



Department for
Energy Security
& Net Zero

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Our ref: 2083u
Your ref: TN/ MILA E4L5/ Gorley Buddle

4 April 2025

Dear Miss Noble,

**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: TN/MILL LANE E4L5/ GORLEY BUDDLE

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 a single low voltage pole on a like-for-like basis



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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 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 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 the New Forest Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).
4. The Applicant consulted with the LPA who raised no objection to the development on 28 August 2024 (planning reference: 24/00762OHL).
5. The Applicant consulted with the County Archaeologist who confirmed in communications dated 11 September 2024 that they had no objections to the proposed development. Specifically, they noted that “No recorded or visible heritage assets will be affected by the pole replacement and/or access route.”
6. The Applicant consulted with Natural England (NE). On 30 October 2024, NE granted assent for the development to proceed between 1 October 2025 to 28 February 2026 (reference: 1010240713JT). The conditions outlined in the assent specify that all works will adhere to the attached ‘Practical Guidelines for Working in the New Forest SSSI’ to minimise damage and disturbance to the protected site. Where possible, replacement poles should be well seasoned to reduce the risk of chemical treatments leaching into the site’s soils. A rare plant, small fleabane, which is an interest feature of the New Forest SSSI, occurs in the verges surrounding areas of the works. Consequently, damp, or wet areas should be avoided and verge disturbance kept to a minimum.
7. An Ecology Survey was conducted at the proposed development site on 12 November 2024 and the subsequent “Ecological Constraints Report” was issued on 8 January 2025 by RSK ADAS Limited (reference: BRT69105-1454(00)). The survey concluded that there are no suitable habitats for reptiles or Great Crested Newts on the site. However, the trees present have potential for nesting birds and provide suitable foraging and commuting habitats for bats. The site also offers limited habitat connectivity for hazel dormouse. The report provided



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recommendations, including that vegetation clearance should be scheduled between September and October to avoid the main bird nesting season. Additionally, the footprint of the works at the site should be kept to a minimum to reduce potential impacts on the designated site.

Yours sincerely,

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