



Department for
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& Net Zero

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Our ref: 2095u
Your ref: LA/PS006112/ALTL E6L5

4 April 2025

Dear Mr Armstrong,

**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: ALTON LOCAL E6L5

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 11kV wooden 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 East Hampshire District 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 to be installed above ground in a sensitive area;
3. The proposed development falls within the Broxhead and Kingsley Commons Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Kingsley Common Registered Common Land and Wealden Heaths Phase II Special Protected Area (SPA).
4. The Applicant produced a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) in December 2024 which outlined the working methods, potential risks to protected sites, and proposed mitigation measures.
5. Natural England (NE) was consulted regarding the designated sensitive areas and on 10 January 2025 granted assent to the development during the period from 1 July 2025 to 1 October 2025 (reference: 1812240806VT).
6. The Applicant consulted with the LPA who raised no objection to the development on 13 January 2025 (planning reference: 25/002).
7. An ecology survey was conducted at the proposed development site on 20 December 2024 and the subsequent “Ecological Constraints Report” was issued by RSK ADAS Ltd on 16 January 2025 (reference: BRT69105-1491(00)). The site comprises of heathland and acid grassland, with areas of scrub and secondary woodland. It supports a diverse flora and invertebrate fauna, including twenty-five nationally rare and scarce species. The survey identified suitable habitats on site for Sand Lizard, Smooth Snake, widespread reptiles, nesting birds, bats, and Badgers. The pole requiring replacement contained a potential roosting feature suitable for a small number of roosting bats. The report recommends that a non-licensed method statement should be produced, detailing appropriate working methods to avoid impacts to the aforementioned species. Additionally, three dusk bat emergence surveys should be conducted within the active period for bats. Should



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a roost be identified, a licence from Natural England will be required before works can proceed.

8. Having considered the HRA, the Secretary of State considers there may be likely significant effects on a National Site Network site under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. These effects could result from disturbance to lowland dry heath and acid grassland habitats, as well as potential disturbances to species such as breeding birds, lizards, and invertebrates, due to excavations and vehicle movements. The Secretary of State has considered whether there could be an Adverse Effect on Integrity of the protected site. The works are expected to take one day and will occur during dry weather conditions. As such any open excavations will be closed during the same day. A competent person will assess access routes prior to commencement of work, and all works vehicles will remain on designated access routes. Refuelling will occur offsite, and spill kits will be present on all vehicles. Additionally, any excavated materials will be retained and returned to the trench in the correct order of layers.
9. In light of the proposed mitigations, the Secretary of State is satisfied that there will be no Adverse Effect on Integrity of the protected site, and this is beyond all reasonable scientific doubt.

Yours sincerely,

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