefits, using funding linked to REZ development to support community initiatives alongside local employment, training and skills development.

Victoria provides a particularly interesting example of how community considerations can be incorporated into strategic planning decisions. Community feedback helped shape the boundaries of its REZs, while its proposed competitive access arrangements would use an assessment process to link developers' ability to secure network capacity to expectations around community and Traditional Owner engagement and social value. This demonstrates how strategic planning can be used to influence developers' focus on communities.

Queensland provides a more front-loaded approach, using planning legislation to require earlier consideration of community impacts and benefits. Reforms introduced in 2025 require prescribed renewable energy developments to undertake a social impact assessment and enter into a community benefit agreement before lodging a development application. These requirements bring engagement and benefit negotiations forward in the development process.

Although each state has adopted a distinct REZ approach, common lessons can be identified around governance, community engagement and benefit-sharing. These themes are explored in the following sections, together with their relevance for the UK's Strategic Spatial Energy Plan (SSEP).

The report concludes with a set of recommendations for how strategic energy planning in the UK can be shaped in ways that genuinely involve local communities.



2.1 Cumulative impacts

One of the strongest lessons emerging from Australia's REZs, and a concern that was raised regularly during my research in New Zealand, was the importance of understanding and managing the cumulative impacts of energy infrastructure development on host communities. People I spoke to highlighted that these impacts extend well beyond the landscape effects of individual projects. Where multiple developments are concentrated within a region, their combined demands can place significant pressure on local roads, accommodation, workforce availability, health services and other community infrastructure, impacting the lived experience of rural communities. While an individual project may create economic opportunities, the combined effects of several projects can also place considerable pressure on the communities hosting them.

A recurring challenge across both countries was that these impacts are not always considered collectively. Communities experience renewable energy development as an ongoing programme of activity across a region, yet planning and assessment processes often remain focused on individual projects. This makes it difficult to anticipate and manage the combined effects of developments promoted by different organisations and progressing on different timescales.

Interviews also highlighted the importance of combining strategic modelling with local knowledge. Infrastructure and services that appear sufficient in national or regional datasets may operate very differently in practice. Seasonal agricultural activity, local road use and the capacity of health and other services can be difficult to capture through desktop analysis alone. Engagement with local authorities and communities is therefore essential to ground-truth assumptions about the capacity of places expected to host significant development.

Assessments of cumulative impacts needs to be an ongoing process. The scale and timing of development can change as projects progress, are delayed or do not proceed, altering the pressures placed on local infrastructure and services. Strategic planning therefore needs to be supported by mechanisms for reviewing development pipelines, updating assumptions and coordinating responses as circumstances change.

For the UK, the SSEP provides an opportunity to identify potential cumulative impacts at a strategic level, rather than leaving them to be considered solely through individual project applications. However, identifying these impacts is only part of the challenge, managing them will require clear responsibilities and coordination between government, developers, network companies, local authorities and other service providers.



Key recommendation for the UK

Plan for communities, not just infrastructure.

Alongside identifying where new energy infrastructure should be developed, the SSEP should establish a framework for anticipating and assessing the cumulative impacts of multiple developments on host communities. This should be supported by clear regional responsibilities for coordinating measures across projects, including community engagement, construction activity and the infrastructure and services needed to accommodate development.

2.2 The challenge of phantom projects

Another significant challenge identified during my research is what I term ‘phantom projects’. These are projects that are presented to communities and progress through early stages of community engagement and planning, despite having a relatively low likelihood of ever being built.

This issue has emerged, in part, because developers seek to secure access to future network capacity or position themselves within an increasingly competitive development pipeline. Around a REZ, where access to existing transmission infrastructure is particularly valuable, multiple projects may be proposed for the same area even though only a proportion will ultimately proceed. Yet these commercial dynamics are largely invisible to communities, who may be asked to engage with numerous proposals, attend consultation events and respond to plans without any indication of which projects are most likely to progress. This can create confusion, frustration and consultation fatigue. The latter is about more than simply the number of consultations, it can also arise from repeated engagement on uncertain projects, fragmented organisations and a perceived lack of local influence on outcomes.



Key recommendation for the UK

Increase transparency around future development pipelines.

Strategic spatial energy planning should provide communities with greater visibility of which projects are most likely to proceed and how individual proposals relate to wider plans for generation and network infrastructure. Providing this context would help reduce consultation fatigue, support more meaningful engagement and strengthen confidence in the planning process.

2.3 The value of local voices

Across the research, a consistent message was the importance of local knowledge and trusted relationships for engagement in strategic energy planning. Several participants observed that concerns about development were often linked not only to the infrastructure itself, but also to perceptions that decisions were being made by people from outside the region who did not fully understand local circumstances and priorities.

Experiences in Queensland and New South Wales suggested that the technical rationale for a REZ was not always accompanied by a clear explanation of what it would mean for the people living within them. Communities faced the prospect of significant new development without necessarily understanding what REZ designation meant, how development would unfold or what benefits their region might receive. Interviewees emphasised the importance of providing clear, accessible information about what is proposed, likely timescales, potential local impacts and, crucially, what remains uncertain or open to influence.

While external engagement expertise has an important role, relying solely on teams travelling into rural communities can reinforce perceptions that decisions are being driven from elsewhere. A stronger approach identified through the Fellowship was the employment of local people to support community engagement, providing a trusted local point of contact able to provide information across projects and direct community questions to the relevant organisations. Local staff bring knowledge of the area, existing relationships and an understanding of community concerns that external teams cannot easily replicate.

The Central West Orana Renewable Energy Zone community information centre in Mudgee, provides an accessible place for local people to ask questions about the REZ.



An example is the Central-West Orana REZ in New South Wales where EnergyCo established a Community Information Centre on the high street in Mudgee. The centre provides an accessible place for residents to ask questions, obtain information about the REZ and raise concerns with locally based staff, supported by the wider project team. It illustrates the value of maintaining a visible local presence throughout the planning and delivery of major infrastructure.

However, local engagement capacity is only effective if it is connected to decision-making. Interviews highlighted the risk of engagement teams becoming a conduit for concerns without having a clear route for those concerns to influence the organisations responsible for planning and delivering infrastructure. Local staff therefore need access to technical expertise and clear mechanisms for escalating feedback. Equally important is demonstrating how community input has been considered and explaining where it has, or has not, resulted in change.



Key recommendation for the UK

Invest in local engagement capacity.

In areas expected to host significant energy infrastructure as part of the SSEP, local people should be trained and employed to support community engagement, potentially through accessible community information hubs. Providing a visible local presence can improve access to information, strengthen trust and create opportunities for ongoing dialogue throughout the development process, while also building local capability.

2.4 Use of local businesses

A further lesson emerging from Australia's REZ experience was the importance of creating opportunities for local businesses to participate in the energy transition. Strategic energy planning can support regional economies through employment, supply chains and business development, but those opportunities do not arise automatically.

Experiences in Australia revealed that utilising local businesses and supply chains is not always straightforward due to the time needed for organisations to prepare for procurement opportunities or adapt their services to meet project requirements. Early engagement with businesses is necessary to enable them to build capacity, develop new skills and position themselves to participate in the emerging supply chain. This is particularly relevant for businesses currently supporting traditional industries, which may need time and support to transition into new energy-related services.

Another lesson was the importance of clearly defining what is meant by 'local'. Interviewees cautioned that broad definitions of the word can provide limited accountability for ensuring that businesses within the communities hosting infrastructure benefit from investment. A broad definition may increase the pool of potential suppliers, but can reduce the economic benefits retained within affected regions.



Key recommendation for the UK

Consider how to maximise economic opportunities for local businesses.

There is an opportunity to maximise the economic benefits of renewable energy investment by identifying potential local supply chain capacity early, engaging businesses before procurement opportunities arise, and providing sufficient time for them to develop the skills and services required to participate. There should also be a clear definition of what constitutes 'local' to ensure benefits reach the communities hosting infrastructure.

2.5 Planning for meaningful community benefits

The importance of meaningful community benefits emerged as a consistent theme throughout my research. While there was general agreement that communities hosting energy infrastructure should share in the benefits, there was also a strong message that traditional community benefit funds do not always deliver the outcomes that communities value most.

Grant funding can provide important support for local organisations and projects, but several participants described how it can sometimes feel transactional or disconnected from wider community priorities. In rural and regional areas experiencing significant energy development, concerns were raised about funding being available for small local projects while broader challenges affecting quality of life, such as access to healthcare, housing, transport and other essential services, remained largely unaddressed. These concerns were particularly significant in places that had experienced long-term underinvestment. Interviewees highlighted the importance of benefits contributing to longer-term social and economic priorities and reflecting the scale of change being experienced by host communities.

Communities need support and opportunities to identify local priorities and influence how community benefit funding is allocated.



The research also highlighted the importance of distinguishing between the costs of development, impact mitigation and genuine community benefits. Measures needed to address project impacts, such as repairing construction-related road damage or mitigating other local effects, should not be presented as community benefits. Equally, community benefit funding should not be seen as a substitute for government investment in essential public services or used to fill gaps in local authority budgets. While benefits could contribute to wider community priorities, they should provide additional value rather than replace existing public responsibilities.

Where community benefits are coordinated or pooled across multiple projects, there is also a need to consider whose priorities are being reflected. Interviews highlighted that the interests of communities immediately hosting infrastructure may differ from those of the wider region. Regional coordination should therefore be accompanied by meaningful opportunities for host communities to identify priorities and influence how funding is invested, rather than assuming that a single institution can represent every community affected by development.

The key lesson for the UK is that strategic energy planning creates an opportunity to think more broadly about community benefits. Rather than treating benefits as a standardised package for individual projects, there is scope to work with communities to identify longer-term priorities and coordinate investment across developments. This could enable funding to contribute to wider regional needs while retaining opportunities for benefits negotiated directly with the communities most affected.



Key recommendation for the UK

Take a more strategic approach to community benefits.

The SSEP provides an opportunity to consider not only where energy infrastructure is located, but how the benefits of development can be delivered strategically. Rather than considering community benefits solely on a project-by-project basis, mechanisms could be developed to coordinate benefits across multiple projects within a region (alongside small, localised grant opportunities). This could enable investment in longer-term local priorities and help address challenges that individual projects alone cannot resolve.



3.

Lessons from energy planning in New Zealand

New Zealand already generates a high proportion of its electricity from renewable sources, particularly hydroelectricity, alongside geothermal, wind and solar. However, meeting future electricity demand and supporting decarbonisation will require continued investment in renewable generation and electricity network infrastructure.

New Zealand does not currently have a single overarching spatial plan for future energy infrastructure; instead, decisions are shaped through planning and consenting processes at national, regional and local levels. Many interviewees highlighted a desire for a more integrated national approach such as a national energy strategy that can provide greater coordination.

This chapter explores regional approaches to addressing these challenges, alongside the Fast-track Approvals Act discussed later in the chapter. The regional examples provide a different perspective from the strategic planning approaches explored in Australia and offer useful insights for how the UK could connect national energy planning with regional spatial planning, economic development and local priorities.

3.1 Regional energy planning

In the absence of a single national spatial framework for renewable energy development, some regions in New Zealand have begun to take a more proactive approach to understanding and planning for their future energy needs. Regional councils have recognised the potential economic and environmental opportunities associated with renewable energy and are exploring how spatial planning can help attract investment while ensuring development is aligned with wider regional priorities. This has occurred in the context of New Zealand's spatial planning reforms, which envisaged regional spatial strategies setting a strategic direction for at least 30 years, integrating infrastructure and land-use planning.

A recurring theme throughout my research with regional actors was the value of exploring how electricity demand might change as a result of economic growth, where renewable generation could be developed, and what infrastructure may be required to support future growth.

The two regional examples set out below demonstrate how energy planning can be connected to spatial planning, economic development and investment.



Case study

Taranaki Strategic Energy Zone

Taranaki provides an example of two closely connected approaches: a Strategic Energy Zone concept focused on regional economic development and investment and regional spatial planning work exploring how future energy infrastructure and demand could be coordinated spatially.

The work has emerged against a backdrop of significant economic change associated with the decline of the region's oil and gas industry, alongside a desire to retain skills, attract investment and support the transition to new energy industries. The Strategic Energy Zone concept was originally developed as part of a proposal to central government for regional support. Although the proposal was not selected in the first round, regional organisations have continued to develop the concept, working with the regional council and local industry.

The approach seeks to bring together energy generation, large electricity users and supporting infrastructure. Emerging regional spatial-planning work is exploring potential high-energy precincts where large power users could be co-located with generation. Potential locations are being considered using spatial analysis alongside stakeholder input, including opportunities to reuse existing energy infrastructure and skills associated with the oil and gas industry.

A particularly interesting feature of the Taranaki approach is its focus on energy demand as well as generation. Constraints on electricity transmission capacity mean that identifying opportunities for additional renewable generation alone may not be sufficient. Considering where energy-intensive activity could be located alongside generation and existing infrastructure connects energy planning with wider decisions about future industry and economic development.

The regional development agency is also developing an energy investment prospectus bringing together information on energy resources, infrastructure, grid capacity and investment opportunities. Alongside engagement with local industry, this is intended to be an evolving resource that creates a clearer picture of regional opportunities for local businesses and potential investors.

The Taranaki experience demonstrates how regional spatial planning can connect energy planning with economic development and investment. It highlights the value of considering where energy will be both generated and consumed, making use of existing infrastructure and capabilities, and creating a shared evidence base to support future investment.



Case study **Canterbury Regional Energy Strategy**

The Canterbury Mayoral Forum began developing a Regional Energy Strategy in 2024, partly in response to growing interest in the economic opportunities of renewable energy development and the need for greater coordination across the region. The work began with an energy inventory, bringing together existing information on generation, demand and infrastructure to establish a shared evidence base. This was followed by stakeholder workshops to develop a strategic framework, with an action plan being developed to support its priorities.

The process brought together organisations that do not always work closely together, including local and central government, energy companies, network operators, industry, academia and community groups. Stakeholders saw value in developing the strategy collaboratively and in creating new partnerships.

A key aim is for the energy work to inform Canterbury's emerging Regional Spatial Plan, helping to align energy, land use, transport and wider regional priorities. In the absence of a clear national energy strategy, the region has adopted a 'least regrets' approach, focusing on actions that are likely to remain valuable under different future scenarios.

The work also highlighted the importance of looking beyond regional boundaries. Stakeholders emphasised that Canterbury is not an 'island' and that its energy strategy needs to consider connections with the wider South Island and New Zealand electricity system. At the same time, developing the initial energy inventory was complicated by the lack of consistent national datasets and differences in how organisations define regional boundaries.

The Canterbury experience demonstrates the value of developing a shared regional evidence base and bringing different organisations together early in the process. It also shows that regional energy planning cannot be undertaken in isolation; understanding the wider electricity system, having consistent data, and connecting energy planning with spatial planning are all important to developing a credible long-term strategy.



Key recommendations for the UK

Ensure any regional energy plans such as the RESP are connected to the planning system.

Regional planning approaches such as Spatial Development Strategies could play an important role in translating national strategic priorities into investable opportunities. The relationship between the SSEP and RESPs should also be two-way to ensure knowledge sharing.

3.2 Fast-track approvals: balancing speed, certainty and participation

The [Fast-track Approvals Act 2024](#) was introduced to provide a faster consenting pathway for projects considered to have ‘significant regional or national benefits’. It builds on New Zealand’s temporary COVID-19 fast-track consenting legislation and allows applicants to seek multiple approvals through a single process.

One of the most interesting features of the approach is the use of independent expert panels to determine applications. A multidisciplinary panel is established for each project, with members selected according to the expertise required and including Māori representation. Local authorities retain a role through nominating a panel member and providing written comments. The process is also subject to defined decision-making timeframes, providing developers with greater certainty over when a decision will be reached.

However, many interviewees emphasised that certainty, rather than speed, is arguably the most significant benefit. The process remains resource-intensive and operates on a user-pays basis, with applicants covering the costs of the panel, government agencies and local authorities. Acceleration is achieved partly by coordinating multiple approvals through a single approval process and by front-loading the work (applicants are expected to provide a complete comprehensive application before it reaches the expert panel).

Looking at New Zealand’s Fast-track process revealed that faster consenting can provide greater certainty, but makes early and meaningful community engagement even more important.



The most significant concern I identified was the limited opportunity for wider public participation once an application has been submitted. Engagement is expected to take place before an application enters the fast-track process, but there is no open opportunity for members of the public to submit comments to the decision-making panel. Panels can invite comments from specified parties, but the wider community may not have an opportunity to feed in.

This creates an important trade-off; front-loading engagement can help identify concerns and improve proposals before an application is submitted, but once the application enters the fast-track process there is limited opportunity for the public to share their views. The lesson for the UK is therefore not simply to replicate a faster consenting process, but to consider how greater certainty can be achieved without weakening opportunities for communities to understand, respond to and influence proposals.



Key recommendation for the UK

Use certainty, rather than speed alone, as the objective of accelerated consenting.

The UK could learn from New Zealand's use of clear eligibility criteria, concentrated expert decision making and defined timescales to provide greater certainty for strategically important infrastructure. However, this should be combined with meaningful community engagement early enough to influence proposals, with clear opportunities for people to submit their views to decision maker.



4.

Planning the grid for the future: lessons from Australia and New Zealand

The scale of electricity network investment required for the UK's energy transition makes transmission planning an important area for international learning. The SSEP is intended to identify the high-level location and scale of future energy infrastructure, with its outputs feeding into the design of the Centralised Strategic Network Plan (CSNP). This creates an opportunity to learn from countries already considering how transmission needs to evolve.

My research in Australia and New Zealand explored how transmission infrastructure is being planned alongside changing patterns of generation and electricity demand and how communities are being engaged in decisions about the future grid.

4.1 International approaches to transmission planning

The approaches to transmission planning in Australia and New Zealand differ, but both demonstrate the value of taking a longer-term and more coordinated approach to network investment. A common theme was the challenge of moving beyond a largely reactive approach, where investment follows individual connections or confirmed demand, towards planning that can anticipate future system needs.

Australia

In Australia, REZs provide a mechanism for coordinating generation, storage and transmission development. The Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO)'s [Integrated System Plan \(ISP\)](#) considers generation, storage and network investment together over the longer term, while state governments and agencies are responsible for implementing individual REZs.

The value of this approach lies in planning transmission alongside anticipated generation and storage, rather than treating network connections as a series of individual projects. However, coordinating generation and transmission remains challenging, even within a REZ model. Interviews highlighted the need to sequence investment carefully so that transmission capacity is available when new generation is ready to connect, without building infrastructure significantly ahead of need and potentially increasing costs.

New Zealand

New Zealand provides a different approach to planning the grid. Transpower is the state-owned enterprise that owns and operates the national grid and also performs the role of system operator. Its planning work combines near-term investment processes with longer-term analysis of how the electricity system may need to evolve. Transpower describes one of its strategic roles as taking a 'whole-of-system view' when planning infrastructure.

Transpower has recognised the need to prepare the grid for substantial growth in electricity demand and renewable generation. Its work on [Net Zero Grid Pathways](#) identified investments that could remove current constraints while allowing time to investigate and plan larger future upgrades, some of which could take seven to ten years to plan, consent and deliver.

One of the clearest lessons from my interviews was the importance of the 'missing middle' between short-term investment decisions and a much longer-term vision for the electricity system. Transpower's more immediate planning processes address current and near-term network requirements, while its Te Kanapu [Future Grid initiative](#) is developing a Grid Blueprint to guide transmission infrastructure investment to 2050 and beyond. The challenge is ensuring sufficient strategic direction between these horizons, so that the system can move progressively from today's network towards the longer-term future. This is important because long-term scenarios can show what the grid may need to look like in 2050, but transmission infrastructure must still be developed in stages as demand, generation and other system requirements change.

Taken together, the Australian and New Zealand examples highlight the potential value of moving from a reactive approach to a more anticipatory and coordinated approach to transmission planning. Where there is sufficient confidence about future demand or generation, planning infrastructure ahead of individual projects can allow networks to serve multiple future users and provide greater certainty about where investment will be needed.

For the UK, this reinforces the importance of viewing the SSEP, RESPs and CSNP as part of an ongoing planning cycle. The strategic planning framework needs to provide both a long-term direction and a clear pathway for translating that direction into nearer-term investment decisions, while retaining enough flexibility to respond as the system evolves.



Case study

When a REZ is not economically justifiable – North Northland

New Zealand also provides an example of where the Australian-style REZ model was considered but did not proceed. Transpower identified the potential for a Renewable Energy Zone in North Northland in 2021, following increased interest in smaller-scale solar and wind projects. However, modelling did not demonstrate that a full REZ would be economic, and there was no government funding available to underwrite the transmission investment.

Stakeholders highlighted the risk of building large transmission lines speculatively. If the expected generation did not materialise, the cost of unused infrastructure could ultimately fall on electricity consumers. This was seen as particularly important in North Northland, where there were concerns about the ability to afford additional costs.

The experience illustrates that the Australian REZ model cannot simply be transferred to another country. Australia is managing a much larger transition from significant fossil-fuel generation and its REZs operate at a bigger scale. New Zealand already has a predominantly renewable electricity system, meaning the rationale and economics for a REZ are different.

4.2 Engaging people in planning the grid

Transpower's approach to long-term grid planning provides an interesting example of how engagement can be used both to build understanding of infrastructure needs, and to improve the assumptions and scenarios on which those needs are based.

Transpower's Te Kanapu [Future Grid initiative](#) is developing a long-term blueprint for the national grid to 2050 and beyond. A particularly interesting feature of Te Kanapu is the role of stakeholder engagement in developing the future scenarios. Rather than simply asking stakeholders to comment on draft network plans, Transpower sought to understand what stakeholders considered possible and desirable for New Zealand's future economy. Initial engagement with generators and large customers identified potential drivers including continued strength in agriculture and food production, AI and data centres, renewable-energy-based manufacturing and e-fuels.

The engagement on future scenarios has also been deliberately broad, with input from consumers and communities through consultations, surveys and the use of social media campaigns alongside industry and energy-sector discussions. Transpower has used a mixture of formal consultation, surveys and direct conversations, with an emphasis on early, face-to-face engagement. This has provided opportunities to understand the ambitions and plans of businesses and regional stakeholders that may not be captured through existing datasets. The future scenarios were deliberately framed around ambition, rather than as forecasts of what is most likely to happen. This encouraged stakeholders to consider what New Zealand could achieve and what this might mean for future electricity demand. The scenarios were subsequently refined in response to stakeholder feedback, with the final scenarios and their underlying assumptions published to show how input had been incorporated. These scenarios are then being used to test different network investment options, with technical analysis intended to identify a first tranche of 'least-regret' investments to inform the future grid blueprint.

Te Kanapu therefore demonstrates an approach in which engagement is used not simply to communicate infrastructure plans, but to help shape the assumptions, scenarios and priorities that underpin long-term network planning.



Key recommendation for the UK

Use engagement to shape the scenarios and assumptions underpinning strategic energy planning.

Future versions of the SSEP and CSNP should involve stakeholders before strategic options are established, using engagement to test assumptions about future energy demand, economic growth, generation and flexibility. Where stakeholder input influences the resulting scenarios or plans, this should be clearly demonstrated, creating a transparent feedback loop between engagement and strategic decision making.



Key question

Does undergrounding have potential?

The potential for undergrounding transmission lines is a common question raised by communities in the UK. However, both Australia and New Zealand generally use overhead transmission lines, except where specific constraints make undergrounding necessary.

The experience in New Zealand illustrates why. It is estimated that underground transmission routes can cost around seven to ten times more than equivalent overhead lines, while faults can take considerably longer to locate and repair. The practical impacts can also be significant: underground cables require extensive excavation, creating environmental damage through trenching and can be difficult to access for repairs. The key lesson is that the choice between overhead and underground infrastructure involves trade-offs in cost, construction, environmental effects, resilience and repair, and these need to be communicated clearly to communities.

Communities need clear information about the costs, impacts and trade-offs of undergrounding if they are to engage meaningfully in decisions about new transmission.



4.3 Local level engagement in transmission applications

Engagement on the future of the electricity grid needs to be complemented by effective engagement on individual transmission projects. Discussions with Transpower highlighted the importance of maintaining relationships with communities and landowners throughout the planning and delivery of infrastructure. Transpower also emphasised the importance of engaging early, being open about what is and is not known, understanding previous community experiences, explaining how the electricity system works, fronting difficult conversations and clearly communicating why decisions are made. Effective engagement is an ongoing process that requires listening and responding to practical concerns alongside explaining the wider need for infrastructure.

A key lesson from Australia was the importance of being clear about what communities can and cannot influence. There is benefit in distinguishing from the outset between elements of a project that are largely fixed and those where communities and landowners can meaningfully shape the outcome, such as aspects of route alignment, tower siting or access arrangements. Being transparent about the scope for influence can help avoid creating unrealistic expectations and focus engagement on decisions where local knowledge and preferences can make a genuine difference.

Engagement can be used not simply to communicate infrastructure plans, but to help shape the assumptions, scenarios and priorities that underpin long-term network planning.



Case study

Energising Queenstown and Queenstown electrification accelerator

Queenstown provides an interesting example of how different approaches to meeting future electricity needs can lead to different narratives about the energy system.

[Energising Queenstown](#) brought together Transpower, Aurora Energy and PowerNet to consider the future electricity needs of the Queenstown area. The project explored options for strengthening the electricity supply to support future growth, with four new transmission line options presented to the community for consultation. The engagement provided an opportunity for people to consider different transmission options at an early stage. Following early consultation, the project identified a new 110 kV transmission line from Cromwell to a new substation near Arrow Junction as the preferred option for further investigation.

At the same time, the [Queenstown Electrification Accelerator \(QEA\)](#), led by Rewiring Aotearoa, has been exploring how local measures such as solar generation, battery storage and changes in electricity demand could contribute to meeting future electricity needs and defer the need for new transmission infrastructure. This approach is motivated by a focus on local resilience and consumer bills, and they wanted the option of delaying any potential line build to be presented as an option to communities.

For QEA, the question was not the location of a proposed transmission line, but whether a combination of local generation, storage and demand flexibility could provide an alternative, delaying the need for a new line. Meanwhile Energising Queenstown considers that both grid upgrades and local solutions like solar are important for Queenstown's future energy needs.

This raises an important issue for strategic energy planning: what counts as an option? Where a community is asked to comment on different routes or designs for a major infrastructure project, this is meaningful engagement, but is it different from being able to influence whether that infrastructure is the preferred solution in the first place?

5.



Building community confidence and capacity

Alongside the approaches to engagement explored elsewhere in this report, the Fellowship research identified a number of other initiatives that offer valuable lessons for the UK. While these approaches are different in scale and purpose, they share a common focus: how we involve, support and build trust with communities as the energy system changes.

This chapter explores three examples in particular: the role of the Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner, Australia's Developer Rating Scheme, and Rewiring Aotearoa's approach to building wider community understanding and participation.

5.1 Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner

One of the most interesting initiatives I encountered during my research in Australia was the role of the [Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner](#). The commissioner provides an independent source of information, support and dispute resolution for communities affected by renewable energy and associated electricity infrastructure projects. The role was originally created in response to community concerns about the impacts of large-scale wind farms. However, the remit has since expanded to include a broader range of energy infrastructure, including transmission projects, reflecting the increasing scale and pace of Australia's energy transition. The commissioner operates independently from both government and industry and acts as an intermediary between communities, developers, regulators and policymakers.

Communities need somewhere independent to turn for information, advice and support when concerns arise.



Throughout my Fellowship, the importance of trust emerged as a recurring theme. Many stakeholders highlighted that opposition to energy infrastructure is often driven not solely by the impacts of individual projects, but by wider concerns about fairness, transparency and whether communities feel their voices are being heard. In this context, the Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner was cited as an important mechanism for building confidence and providing communities with access to an independent and trusted source of advice.

The commissioner's role extends beyond responding to complaints; the office undertakes research into community attitudes, develops guidance and best practice resources for industry, facilitates dispute resolution and provides advice to government on emerging issues and areas of concern.

The UK currently lacks an equivalent independent body focused specifically on the social and community dimensions of energy infrastructure development. While developers, local authorities and regulators all play important roles, there is no single organisation with responsibility for supporting communities, identifying emerging concerns and sharing best practice across the sector.



Recommendation for the UK

Establish a similar 'UK Energy Infrastructure Commissioner' role ahead of the implementation of the Strategic Spatial Energy Plan.

The role could provide a neutral and trusted point of contact for communities.

5.2 Australia's Developer Rating Scheme

Australia's [Developer Rating Scheme \(DRS\)](#) was launched in 2026 to improve transparency and public confidence in renewable energy developers. The scheme responds to recommendations from the Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner's [Community Engagement Review](#) (2023), which identified poor community engagement as a significant contributor to declining trust in renewable energy development.

The underlying principle is simple: communities are often expected to host major energy infrastructure, yet have little independent information about the organisations proposing these projects. Developers can vary in their experience, governance and approach to community engagement, but this track record is not always visible to landowners and local communities. The DRS seeks to address this information gap through an independent assessment of participating developers.

Administered by Equifax, the voluntary scheme assesses developers across seven areas of organisational performance – community engagement, conduct, character, capability, organisational capacity, financial strength and management of contractor relationships. The public-facing element is deliberately simple: participating organisations receive a three- five-star Community Engagement Rating, providing communities with an accessible indication of a developer's approach while encouraging developers to improve their practices.

The scheme represents an interesting attempt to strengthen trust through greater transparency. Rather than assessing individual projects, it focuses on the capability and track record of the organisations delivering them. However, the approach also raises questions about how effectively the quality of community relationships can be captured through a rating. Engagement is inherently local and relational, shaped by individual behaviours, local circumstances and relationships built over many years. The scheme is also voluntary, which may limit its impact.

Despite these potential limitations, the DRS offers an important reflection for the UK – as the number of renewable energy and transmission projects increases, communities will increasingly need to engage with developers that they may know little about. Greater transparency about developers' experience and track record could help address this information imbalance and support more informed engagement.

Whether the UK requires a formal developer rating scheme remains an open question. Any comparable approach would need to ensure that assessments are robust, proportionate and capable of reflecting the relational nature of effective community engagement. Nevertheless, Australia's experience demonstrates the importance of recognising trust as a strategic component of the energy transition, rather than assuming it will emerge automatically. There may be other ways to achieve this in the UK, in particular through ensuring communities have access to independent advice to help them understand proposals, develop community priorities and plans, negotiate community benefits and participate confidently throughout planning processes.

5.3 Lessons on wider public engagement

Throughout my research, I saw numerous interesting approaches to community engagement, many of which are explored elsewhere in this report. One example that particularly stood out was [Rewiring Aotearoa](#), which is part of a wider [Rewiring movement](#) that originated from, and is very active in, Australia.

Rewiring Aotearoa's mission is to make New Zealand more electric, combining research, communication and demonstration with grassroots community organising. It has developed accessible resources to help households understand the benefits and practicalities of electrification, alongside a growing network of local community groups. These groups provide practical advice, run events and demonstrations, and work with councils and other organisations to support local action.

What I found particularly interesting was the emphasis on building community knowledge and confidence. Rewiring helps translate complex energy issues into accessible information and supports local people to share that knowledge within their own communities. For example, their support has helped communities participate in government consultations that they might otherwise have found difficult to navigate.

The Rewiring model demonstrates the potential of supporting trusted local organisations and networks to build public understanding of the energy transition. Communities cannot meaningfully participate if they do not have access to the information, skills and confidence to do so. This suggests that investment in community capacity and accessible information should sit alongside formal consultation and engagement requirements.



Recommendation for the UK

Invest in support for local communities.

Communities cannot meaningfully participate in the energy transition if they do not have access to the information, skills and confidence to do so. There needs to be a wider effort to provide accessible information about the energy system and provide support for communities who want to learn skills such as how to respond to consultations.



6.

Recommendations for putting communities at the heart of UK strategic energy planning

The success of the UK's Strategic Spatial Energy Plan should not be measured by the quality of the plan alone, but also by how effectively it shapes subsequent decisions and delivers positive outcomes for the communities affected.

Strategic energy planning creates an opportunity to involve communities earlier, before decisions about the location and scale of infrastructure become established. The recommendations below draw on lessons from Australia and New Zealand to identify what is needed to put this into practice. As well as the implementation of the SSEP and subsequent strategic plans, the recommendations also cover the institutions, planning processes, local capacity and delivery arrangements needed to support it. Together, they aim to ensure that communities can meaningfully influence strategic decisions, that the cumulative impacts of infrastructure are anticipated and managed and that the places and people hosting clean energy infrastructure have opportunities to share in its benefits.



Recommendations on SSEP implementation

1.

Plan for communities as well as infrastructure

Who: NESO working with DESNZ and relevant regional partners

Use the SSEP and RESP processes to identify, coordinate and mitigate the cumulative impacts of multiple energy developments on host communities. This should include consideration of construction activity, transport, workforce pressures, local services and community infrastructure, with clear roles and responsibilities for anticipating and coordinating these cross-project impacts at a regional level.

2.

Invest in local engagement capacity

Who: DESNZ community engagement team, working with NESO

Engagement should continue from the start of strategic planning through to project delivery. Developers are well placed to engage with communities about individual projects, but should not be expected to explain or defend strategic decisions made by government. Clear responsibilities can help maintain accountability and reduce confusion for communities while ensuring that there is ongoing engagement about the strategic planning process.

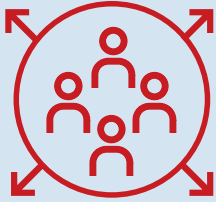
In areas expected to host significant volumes of energy infrastructure, DESNZ should establish a dedicated local engagement capacity, potentially through accessible community information hubs or training and employing locally based engagement officers. This should provide a trusted local point of contact able to provide information across projects and direct questions to the relevant developer, network company or public body.

3.

Develop a more strategic approach to community benefits

Who: DESNZ community benefits team, working with NESO and the devolved governments

The SSEP provides an opportunity to consider not only where energy infrastructure is located, but how the benefits of development can be delivered strategically. Rather than considering community benefits solely on a project-by-project basis, mechanisms should be developed to coordinate benefits across multiple projects within a region alongside small, localised grant opportunities. Strategic arrangements should give affected communities a meaningful role in identifying investment priorities while retaining scope for benefits negotiated directly with host communities. This process could also involve providing additional support to upskill communities and to help them develop priorities for their local area.



Recommendations for building community capacity

4.

Establish an independent Energy Infrastructure Commissioner for the UK

Who: DESNZ, working with the devolved governments

The UK government should establish an independent Energy Infrastructure Commissioner ahead of implementation of the SSEP. They should consider how the role could operate across the UK, working with the devolved governments where appropriate.

The commissioner could provide a neutral and trusted point of contact for communities affected by energy infrastructure. The role should provide independent information and support, identify recurring concerns across projects and regions, promote good engagement practice and provide an independent route for communities to raise issues.

5.

Invest in upskilling local communities

Who: DESNZ community engagement team

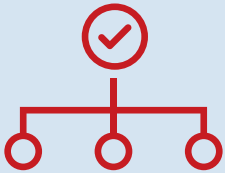
Communities cannot meaningfully participate in the energy transition if they do not have access to the information, skills and confidence to do so. There needs to be a wider effort to provide accessible information about the energy system and provide support for communities who want to learn skills such as how to respond to planning applications and engage in policy consultations.

6.

Plan early for local economic participation

Who: DESNZ working with NESO SSEP engagement team

As part of the SSEP implementation there should be consideration of how local businesses can benefit from the development of local energy infrastructure. This should include early engagement with local businesses, sufficient lead times for procurement opportunities, support for businesses seeking to adapt their services, and a clear definition of what constitutes 'local' to ensure benefits reach the communities hosting infrastructure.



Recommendations for changes to the planning system

7.

Connect regional energy planning with regional planning

Who: NESO RESP team, working with MHCLG and combined authorities

Ensure that Regional Energy Strategic Plans (RESPs), are connected to the wider planning system, potentially through Spatial Development Strategies in England. The relationship between strategic energy planning and the planning system should be considered as early as possible, identifying where strategic assessment could provide greater certainty and reduce duplication later in consenting. Strategic planning should resolve questions that are genuinely strategic, allowing project consenting to focus on the site-specific issues that cannot sensibly be resolved in advance.

Regional energy planning should help connect energy opportunities with spatial planning, economic development, infrastructure investment and local priorities, providing a clearer pathway from strategic planning to delivery.

8.

Make certainty, rather than speed alone, the objective of accelerated consenting

Who: MHCLG and DESNZ planning teams

The UK should focus on providing greater certainty, rather than pursuing speed alone, when reforming the consenting process for strategically important energy infrastructure.

New Zealand demonstrates the potential value of clear eligibility criteria, expert decision-making panels and defined timescales. However, accelerated processes should also provide meaningful opportunities for communities to share their views with decision makers.



Recommendations on future strategic energy planning (RESPs, CSNP and future versions of the SSEP)

9.

Give communities a meaningful role in shaping strategic energy plans

Who: NESO

Across the suite of strategic energy plans, societal engagement should take place before strategic options and scenarios are established. Future iterations of the SSEP and CSNP should involve communities, local authorities, industry and other stakeholders in testing assumptions around energy demand, generation, flexibility and infrastructure needs. The aim should be to involve communities early enough to influence decisions while providing clear information about what is known, what remains uncertain and what can still change. Where stakeholder input influences the resulting scenarios or plans, this should be clearly demonstrated, creating a transparent feedback loop between engagement and strategic decision making.

The Australian experience also demonstrates that transparency in strategic energy planning needs to extend beyond publishing data and modelling assumptions. For the SSEP, providing this decision-making 'audit trail' could help communities and stakeholders understand not only the evidence informing the plan, but how that evidence has translated into strategic choices.

10.

Give communities greater visibility of the future development pipeline

Who: NESO and DESNZ

Strategic energy planning should provide communities with greater visibility of which projects are most likely to proceed, how individual proposals relate to wider plans for generation and network infrastructure and how plans may evolve over time. Greater visibility would help communities understand the scale and likely timing of change in their area, reduce consultation fatigue and enable more informed participation.

Appendix

List of organisations that participated in this research

New Zealand:

Arup
Ara Ake
Barker & Associates
Bajema Consultancy
Canterbury Mayoral Forum
EECA (Energy Efficiency & Conservation Authority)
Electricity Networks Aotearoa
Electricity Networks Association
Energising Queenstown
Environmental Protection Authority
Independent planning consultant
New Zealand Infrastructure Commission, Te Waihangā
New Zealand Ministry for the Environment
New Zealand Wind Energy Association (NZWEA)
Re-alliance
Rewiring Aotearoa
Rewiring Queenstown
SLR Consulting
Taranaki Regional Council
Transpower
Venture Taranaki
Victoria University of Wellington
WSP
Yinson Renewables

Australia:

Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner's Office
Australian Energy Market Commission
Australian Energy Market Operator
Australian Energy Regulator
Australian National University
Clean Energy Council
Coexistence Queensland
Community Power Agency
Cubico
Dawn Renewables
EnergyCo NSW
Queensland Department of State Development Infrastructure and Planning
Queensland Renewable Energy Council
Renewable Energy Partners
RES Australia
Squadron Energy
Stromlo Energy
Sydney Law School
Transgrid
VicGrid



PUTTING COMMUNITIES AT THE HEART OF UK STRATEGIC ENERGY PLANNING

Lessons from Australia and New Zealand
