



Department for
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Our ref: 2123u
Your ref: MN-BUSH-SWAN-WARE

23 May 2025

Dear Mr Matthew Norris

**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: BUSH-SWAN-WARE (YELLOW) P66, P67, P68, P69

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 7 poles and associated stays on approximately 494m of an existing 33kV overhead line.



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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 PLC (“the Applicant”) in relation to the impacts on the environment of the proposed development and the views of Dorset 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 Dorset National Landscape, Dorset Heathlands SPA, Dorset Heaths (Purbeck & Wareham) & Studland Dunes SAC, Dorset Heathlands Ramsar, Thrasher’s Heath Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and an Impact Risk Zone.
4. The Applicant consulted the LPA. The LPA concluded that the proposed development is not likely to have significant environmental impacts and had no objections to make on 16 January 2025.
5. The Applicant consulted Dorset National Landscape on 25 November 2025. Dorset National Landscape advised the works involve like for like replacement of existing infrastructure and had no comments to make on the proposed development.
6. The Applicant consulted Natural England on 2 December 2024. Natural England responded 12 December 2024, concurring with the appropriate assessment and confirmed that the plans proposed would not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the European Sites.
7. Natural England granted assent covering the period from 1 October 2025 to 30 December 2025 (reference: 0212241148NG).
8. An Ecological Constraints Report was issued out by RSK ADAS Limited on 21 February 2025. The report determined the site comprised of a mixture of wet and dry heath with areas of bog. The survey noted that the site is known to have a good population of Sand Lizard and Smooth Snake. The area around P66 was dominated by Bracken with occasional Bramble and Old Man’s Beard. P68 was situated at the top of a valley and east of the main dirt track. The immediate area surrounding the pole was mostly bare ground with a log pile and some patches of Deer Grass, dock species and Bell Heather. P69 was within a hedgerow and a ditch along a private track. The ditch was damp and taken over with abundant Rough Meadow Grass, frequent Cock’s foot and Yellow Oatgrass with occasional



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Teasel, Common Nettle, Bird's-foot Trefoil, Common Sorrel and rare Hedge Bedstraw. The site had suitable habitat for widespread species of reptile, with P66 – P69 being within statutory designated sites known to contain good population of all six species of native reptiles.

9. The proposed development is likely to adversely impact the Ecology of the site in the absence of mitigations. It is therefore recommended that the Applicant follows the recommendations outlined in the Ecological Constraints Report to minimise the risk of impacts on Wildlife and protected species.
10. The Applicant provided a Habitats Regulation Assessment ("the HRA") which was carried out 29 November 2024, the document provided details on work methods, risks to the protected sites and proposed mitigation measures.
11. Having considered the HRA and the Ecological Constraints Report, 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. This is due to disturbance to the Heathland habitats located in/around the proposed site. The Secretary of State has considered whether there could be an Adverse Effect on Integrity of the protected site. The Applicant has provided appropriate mitigations on the HRA advising that the proposed development will be carried outside of the bird nesting season, works will be carried out during a period of dry weather, low ground pressure, tracked excavators will be used to conduct the works, an Ecologist will check the access routes are clear of breeding birds/ reptiles prior to works. The Applicant advised temporary rubberised mats will be placed on the ground at turning points to prevent the slewing of tracks damaging the surface of the site, excavated soil will be separated in layers and placed on a ground sheet in readiness for reinstatement in the correct order.
12. Considering the proposed mitigation, 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.
13. 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