



Department for
Energy Security
& Net Zero

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Our ref: 2438u
Your ref: JO/DUNB E3L5 Bentley Wood

17 June 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/DUNB E3L5 Bentley Wood

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 two 11kV electricity wood poles on an existing overhead line approximately 162m.



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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 Wiltshire 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 Bentley SSSI and Tytherley Common Ancient Woodland.
 - d) On 30 January 2026 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) The Applicant consulted Natural England (NE), on 4 December 2025. NE reviewed the relevant plans and working methods and concluded with no objections. Assent has been granted for the relevant works to take place between 1 April 2026 to 28 March 2027 (reference: 1711251201JT).
 - f) The Applicant consulted the County Archaeologist who, on 7 January 2026, confirmed that there are no known heritage assets in close proximity to the proposed works and therefore raised no concerns.
 - g) A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal was prepared by Wessex Ecology on 21 January 2026. The survey identified that the poles are located within an area of open ground, outside of the core woodlands thereby reducing ecological risk if appropriately managed. The base of each pole is dominated by bracken with some grasses and bramble present. The appraisal noted that bracken habitat has some potential to support reptiles including slow worm and adder. However, the report concluded that the proposed pole replacement works are unlikely to result in significant ecological harm, provided the mitigations set out in the Preliminary



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Ecological Appraisal (reference: Pole Replacement, Bentley Wood SSSI, Howe Farm, East Grimstead, Wiltshire. Wessex Ecology. January 2026.) are implemented.

2. 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