



Department for
Energy Security
& Net Zero

Edward Purnell
WSP
Kings Orchard
1 Queen Street
Bristol
BS2 OHQ

Energy Infrastructure Planning

3-8 Whitehall Place
London
SW1A 2JP

Email:

S37consents@energysecurity.gov.uk

Website: www.gov.uk/desnz

Our ref: n/a (to be assigned on receipt of S37 application)
Your ref: UK0028121.4284

19 November 2025

Dear Mr Purnell,

**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: FARMOOR SUBSTATION

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:

- Erect 2 new 400kV terminal towers to facilitate the connection of a new substation to an existing 400kV overhead line. Works would comprise the construction of two new towers and the removal of one existing tower, and the construction and subsequent removal of a temporary diversion necessary to construct the new towers
- The proposed tower heights are 60 to 80 metres
- This screening opinion relates to the overhead lines only.



Department for Energy Security & Net Zero

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 WSP Limited (“the Applicant”) in relation to the impacts on the environment of the proposed development and the views of Vale of White Horse 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 400 kilovolts and therefore requires a mandatory screening.
3. The LPA provided the Applicant with an EIA screening opinion for the new substation associated with the proposed development. The LPA concluded on 21 September 2024 that the new substation would result in significant environmental effects (reference: P25/V1685/SCR).
4. The LPA considers that “visually and in landscape terms, the extent of the impact is likely to be significant. The site, which covers an area of approximately 7 Ha will change from one with an open character and appearance to a large-scale industrial substation.”.
5. The Secretary of State considers that the addition of two towers needed to facilitate the connection of a new substation to an existing 400 kV overhead line is unlikely to have any significant effects on landscape and visual amenity. This is because with the removal of the existing tower, there would be a net increase of one new tower, which is already a feature in the existing landscape.
6. The LPA suggests that there are likely significant adverse impacts to biodiversity, specifically protected species and species present in Local Wildlife Sites (reference: P25/V1685/SCR).
7. The Applicant states that a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) would be in place during the proposed development, which would contain any precautionary working methods to ensure habitat and wildlife protection in addition to preventing any pollution events.
8. Furthermore, the Applicant will also produce a Tree Removal and Protection Plan which will identify Construction Exclusion Zones that would be established around Root Protection Areas. An Arboriculture



Department for
Energy Security
& Net Zero

Clerk of Works would be appointed to ensure the application of these mitigation measures.

9. The Secretary of State considers that the addition of two towers will have some impact to biodiversity but will be mitigated by the Applicant adhering to a CEMP and Tree Removal and Protection Plan.
10. The Applicant concludes that "... given the temporary nature of the works and the mitigation measures proposed to minimise impacts, these effects would not be significant.", the Secretary of State agrees with this observation (reference: UK0028121.4284).
11. The cumulative effects of the proposed development, specifically regarding landscape and visual impact are considered to be limited, therefore the Secretary of State concludes no significant effects.

Yours sincerely,

John McKenna
Head of Network Planning team
Energy Infrastructure Planning Delivery Team