



Department for
Energy Security
& Net Zero

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Our ref: 2301u
Your ref: MMN-AWRE-BASI-PAMBERFOREST

19 September 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-AWRE-BASI-PAMBERFOREST
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:

- The replacement of one electricity pole supporting a 33kV overhead line approximately 375m.

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 Basingstoke & Deane 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 within Pamber Forest and Silchester Common SSSI, Registered Parks and Garden and Impact Risk Zone.
4. The Applicant consulted the LPA. The LPA concluded their checks and advised that the proposed development is not considered an EIA development and therefore raised no objections on 1 September 2025.
5. The Applicant consulted Natural England. NE responded on 28 March 2025 granting assent subject to strict adherence with the following conditions:
 - As these works are scheduled during bird breeding season, it is essential that the access route and immediate surroundings is surveyed for nesting birds by an appropriately qualified or skilled personnel for any signs of breeding activity (such as observation from a distance using binoculars and direct searching of hedge/trees for nests) prior to commencing these works. If any nests or breeding activity are found, an appropriate species dependent buffer zone must be put in place to avoid any possible disturbance, or works must be postponed until after all individuals have fledged and breeding activity has ceased.
 - Vegetation clearance should be undertaken outside of nesting bird season. The nesting bird season is weather dependent but generally extends between March and September inclusive (peak period March-August). If this is not possible than any vegetation to be removed or disturbed should be checked by an experienced ecologist for nesting birds immediately prior to works commencing. If birds are found to be nesting any works which may affect them would have to be delayed until the young fledged and the nest has been abandoned naturally, for example via the implementation of

- an appropriate buffer zone (species dependant) around the nest in which no disturbance is permitted until the nest is no longer in use
6. NE assent covers the period between 15 August 2025 to 30 September 2025.
 7. An Ecological Constraints Report was issued on 15 May 2025 by RSK ASDAS Limited. The report determined that P56 was situated within a woodland ride, approximately 5 m from the Silchester Brook. Young Hawthorn and Honeysuckle were growing around the base of the pole. The proposed access route to P56 currently proposed traversing through approximately 208 m of woodland which is potentially ancient in origin, which could result in damage to tree roots. Pruning may also be required. It is recommended that an alternative access route has been proposed in the Ecological Constraints report (ref: BRT69105-1538(00)). A mosaic of interconnected watercourses ran through this section of woodland, which could make access difficult.
 8. 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.
 9. 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