

Public submission in respect of

**Planning Application 77576 to North Devon District Council
WHITE CROSS WIND FARM**

Some detail has been obscured for reasons of national security.

1. Since the start of this Application the operation of the GB Electricity Grid has been assigned to the new National Energy Systems Operator (NESO).

NESO has been given the remit to attain Net Zero by 2050.

It has the interim target to de-carbonise the electricity grid by 2030.

That means decommissioning the Combined Cycle Gas Turbine (CCGT) plants which provide the mainstay of the 'cheap-rate' overnight tariff provision.

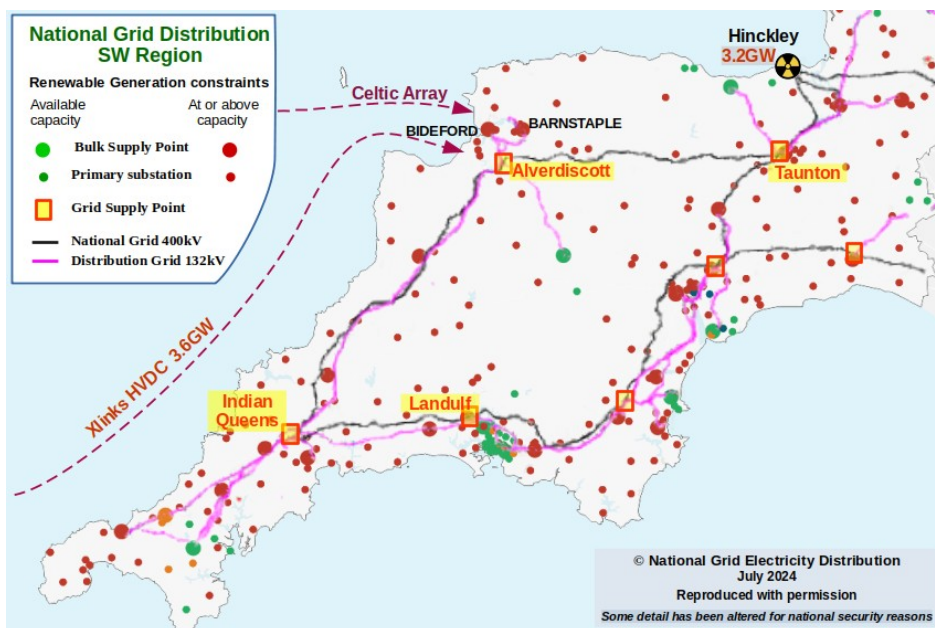
The White Cross Celtic Array might expect to become part of the generation mix which replaces CCGT and the Drax (wood pellet) plant in Yorkshire.

However, the Applicants have not stated their strategy, nor whether they even have an **Offer to Connect** to the Grid.

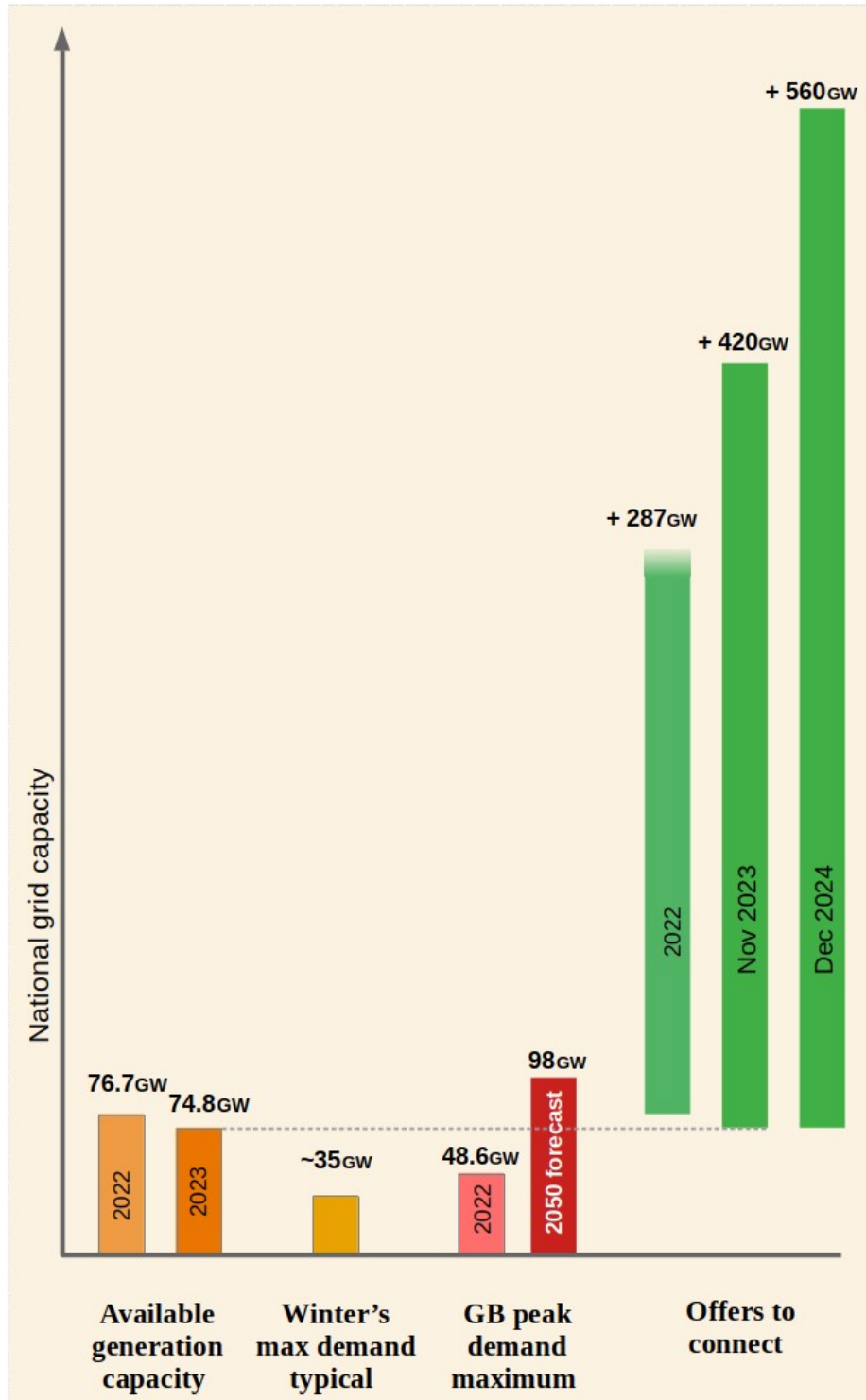
2: Although the Applicant's intention is to connect to the 132kV distribution grid at East Yelland, the West Country is already over-supplied with electricity generation.

The clear intention is that the Applicant seeks the cheapest route by which they will connect to the 400kV Transmission Grid at Alverdiscott.

However, there is insufficient capacity on the Transmission Grid cables to export electricity from Celtic Array eastwards across Exmoor towards Taunton and beyond.



3: GB already has more electricity generation being offered than it requires.



The [Digest of UK Energy Statistics](#) (DUKES) is published in July for the preceding year

With the transmission pipeline currently oversubscribed at more than 560GW – three times what is needed to meet Britain's net zero goals – there is huge uncertainty around what substations need building and where.

[National Grid](#) Electricity Transmission, Dec'24

The 0.1GW of potential generation from WCOWL is not required. It is so insignificant, it would be a line less than 1pt high on the above histogram, and hence invisible.

4. There is financial advantage for WCOWL in having unused operating capacity:

They are compensated at the expense of British consumers.

Thousands of wind turbines will be shut down during Storm Éowyn because its 100 mph gusts are expected to generate more power than the UK's electricity grid can handle.

When Éowyn impacts wind farms in Scotland and the North Sea on Friday, the extreme winds will produce excessive energy, forcing operators to disconnect their turbines.

Despite being offline, the turbines are anticipated to generate millions of pounds in profits for wind farm operators, who will receive constraint payments for their shutdown.

In the UK, the National Energy System Operator (NESO) compensates wind turbine owners to halt electricity generation. This funding is ultimately sourced from consumers' energy bills.

This winter's storms have already proven that wind turbines can be highly profitable for the predominantly foreign companies operating UK wind farms.

According to the Renewable Energy Foundation (REF), Storms Ashley in October and Bert in November resulted in £26.3 million in payments to energy companies.

[Share Talk 23rd Jan'25](#)

There is no benefit to consumers in adding the White Cross array to the electricity grid.

5. There is no obligation on an electricity generator to supply British consumers when required.

During recent storms in the winter 2024/25, NESO sought to buy electricity from Battery Energy Storage Sites (BESS). However, many had already contracted to sell elsewhere in Europe for a higher price, using the marine interconnectors.

As a result, NESO is then forced to pay very high prices to secure supplies from Gas Turbine generation plants.

[The Guardian, 8th Jan'25](#)
[Watt Logic 13th January](#)

The UK is a 'soft touch' for allowing companies backed by foreign investment to gain access to our electricity grid. Our countryside and infrastructure is being used by companies to inflate electricity prices and make vast profits for energy being consumed elsewhere.

It is incumbent on Local Planning Authorities to make decisions which best reflect the needs of this country and its citizens.

Paul Richardson

Lumburn Rise, Tavistock PL19 8HP