



Department for  
Energy Security  
& Net Zero

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Our ref: 1840u  
Your ref: 4695436

26 April 2024

Dear Mr Meggitt,

**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: Coveridge Fields, Wheathill**

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:

- Upgrade approximately 1,600 metres of existing 11kV overhead line to 3-phase.
- Replace 18 x existing poles on a like-for-like basis

## 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 National Grid Electricity Distribution (West Midlands) PLC (“the Applicant”) in relation to the impacts on the environment of the proposed development and the views of Shropshire Council (“the LPA”). 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 the Shropshire Hills National Landscape (formerly Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) and within a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Impact Risk Zone (IRZ) associated with the Green Farm Quarry, Titterstone Clee and Catherston Common SSSIs which are approximately 700 metres, 2,300 metres and 3,000 metres from the proposed development respectively.
4. The Applicant commissioned an ecological appraisal of the proposed development. A survey was conducted by GE Consulting Services (UK) Ltd on 9 December 2023 and the subsequent “Ecology Survey and Recommendations” report was issued on 12 December 2023 (reference: 2182-NG-PP). The report determined that some scrub and woody vegetation would be necessary during the proposed development, but significant impacts are not anticipated due to the discrete and short duration of the works. Potential for protected species in the area was identified, but recommendations are outlined within the report to minimise any impact which shall be followed by the Applicant during the proposed development.
5. The Applicant consulted with the LPA who had no objection to the proposed development (reference: 23/05446/OHL) and concluded that the proposed development would not make the existing apparatus significantly more prominent and the installation would not have any other significant long-term environmental impacts provided the recommendations outlined in the ecological report are followed.
6. The LPA consulted with Natural England who confirmed in communications on 23 January 2024 (Natural England reference: 463185) that impact on the National Landscape can be determined by the LPA. Natural England noted that a small section of the proposed development passes through a Priority Habitat deciduous woodland

which is not in favourable condition. Natural England requested that measures be taken to limit tree and scrub clearance and appropriate surveys be undertaken by a Licensed Ecologist – this was completed in December 2023 by GE Consulting.

7. The LPA consulted with the Shropshire Hills AONB (National Landscape) Partnership who did not indicate either an objection or no objection within their standard response.
8. The proposed development is a minor modification to an existing piece of infrastructure and is likely to have minimal visual impact on the National Landscape in which it is situated.

Yours sincerely,

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