

Date: 19 September 2017
Our ref: 225492
Your ref: Y17/0007/SCR



Wendy Simpson
Shepway District Council

Customer Services
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By email only, no hard copy to follow

Dear Wendy Simpson

EIA Screening Opinion under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 for the laying of electricity cables below ground between converter stations as part of the connection of the UK National Grid Electricity Grid to the European Electricity Grid.

Location: From Channel Tunnel Terminal, Ashford Road, Newington, Kent, CT18 8XX to District Boundary Close to Sellinge Converter Station, Station Road, Sellinge, Ashford TN25 6AF

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 05 September 2017 which was received by Natural England on the same day.

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

Schedule 3(2) of the Town & Country Planning (Environmental Impact Regulations) 2011 requires consideration of the selection criteria for Schedule 2 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) development and identification of 'environmental sensitivity'. Natural England has identified that the proposed location of the development would be within, adjacent to or in close proximity to the following sites:

- Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
- Folkestone to Etchinghill Escarpment Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
- Gibbin's Brook SSSI

Having reviewed the information provided, Natural England considers that the proposed development could result in impacts upon the aforementioned sites. Given the likely temporary duration of the impacts Natural England, based on the information provided, does not consider that they are likely to be sufficiently significant to require an EIA. Should the Council decide that an EIA is not required, Natural England recommends that an assessment of the potential impacts of this proposal upon these sites along with details of the avoidance, mitigation and landscape restoration measures that are to be implemented should be provided with any subsequent planning application.

Natural England does not hold information on the location of significant populations of protected species, so is unable to advise whether this proposal is likely to affect such populations to an extent sufficient to require an EIA. It remains the case, however, that the developer must provide information supporting this application sufficient for your authority to assess whether protected species are likely to be affected and, if they are, whether sufficient mitigation, avoidance or

compensation measures will be put in place.

Natural England does not hold locally specific information on potential environmental planning constraints such as Local Sites, local landscape character or Local and National Biodiversity Action Plan species and habitats. We recommend that you seek further information from the appropriate bodies (which may include the local records centre, the local wildlife trust, local geoconservation group or other recording society). Information on these potential assets should be included, where appropriate in a detailed assessment of the potential impacts of this proposal, in the event that your authority decides a full Environmental Impact Assessment is not necessary.

I trust this information is helpful; if you have any queries regarding this letter please do not hesitate to contact me on 0208 0266 064 or by email to sean.hanna@naturalengland.org.uk and we would be grateful if you were to consult us further should the proposal change.

We really value your feedback to help us improve the service we offer. We have attached a feedback form to this letter and welcome any comments you might have about our service.

Yours sincerely

Sean Hanna

Sean Hanna
Lead Adviser
Sussex and Kent Team

cc Ashford Borough Council