



Department for
Energy Security
& Net Zero

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Our ref: 2490u
Your ref: ED/ HABO E2L5 Coates Castle SSSI

17 June 2026

Dear Miss Dunn,

**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: HABO E2L5

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 four wooden poles forming part of a 136 metre, 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 (“the Applicant”) in relation to the impacts on the environment of the proposed development and the views of Chichester 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 Coates Castle Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and South Downs National Park.
4. Natural England (NE) was consulted regarding the designated sensitive areas and granted unconditional assent for the development between 18 March 2026 and 31 January 2027 (reference: 2702260938NG).
5. The Applicant consulted with the LPA who had no objection to the development on 2 April 2026 (planning reference: SDNP/26/00849/OHL).
6. An ecology survey was conducted at the site of the proposed development on 12 May 2026 and the subsequent “Ecological Constraints Report” was issued on 22 May 2026 by ADAS Ltd (reference: BRT69105-1730 (00) Coates Lane). The survey identified that the proposed works are in close proximity to trees. Two ponds on site may provide suitable aquatic habitat for Great Crested Newt (GCN), while the woodland, grassland and scrub on site provided suitable habitat for reptiles, GCN, nesting birds and bats. Evidence of badger activity, including snuffle holes and fur was recorded, although no setts were identified, the woodland provides suitable habitat for sett creation. To mitigate ecological impacts, Street Works Guidelines for tree root protection should be adhered to. Works should be undertaken under a non-licensed method statement for great crested newt with ecological supervision and a reptile method statement should be



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prepared and implemented. Should vegetation clearance be required during the nesting bird season (March to August inclusive), a check by a competent person, must be completed no more than 24 hours prior, if an active nest is found, a minimum 5 metre exclusion buffer must be maintained until the nest is no longer in use. If tree trimming or clearance are proposed, a ground-level tree assessment will be required to determine suitability for roosting bats, with further survey or mitigation as necessary. A pre-works for badger setts within 30 metres of the works is also recommended. These mitigations are secured by condition 4 of the associated consent granted under Section 37 of the Electricity Act 1989.

7. The proposed development is a minor modification to an existing piece of infrastructure and is likely to have minimal visual impact on the National Park in which it is located.

Yours sincerely,

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