



Department for
Energy Security
& Net Zero

Alex Monk
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Our ref: 2029u
Your ref: AM/NUFF E3L5 BERINS HILL BANK SSSI

18th December 2024

Dear Mr Monk,

**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: AM/NUFF E3L5 BERINS HILL BANK SSSI

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 (2) 11kV electricity wood pole on the Berins Hill Bank SSSI.**

Secretary of State considerations:



Department for Energy Security & Net Zero

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 Oxfordshire County Council (“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 Chilterns National Landscapes and a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Impact Risk Zone associated with Berins Hill Bank SSSI.
4. The Applicant consulted the LPA on 5 September 2024. The LPA responded on 25 September 2024, concluding that the proposed development was not EIA. (Reference: P24/S2823/SCR).
5. The Applicant consulted Natural England (NE) 14 May 2024. NE responded on 31 May 2024, granting assent covering the period 1 December 2024 to 31 March 2025.
6. The Applicant consulted the County Archaeologist (CA) on 5 September 2024. The CA responded on 19 September 2024 confirming that they had no objections for the proposed development.
7. An Ecological survey was carried out on 12 August 2024 by RSK ADAS Limited. Subsequently, an Ecological constraints report was issued on 29 August 2024 (reference: 1050155). The survey determined that the area of proposed works comprised of woodland area provided suitable habitat for nesting birds, Hazel Dormouse, bats reptiles, Roman Snails and Badger. It is therefore recommended that the Applicant follows the mitigations outlined in the Ecological Constraints Report to minimise the risk of impacts on Wildlife and protected species.
8. The proposed development is a minor modification to an existing piece of infrastructure and not likely to have a significant effect on the Natural Landscape.

Yours sincerely,

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