



Department for
Energy Security
& Net Zero

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Our ref: 2403u
Your ref: JO/MILA E2L5 Kingston

10th April 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 Kingston

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:

- Replacement of four 11kV electricity wood poles on an existing overhead line approximately 553m.



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Secretary of State considerations:

1. 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 particular, in reaching his decision the Secretary of State notes the following factors:
 - a) The proposed development does not fall within Schedule 1 (mandatory EIA);
 - b) 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.
 - c) The proposed development is located within the Avon Valley (Bickton to Christchurch) SSSI and Impact Risk Zone and within the Avon Valley Ramsar and Special Protection Area.
 - d) On 18 September 2025 the LPA concluded that the proposed development is unlikely to result in any significant environmental effects, and a full EIA was not required. The LPA raised no objections to the proposed development.
 - e) Natural England assented to the relevant works to taking place between 1 September 2025 to 28 February 2026 (reference: 1401251015NG). Works are now scheduled to take place between 1 September 2026 and 28 February 2027, however in accordance with the conditions set out in the original assent further consultation with Natural England is not required. The proposed development is considered unlikely to disturb or adversely affect the notified features of the SSSI, SPA, and Ramsar site.
 - f) The Applicant consulted the County Archaeologist, who advised on 5 July 2023 that a 19th Century boathouse is recorded near one of the poles. However, the works are not anticipated to result in any harm to this heritage asset.
 - g) A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal was prepared by Wessex Ecology on 2 December 2025, which identified that the site lies within multiple designated sites, including Avon Valley SSSI, Special Protection Area and Ramsar site, and forms part of a sensitive floodplain environment. The survey identified wet grassland and reedbed habitat, which is valuable for breeding and foraging birds, including species that are qualify features of the



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Avon Valley SPA. The report concluded that the pole replacement is unlikely to result in significant ecological harm, provided the mitigations set out in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (reference Avon Valley (Bicton to Christchurch) SSSI, River Avon SAC & Avon Valley SPA, Ramsar, Mill Lane, Ringwood, Hampshire. Wessex Ecology October 2025) are implemented.

h) The Applicant produced a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) on 14 January 2025 which provided details on the working method, risks to protected sites, and proposed mitigation measures.

2. Having considered the HRA, the Secretary of State considers that in the absence of mitigation the proposed development could give rise to adverse ecological effects. This is due to the vehicle movements which may cause disturbance to habitats, species and coastal floodplain grazing marsh.
3. The Applicant has outlined appropriate mitigation measures in the HRA, including works will be undertaken when ground conditions are driest and following the completion of bird breeding season, vehicles will stay on designated routes (and will not drive widely on habitats beyond these route), temporary track matting may be used for further protection to designated habitats or postponement of the works until ground conditions are suitable.
4. The proposed development is a minor modification to an existing infrastructure. Having considered the evidence and proposed mitigations the Secretary of State is satisfied beyond reasonable scientific doubt that there will be no Adverse Effect on Integrity of the protected site.

Yours sincerely,

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