



Department for  
Energy Security  
& Net Zero

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Our ref: 2171u  
Your ref: SP/U7077515

18 July 2025

Dear Mr Wade,

**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: HELL HOLE SOLAR (PV) FARM 132KV CONNECTION**

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:

- Install 375 metres of 132kV overhead line
- Install 8 H-poles

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 Northern Powergrid ("the Applicant") in relation to the impacts on the environment of the proposed development and the views of Stockton on Tees Borough 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 under Schedule 2 of the 2017 Regulations as the electricity line is 132 kilovolts and therefore requires a mandatory screening.
4. The proposed development does not fall within any designated sensitive areas.
5. The Applicant consulted with the LPA who had no objection to the development and concluded that an EIA is not required, stating that 'the proposed development is relatively minor and would be viewed in the context of the substation' on 12 November 2024 (planning reference: 24/1766/OHL).
6. The Applicant consulted with the County Archaeologist, who confirmed on 9 April 2025 that there are no areas of archaeological interest that will be affected by the proposed development.
7. An ecological walkover survey was conducted at the site of the proposed development on 1 April 2025, and the subsequent "EcoCheck" was issued on 2 April 2025 (ref: WNT69105-2219 (00) NPG) by RSK ADAS Ltd. The site lies in an area of bramble scrub with surrounding rough grassland and grazing pasture. The survey found no records of priority habitats or the presence of protected species, with a small risk of nesting birds being present. It is recommended that if works are to take place between March and August, a thorough check for active nests should be made before any vegetation clearance.
8. Public Notices regarding the proposed development were posted in the local newspaper from 11 April 2025 to 25 April 2025. No representations were received by the deadline of 19 May 2025.

Yours sincerely,

John McKenna