



Department for
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& Net Zero

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Our ref: 2146u

Your ref: MN/BUSH-SWAN-WARE (YELLOW)-P40

13th June 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: MN/BUSH-SWAN-WARE (YELLOW)-P40
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 wooden poles on an existing 33kV overhead line approximately 108m.

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 Heathlands SPA, Dorset Heaths (Purbeck & Wareham) & Studland Dunes SAC, Dorset Heathlands Ramsar, Purbeck Heaths National Nature Reserves Stoborough & Creech Heaths SSSI, Dorset National Landscapes and an Impact Risk Zone.
4. The Applicant consulted the LPA. The LPA concluded their checks and had no objections to make on the proposed development on 6 February 2025.
5. The Applicant consulted Dorset National Landscape (DNL) on 26 November 2024. DNL responded via email on 9 December 2024 with no comments to make on the proposed development.
6. The Applicant consulted Natural England. Natural England responded on 20 March 2024 granting assent covering the period from 1 August 2025 to 30 October 2025.
7. An Ecological Constraints Report was issued out by RSK ADAS Limited on 21 February 2025. The report determined that the area around pole P40 was dominated by European Gorse. Surrounding areas had abundant Deer Grass, Sheeps Fescue, Glaucous Sedge, frequent Bell Heather and occasional Cross Leaved Heather. The survey found that the site P40 provided suitable habitat for various reptiles such as Adders, Common Lizard, Slow-worm, Sand Lizard, Smooth Snake, Grass Snake, along with providing suitable habitat for breeding and nesting birds. The heathland habitat around P40 is considered sub optimal for Badgers to create a sett as the site provided soft soil and nearby plantation.
8. One pond was found approximately 80m northwest (PD1) and one pond approximately 100m southwest (PD2), separated from the site by a single lane road. Parts of the site which may be used as an access

route are periodically wet creating pools which provide suitability for Great Crested Newt.

9. The proposed development is likely to adversely impact the Ecology of the site in the absence of mitigations, especially in relation to nesting birds, Great Crested Newts and Reptiles. 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. 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 excavations and vehicle movement causing 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, avoiding peak wintering bird season, works will be carried out during a period of dry weather and include a site check to ensure breeding birds are not present. This will likely involve an Ecological clerk of work supervision. 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, tracked excavated will be used, and work vehicles will stay on agreed, designated routes – sticking to the driest areas. Excavated soil will be separated in layers and placed on a ground sheet in readiness for reinstatement in the correct order.
11. 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.
12. 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