



Department for
Energy Security
& Net Zero

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Our ref: 2422u
Your ref: JO/WART E2L5 Arne

30 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/WART E2L5 Arne

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 3 poles as part of a 11kV, 1,148 metre 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 Dorset 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 the following designated sensitive areas:
 - Arne Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
 - Studland Dunes Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
 - Dorset Heathlands Special Protected Area (SPA)
 - Dorset Heathlands Ramsar
4. The Applicant produced two Habitats Regulations Assessments (HRA) in June 2025 and July 2025 which provided details on the working method, risks to protected sites, and proposed mitigation measures.
5. Natural England was consulted regarding the designated sensitive areas and granted assent to the development from the period between 1 October 2026 and 28 February 2027 based on the HRAs submitted regarding the proposed development (Natural England reference: 0107251407JT).
6. In January 2026, the applicant produced an ecology survey to assess the possible risks and mitigations of the development. The survey advised mitigations such as conducting vegetation clearance outside of bird breeding season and having an ecological clerk of works present on site at all times.
7. 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 due to potential disturbance to embryonic shifting dunes, great crested newts and breeding birds, as a result of excavations and vehicle



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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, where excavations will be undertaken during the day and will not be left open overnight. An Ecologist will check for reptiles prior to excavation commencing. The proposed development will be carried out outside of bird breeding season and works vehicles will stay on designated routes and will not drive on habitats beyond these routes.

8. 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.
9. The Applicant consulted with the LPA who noted no objection to the proposed development (reference: P/STA/2025/04570) in October 2025. It concluded that the development is unlikely to result in a likely significant environmental effect and is not EIA development.

Yours sincerely,

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