



Department for  
Energy Security  
& Net Zero

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Our ref: 2414u  
Your ref: JO/WEYM E5L5 White Horse Hill

14 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/WEYM E5L5 White Horse Hill**

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 Dorset Council LPA (“the LPA”) for information.

Screening decision for a proposed development (“the proposed development”) to:

- 3 x pole replacement of existing 278m, 11kV overhead 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 PLC (“the Applicant”) in relation to the impacts on the environment of the proposed development and the views of 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 the following designated areas:
  - White Horse Hill Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
  - Dorset National Landscape
4. Natural England was consulted regarding the designated sensitive area in June 2025 and granted unconditional assent to the development from the period between 1 September 2026 and 28 February 2027 (Natural England reference: 1306250934JT).
5. The Applicant consulted with the LPA who had no objection to the proposed development in June 2025 (reference: P/STA/2025/03693). It concluded it was not an EIA development due to it being a minor development.
6. In December 2025, the applicant produced an ecology survey to assess the possible risks and mitigations of the development. The survey advised mitigations such as vehicles keeping to designated access routes where possible, checking of woodpecker holes in pole 8 for possible nesting birds or roosting bats and if necessary, an endoscope, additionally the works should take place outside of bird breeding season.
7. The Secretary of State notes the limited scale of the works, and localised nature of any impacts and that the proposed development is a like for like replacement to existing infrastructure. The Secretary of State therefore considers that there are no likely significant effects arising from the expected residues and emissions and the production of waste or the use of natural resources, in particular soil, land, water and biodiversity and that the proposed development is not likely



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to have significant effect on the SSSI and National Landscape in which it is located.

Yours sincerely,

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