

Natural England's response to Q10.0.1- Siting of the substation and BESS (ExQ2, Issued on 2 July 2026)

In line with the avoidance-mitigation-compensation hierarchy, Natural England's advice remains that these elements are located away from areas associated with higher levels of bat activity. However, as advised in our response to ExQ1 (Q3.0.8), if re-siting of the substation and BESS is not considered possible, a lighting mitigation strategy should be designed in accordance with best practice guidance and informed by a detailed lighting assessment.

We welcome the Applicant's commitment to retain woodland and boundary vegetation, provide increased buffers, and develop a detailed lighting scheme through the oCEMP and oOEMP. On the basis that the detailed lighting scheme and any associated mitigation measures are developed in accordance with current best practice guidance for bats and informed by a detailed lighting assessment, Natural England is satisfied that the Applicant's response addresses our concern regarding the siting of the substation and BESS.