



Department for
Energy Security
& Net Zero

Rt Hon Ed Miliband MP

Secretary of State Department for
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Bill Esterson MP
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6 February 2025

Dear Bill,

Nuclear Energy Regulation Review and National Policy Statement

I am writing to invite your committee to engage with the new Nuclear National Policy Statement (NPS), EN-7, on nuclear energy.

To facilitate new nuclear infrastructure development through the planning framework, I have laid the draft EN-7 before Parliament as part of the procedure to bring it into effect set out in the Planning Act 2008. My intention is to bring EN-7 into effect before the end of 2025.

EN-7 will be applicable to nuclear infrastructure over 50 MW in England and over 350 MW in Wales which are expected to deploy after 2025. EN-7 will not apply in Scotland, where electricity generating stations with a capacity of more than 50MW are consented by Scottish Ministers, and those with a capacity below that threshold are consented by the relevant Local Planning Authority. In Northern Ireland, planning consents for all Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects, as well as most energy policy, are devolved to the Northern Ireland Executive, so the Secretary of State will not examine applications for energy infrastructure in Northern Ireland and EN-7 will not apply there.

The current suite of energy National Policy Statements were designated in 2024, with the exception of the nuclear specific NPS (EN-6) which was designated in 2011. It includes the overarching energy NPS (EN-1) and a range of technology-specific NPSs (EN-2 to EN-5). EN-7 will play a crucial role in fulfilling a key manifesto commitment: ensuring the long-term security of the UK nuclear sector. EN-6 listed eight sites potentially suitable for the deployment of GW scale developments by the end of 2025, but no longer has full effect. A new nuclear National Policy Statement, EN-7, is needed.

We have designed EN-7 to support and facilitate new nuclear development through:

- a) **Expanding the range of technologies** from just Gigawatt-scale to also include Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) and Advanced Modular Reactors (AMRs);
- b) **Removing the deployment deadline** for new projects to open up more siting opportunities and facilitate longer-term market development. The previous 2025 deadline set in EN-6 has been viewed by industry as holding back, rather than speeding up or encouraging, development;
- c) Having a **criteria-based approach** to new nuclear deployment that restricts development in unsuitable locations but empowers developers to identify sites suitable for their specific project and technology. The previous approach where over a 3-year period government sought nominations, undertook site analysis, and then selected 'potentially suitable' sites (eight sites were named in 2011), no longer works given the new diversity of technologies, end-uses (e.g. for high-temperature heat and hydrogen production), and pace needed to meet net zero;
- d) **Prioritising safety and security** by setting absolute requirements on relevant site assessment criteria, such as proximity to dense populations and military interests;
- e) Ensuring high standards for managing **environmental and socio-economic impacts**; and
- f) **Maximising clarity** to promote good development planning, speed up application processing, and address concerns about complexities and ambiguities in the Development Consent and regulatory processes.

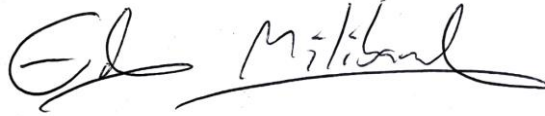
In parallel to laying EN-7 in Parliament, we are launching a public consultation on the draft EN-7, which incorporates the formal response to the siting strategy consultation launched by the previous government in January 2024. I will provide Parliament with a summary of consultation responses following closure of the consultation to inform Parliamentary scrutiny of EN-7.

I understand that your committee may wish to scrutinise EN-7 in detail. Lord Hunt and our officials stand ready to discuss any questions you have.

Alongside this, the Prime Minister is commissioning an independent taskforce to look at the regulatory framework and regulations affecting nuclear across both civil and defence sectors. The task force will examine how to deliver nuclear faster and cost-effectively in support of growth and innovation, while maintaining the UK's high standards of nuclear safety, security and non-proliferation. It will be led by an independent expert and will report to the Prime Minister and present options to me, the Defence Secretary, and Chief Secretary to the Treasury to consider in Summer

2025. I would welcome any contributions your committee and its members make to the work of the taskforce and will provide further details on how to do so in due course.

Yours ever,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ed Miliband', written in a cursive style.

RT HON ED MILIBAND MP
Secretary of State for Energy Security & Net Zero