



Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

Mr Stephen McNally
Delta House
Tenth Avenue
Deeside Industrial Park
Deeside
CH5 2UA

**Department for Business, Energy &
Industrial Strategy**

Level 3, Victoria 1
1 Victoria Street,
London SW1H 0ET
T: +44 (0)300 068 5672
E: S37-wayleaves@beis.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/beis

Our ref: 12.04.09.05-1380U
Your ref: SP M-23923

31 January 2022

Dear Mr McNally

**SCREENING DECISION BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE UNDER THE ELECTRICITY WORKS
(ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) (ENGLAND AND WALES) REGULATIONS 2017 (“THE
2017 REGULATIONS”)**

Screening decision for a proposed development to rebuild approximately 4.6 kilometres of an existing 11kV overhead line and associated electricity poles between Duckington and Chowley, Cheshire (the “proposed works”).

The proposed works require Section 37 consent under the Electricity Act 1989 and are subject to the 2017 Regulations.

The Secretary of State has considered the factors set out in Schedule 3 of the 2017 Regulations, together with the information within the supplied documentation (“the Application”) by SP Manweb Plc (“the Applicant”) in relation to the impacts on the environment of the proposed works and the views of the Cheshire West and Chester Borough Council (“the LPA”). In particular, in reaching his decision the Secretary of State notes the following factors:

- The proposed works do not fall within Schedule 1 (mandatory EIA);
- The proposed works fall under Schedule 2 of the 2017 Regulations as the electricity line is to be installed above ground in a sensitive area;
- The proposed works are to rebuild an existing section of overhead line;
- The proposed works involve the replacement of seven (7) poles and the construction of two (2) new poles and associated overhead line within the Bickerton Hill Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). No other statutory or non-statutory nature conservation sites are located within 1 kilometre of the proposed works;



Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

- Any potential effects to this site will be mitigated through the implementation of all measures identified in the Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP), dated September 2020, ref. WNT69105-500(00) submitted by the Applicant;
- The Application indicates that the proposed works have the potential to affect habitats suitable to support protected species, Great Crested Newts and roosting bats at multiple sites (EcoCheck environmental report, dated 21 September 2020, ref. WNT69105-418). However, any potential impact to Great Crested Newt will be mitigated via the submission to and approval in writing by the LPA, of a scheme of Reasonable Avoidance Measures. In addition, any potential impact to protected species and breeding birds will be mitigated via ground and arial inspections being carried out by a competent ecologist prior to the start of the proposed works. The ecologist shall advise the Applicant on species-specific working method statements (in agreement with the LPA) should any evidence of the above species be found;
- The Application does not suggest there will be any cumulative adverse effects given that the proposal is to rebuild an existing section of overhead line which will be removed after the proposed works are completed, and the new line will be constructed along the same route to the existing line or within a distance not exceeding 10 metres on either side thereof;
- The closest scheduled monument is the Maiden Castle promontory fort on Bickerton Hill, located at approximately 280 metres from the route of the line. No harm is anticipated to arise from the proposed works to the heritage significance of this monument since the new line and poles will be installed on the same route as the existing line. However the Applicant will be required to agree with the LPA an archaeological watching brief programme prior to the works commencing to ensure the protection of the scheduled monument, and of any archaeological remains which may be disturbed by the proposed works;
- The LPA have considered that the proposal is unlikely to be an EIA development (completed Screening Views form (Appendix A), dated 1 September 2021) and did not require the preparation of Environmental Statement for the proposed works subject to the implementation of appropriate mitigating measures included in the CEMP and for the protection of Great Crested Newts as described above;
- Natural England do not object to the proposed works within the Bickerton Hill SSSI, subject to appropriate mitigations being secured through the implementation of the measures included in the CEMP detailed above (letter dated 25 January 2021, ref. 338590).

Taking account of the abovementioned factors and information received, the Secretary of State concludes that the proposed works do not require a statutory EIA as they are unlikely to have significant effects on the environment due to their nature, location and size. A copy of this letter has been sent to the LPA for information.

Yours sincerely,

Francesco Marolda
Overhead Lines Manager
Energy Infrastructure Planning