
firmus energy

Distribution Connection Policy

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 In accordance with condition 2.3 of the licence for the conveyance of gas granted on 24 March 2005 under which Firmus Energy (Distribution) Limited (“**firmus energy**”) conveys gas (“**Licence**”) there is a requirement to set out a statement regarding the methods by and the principles on which charges are determined for connections to and disconnections from the **Network**¹.
- 1.2 As the Distribution Network Operator, firmus energy has a Distribution Network Code, which provides the operating policy for the conveyance of gas in its Licensed Area. This distribution connection policy (“**Connection Policy**”) complies with the firmus energy Network Code and Licence, setting out firmus energy’s practices and principles in respect of the management and administration of gas network connections and includes schedules of current charges, allowances, indicative costs, and technical requirements for property owners or Licensed Gas Suppliers.
- 1.3 This Connection Policy, as reviewed and approved by the Northern Ireland Authority for Utility Regulation (“**UR**”), sets out the methods and principles on which firmus energy determines its connection charges, creating transparency by enabling customers to reasonably estimate applicable charges and operational / technical requirements for the connection of their premises or gas meter.
- 1.4 Connections by pipe-line systems to the Network
- Where a connection to the Network is requested by a Licensed Gas Conveyor² for any pipe-line system to or from which gas will be conveyed by means of the Network, firmus energy will agree the terms of such connection with the person requesting the connection, on a case-by-case basis. The remainder of this Connection Policy is not applicable to such connections to the Network.
- 1.5 Biomethane injection connections
- Where a connection for the purposes of introducing biomethane into the Network at a Biomethane Entry Point is requested, the steps set out in the Biomethane Connection Guide should be followed [[Biomethane Connection Guide \(firmusenergy.co.uk\)](http://firmusenergy.co.uk)]. The remainder of this Connection Policy is not applicable to such connections to the Network.
- 1.6 All indicative costs provided in this Connection Policy are exclusive of VAT. Where applicable, VAT will be added at the prevailing rate to any quote for work to be carried out under this Connection Policy.
- 1.7 Technical requirements will be in accordance with current relevant industry legislation and guidance documents.

1 “**Network**” means the firmus energy distribution network to which homes and businesses connect, including all gas plant owned, operated and utilised by firmus energy through which gas is delivered to a meter point.

2 “**Licensed Gas Conveyor**” means any person authorised by licence under Article 8 of the Gas (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 (“the Order”) or by exemption under Article 7 of the Order to convey gas to designated areas as set out in its licence (its Licensed Area).

- 1.8 firmus energy will periodically review this Connection Policy and, save in respect of adjustments made in accordance with the applicable measure of inflation, any amendments or variations of this Connection Policy will be provided to the UR for approval prior to coming into effect.
- 1.9 A cost element is recoverable by firmus energy via its connection charges, subject to the terms of its Price Control. The GD23 allowances set out in Schedule 3 of this Connection Policy are compliant with the provisions of the UR's final determination of the GD23 price control for Northern Ireland's Gas Distribution Networks for 2023-2028 (the "GD23 Determination") which came into force on 19 April 2023.
- 1.10 A copy of this Connection Policy, the firmus energy Distribution Network Code, the firmus energy Distribution Licence, the firmus energy Distribution Notice of Rights³ and the firmus energy Accuracy Scheme can be downloaded from the firmus energy website at www.firmusenergy.co.uk ("Website"). They are also available by writing to our customer services manager at A4-A5 Fergusons Way, Kilbegs Road, Antrim, BT41 4LZ.

³ The firmus energy Distribution Notice of Rights sets out the individual standards of performance you can expect from firmus energy and includes the compensation you could receive if these standards are not delivered.

2 Requesting a quotation for connection to the firmus energy network

2.1 Quotation requests – standards of service

- 2.1.1 A Relevant Person⁴ may request from firmus energy a quotation of indicative connection charges for the connection of their premises or gas meter. An applicant's quotation request should be in such form and contain such relevant information as set out at paragraph 3.3 below.
- 2.1.2 Any quotation issued by firmus energy shall be made in accordance with this Connection Policy and the firmus energy Notice of Rights.
- 2.1.3 firmus energy shall provide the applicant with a quotation outlining the applicable connection charges and other applicable terms of connection, in line with this Connection Policy, within the timescales set out below:
- in respect of a Standard Quotation, firmus energy will provide a quotation of connection charges to a Relevant Person within 10 Business Days⁵ of receipt of such a request. A "Standard Quotation" is a quotation (excluding a self-quote⁶) that can be determined by firmus energy without the need for a site visit.
 - in respect of a Non-Standard Quotation, firmus energy will provide a quotation of connection charges to a Relevant Person within 28 days of such a request. A "Non-Standard Quotation" is a quotation which requires firmus energy to visit the site prior to provision of a quotation.
- 2.1.4 firmus energy may not be reasonably expected to provide a specific statement of connection charges within the required 28 days for the following requests. In such instances firmus energy will provide a specific statement of connection charges as soon as is reasonably practicable:
- Domestic and Non-domestic Developments;
 - connections classed as excluded connections (see paragraph 2.4 below);
 - connections where firmus energy, having taken all steps as it was reasonable to take, is unable to provide an accurate quotation within the relevant timescales, since the quote will include costs that can only be negotiated with and paid to a third party;
 - where the Relevant Person has failed to provide firmus energy such minimum information as required from the Relevant Person to provide a quotation;
 - where the Relevant Person has failed to provide firmus energy such access as required to the property to provide a quotation; and
- 2.1.5 Firmus energy is unable to provide a connection to a property which is outside its Licensed Area and therefore cannot provide a quotation for these properties.

2.2 Properties Readily Connectable

⁴ "Relevant Person" means a person who is the Property Owner or the occupier of the premises in respect of which the request for connection is made

⁵ "Business Day" means a day other than as Saturday, Sunday or bank holiday in Northern Ireland when banks in Belfast are open for business.

⁶ "self-quote" means a quotation produced by the customer for the provision of a new connection or alteration of an existing connection in accordance with any conditions published by the relevant gas conveyor to enable the customer to calculate the cost of those works.

- 2.2.1 The Relevant Person may request a quotation for the cost of connection if the property (premises) is defined as being readily connectable.
- 2.2.2 The quotation will include the cost of providing the complete service connection and the provision of a meter installation (see paragraph 2.4 below), as well as any other terms of connection required.
- 2.2.3 As per Part 3, Condition 3.1.1 of the Licence, a readily connectable property is defined as one where:

the curtilage of that premises is within 50 metres of a distribution pipe-line forming part of the Network, which pipe-line is either in operation or readily capable of being brought into operation;

- 2.2.4 In the interest of maintaining the integrity of the distribution network and for the purposes of this Connection Policy, the property defined as readily connectable is one whose front curtilage is situated within 50 metres of a distribution pipeline (i.e. a live gas main) and has a suitable distribution pipeline in the highway located at the same postal address. Exceptional instances may occur where an easement and/or a wayleave agreement are required due to proposed pipework encroaching a third party's property. In such an instance, obtaining the necessary easement and/or a wayleave agreement is the responsibility of the property owner of the premises to which the connection has been requested and any associated costs will be borne by the property owner or Licensed Gas Supplier.

If you are unsure whether your property is readily connectable please contact firmus energy.

2.3 Properties Not Readily Connectable

- 2.3.1 A property is not readily connectable if:
- the criteria set out in paragraph 2.2 do not apply; or
 - the connection is an excluded connection; or
 - the connection is part of a Domestic Development or a Non-domestic Development.
- 2.3.2 If a property cannot be readily connectable the Relevant Person can request a bespoke quotation for the cost of the connection (except if the connection lies outside the Licensed Area). The bespoke quotation will include:
- the cost of providing a suitable distribution main at the front of the property (where required); and
 - the cost of the complete service connection and the provision of a gas meter installation.
- 2.3.3 Please note that, even where a property cannot be readily connectable, the property owner remains entitled to the GD23 regulatory allowances as set out in Schedule 3 of this Connection Policy. The relevant regulatory allowance will be deducted from the cost of connection in respect of the relevant property, i.e..

Quotation = Pipeline construction costs less Properties Passed Allowances

*Details of allowances available are included in **Schedule 3** in the “Mains” table. However, where the value of the allowance exceeds the cost, the Quotation will be nil.*

From time-to-time firmus energy may provide additional allowances for operational reasons.

Please see Appendix 3 of this Connection Policy for a worked example of this calculation.

- 2.3.4 Any quotation provided is valid for a period of 28 days. Please be aware that, where an original quotation has expired, additional charges may be applicable to any subsequent quotation, both in respect of the work to be carried out and for the provision of the subsequent quotation. firmus energy may extend the period for which a quotation remains valid at its absolute discretion and in no circumstances shall firmus energy be obliged to do so.
- 2.3.5 If the quotation request relates to a Domestic Development or a Non-domestic Development and the property owner requires a subsequent redesign, the property owner will be required to pay a non-refundable quotation determination charge. The quotation will be provided within 28 days of receipt of the payment. The quotation determination charge includes:
- the cost of producing the bespoke network design; and
 - the production of the quotation.
- 2.3.6 The quotation determination charge is set out in Schedule 1. Each redesign thereafter may require the property owner to pay a further non-refundable quotation determination charge.

2.4 Statement of excluded connections

2.4.1 The following connections are designated as excluded connections:

- complex connections (see paragraph 2.5 below);
- requests deferred by the customer; and
- sites of special scientific interest.

2.5 Statement of complex connections

2.5.1 A connection is considered a complex connection when:

- Engineering difficulties are present between the location of the distribution main and the property such as waterways, train lines, culverts or significant ground level differences. (A further list of such engineering difficulties and restrictions is provided at Appendix 2 of this Connection Policy); and
- The anticipated costs, which may include costs for design, planning, construction works and applicable overheads, required to overcome such engineering difficulties are in excess of £10,000; or
- Where the total construction costs including applicable overheads, based on past experience of projects of a similar nature, is expected to exceed £100,000.

2.6 Cost of connection

- 2.6.1 Charges for connection are based on the actual costs of carrying out the work based on firmus energy's agreed schedule of rates for construction works. These rates have been established to achieve best value for money through a tendering process.
- 2.6.2 The cost of connection will include:
- where required, the cost of providing a live gas main at the property i.e. the cost of providing a suitable distribution pipeline at the property as detailed in paragraph 2.2; and
 - the cost of providing the complete service connection and the provision of a meter installation (indicative costs are shown in Schedule 1). This includes:
 - the actual connection to the main, the service pipe-work, the pressure regulator, the meter and its installation; and
 - the excavation, reinstatement and statutory notification required to complete the connection.
- 2.6.3 Indicative costs are dependent upon the length of the service, the peak flow rate, the road classification and the pressure classification i.e. the type of main (low or medium pressure). In calculating the charge, the length of the service will be taken to be the length of service from the nearest suitable distribution pipeline to the meter position in accordance with paragraph 2.2.
- 2.6.4 Regulatory allowances are available for the first connection of a property to the Network. Where property is disconnected or isolated from the Network and a request for a connection of that property to the Network or restoration of supply to that property is received, costs may apply.

2.7 Domestic customers

- 2.7.1 The cost of connection includes the cost of providing the complete service connection (indicative costs are shown in Schedule 1) and the provision of a meter installation (meter installation charges are set out in Schedule 1).
- 2.7.2 The first 30m of a domestic service connection (where the peak flow is less than 6 scm³/h) and the provision of a low or medium pressure meter are free of charge⁷.
- 2.7.3 Where a domestic service connection is in excess of 30m in length a rate per linear metre will be charged for each metre in excess of the first 30m (additional costs per metre are set out in Schedule 1).

⁷ The associated costs have been identified in the setting of allowances within the UR's GD23 price control determination. Details of such allowances, where applicable, are shown in Schedule 3 under the heading "Mains" where provision of a suitable distribution pipeline at the property is required (i.e. provision of a live gas main at the property) and under the heading "Connections" for provision of the complete service connection and the provision of a meter installation.

- 2.7.4 Where additional requirements are identified (see section 2.11) for which allowances are not available under the terms of the Utility Regulator's GD23 determination, e.g. expensive surface reinstatement, additional costs may apply.

2.8 Industrial and Commercial customers (I&Cs)

- 2.8.1 Each connection will be treated independently based on expected usage and whether the property can be readily connectable.
- 2.8.2 Each connection will be subject to financial appraisal (based on costs, Regulatory allowances and expected volume of gas burned) and any shortfall in payback from the financial appraisal may be requested from the customer.

2.9 Developers – new build housing developments (including new build social housing developments)

- 2.9.1 Connections to new housing developments will be undertaken where developers commit to a gas connection agreement for their site.
- 2.9.2 The Quotation will be determined using the full cost of providing the Gas Apparatus required to facilitate the connection of the property to the Network (the connection cost) less the allowance available for connecting the property to the Network i.e.

$$\text{Quotation} = \text{Connection cost less Connection Allowance}$$

Details of allowances available are included in Schedule 3. However, where the value of the allowance exceeds the cost, the Quotation will be nil.

From time-to-time firmus energy may provide additional allowances for operational reasons.

Where additional requirements are identified (see section 2.11) for which allowances are not available under the terms of the Utility Regulator's GD23 determination, e.g. expensive surface reinstatement, additional costs may apply.

- 2.9.3 The developer will be required to provide pre-excavated trenches for mains and services within their site and proposed meter locations in line with firmus energy recommendations and in conjunction with the firmus energy engineer.
- 2.9.4 The developer must inform firmus energy of any relevant changes to the development plans which may affect the works to be carried out by firmus energy. Please be aware that the costs charged by firmus energy may need to be re-evaluated as a result.

2.10 NIHE and Housing Association developments and refurbishments

- 2.10.1 Firmus energy will continue to construct the Network giving consideration to any acceptable heating replacement programmes in place from time to time.
- 2.10.2 NIHE and Housing Association tenants will be advised to contact their nearest office to request further details on connection to the firmus energy Network.
- 2.10.3 NIHE and Housing Association developments will be subject to financial appraisal (based on costs, Regulatory allowances and expected volume of gas to be burned). Any shortfall in

payback from the financial appraisal may be requested from NIHE or the Housing Association (as applicable).

2.11 Additional costs

2.11.1 Costs may be chargeable to the Relevant Person or Licensed Gas Supplier where:

- there are reinstatement materials not covered in firmus energy contractor's normal charges, including but not limited to decorative quarry stone. Please see clause 4 for further details;
- engineering difficulties are present between the location of the distribution main and the property including but not limited to waterways, train lines, culverts, significant ground level differences, sites of special scientific interest;
- there is an exceptional length of service on the property i.e. more than 50 metres from the nearest suitable distribution pipeline subject to no more than two metres along the gable wall of the property where the gas supply is being fitted;
- the gas supply is being fitted greater than two metres along the gable wall of the property. This provision is also subject to all applicable health & safety regulations which are in place from time to time and the outcome of any risk assessment and/or site visit carried out by or on behalf of firmus energy;
- there is an inaccessible meter position, e.g. a meter position that requires specialist equipment for installation (such as a meter positioned on the roof of a commercial building);
- there is a potential engineering difficulty regarding the meter position due to hazardous surrounding apparatus.

2.11.2 In the event that unanticipated costs applicable to the connection are identified, firmus energy reserves the right to provide a second quotation for the completion of the works. The property owner, developer or Licensed Gas supplier will be liable for the construction costs already incurred by firmus energy.

2.12 Other Charges

2.12.1 The Charges for non-burn or reduced burn

If no gas is used at the property during the first 12 months after the property is connected to the Network, the Property Owner or Licensed Gas Supplier may be required to pay the cost of any allowance given, cost associated with the disconnection of the property and any other associated costs not charged at the time of connection.

Where applicable, additional costs may be applied if it is found that there is a difference between the actual load determined via the metered rate and the initial forecasted load as supplied initially by the property owner or Licensed Gas Supplier. These costs relate to those occasions where the actual load variance is of such significance to result in a different sized meter being required to facilitate the actual load and capacity. It is the cost for replacing and

installing this new meter that will be applied.

2.12.2 Service alteration and post connection works

Service alteration costs are included in Schedule 2. Post connection work rates are set out in Schedule 2.

3 Permitting a connection to the firmus energy network

3.1 Obligation to connect

3.1.1 Subject to certain exceptions, as set out in the Licence and noted below at 3.1.2, upon acceptance of a quotation by a Relevant Person firmus energy has an obligation (in accordance with Licence Condition 2.3.16) to make such connection based on the terms of such quotation.

3.1.2 In accordance with Licence Condition 2.3.18, firmus energy has no obligation to connect or maintain a connection:

3.1.2.1 If (having firmus energy taken all reasonable steps to prevent such danger occurring) the making or maintain of the connection involves a danger to the public and / or a risk to the safety of the Network

3.1.2.2 There is insufficient capacity in the Network; or

3.1.2.3 If firmus energy has reasonable grounds to believe that the making of the connection would be in conflict with the firmus energy Network Code or any public service obligation

3.1.3 Where firmus energy refuses a request for connection on any of the grounds set out in 3.1.2, the Relevant Person will be advised of the reasons for refusal.

3.2 Connection Requirements

3.2.1 In accordance with Licence Condition 2.3.17, upon acceptance of a quotation for connection but prior to making such connection, firmus energy may require that:

3.2.1.1 the property owner accepts the terms and conditions for making the connection including in respect of:

- (a) the applicable design and operational requirements
- (b) the payment of the connection charges

and

3.2.1.2 A Licenced Gas Supplier⁸ confirms to firmus energy that they are willing to supply gas to the occupier of the premises following the making of the connection

⁸ "Licenced Gas Supplier" means any person or body corporate authorised by licence under Article 8 of the Gas (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 (the "Order") or by exemption under Article 7 of the Order to supply gas to a consumer's property

- 3.2.1.3 An agreement to connect to the Network⁹ may be made between firmus energy and:
- a property owner, which shall include industrial and commercial businesses (“I&Cs”), a developer (who constructs a Domestic Development¹⁰ or Non-domestic Development¹¹) and private landlords (each a “Property Owner”);
 - the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (“NIHE”);
 - Housing Associations;
 - Licenced Gas Conveyors¹²

3.3 How to request a connection

3.3.1 To request a connection to the Network the applicant must provide the following information to firmus energy:

- all such information as may reasonably be requested by firmus energy, including a wayleave (where applicable), details of any planned future developments and details of expected gas volumes (where applicable);
- a fully completed Gas Application Form (Distribution) (“GAF”) or signed contract (as applicable);
- confirmation of a suitable position for the gas meter and associated equipment; (As per section M2.9 of the firmus energy Network Code the Licensed Gas Supplier must ensure that suitable support, protection and security for the Supply Meter Installation is provided)
- confirmation in respect of the estimated date on which gas usage will begin;
- the name of the Gas Safe Registered¹³ installer hired to complete the natural gas conversion; and
- payment to firmus energy of all applicable charges.

3.4 Review of charges and disputes

⁹ “**Network**” means all gas plant owned, operated and utilised by firmus energy through which gas is delivered to a meter point.

¹⁰ “**Domestic Development**” means a development of at least 5 new build domestic premises where there is no existing connection to the Network.

¹¹ “**Non-domestic Development**” means a development of at least 5 new build non-domestic premises where there is no existing connection to the Network.

¹² “**Licenced Gas Conveyer**” means any person or body corporate authorised by licence under Article 8 of the Order or by exemption under Article 7 of the Order to convey gas to a designated area as set out in the relevant licence (its “**Licensed Area**”). A connection to the Network for a Licenced Gas Conveyer will be facilitated under the terms of an appropriate connected systems agreement between firmus energy and the Licensed Gas Conveyer and will not be facilitated under the terms of this Connection Policy.

¹³ “**Gas Safe Registered**” means any engineer qualified to work safely and legally on gas appliances by the Gas Safe Register, being the official gas registration body for Northern Ireland appointed by the Health and Safety Executive Northern Ireland. It is a legal requirement that all gas engineers must be Gas Safe Registered. A copy of the Gas Safe Registered installers is available at <http://www.gassaferegister.co.uk>.

Any person entitled or claiming to be entitled to connection can request a review of the charges or terms of the agreement for connection by writing to:

Director of Engineering & Sustainability
firmus energy
A4-A5 Fergusons Way
Kilbegs Business Park
Antrim
BT41 4LZ

If after contacting firmus energy the matter is still not resolved to the satisfaction of all parties, the requestor has the right to contact the Consumer Council for Northern Ireland for an independent investigation at:

The Consumer Council
Floor 3
Seatem House
28-32 Alfred Street
Belfast
BT2 8EN
Tel: 028 9025 1600

4 Facilities for connection to the distribution system

A connection is an interface with the Network through the construction of pipe and facilities. A connection includes valves, pipe, pressure reduction equipment and meter installation. The arrangements for connections may vary depending on the annual load and the upstream pressure of the gas system. A supply meter will only be fitted when firmus energy receives acceptance of its terms for connection and a Licensed Gas Supplier has confirmed its willingness to supply in accordance with firmus energy's Distribution Network Code.

4.1 The connection pipe and facilities

To ensure safety of operations and to meet the various statutory and commercial needs, certain facilities are required at a connection.

4.1.1 Connecting pipe

Any main or service pipe will be constructed of either polyethylene (PE80 or PE100) or steel depending upon the operating pressure requirement.

4.1.2 Isolation valve

In addition to the customer control valve, a service isolation valve will be required for all connections to domestic premises with a service pipe, having diameter greater than or equal to 32 mm. A service isolation valve will be required for all connections to buildings containing several separately metered domestic premises, special risk premises and all industrial and commercial premises. Medium pressure domestic connections having a diameter less than 32 mm have a flow limiting device and

therefore an isolation valve is not required.

4.1.3 Fire Safe Valve

This is a valve that has undergone testing under fire conditions and has met specific criteria for both leakage and operation. Installation of a fire safe valve may be required where a connection has no service isolation valve.

4.1.4 Pressure reduction equipment

An area of land together with planning permission may be required for very large installations to allow for the installation of pressure reduction equipment.

4.1.5 Operational additional facilities for connections

The following equipment is available at extra cost:

- twin streams for additional security of supply;
- additional line valves;
- additional housing for pressure reduction equipment; and
- service riser covers (including house entry tees).

4.2 Supply meter installation

4.2.1 Filtration equipment

On large supply meter installations (over 40 standard cubic meters per hour (scmh)) separate filtration is required to protect metering and pressure reduction equipment.

4.2.2 Pressure regulation equipment

This is supplied at all sites.

4.2.3 Meter outlet valve

An outlet valve will be fitted to meters with a capacity of more than 40 scmh.

4.2.4 Data loggers

If the load is over 2,196,000 kWh (75,000 tpa) and where deemed as a requirement by firmus energy data loggers will be supplied.

4.2.5 Volume correction equipment

This equipment is required to convert the measured volumetric consumption to a volume corrected for temperature and pressure at Supply Meter Points (SMPs)¹⁴ using

¹⁴ A Supply Meter Point is a system point on the Network at which gas may be offtaken from the network for the purposes of supply directly to a particular premises.

more than 2,196,000 kWh (75,000 tpa).

4.2.6 Optional extras as part of the Supply Meter Installation

At an additional cost the following can be provided:

- meter by-pass¹⁵
- data loggers (where not required for firmus energy Network Code purposes);
- additional over/under pressure protection devices;
- non-return valves (recommended for installations that utilise compression or forced draught equipment in their downstream);
- interface for energy management equipment (chatter cabinet); and
- non-standard operating pressure (not available on low pressure system).

5 Service installation process and reinstatement

- 5.1 In order to bring gas to a customer's premises, an underground gas service pipe has to be laid from the gas main to the gas meter. This gas service pipe will be installed using a trenchless technique called "moling" where possible. This technique limits the amount of excavation (i.e. holes) that needs to be excavated on a customer premise.
- 5.2 There will be a minimum of one excavation at the customer's boundary and one excavation at the gas meter location.
- 5.3 This technique is limited to a maximum distance of 10m between excavations and depends on the ground conditions and the presence of existing underground apparatus. As a result, further excavations may be required to complete the installation of the gas service pipe at the relevant property.
- 5.4 The assessment of whether the trenchless technique can be used for part or all of the gas service will only take place on the date of the installation once the work has started and the ground has been excavated. Firmus energy will endeavour to notify the customer once a decision has been made.
- 5.5 In some cases there will be a requirement to excavate a trench (dig the whole way) from the customer's boundary to the gas meter location to install the gas service pipe. At all times the trenchless technique will be considered for all/part of the route to minimise the disruption to the customer's premise where possible.
- 5.6 Firmus energy will endeavour to reinstate the customer's property within 5 Business Days of the completion of the service installation using standard materials to match the existing reinstatement (surface) where possible.

¹⁵ Where the continuous flow of gas to a property is essential, a meter by-pass is installed to allow the flow of gas to be diverted so as not to pass through the meter therefore securing the continuous offtake of gas at a supply meter point in the event of any failure of part of the meter. It minimises interruption of a gas supply to a property where a continuous flow of gas is essential and also where appropriate, helps satisfy particular technical requirements. The meter by-pass comes in standard format/configuration for all twin stream units over 160 scmh.

5.7 Standard materials include

- bitumen;
- concrete; and
- block paviors (where readily available).

5.8 Where the excavation takes place on grass or unmade ground (stone), the excavated material will be used to reinstate the excavation.

5.9 An additional cost will be charged for any non-standard reinstatement materials such as decorative surface or materials no longer readily available or materials that are considered over and above the standard materials listed above.

5.10 There is no guarantee that an exact match of the existing reinstatement can be accomplished as these surfaces may have weathered or the material previously used may no longer be readily available. Please be aware that it is inevitable that the excavated area will remain visible and will not be returned to its original state.

5.11 Firmus energy shall, when completing such works as are required to connect the relevant property to the network, adhere to the provisions of all applicable Northern Ireland Road Authority and Utilities Committee codes of practice.

5.12 All works carried out shall also be in line with our Guaranteed Standards of Service (Gas Distribution).

6 Maintaining, repairing, altering and isolating connections

As the Distribution Network Operator, firmus energy will carry out any maintenance and/or repairs that are required under the normal operation of the gas network. Any such costs will be recovered through published conveyance charges.

Where costs are not recovered through conveyance charges firmus energy will charge the Licensed Gas Supplier, property owner or person requesting such works under the terms of this Connection Policy.

Firmus energy reserves the right to charge the Licensed Gas Supplier for works undertaken at a property for which they are the registered Licensed Gas Supplier under the terms of the firmus energy Distribution Network Code.

6.1 Alterations

6.2 Upsizes/Downsizes

6.2.1 Firmus energy reserves the right to charge the property owner or Licensed Gas Supplier if an upsize of a meter and/or service connection is required due to an increased gas load.

6.2.2 If a meter and/or service are to be downsized due to a customer request or due to a technical requirement caused by a decrease in gas usage, firmus energy reserves the right to charge the property owner or Licensed Gas Supplier.

- 6.2.3 If it is found that the size of the meter installed is insufficient to meet the gas requirements at the property and the information provided by the property owner or Licensed Gas Supplier indicated this meter was appropriate, firmus energy reserves the right to charge for any subsequent meter exchange and associated works.

6.3 Damaged meters (including meter cabinet and fittings)

- 6.3.1 The property owner must not, and must ensure that no other person does, interfere or tamper with, misuse or damage the Equipment¹⁶ or the meter cabinet. The property owner is responsible for any theft or damage to the Equipment or the meter cabinet and the property owner or Licensed Gas Supplier may be liable to firmus energy or its agents for all costs incurred in the repair, replacement or removal of same, including the costs set out in Schedules 1, 2 and 3 for replacing damaged meters or equipment.

6.4 Stolen meters

- 6.4.1 The cost of replacing a stolen meter at a domestic property may be charged to the property owner or Licensed Gas Supplier as detailed in Schedule 2.
- 6.4.2 The cost of replacing a stolen meter at an industrial or commercial property will be costed on an individual basis and may be charged to the property owner or Licensed Gas Supplier.

6.5 Energy Theft

- 6.5.1 Distribution Network Operators and Gas Suppliers in the Northern Ireland natural gas market are required to comply with the Energy Theft Code of Practice.
- 6.5.2 In line with the Energy Theft Code of Practice, where firmus energy suspects that theft of gas, criminal damage to firmus energy assets, meter and/or supply tampering or recovery of stolen assets may have occurred, an investigation will commence. All evidence gathered as part of any investigation may be passed on to the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI). An exchange of the meter will also be arranged. All applicable costs will be charged to the Licensed Gas Supplier or, in the absence of a Licensed Gas Supplier, to the property owner.
- 6.5.3 Where firmus energy has determined that more than one instance of energy theft has occurred, the property may be Disconnected (in accordance with paragraph 6.9.1) and the costs will be chargeable to the Licensed Gas Supplier or, in the absence of a Licensed Gas Supplier, to the property owner.
- 6.5.4 Where energy theft is, in the opinion of firmus energy, an immediate risk to life or property, the property may be permanently Disconnected (in accordance with paragraph 6.9.1), without notice, whether or not it is the first instance of energy theft. All applicable costs will be chargeable to the Licensed Gas Supplier, or in the absence of a Licensed Gas Supplier, to the property owner.
- 6.5.5 Where the property owner or tenant using the gas is deemed liable for the costs associated with multiple incidents of Energy Theft, any subsequent request for connection of a property to the firmus energy network, where they are the property owner or tenant, will be subject

¹⁶ "Equipment" means the meter and associated equipment and installations installed or to be installed at the relevant property, including associated pipework, regulator, filters, valves, seals, housings and mountings in order to connect the relevant property to the network.

to a detailed individual risk assessment. If this risk assessment determines that a connection may be facilitated, the cost of any additional controls required by firmus energy to enable it to make the connection, which it determines as necessary to prevent danger to the public and/or a risk to the safety of the network, will be recovered from the property owner or tenant before the connection is made.

6.6 Entry warrants

- 6.6.1 Firmus energy or the Licensed Gas Supplier may obtain an entry warrant under the relevant legislation. Only warrants obtained by firmus energy will be executed by firmus energy. The associated costs with the execution of any entry warrant will be calculated based on actual costs and will be recovered from the property owner or Licensed Gas Supplier.

6.7 Abortive visits

- 6.7.1 Firmus energy reserves the right to charge the property owner, Licensed Gas Supplier or tenant for any abortive visits undertaken by them for the purpose of post connection activities as set out in “Abortive visit costs” in Schedule 2.
- 6.7.2 An abortive visit means when firmus energy visits a property on a date agreed with the property owner or tenant and where the requested work cannot be completed for one of the following reasons:
- (i) firmus energy employees or the agents of firmus energy are unable to gain access to the property to carry out the work;
 - (ii) The property owner has failed to prepare the property as previously agreed with firmus energy;
 - (iii) It would be unsafe to undertake the work due to the condition of the property; or
 - (iv) The work was cancelled on the instruction of the property owner or Licensed Gas Supplier after firmus energy had despatched resources to the property.

6.8 Site visits

- 6.8.1 Firmus energy reserves the right to charge the property owner or Licensed Gas Supplier for all planned site visits which result in a second visit to carry out a purge and relight¹⁷ as set out in purge and relight costs in Schedule 2.
- 6.8.2 Firmus energy reserves the right to charge the Licensed Gas Supplier for any site visit where firmus energy determines that the issue could have been resolved by the Licensed Gas Supplier as set out in Operator Site Visit Costs in Schedule 2.

¹⁷ “purge and relight” means the reinstatement of the gas supply at a SMP following a temporary interruption of supply. Purge and relight includes the performance of a ‘Tightness Test’ and the visual inspection of the downstream gas installation and connected appliances.

6.9 Disconnection and Isolation

6.9.1 Requests for Disconnection or Isolation

6.9.1.1 Requests for Isolation or Disconnection should be submitted by the Licenced Gas Supplier¹⁸ registered at the Supply Meter Point, in accordance with L11 of the firmus energy Distribution Network Code and the applicable Disconnection and Isolation Siteworks Procedures.

6.9.2 Disconnection

6.9.2.1 Disconnection¹⁹ of a property from the firmus energy network²⁰ may be undertaken where:

- (i) a Property Owner requests that the gas apparatus is removed as a supply of gas to the property is no longer required;
- (ii) firmus energy determines that the maintaining of the connection involves danger to the public and/or a risk to the safety of the network; or
- (iii) a property has been Isolated but not Disconnected for a period of greater than 12 months²¹, without the restoration of the gas supply.
- (iv) a Licenced Gas Supplier requests that the gas apparatus is removed

6.9.2.2 Firmus energy may seek to recover the full costs of any Disconnection from the property owner or Licensed Gas Supplier.

6.9.3 Isolation

6.9.3.1 Isolation²² of a property from the firmus energy network²³ will be undertaken where:

- (i) a Property Owner or Licensed Gas Supplier requests that the gas apparatus is temporarily removed, to enable works to be undertaken at the property; or
- (ii) a Licensed Gas Supplier requests that the gas apparatus is temporarily removed, to enable the Licensed Gas Supplier to recover any accrued debt.

¹⁸ Any request shall be submitted in accordance with any applicable Gas Supplier's Licence requirements and in accordance with any relevant legislation in relation to the management of bill payment.

¹⁹ Disconnection of a SMP means the removal or decommissioning of the gas service in such manner as the Operator may in any case determine (and "Disconnect" and "Disconnected" shall be construed accordingly).

²⁰ If a property is Disconnected, the Property Owner will no longer be bound by the Terms and Conditions relating to connection of the property to the firmus energy network. Any subsequent request for connection of the property to the firmus energy network will be subject to a new gas application and applicable charges in accordance with this Connection Policy may apply.

²¹ Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2004 - Regulation 16 s3(b)

²² Isolation shall mean the isolation by firmus energy of a SMP for the purposes of securing that gas is and cannot be oftaken from the Network at such point in such manner as firmus energy may determine (and "Isolate" and "Isolated" shall be construed accordingly)

²³ If a property is Isolated but not Disconnected from the network, the property owner and Licensed Gas Supplier will continue to be bound by the Terms and Conditions relating to connection of the property to the firmus energy network.

6.9.3.2 Firmus energy may seek to recover the cost of any Isolation, and any subsequent restoration of the gas supply, from the property owner or Licensed Gas Supplier.

6.10 Works not included within this connection policy

6.10.1 Where a property owner or Licensed Gas Supplier requests work to be carried out to their connection, the costs detailed in Schedules 1 & 3 will apply. Any work not detailed in the Schedules will be charged by firmus energy on a time and materials basis and prevailing uplifts will be applied.

6.11 Non-standard meters and meters not owned by firmus energy

6.11.1 Connection charges referred to in Schedule 1 are for complete service connection, including the provision of a standard meter.

6.11.2 Where a non-standard meter installation is requested, firmus energy's Conveyance Licence Condition 2.5.2 and 2.5.3 will be applied. However, as per the firmus energy Distribution Network Code any installation undertaken by a Licensed Gas Supplier must be of a type and standard of design and accuracy complying with the IGE Meter Recommendations and any other applicable legal requirements which are in force at the time of the installation. Responsibility for the maintenance of such a meter will be that of the Gas Supplier.

Schedule 1 – Indicative costs: Services and Meters

All indicative costs exclude VAT. VAT where applicable will be added at the prevailing rate to any quote.

Engineering survey required (“ESR”) is stipulated where firmus energy deem that the cost must be compiled on an individual basis due to the bespoke nature of the works.

All costs are determined using the assumption of a category 4 road type. A category 4 road type is defined under “Streetworks Northern Ireland Order 1995” as “roads carrying up to 2,000 vehicles per day”. Costs for different road categories may vary from those quoted.

Indicative costs for service connection to low pressure (75mbar) main

Peak flow (scmh) less than	0 – 15 metres £	Additional £ per metre (excl.VAT)
6	£1,598.19	£67.26
16	£2,333.91	£67.26
25	£3,132.78	£181.63
40	£3,132.78	£181.63
65	£3,132.78	£181.63
100	£3,132.78	£181.63
160	ESR	ESR
250	ESR	ESR

Please review these schedule costs in conjunction with section 3 – costs of connection

Indicative costs for service connection to medium pressure (4bar) main

Peak flow (scmh) less than	0 – 15 metres £	Additional £ per metre (excl.VAT)
6	£1,686.38	£67.26
16	£2,271.27	£67.26
25	£2,898.47	£181.63
40	£2,898.47	£181.63
65	£2,898.47	£181.63
100	£2,898.47	£181.63
160	ESR	ESR
250	ESR	ESR

Please review these schedule costs in conjunction with section 3 – costs of connection

Meter fit costs

These costs are applicable to first installations

Peak flow (scmh) less than	Meter fit (excl. VAT)
6	£97.63

Indicative costs for 6 scmh meter – low and medium pressure

Peak flow (scmh) less than	Credit meter (excl. VAT)	Prepayment meter (excl. VAT)
6	£40.39	£130.49

Indicative costs for installation of a 6 way meter cabinet to supply 6 no. of 6 scmh meters (includes meter cabinet, fittings and regulator but excludes meter cost)

Pressure	Low pressure (excl. VAT)	Medium pressure (excl. VAT)
6 way meter cabinet	£2,861.82	£2,878.59

Indicative costs for low pressure (75mbar) meter (includes meter cabinet (external only), fittings, meter and regulator)

Peak flow (scmh) less than	External Meter		Internal Meter	
	Single Stream (excl. VAT) £	Twin Stream (excl. VAT) £	Single Stream (excl. VAT) £	Twin Stream (excl. VAT) £
16	£2,080.17	N/A	£1,147.10	N/A
25	£2,794.21	N/A	£1,650.65	N/A
40	£3,514.20	N/A	£2,356.14	N/A
65	£9,625.12	£18,099.16	£7,989.94	ESR
100	£11,968.92	£23,155.13	£10,517.73	ESR
160	£16,679.65	£32,146.30	£14,293.66	ESR
250	£18,307.39	£35,205.29	£15,848.22	ESR

Indicative costs for medium pressure (4bar) meter (includes meter cabinet, fittings and regulator)

Peak flow (scmh) less than	Single Stream External (excl. VAT) £	Twin Stream External (excl. VAT) £
16	£2,711.03	N/A
25	£3,330.82	N/A
40	£4,375.91	N/A
65	£7,381.23	£14,700.52
100	£10,503.18	£20,628.53
160	£13,284.56	£25,011.49
250	£23,999.63	£45,954.56

Abortive visit costs

Option	Work required	Charge (excl. VAT)
1	Meter fitter	£58.12
2	Distribution team	£158.45

Quotation Determination Charge

The quotation charge is £50 per property included within the domestic or non-domestic development, up to a maximum of £500 per quotation.

Schedule 2 – Post connection activities

All domestic post connection charges quoted apply to 6 scmh meter installations only. Any domestic meter installation larger than 6 scmh will be charged at the prevailing I&C post connection costs.

Domestic post connection activities

Option	Work description	Charge (excl. VAT)	
1	Disconnect 6scmh	£96.48	
2	Reconnect 6scmh	£92.98	
3	Disconnect and/or reconnect non-standard gas meter	ESR	
4	Meter exchange 6scmh	£132.84	
5	Stolen meter charge (6scmh)	£228.11	Prepayment
		£128.45	Credit
6	Revenue protection charge	£463.95	

Note: Firmus energy will agree to carry out one free meter exchange per annum at a domestic property only where the exchange is from a credit to a prepayment meter. However any:

- (i) meter exchange from a prepayment to a credit meter; or
- (ii) meter exchange from one prepayment meter to another or from one credit meter to another; or
- (iii) additional request by a property owner or Licensed Gas Supplier i.e. more than one meter exchange per annum from credit to prepayment; or
- (iv) meter exchange within 12 months of initial meter installation

will be chargeable to the Licensed Gas Supplier, except in the circumstance that a meter is proven to be faulty, in which case, firmus energy will meet the cost of a like for like meter exchange.

Indicative costs for domestic service alterations up to and including 6scmh (Costs are based on works being completed during one visit)

Option	Work description	Charge (excl. VAT) £
1	Disconnect meter, box and fittings and re-fix in location 0 – 5 metres from original site incl. excavation (excl. downstream pipework)	£1,765.26
2	Disconnect meter, box and fittings and re-fix in location 0 – 5 meters from original site not incl. excavation (excl. downstream pipework)	£645.71
3	Additional £ per metre based on excavation work required	£128.25
4	Additional £ per metre based on open trench provided by customer	£57.72

5	Cost to amend downstream pipework	ESR
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Indicative costs for service disconnection (medium pressure and low pressure) up to and including 6scmh (1st visit)

Option	Work description	Charge (excl. VAT)
1	Cap and seal service pipework at mains connection (incl. excavation)	£893.85

Note: the above disconnection does not include the costs associated with the meter. See **Domestic post connection activities** for meter costs.

Indicative costs for service reconnection (low pressure and medium pressure) up to and including 6scmh (2nd visit)

Option	Work description	Charge (excl. VAT)
1	Reconnect service pipework at mains location and install meter (incl. excavation)	£737.02

Note: the above reconnection does not include the costs associated with the meter. See **Domestic Post Connection Activities** for meter costs.

Lateral disconnection

Option	Work description	Charge (excl.VAT)
1	Ground floor	£666.06
2	2 nd floor and above	ESR

I&C post connection activities

Option	Work description	Charge (excl.VAT)
1	6 scmh meter exchange	£132.84
2	>6 <40 scmh meter exchange	ESR
3	Disconnect and remove meter, cap and seal service pipework within meter box (6 scmh)	£96.48
4	Reconnect 6 scmh (meter only)	£92.98
5	Disconnect and remove meter, cap and seal service pipework within meter box (16-40 scmh)	ESR

Option	Work description	Charge (excl.VAT)
6	Reconnect 16 – 40 scmh (meter only)	£154.98
7	Disconnect and remove meter and meter box, cap and seal service pipework underground at meter box location (6-40 scmh)	ESR
8	Disconnect / Reconnect for connections with a capacity greater than 40 scmh	ESR
9	Stolen Meter charge	ESR
10	Revenue protection charge	ESR
11	Alter position of meter and/or service	ESR
12	Cut and cap service at mains location	ESR
13	Reconnection of service pipe at mains location	ESR

Note: The above costs are labour only rates

Post Customer energy management interface to gas meter

Work description	Charge (excl. VAT)
Customer energy management interface to gas meter (Chatterbox)	ESR

Purge and relight costs

Option	Work description	Charge (excl.VAT)
1	Test and Commission gas system, 6 scmh meter	£77.49
2	>6scmh meter	ESR

Note: Test and commission gas system 6 scmh means the reinstatement of the gas supply at a SMP following a temporary interruption of supply. Purge and relight includes the performance of a “Tightness Test” and the visual inspection of the downstream gas installation and connected appliances. Should any issues with the system be highlighted during this visit, the system will not be commissioned and instead will be made safe.

Abortive visit costs

Option	Work description	Charge (excl.VAT)
1	Meter fitter	£58.12
2	Distribution team	£158.45

Ducting

Option	Work description	Charge (excl.VAT)
1	63 mm per meter	£10.77
2	110 mm per meter	£25.31

Operator site visit costs

Work description	Charge (excl.VAT)
firmus energy representative	£52.57

Meter cabinet repair costs (6 scmh)

Whilst firmus energy supplies a meter cabinet at the point of connection, the property owner shall own the meter cabinet. Thereafter, as it will form part of the fabric of the property, repairs and maintenance of the meter cabinet are the responsibility of the property owner.

Meter box works	Surface mounted box (excl. VAT)	Multi-box (excl. VAT)	Recessed (excl. VAT)	6-way cabinet (excl. VAT)	meter (excl. VAT)
Replace door/front cover/lid	£238.30	£238.30	£238.30	£564.36	
Replacement meter box key	No Charge	No Charge	No Charge	No Charge	
Install anti-vandal cover	Materials costed at time of quotation request				
Replace meter box and fittings (excavation required low pressure)	Materials costed at time of quotation request				
Replace meter box and fittings (excavation required medium pressure)	Materials costed at time of quotation request				

Note: The above costs for replacing damaged meter cabinets do not include any works associated with the downstream pipework. Due to recessed cabinets being installed in the fabric of the buildings the property owner must arrange for a third party to remove the damaged cabinet and the refitting of the replacement recessed cabinet.

Meter cabinet door repair costs (>6scmh)

All repairs to meter cabinets >6 scmh are subject to an engineering survey due to the bespoke nature of the works.

Meter tests (off site)

All meter tests will be carried out using the Office of Gas and Electricity Market (OFGEM) approved registration test. The total cost chargeable will include cost of the meter test and the carriage costs which will depend on the size and weight of the meter.

Meter Type	Charge	Adder (Broken seal)	Meter fitter/Gov technician cost
Diaphragm Meter (U6 – U40 or G4 – G25)	TBC	TBC	£58.12
Electronic Libra	TBC	TBC	£58.12
RPD (<650 scmh)	TBC	TBC	TBC
Turbine (>=650 scmh)	TBC	TBC	TBC

Note: The above costs for meter tests does not include broken seal costs or carriage costs for Diaphragm and Libra meters. These charges will be determined at the time of testing. Carriage costs have been included for RPD and Turbine meters. There is no cost for replacement meters included.

Meter operation test (on-site test)

Meter type	Meter operation test (on-site test) fees (excl. VAT)
Domestic	TBC
Commercial (test to confirm meter index registration only)	TBC

Note: All meter tests must be paid for in advance. A full refund will be given if the meter is determined to be faulty.

Schedule 3 – GD23 Allowances

Allowances

Mains

Property Passed	Allowance per Property Passed
New Build Domestic Housing	£593
Existing housing – Domestic and I&C	£539

Connections

Domestic

Domestic Housing	Service and Meter Allowance
Existing housing (Credit meter)	£1,702
Existing housing (PAYG meter)	£1,818
New build housing	£ 969

I&C

I&C Meter Size	Service and Meter Allowance
U6	£2,191
U16	£5,206
U25	£5,968
U40	£6,164
U65	£13,178
U100	£15,748
U160	£19,893
U250	£31,849
U400	£41,809
U650	£55,857
U1000	£81,390
U1600	£111,760
U2500	£135,659

Appendix 1 – Information required when requesting a new domestic connection

The initial assessment of the costs of connection and reinforcement, if required, will be more accurate if the full information is available when the request is made.

The following information is required:

- Site information – including the postcode
- User name and address
- Preferred Supply Meter Point Registration Date (date the meter agreed with supplier to take responsibility for the transportation costs of the SMP)
- Date of submission

Should the required information not be provided, firmus energy will indicate the assumptions made.

Information required when requesting a new industrial or commercial connection

The initial assessment of the costs of connection and reinforcement, if required, will be more accurate if the full information is available when the request is made.

Should the required information not be provided, firmus energy will indicate the assumptions made if possible.

The following information is required to make a full evaluation:

- Site name
- Site address – including the postcode
- Company name(s) and address(es)
- Gas supplier

Details of the supply meter installation are also required:

- Load type - heating or process
- Supply type (firm or interruptible)
- If interruptible supply alternative fuel
- First date that gas is required including commissioning
- SMP capacity (peak flow day – kWh/day)
- Peak hourly flow –kWh
- Annual Quantity – kWh per annum
- Supply pressure – bar
- Required operating pressure – mbar
- Max operating pressure – mbar
- Lowest operating pressure – mbar
- Design incidental pressure – mbar
- Strength test pressure – mbar
- Max flow rate – scmh
- Min flow rate – scmh
- Any special equipment requirements at the connection e.g. elevated pressure requirements etc²⁴

²⁴ Certain assumptions will be made if this information is not provided. It should be noted that elevated pressure of more than the standard 21mbar may have significant impact on connection and reinforcement costs.

- Priority customer – (yes/no)²⁵

Appendix 2 – List of Obstacles

The list below details a number of obstacles that may cause engineering difficulties in providing a gas supply to a Property and as such would deem the connection to be not readily connectable. Please note this list is not exhaustive and a site visit by an engineer will be required to assess the extent of the complexity of the connection and to provide a bespoke quotation in line with clause 2.8.1 of this policy.

List of obstacles:

- Works that necessitate the crossing of a bridge structure either within the road make up on top of the bridge or attached to the bridge structure itself.
- Works which require the crossing of waterways (e.g. rivers, streams, drainage channels, etc.).
- Works that involve the crossing of motorways, dual carriageways or highways which have been designated by the Highway Authority to have special engineering difficulties.
- Works which involve the crossing of, or which are affected by the presence of, a railway line.
- A connection to a Property which has been designated as a listed building.
- Where works are in, or are likely to impact upon an Area of Special Scientific Interest.
- Works are situated within, or are likely to impact upon, a woodland, marsh, peat bog or coastal wetland.
- A connection to a building that has a basement or cellar in the locality of the service route and/or meter position.
- Connections to existing blocks of apartments/flats where any service pipe will terminate more than two stories above the adjacent ground level.
- Connections where access for the installation of apparatus is restricted requiring specialist access platforms.
- Connections to new blocks of flats / apartments where any service pipe will terminate more than five stories above the adjacent ground level.
- A connection to a building that requires significant excavation and reinstatement of public realm paving.
- Works which involve any requirement for a public enquiry or planning permission, including planning permission associated with any buildings including meter houses.
- Where the route of any apparatus involves significant breaking out and excavation of a continuous stream of rock.
- Where the route of any apparatus involves a significant (greater than 2m) change in elevation within a short horizontal distance e.g. a cliff or retaining wall.
- Where any apparatus will be laid through contaminated ground.
- Where any apparatus will be laid in land likely to suffer from subsidence.
- Where works are likely to be affected by special security provisions, e.g. airports, military bases, prisons etc.
- Where works will take place within top tier COMAH sites i.e. sites subject to the Control of Major Accident Hazards Regulations (COMAH).
- Where ground conditions require significant trench supports systems to be employed.
- it is part of a multi storey building or the gas meter is to be sited at high level (in excess of 3m);
- Where an easement and/or a wayleave agreement or other legal permit is required to install gas apparatus to supply gas to the property. In such an instance, obtaining the necessary easement and/or wayleave agreement is the responsibility of the property owner requesting the connection and any associated costs will be borne by the property owner or Licensed Gas Supplier.

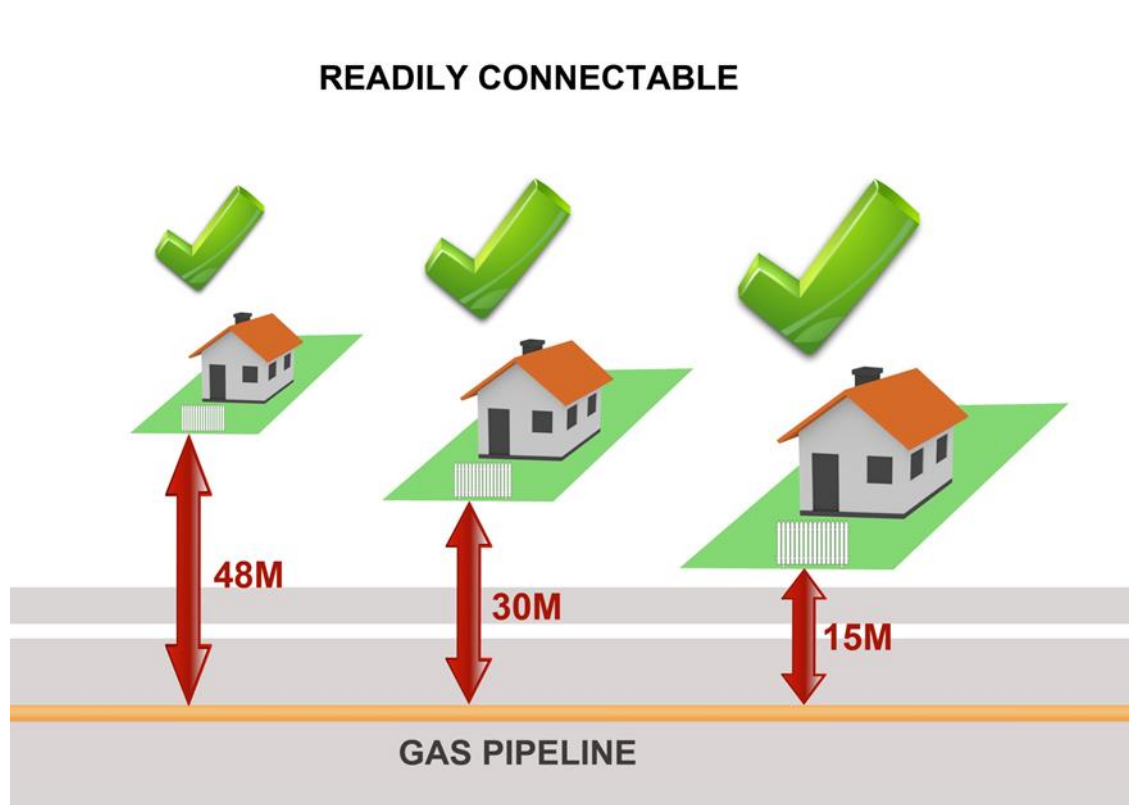
²⁵ The conveyance licence requires the distribution company to establish a list of non-domestic consumers who must be given priority with maintaining a gas supply in the event of a gas emergency.

Appendix 3 – Worked Examples

Readily Connectable Properties

As provided in clause 2.4 of this Policy, the property defined as readily connectable is one whose front curtilage (the property boundary) is situated within 50 metres of a distribution pipeline (i.e. a live gas main) and has a suitable distribution pipeline in the highway located at the same postal address.

This principle is illustrated below:



All three examples shown above are readily connectable.

It is important to note that the readily connectable threshold of 50m is the distance from the gas mains to the property boundary (curtilage), however, the cost of the connection is determined based on the length of the service pipe required to bring gas from the mains to the meter box situated on the property itself.

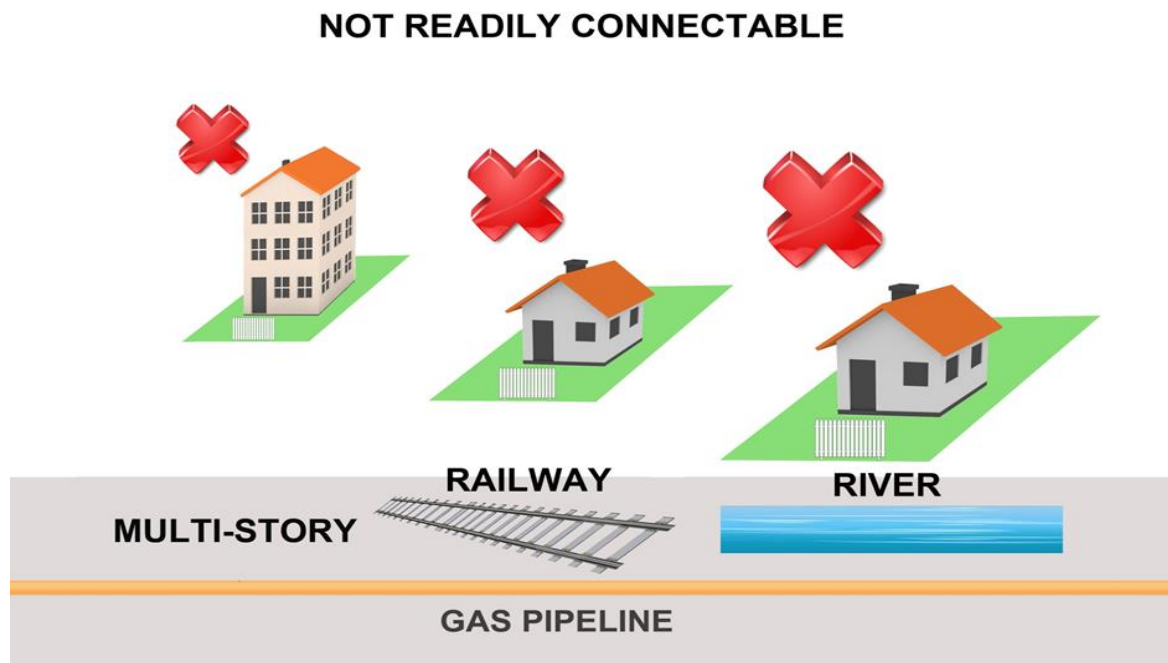
Not Readily Connectable Properties

As provided in clause 2.5 of this Policy, a property may not be readily connectable if it fulfils one or more of the following criteria:

- the front curtilage or boundary is not within 50 metres of a suitable distribution main located at the front of the property at the same postal address;

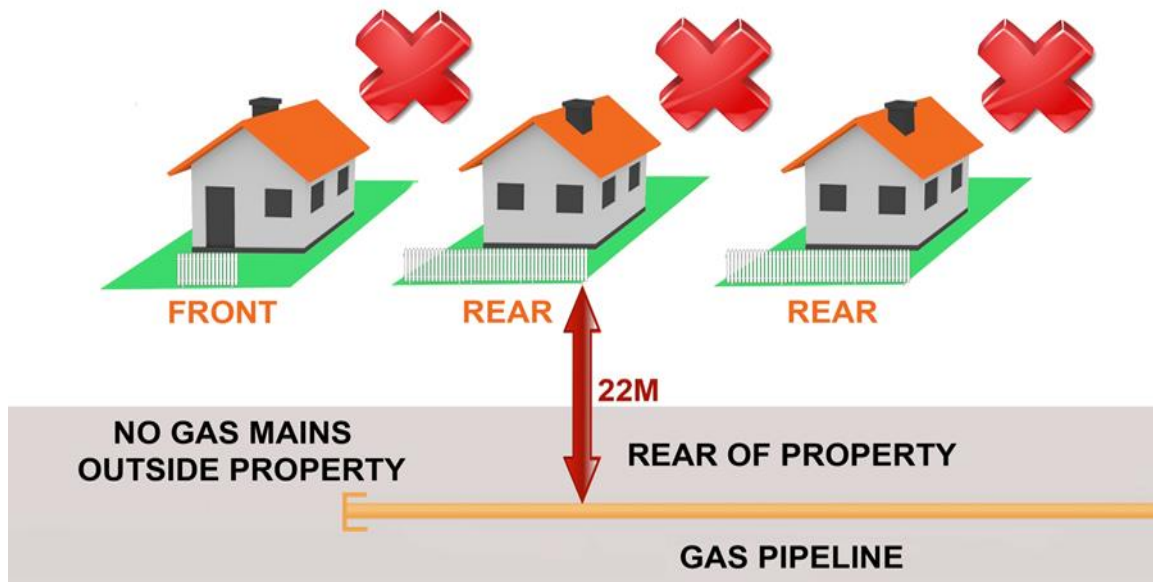
- it is a complex connection with additional associated costs (i.e. engineering difficulties are present between the location of the distribution main and the property such as waterways, train lines, culverts, significant ground level differences, sites of special scientific interest etc. which must be taken into account. A further list of such engineering difficulties is provided at Appendix 2 of this Policy);
- the front curtilage or boundary is within 50 meters but the distribution main is located at the rear of the property (which is more than 50 metres of a suitable distribution pipeline);
- It is part of a Domestic Development or Non-Domestic Development;

Please see below for some examples;



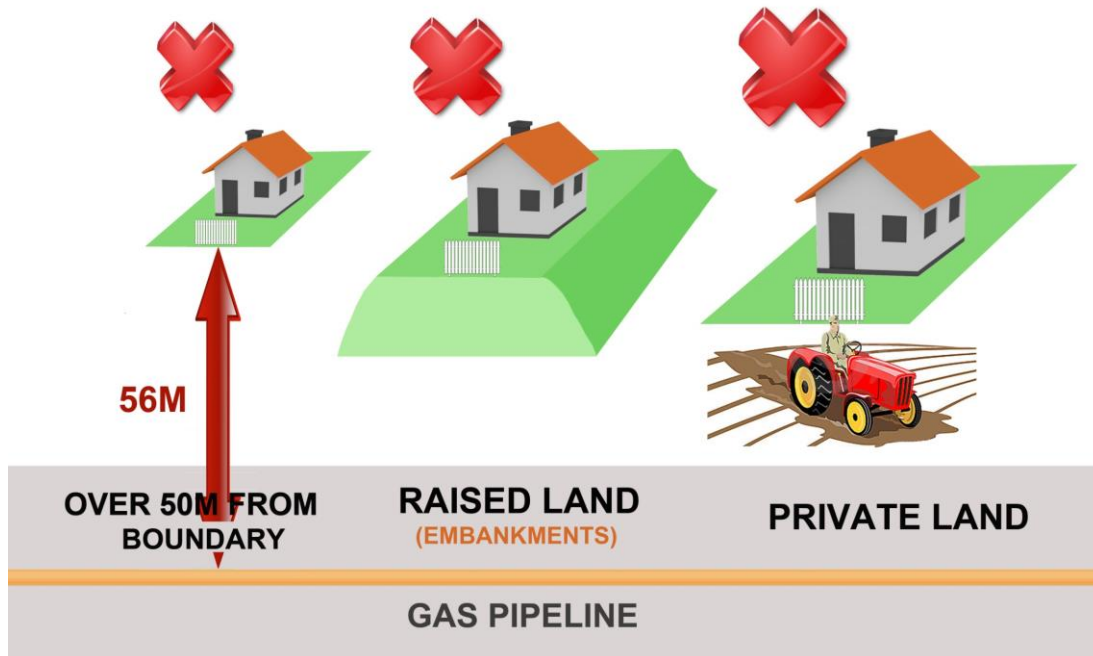
The three examples illustrated above require an engineering site visit to determine if the property is connectable and the costs associated with the service and meter installation.

NOT READILY CONNECTABLE



The three examples above are not connectable under the firmus energy connection policy. Firmus energy does not connect properties to the rear. Please note that firmus energy is unable to connect a property to the Network from the rear of the property. This is because, in accordance with the IGEM/TD4 Gas Services Standard, under no circumstances should a meter box be positioned behind a locked gate, hidden from view or not accessible by an engineer when required. This is an important safety consideration which is in turn adopted firmus energy in its Operations Policy. Firmus energy will work together with potential customers to find an alternative connection point.

NOT READILY CONNECTABLE



The 3 examples above are not readily connectable:

- The first illustration details a 56 metre service and the front curtilage or boundary is not within 50 metres of a suitable distribution main located at the front of the property at the same postal address.
- The second illustration details raised land. This scenario requires an engineering site visit to determine whether the property is connectable. If connectable an individual engineering quotation for the costs to complete a service and fit the meter would be required.
- The third illustration details a private land crossing. This scenario requires an easement and/or a wayleave agreement to install gas apparatus to supply gas to the property as well as an engineering site visit to confirm whether the property is connectable.

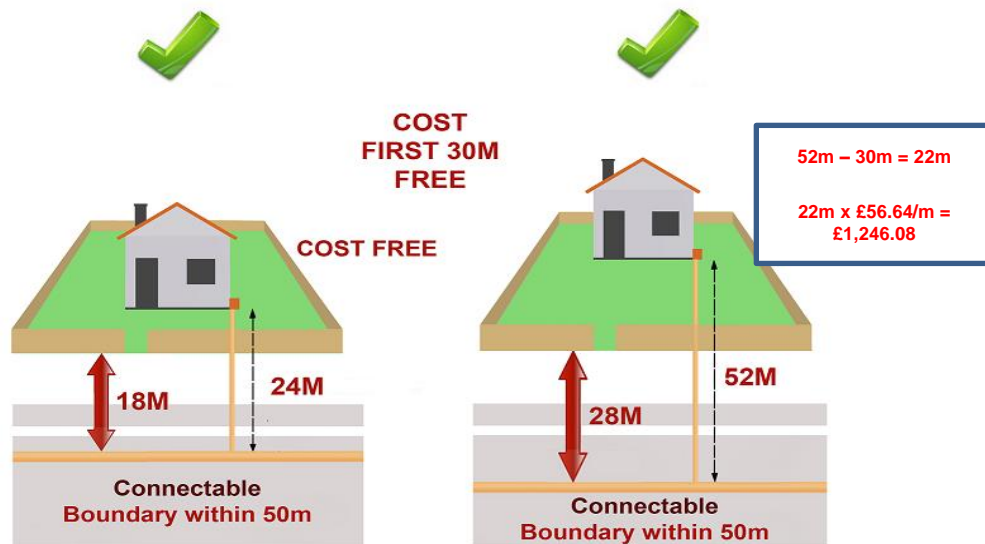
Costs of Connection

As provided in clause 5.10 of this Policy:

- charges for connection are based on the actual costs of carrying out the work based on firmus energy's agreed schedule of rates for constructions works. These rates have been established to achieve best value for money through a tendering process; and
- these actual costs will be adjusted for regulatory allowance in accordance with the GD23 determination and the rates established therein by the UR. Details of such allowances, where applicable, are shown in Schedule 3 under the heading "Mains" where provision of a suitable distribution pipeline at the property is required (i.e. provision of a live gas main at the

property) and under the heading “Connections” for provision of the complete service connection and the provision of a meter installation. From time to time firmus energy may provide additional allowances where there are operational benefits or where development of the system is accelerated as a result.

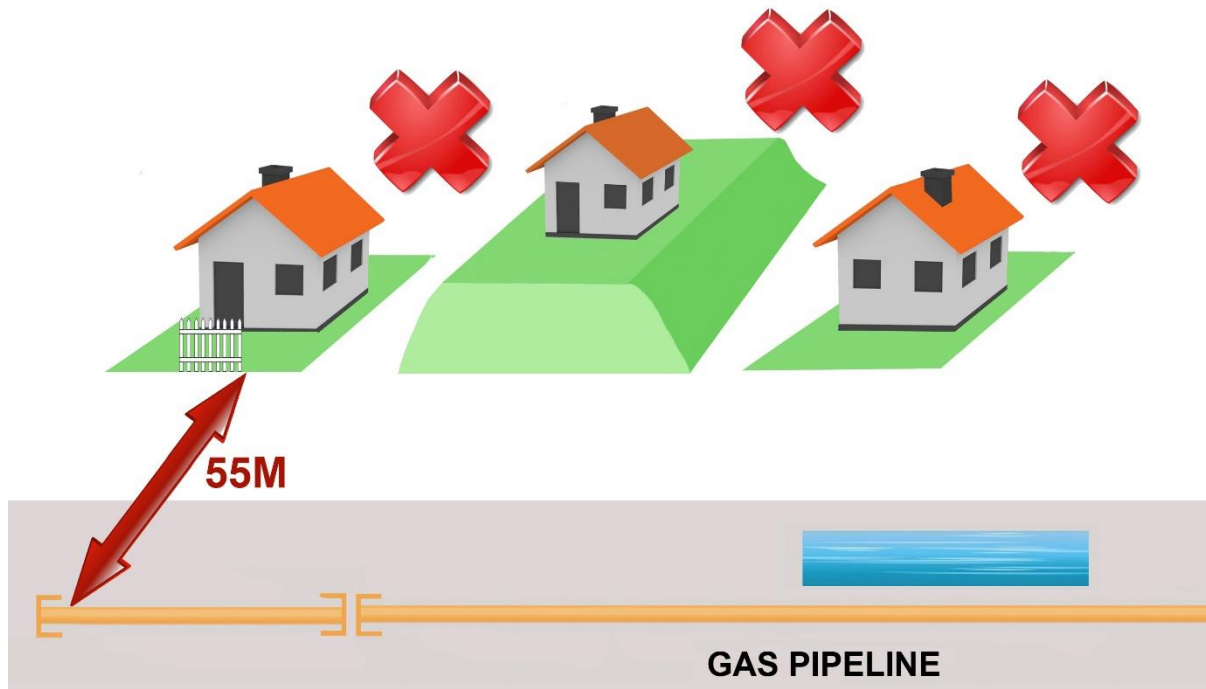
READILY CONNECTABLE – COST OF CONNECTION



The two examples above are readily connectable:

- The first illustration details a 24 metre domestic service connection (peak flow less than 6 scmh). The provision of a low or medium pressure meter is free of charge.
- The second illustration details a 52 metre service. The front curtilage or boundary is within 50 metres of a suitable distribution main located at the front of the property at the same postal address. The first 30 metres of a domestic service connection (peak flow less than 6 scmh) and the provision of a low or medium pressure meter is free of charge. In this example, the domestic service connection is in excess of 30 metres in length, and a rate per linear metre will be charged for each metre in excess of the first 30 metres i.e. $22 \times £56.64 = £1,246.08$ chargeable to the customer.

NOT READILY CONNECTABLE - COST OF CONNECTION



The 3 examples shown above are not readily connectable:

- The first illustration details a 55 metre service. The front curtilage or boundary is not within 50 metres of a suitable distribution main located at the front of the property at the same postal address and requires a network extension. The customer will be quoted for the network extension and any additional meterage to complete a service.
- The second illustration details raised land. This scenario requires an engineering site visit to determine if constructible. If connectable, this would then require an engineering quotation of the costs to complete a service and fit a meter.
- The third illustration details a river / water crossing. This scenario requires an engineering site visit to determine if constructible. If connectable, this would then require an engineering quotation for the costs to complete a service and fit meter.

Meter Positions



Firmus energy permits a meter box to be installed a maximum of 2 metres down a gable wall (subject to gas regulations). If the meter position is not achievable, then an engineering site visit is required to establish a suitable alternative position.

Alteration Requests



If firmus energy receives an alteration request to any service or meter, the costs for such alternation will be charged to the customer, e.g. to relocate the existing meter to the front elevation 0 to 5 metres from the original location, the costs chargeable to the customer would be £1,441.55 (excluding downstream pipework).