



Department for
Energy Security
& Net Zero

John O'Reilly
Southern Electric Power Distribution PLC
New Forest Depot
Minstead
Lyndhurst
SO43 7PE

Energy Infrastructure Planning
3-8 Whitehall Place
London
SW1A 2JP

Email:
S37consents@energysecurity.gov.uk
Website: www.gov.uk/desnz

Our ref: 2460u
Your ref: JO/LYMI E7L5

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/LYMI E7L5 Ampress

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 a single 11kV electricity wood poles on an existing overhead line approximately 256m.



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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 the New Forest National Park Authority (“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 Lymington River Reedbeds SSSI, New Forest National Park, Solent & Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar.
 - d) On 19 November 2026 the LPA concluded that the proposed development is unlikely to result in any significant environmental effect, or exacerbated visual impact over the existing works and a full EIA was not required. The LPA raised no objections to the proposed development on 8 December 2025.
 - e) The Applicant consulted Natural England (NE), on 20 October 2025. NE reviewed the HRA and the relevant working methods and concluded that the proposed works would not have an adverse effect on the European Site and raised no objections. Assent has been granted for the relevant works to take place between 1 September 2026 to 31 December (reference: 1410251122MH).
 - f) The Applicant consulted the County Archaeologist, who advised the proposed works is located within a yellow alert area of high archaeological potential, associated with the site of Ampress Camp, a known but largely destroyed historic earthwork. While no specific remains are confirmed at the exact pole location, the potential for buried archaeological deposits cannot be excluded. The County Archaeologist concluded on 11 February 2026 that archaeological monitoring may be required, subject to the nature and extent of the proposed ground works.
 - g) A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal was prepared by Wessex Ecology on 17 February 2026. The survey identified that the poles



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are located within an area of boggy wet grounds dominated by grasses, rushes wetland habitat. The appraisal noted that the base of the pole is dominated by scrub that could potentially support nesting birds. Habitat within the site has some potential to support reptiles including slow worm. However, the report concluded that the habitat close to the pole is not considered optimal habitat and the proposed pole replacement works are unlikely to result in significant ecological harm, provided the mitigations set out in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (reference: Pole Replacement Works, Hurst Castle & Lymington River Estuary SSSI Solent & Southampton water SPA, Ramsar & Lymington River SSSI Lymington Reed Beds SSSI Lymington, Hampshire. Wessex Ecology February 2026) are implemented.

- h) The Applicant produced a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) on 14 October 2025 which provided details on the working method, risks to protected sites, and proposed mitigation measures.

2. Having considered the HRA, the Secretary of State considers that in the absence of mitigation the proposed development could give rise to adverse ecological effects. This is due to the excavations and vehicle movements which may cause disturbance to habitats and possible disturbance to species.
3. The Applicant has outlined appropriate mitigation measures in the HRA, including works will be undertaken when ground conditions are driest and following the completion of bird breeding season in line with Natural England assent period, vehicles will stay on designated routes (and will not drive widely on habitats beyond these route) and excavate the turf/soil in the correct order of layers and to store these separately on ground matting adjacent to the excavation. Following completion of the works the soils and turf will be reinstated in a reversal of the removal process.
4. 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



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Energy Infrastructure Planning Delivery Team