



Department for
Energy Security
& Net Zero

Stephanie Chapman
ARUP
EQ 2nd Floor
111 Victoria Street
Bristol
BS1 6AX

Energy Infrastructure Planning

3-8 Whitehall Place
London
SW1A 2JP

Email:

S37consents@energysecurity.gov.uk

Website: www.gov.uk/desnz

Our ref: n/a (to be assigned on receipt of S37 application)
Your ref: 298483

30 January 2025

Dear Ms Chapman,

**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: Celtic Lakes 132kV Terminal Towers

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:

- Dismantle 2 x existing 132kV towers (150 & 151) and erect 2 x new 132kV terminal towers (150R & 151R) to facilitate the connection of a new underground cable route to existing 132kV overhead lines.
- The proposed tower heights are 150R – 26.3 metres, 151R – 29.3 metres, an increase of 3.74 metres and 3.93 metres when compared to the existing towers.
- This screening opinion relates to the overhead lines only.



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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 Ove Arup & Partners Limited ("the Applicant") in relation to the impacts on the environment of the proposed development and the views of Newport City Council ("the LPA"). 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 132 kilovolts, is to be installed above ground in a sensitive area and therefore requires a mandatory screening.
3. The proposed development falls within the Gwent Levels: St Brides Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).
4. The proposed development is hydrologically linked to the Severn Estuary Ramsar site, Special Area of Conservation (SAC) & Special Protection Area (SPA), and the River Usk SAC.
5. An extended phase 1 habitat survey was carried out in October 2023, this determined that the two existing 132kV towers are located in fields with a relatively low flora diversity, with no more than local value for nature conservation.
6. The key risk in relation to both the special features of the SSSI and the Ramsar/SAC/SPA sites as a result of the proposed development is the potential to pollute the Reen and Ditch habitat. The Applicant has indicated that this risk will be managed through best practice pollution control measures which will be detailed within a Construction Environmental Management Plan.
7. Prior to the proposed development this Applicant will complete a Habitats Regulations Assessment, this will be reviewed by both Natural Resources Wales and the Secretary of State during the application processes for SSSI Assent and Section 37 consent.
8. The LPA provided the Applicant with an EIA screening opinion for the underground cable route associated with the proposed development. The LPA concluded on 21 September 2024 that the underground cable route would not result in a significant environmental effect (reference: 24/0718).



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9. The visual impact as a result of a ~15% height increase of the two existing towers will be minimal.
10. The Secretary of State agrees with the conclusions of the Applicant outlined in communications on 20 December 2024 (reference: 298483-03).

Yours sincerely,

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