



Department for
Energy Security
& Net Zero

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Our ref: 1959u
Your ref: SW/LANC E3L5

15th October 2024

Dear Miss Woodhouse

**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:

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:

- Replace 43 11kV overhead line wood poles.



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- Upgrading the existing pole mounted transformer with a 200KVA 3 phase transformer with an additional pole being installed adjacent to the existing pole to form a H Pole construction.
- Poles may be replaced to support the new line & pole mounted transformer upon assessment.

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 PLC (“the Applicant”) in relation to the impacts on the environment of the proposed development and the views of South Downs National Park (“the LPA”). In particular, in reaching his 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 South Downs National Park, Upper Greensands Hangers: Empshott to Hawkley Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), and East Hampshire Hangers Special Area of Conservation (SAC).
4. The Applicant consulted the LPA on 23 May 2024. The LPA responded on 13 June 2024 with no objections.
5. The Applicant consulted Natural England (NE) on 22 February 2024. NE granted assent covering the period 1 September 2024 to 28 February 2024 (reference: 2202241345JC).
6. The Applicant consulted the County Archaeologist who confirmed on 21 June 2024 via email that the proposed development will not cause any archaeological issues.
7. The Applicant provided a Habitat Regulations Assessment (“the HRA”) which was carried out 12 February 2024, the document provided details on work methods, risks to the protected sites, and proposed mitigation measures.
8. Of the 43 poles to be replaced, only 3 are situated within a designated sensitive area. An Ecological survey of these 3 poles was carried out on 31 July 2024 and the subsequent Ecological Constraints Report was issued on 13 August 2024 by RSK ADAS Ltd (reference: BRT69105-1368 (00)).



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9. The survey determined the poles are all situated at, or very near to, the boundary of the SSSI and SAC. The scrub, grassland, and nearby woodland areas provides suitable habitat for several protected species including, but not limited to, nesting birds, hazel dormice and great crested newts. The Ecological Constraints Report outlines a number of mitigations which shall be followed by the Applicant to minimise the risk of impacts on these species.
10. The proposed development is to be carried out adjacent to designated ancient woodland. The Applicant shall follow Volume 4 of the National Joint Utilities Group guidelines to ensure that the trees are not damaged.
11. Having considered the HRA and Ecological Constraints Report, the Secretary of State is satisfied that there will be no likely significant effects on any National Site Network site under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. This is due to the small footprint of the proposed works, the limited access required to the designated sites, and the relatively short time period required to complete the proposed development.
12. The proposed development is a refurbishment an existing piece of infrastructure and not likely to have a significant effect on the National Park in which it is situated.

Yours sincerely

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