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27 January 2025

Cadent Gas Limited's (Cadent) HyNet North West Hydrogen Pipeline Project

Targeted Consultation under Section 42 of the Planning Act 2008 ("the Act") (as amended)

Notification under Regulation 11 of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2009 ("EIA Regulations")

I am writing to consult with you on amendments to the proposed application for the Hynet North West Hydrogen Pipeline Project ("the Project"). Cadent intends to apply to the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero for a Development Consent Order ("DCO") under Section 37 of the Act for the construction and operation of the Project. You have been identified as a consultee for the Project and I am writing in accordance with Section 42 of the Act to inform you that targeted consultation on proposed changes to the Project commences on 29th January 2025.

The Project

Cadent, the UK's largest regional gas distributor, is currently developing a number of projects to support the decarbonisation of industry and power generation in our regions through the use of hydrogen. The Project is the first of these located in the North West industrial heartland of the UK which will support retaining industry and jobs in the region as well as contributing towards the UK reaching its Net Zero ambitions.

Cadent intends to make an application to the Secretary of State for a DCO for the Project.

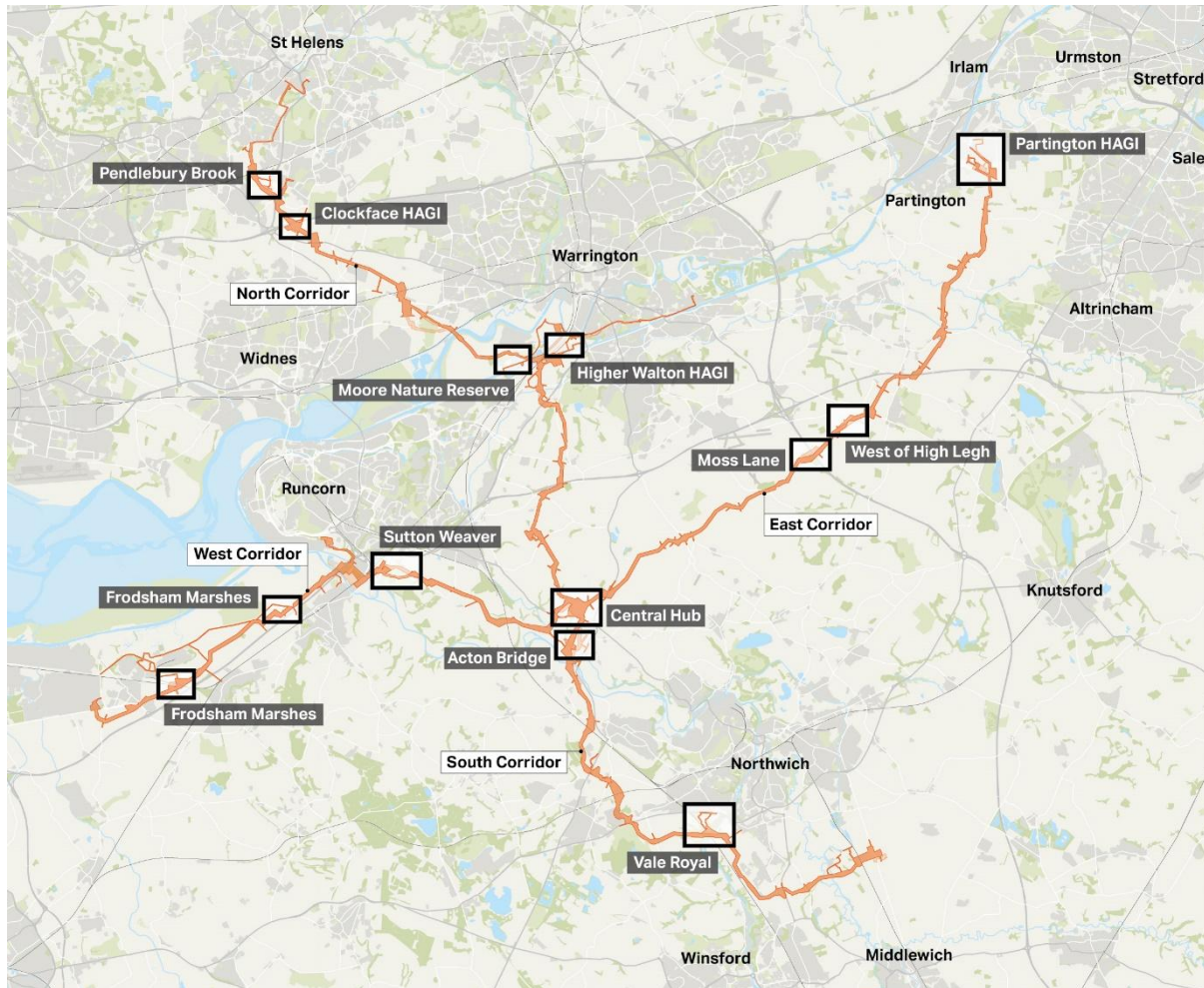
The Project includes the construction, operation and eventual decommissioning of approximately 100km of new underground pipeline to distribute hydrogen to industry in the North West. A number of Hydrogen Above Ground Installations (HAGIs), including Block Valve Installations (BVIs), are required to control the flow and pressure of hydrogen at key points along the proposed pipeline.

The Project connects the Hydrogen Production Plant (HPP) at the Stanlow site, as the source of low carbon hydrogen, for onward distribution to the network. The pipeline transports the low carbon hydrogen to the Central Hub at the centre of the network, which then serves as the distribution point to the North, East and South pipeline Corridors, which would extend to St. Helens, Partington and Northwich respectively. Branching off from each main pipeline corridor would be smaller pipelines called spurs, which connect regional industry to the main pipeline. On the eastern pipeline corridor, alongside industrial connections, infrastructure has also been included which in the future would support the potential for blending low levels of hydrogen into the existing natural gas network, pending a government policy decision. The Project would also link to underground hydrogen storage facilities in Cheshire used to balance supply and demand through the network.

Targeted consultation

This targeted consultation follows a third stage statutory consultation held in Autumn 2024 at which Cadent presented updated proposals, refined from earlier route corridors. Proposals for the removal of the Northwich Spur, new options for the Higher Walton and Partington HAGIs, alternative route options avoiding the former Fiddlers Ferry Power Station, and further changes, additions and reductions to the area being considered were also presented for consultation.

As a result of feedback prior to and during Stage Three statutory consultation, Cadent is consulting on several additional amendments to the Project. An overview of these amendments can be found below, and a separate copy of this map is also enclosed.



Sutton Weaver (West Corridor)

- Following feedback on the location of the pipeline route to the east of the Rocksavage HAGI, the Applicant is proposing to realign the pipeline directly to the south of the route previously consulted upon.
- The route would pass to the south of Sutton Hall across the former Sutton Hall Golf Course, which has been returned to agricultural land. The amendment would increase the distance of the pipeline from residential properties and better align with an existing pipeline corridor.

Central Hub

- The Applicant is proposing several amendments in the area near to the Central Hub following feedback received.
- The Applicant proposes to extend the Draft Order Limits (boundary of development area) west to include the existing access off Northwich Road with the land between the red line boundary and the existing access to be used as an ecological mitigation area. The amendments proposed provide an opportunity for construction traffic to use the existing access, potentially reducing the number of vehicles using the proposed access further east on Northwich Road. The ecological mitigation area could include the planting of woodland, hedgerows and potentially, the creation of ponds.

Higher Walton HAGI (North Corridor)

- Following feedback received on the two HAGI options in Higher Walton, an additional option (HWH9) has been identified in this area within the Solvay Interlox ownership. Option HWH9 is located to the east of option HWH2 on the eastern side of the West Coast Mainline railway. This is an area of previously developed land set within an existing industrial site.
- For Option HWH9, the pipeline would route below the Manchester Ship canal via a trenchless crossing from two possible locations – the first from a location similar to option HWH8, the second in the adjoining field to the west. These are both accounted for within the proposed Limits of Deviation (LoD). The route of the Warrington spur, serving Novelis, has been amended through the Solvay Interlox site and Morley Common.

Moore Nature Reserve (North Corridor)

- The Limits of Deviation (LoD) have been widened next to the Moore Nature Reserve north of Birchwood Lane to allow the route to avoid the total loss of a pond and a rare, black poplar tree(s). These features were identified as part of an environmental survey undertaken in summer 2024.

Pendlebury Brook (To the West of James Roby Way)

- In this location, the Applicant is proposing to extend the Draft Order Limits to include land either side of Pendlebury Brook. This land is proposed as ecological mitigation and it is intended to provide suitable alternative habitats for water voles in the area.

West of High Legh (East Corridor)

- The Applicant received feedback on the pipeline route west of High Legh and the characteristics of the land in this area. The Applicant therefore proposes to amend the alignment of the pipeline such that it would pass to the north of these features.

Moss Lane (East Corridor)

- To provide access across the Crowley Brook from Moss Lane, the Applicant has made a minor amendment to the Draft Order Limits to include the option of using an existing crossing point into the proposed trenchless crossing location.

Partington HAGI (East Corridor)

- There are two amendments proposed by the Applicant in this area. The first is to replace the previous access route to the Partington HAGI (PH2), which was via the existing industrial site, to a route via Common Lane, as indicated by stakeholders.
- The second amendment is an extension of the Project's Draft Order Limits to include an existing Electricity North West wooden pole line (northern boundary of the field), to support a potential future grid connection and to improve safety during construction.

Vale Royal (South Corridor)

- During Stage Three statutory consultation, the Applicant presented two alternative crossing techniques for the River Weaver and West Coast Mainline railway at Vale Royal – Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) and a micro-tunnel. This was proposed as a single crossing location.
- Construction challenges remain in this area, related to the length of the crossing and the nature of the ground and infrastructure to be crossed. The Applicant is therefore considering two crossing options with an additional crossing location included consisting of two adjoining micro-tunnels, one routing south west under the railway and the other north west under the River Weaver. To

allow for construction access, two alternative routes have been identified from the A556 for consideration.

Frodsham Marshes (West Corridor)

- The Applicant is proposing an extension of the Project's Draft Order Limits at Frodsham Marshes along ditches south of Moorditch Lane and east of Hapsford Lane. This land is proposed as ecological mitigation and it is intended to provide suitable alternative habitats for water voles.
- A further addition of land at Frodsham Marshes is an increase in the width of the Draft Order Limits of approximately 2.5m towards the bank of the ditch predominantly to the east of the junction between Brook Furlong and Moorditch Lane. This is to maximise the land available to the Project, to support avoidance of the existing telecommunications tower.

Clockface HAGI (North Corridor)

- The area proposed for the Clockface HAGI includes an existing arable field margin, which is managed for the benefit of wildlife. The Applicant is proposing to extend the area of ecological mitigation in the form of an arable field margin alongside the Clockface HAGI compound.

Acton Bridge (South Corridor, south of Central Hub)

- The Applicant has identified an opportunity to work with the landowner of woodland either side of the proposed Trent and Mersey Canal crossing to improve the quality of the habitat in this location. This wooded area would be included in the Project's Draft Order Limits as an ecological mitigation area.

Supporting materials

Further information on the changes, including an addendum to the Draft Environmental Statement as well as Section 46 notice, Section 47/48 notice, and documents, maps and plans showing the nature and location of these amendments, will be available free of charge from **0:00 on Wednesday 29th January until 23:59 on Tuesday 25th February 2025** on the Applicant's website:

www.hynethydrogenpipeline.co.uk/knowledge-hub

Please find enclosed a copy of the notice which publicises the targeted consultation, as required by Section 48 of the Act. This includes further details of how to obtain copies of the consultation materials, together with other relevant information.

Taking part in this targeted consultation

As part of the DCO process, Cadent is required to carry out pre-application consultation in accordance with section 42 of the Act.

Cadent will undertake the consultation in accordance with the Act and the EIA Regulations and will include:

- Prescribed bodies, host and neighbouring authorities, and any persons with an interest in the land affected by the Project under section 42 of the Act;
- Affected local communities under section 47 of the Act; and
- General publicity under section 48 of the Act.

The consultation commences at **0.00 on Wednesday 29th January until 23.59 on Tuesday 25th February 2025**.

Responding to the Consultation

There are several ways to submit feedback:

- **By email**
info@hynethydrogenpipeline.co.uk

- **In writing**
FREEPOST HYPNET NWHP
(please be advised it is not possible to send registered post to a freepost address)

To help us better understand your feedback, it would be helpful if you could include your name and address. Please also confirm which amendment you are responding to, and the nature of your interest in the land affected by the scheme. Further instructions are included alongside each amendment, which will be available to view on www.hynethydrogenpipeline.co.uk/knowledge-hub.

Please respond to this consultation no later than **23:59 on 25th February 2025**. Responses received after this time may not be considered.

Following the consultation, we will consider stakeholder comments and review the Project in light of the feedback gathered, engineering and environmental information.

Further details about the Consultation

The Project is an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) development as defined in the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. Consequently, the Applicant will submit an Environmental Statement as part of the Application. This assesses the likely significant effects arising from the Project on the environment. A Draft Environmental Statement was published as part of the Applicant's Stage Three statutory consultation and an addendum to this Draft Environmental Statement forms part of the consultation material.

Copies of the consultation information may be obtained by calling our community relations team on 0800 860 6261 or by emailing info@hynethydrogenpipeline.co.uk following the launch of consultation and may be requested as an electronic or paper copy.

A reasonable copying charge will apply for paper copies of the Draft Environmental Statement and addendum (up to a maximum of £150 for the full suite of documents).

The Applicant can be contacted for enquiries in relation to any of the above on **0800 860 6261** or by email to: info@hynethydrogenpipeline.co.uk.

Safely managing your data

Cadent will consider and have regard to all responses when developing the application for a DCO once consultation has closed. Responses will form the basis of a Consultation Report that will be one of the factors taken into consideration by the Secretary of State when deciding whether the Application can be accepted for examination. It should therefore be known that any responses could be communicated to others as part of the Consultation Report. Any details you provide to us will be subject to our privacy policy notice.

The Project's privacy policy notice can be found at www.hynethydrogenpipeline.co.uk/contact-us/privacy-policy.

Personal details will be held securely and solely for the purposes connected with this consultation, the DCO process and further development of the Project, including maintaining our gas network. Personal details will not be disclosed to any third parties except where Cadent is required to do so by law (e.g. where required to respond to a formal Freedom of Information Request).

Yours sincerely
Robert Donovan
Project Director – West
HyNet North West Hydrogen Pipeline