



Department for
Energy Security
& Net Zero

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Our ref: 2494u
Your ref: 59CM11/SWT2224

17 June 2026

Dear Mr Morris,

**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: 11KV D POLE REPLACEMENT AT BLAENCELYN

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 one 11kV wooden pole



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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 National Grid Electricity Distribution (“the Applicant”) in relation to the impacts on the environment of the proposed development and the views of Ceredigion County 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 adjacent Aberarth-Carreg Wylan Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Cardigan Bay Special Area of Conservation (SAC).
4. An ecology survey was conducted at the site of the proposed development on 5 February 2026, and the subsequent “Preliminary Ecological Appraisal” was issued on 23 February 2026 by Gould Ecology Ltd. The survey identified that the pole is located within a grassland field. A badger sett was recorded within a bank adjacent to the access track, approximately 115m south-east of the pole. Hedgebanks may provide suitable habitat for reptiles and offer gaps and crevices of potential value to small mammals. No habitats suitable for nesting birds were identified within the immediate working area, however, dense vegetation on the coastal slope has potential to support ground nesting birds. Habitats within the working area were assessed as having negligible suitability for bats, dormice, otter, water vole, amphibians and invertebrates. To mitigate ecological impacts, measures will be implemented to avoid damage or disturbance to hedges and coastal slope habitats during the works. Vehicle access across the grassland field will be restricted to a minimum distance of 20m from the identified badger sett. Works will be undertaken outside the bird nesting season where possible. Where this is not feasible, a pre-works check for nesting activity will be carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist.
5. A Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) prepared by Gould Ecology Ltd on 27 February 2026, sets out the proposed construction methods and outlines the control measures required to minimise environmental impacts.



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6. Natural Resources Wales (NRW) was consulted in relation to the SSSI designation and on 10 March 2026 granted conditional assent to the development (reference: A005549/1), valid until 6 March 2028. The conditions require that all works be carried out in accordance with the NGED Environmental Handbook, the CEMP and the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA). In addition, a toolbox talk with specific reference to mitigation measures outlined in sections 7.02 to 7.20 of the PEA must be delivered to all staff entering or working within the site. These mitigations are secured by conditions 3 and 4 of the associated consent granted under Section 37 of the Electricity Act 1989.
7. The Applicant consulted with the LPA which had no objection to the development on 14 April 2026 (planning reference: Q260060).
8. Having considered the distance from the features for which the SAC is designated, together with the mitigation measures and methodology set out in the PEA, CEMP and NGED Environmental Handbook, the Secretary of State concluded that a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) was not required, as there would be no likely significant effects on the SAC.

Yours sincerely,

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