



COUNCIL OF THE ISLES OF SCILLY

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30 June 2025

Dear Martin,

EIA Screening Opinion, Town & Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017 (SI No 571)

REF: EIA-25-001

Proposal: Undergrounding of electricity cables,

Location: Lower Moors, St Mary's, Isles of Scilly

Applicant: National Grid

Further to the submission of the Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Opinion Request, for the above development, as received at this office on 14 May 2025. Thank you for your patience whilst we process and assess the information provided and my apologies for the delay.

The development proposed, falls into Part 3 (Energy industry) of Schedule 2, specifically (a) "*Industrial installations for the carrying of gas, steam and hot water; transmission of electricity by overhead lines.*" While undergrounding is not explicitly listed, the replacement of overhead lines with underground cables, especially in sensitive areas, can still be considered under Schedule 2 if it meets the thresholds or is likely to have significant environmental effects. Whilst the column 2 thresholds are not met, the site does fall within a National Landscape: The Isles of Scilly Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and partly within or adjacent to the Lower Moors Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). It is therefore within a sensitive environment. The proposal includes undergrounding of overhead electricity cables and associated trenching works including:

- Use of existing public highway and footpath (65%)
- Agricultural land (35%) not currently in use
- Reinstatement using local materials

These are all positive mitigation measures but do not exempt the project from screening.

Although the work would need to be carried out in accordance with a detailed Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) which has not been provided, I would advise that this

should ensure any harm is mitigated as far as possible. This will need to be in place to control issues including (not exhaustive):

Dust

- Spraying water to suppress dust, for example damping down excavation sites during construction;
- If feasible, excavations and earthworks activities should be avoided during very dry or windy weather;
- Applying sheeting / a covering over soil stockpiles (such as excavated soils to be stored for backfilling); and
- Cleaning the road / track near to the works location, as required.

Noise and Vibration

- Construction contractors should adhere to the codes of practice for construction work given in BS 5228-1:2009-Code of practice for noise and vibration control on construction and open sites – Noise and the guidance given therein regarding minimising noise from the site;
- Construction plant and equipment should comply with UK noise emissions limits;
- Implementation of a no-idling policy for vehicles; and
- Site fencing / hoarding to be erected prior to the commencement of construction.

Light

- It is not considered likely that construction activities, such as excavation or installation, would occur during night-time and therefore require lighting. However, if construction lighting was required measures may include:
- Turning off lights when not in use to minimise light spill away from the site;
- Switching off lighting when not required;
- Undertaking daily assessments for need and appropriateness of task lighting; and
- Ensuring that light scatter is minimised through height and direction adjustment.

Assuming the works will be carried out in accordance with an appropriate CEMP, I consider that on balance, having regard to the characteristics, scale and potential impacts of the development, **the proposal would not amount to EIA development**. The decision is based on the information known at the time and selection criteria for screening Schedule 2 development (Schedule 3) and the indicative thresholds and paragraphs 017, 018 and 023 of Planning Practice Guidance (Environmental Impact Assessment).

The development does not therefore require an Environmental Impact Assessment. In adopting this screening opinion, account has been taken of the applicable provisions of the EIA Regulations 2017 and their purposive nature and relevant Government Guidance.

Should you decide to change the details of your proposed development in any way then please contact me on 01720 424456 or by email: lisa.walton@scilly.gov.uk to determine whether or not further screening of the proposal is necessary.

Yours sincerely



Lisa Walton
Chief Planning Officer