



Department for
Energy Security
& Net Zero

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Our ref: 2080u
Your ref: JO/CROW E10L5 / Longmoor Bog SSSI

14 March 2025

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: CROWTHORNE E10L5 11KV - LONGMOOR BOG SSSI

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 two poles within a span of approximately 324m of 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 Wokingham Borough 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 Longmoor Bog Local Nature Reserve and Longmoor Bog Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).
4. The Applicant submitted a method statement and requested for assent from Natural England (NE). On 27 September 2024, NE granted conditional assent for the development from 1 March 2025 to 1 September 2025 (reference: 0209241211JT). The conditions specify that all vegetation, cuttings or arisings must be removed from the site to prevent impacts from nutrification, temperature changes, and light levels. Additionally, works must only be carried out when the ground is sufficiently dry to prevent vehicle use from damaging to the soil surface. The method statement included mitigation measures, such as keeping works vehicles on designated access routes whenever possible when crossing the SSSI. Any vehicles crossing or operating near the SSSI boundary will carry spill kits, and all refuelling will take place outside the designated area.
5. The Applicant consulted with the County Archaeologist who confirmed in communications on 30 September 2024 that they had no objections to the proposed development as they “do not consider that the works require any mitigation”.
6. The Applicant consulted with the LPA who had no objection to the development and concluded that an EIA is not required on 18 November 2024 (planning reference: 242749).
7. An Ecology Survey was conducted at the proposed development site on 18 October 2024, and the subsequent “Ecological Constraints Report” was issued on 18 December 2024 by ADAS (reference: BRT69105-1444 (00) / 1052777). The site consists of lowland valley mire, wet woodland, and wet heathland, providing suitable foraging and



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commuting habitat for Great Crested Newts, bats, reptiles, nesting birds, Stag Beetles and Hazel Dormice, with bracken offering additional shelter. The watercourse may support fish, and European Hedgehogs, Common Toads and Frogs could be present within the woodland, grassland and pond areas. Works near mature trees must follow Street Works UK Guidelines for root protection, and a 10 m buffer must be maintained around Himalayan Balsam and other non-native invasive plant species. A non-licensed method statement with ecological supervision will guide works involving Great Crested Newt and Stag Beetles. If works occur during the nesting bird season an ecologist should complete a pre works check. Before pole removal, a ground-level tree assessment must check for potential roosting features, and a non-licensed method statement or mitigation licence is required for Hazel Dormice. If a Badger sett is found within 30 metres of the works, activity must stop immediately, and ADAS must be contacted. Pollution prevention measures must comply with Environment Agency regulations, and at least one bat box and one bird box should be installed on mature trees to compensate for habitat loss.

Yours sincerely,

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



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Date: 14th March 2025

**OVERHEAD LINES
ELECTRICITY ACT 1989
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990.**

With reference to the application particulars of which are specified below, I am directed by the Secretary of State to inform you that consent is hereby granted pursuant to section 37(1) of the Electricity Act 1989 ("the 1989 Act") to the installing or keeping installed above ground of electric lines ("the lines") particulars of which are specified below ("the Development").

Pursuant to section 37(3) of the 1989 Act this consent is given subject to the following conditions:

1. The Development shall be constructed in accordance with the application and the plans set out in the particulars below.
2. Subject also to regulations 65, 66, 89 and 90 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, the Secretary of State may review this consent at any time after a period of five years from the date hereof, and upon such review, after giving all persons concerned an opportunity of being heard, he may vary or revoke this consent.
3. If the Secretary of State revokes this consent, then any lines or apparatus forming part of the Development shall be removed within such period as the Secretary of State may direct.

Pursuant to section 90(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 ("the 1990 Act") the Secretary of State hereby directs that planning permission for the Development shall be deemed to be granted subject to the following condition(s):

1. The Development to which this permission relates shall be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning from the date of this consent.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of section 91 of the 1990 Act.

2. The Company shall dismantle and remove any temporary lines and equipment referred to in the application together with any redundant lines and apparatus



replaced by the Development within six months from the date of commissioning of the Development.

Reason: To restore the land as far as possible to its condition before the redundant lines and apparatus were installed.

3. The Development shall be carried out between 1 March 2025 and 1 September 2025 as per conditional assent granted by Natural England on 27 September 2024 (reference: 0209241211JT). The Development shall not be carried out outwith the aforementioned dates without further consultation with Natural England.

Reason: To comply with assent of Natural England under Section 28H of The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

4. The Development shall be implemented in accordance with the recommendations and mitigations detailed in the Ecological Constraints Report, ref. BRT69105-1444 (00)/ 1052777 - by ADAS, dated 18 December 2024.

Reason: For the protection of flora and fauna and compliance with the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), and with the Conservation of Species and Habitats Regulations 2017.

PLANNING AUTHORITY REFERENCE: Wokingham Borough Council - Signed Form B dated 18 November 2024, ref: 242749

APPLICANT COMPANY: SOUTHERN ELECTRIC POWER DISTRIBUTION PLC

DATE OF APPLICATION: 10th January 2025

PARTICULARS OF OVERHEAD LINES:

Name of Scheme: Crowthorne E10L5 11kV - Longmoor Bog SSSI

Situated in the Parishe(s) of:

- Finchampstead

Route as indicated on plan reference Longmoor Bog SSSI Plan SSEN (or within a distance not exceeding five metres on either side thereof)

Voltages:

- 11kV

The validity of the Secretary of State's decision may be challenged by making an application to the High Court for leave to seek a judicial review. Parties seeking further information as to how to proceed, including time limits, should seek



independent legal advice from a solicitor or legal adviser or alternatively may contact the Administrative Court at the Royal Courts of Justice, Strand, London, WC2 2LL (General Enquiries 020 7947 6000).

Authorised by the Secretary of State

Yours sincerely,

Mr John McKenna
HEAD OF NETWORK CONSENTS