



Department for  
Energy Security  
& Net Zero

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Our ref: 2096u  
Your ref: LA/PS006117/ALTL E5L5

10 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: ALTL E5L5**

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 two 11kV wooden poles 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 South Downs National Park, Wealden Edge Hangers Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), East Hampshire Hangers Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Hawkley Hanger, Farrow Hill Ancient Woodland.
4. The Applicant consulted with the LPA who responded with no objection to the development on 7 January 2025 (planning reference: SDNP/24/04969/OHL).
5. The Applicant produced a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) in November 2024 which provided details on the working method, risks to protected sites, and proposed mitigation measures.
6. Natural England (NE) was consulted regarding the designated sensitive areas and granted assent to the development from the period between 1 July 2025 to 1 October 2025 (reference: 0711241625CG).
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 17 January 2025 (reference: BRT69105-1486(00)). The sites feature poles located at the edge of an agricultural field surrounded by dense bramble scrub, and on a scrub-dominated slope amongst bramble and Field Maple, surrounded by woodland. The survey identified that the woodland, hedgerows, and scrub habitats were suitable for widespread reptiles, nesting birds, bats, badgers, and Hazel Dormouse. The report outlined recommendations inclusive of producing a Non-Licensed Method Statement, detailing appropriate working methods to avoid impacts to these species, with a pre-works nesting bird check if works occur during the nesting season. Street Works UK guidelines should be followed to avoid damage to trees. If trees within the woodland require



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pruning or removal to access Pole P15712, an Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) should assess them for any potential roosting features. If these trees cannot be avoided, an endoscope survey should be conducted.

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 dry grassland, and broad-leaved deciduous woodland habitats 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 two to three days 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