



Department for
Energy Security
& Net Zero

Miss Sarah Mills
Southern Electric Power Distribution Plc
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Energy Infrastructure Planning

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Our ref: 1866u
Your ref: EZX538 Sowley House

26 April 2024

Dear Miss Mills,

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

**NAME OF SCHEME: EZX538 SOWLEY HOUSE, SOWLEY LANE,
LYMINGTON, HAMPSHIRE, SO41 5SQ**

Decision:

The Secretary of State concludes that the proposed works are not EIA development under the 2017 Regulations and 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.

Screening decision for a proposed development (“the proposed development”) to:

- Add a third conductor to 704 metres of an existing 11 kV overhead line
- Replace eight poles

Secretary of State considerations:

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 Southern Electric Power Distribution (“the Applicant”) in relation to the impacts on the environment of the proposed development and the views of New Forest National Park Authority (“the LPA”). In particular, in reaching her decision the Secretary of State notes the following factors:

1. The proposed development does not fall within Schedule 1 (mandatory EIA);
2. The proposed development falls under Schedule 2 of the 2017 Regulations as the electricity line is to be installed above ground in a sensitive area;
3. The proposed development falls within several designated sensitive areas:
 - The New Forest National Park
 - A Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Impact Risk Zone (IRZ) associated with The New Forest SSSI
 - The New Forest SSSI
4. Due to the designations, SSE produced an environmental method statement in October 2023. The document included details of how the construction works will be executed and what machinery will be used, the works are not expected to harm the features of the SSSI.
5. The Environment Agency was consulted regarding the works falling under a FRA2 exemption permit. The EA responded on 4 December 2023 that as “The works are seen as low risk and minor” and that an exemption permit isn’t needed.
6. Natural England submitted conditional assent on 14 December 2023 to the development after being consulted via email regarding the SSSI and SSSI IRZ. The conditions noted, “All works... are to be carried out outside of the March – June period when birds are actively nesting and rearing their young” and “works are to take place in line with protocols outlined in NE document ‘Practical ways of working in The New Forest SSSI’.”.
7. The LPA was consulted regarding the proposed development and noted no objection to the development on 27 February 2024.

Yours sincerely,

John McKenna
Head of Network Planning team
Energy Infrastructure Planning Delivery Team