



Department for  
Energy Security  
& Net Zero

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Our ref: 2404u  
Your ref: JO/MILA E2L5 Moortown

20 March 2026

Dear Mr O'Reilly,

**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: JO/MILA E2L5 MOORTOWN**

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 as part of an 11kV, 257 metre 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 (“the Applicant”) in relation to the impacts on the environment of the proposed development and the views of New Forest 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 to be installed above ground in a sensitive area;
3. The proposed development falls within Avon Valley (Bickton to Christchurch) Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), and Avon Valley (Bickton to Christchurch) Ramsar.
4. The Applicant consulted with the LPA who had no objection to the development on 9 September 2025 (planning reference: ENQ/25/20295).
5. The Applicant produced a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) in January 2025 which provided details on the working method, risks to protected sites, and proposed mitigation measures.
6. Natural England (NE) was consulted regarding the designated sensitive areas and granted unconditional assent to the development from the period between 1 September 2025 and 28 February 2026 (reference: 1401251015NG). The assent period has expired before works are scheduled to commence, however the Applicant is not required to consult Natural England again, as the proposed development is considered unlikely to disturb or harm the notified features of the SSSI and Ramsar.
7. An ecology survey was conducted at the site of the proposed development on 2 December 2025, and the subsequent “Preliminary Ecological Appraisal” was issued by Wessex Ecology. The survey identified that bramble within the works area provides suitable habitat for reptiles and nesting birds. It is therefore recommended that works are undertaken in late summer or early autumn, when ground conditions are likely to be drier and outside of bird nesting season to avoid disturbance to nesting birds.
8. Having considered the HRA, 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



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due to potential disturbance to grassland habitats, as a result of excavations and vehicle movements. The Secretary of State has considered whether there could be an Adverse Effect on Integrity of the protected site. The works are expected to take two days to complete and will be undertaken during a period of dry weather. Vehicles will always remain on proposed access routes to limit disturbance to the designated habitats. All vehicles will be refuelled off site, with spill kits are readily available. Additionally, all excavations will be reinstated in the reverse order in which they were removed. These measures are secured by condition 3 of the consent issued under Section 37 of the Electricity Act 1989.

9. In light of the proposed mitigations, 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.

Yours sincerely,

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