

INTERESTED PARTY NUMBER 20045181

We strongly object to the Rampion II proposal.

We are residents living on Kent Street in Oaklands / Ridgelands.

I have sent written representations previously and we are part of the Cowfold V Rampion group, we fully support the document COWFOLD RESIDENTS' IMPACT STATEMENT.

Cowfold Parish Council have also sent in an objection and supplementary information for the 28/2 deadline and we fully support the Council's comments and objections. We are an active community who will not let large business bulldoze through our area without due regard to local policy and local people.

This CowfoldvRampion group has over 150 households and over 200 people in the Cowfold area. The group have collated information and have submitted an impact report to be studied. We also attended and spoke at the Hearings in Brighton and also completely agree with the responses and objections put forward by our MP Mr Griffith who said this is the "wrong project in the wrong place".

We are responsible people who all want new technologies and renewable energy BUT we must have joined up thinking as to where we locate these schemes. Recently many local objections have been bulldozed over as we rush to a green future but without proper consideration of what we are losing. This DCO should be a turning point, like the Post Office debacle, where local opinions and local people are not pushed aside and we are given due consideration, where our communities and National Parks are not ruined for short term gain. We need to pause and have a longer-term strategy on location and impact of large scale renewable schemes, where individual private companies come together with Government to form a long term plan and locate new infrastructure in an appropriate location with different schemes linking together off shore.

We shouldn't be exchanging green energy for green spaces

As per our last correspondence we would request a site visit by the panel to the Cowfold area and especially the small lanes around Kent Street, to see the inadequacy of the local area for such a large project, points of detail will be listed below, we believe the panel would realise the inappropriate site once they walk around our community.

Items which need further investigation by the panel

Have alternatives been properly investigated.

It has been noted by the Protect Coastal Sussex group and was again mentioned by the chair of the panel that more information is needed from the applicant regarding initial analysis of the sub station and onshore cable route and viable alternatives.

The chair talked about Farley been a viable alternative site with the cables going along the seabed instead of ploughing through a National Park. Farley would also not need a large substation. The applicant said this scheme was looked at but the major issue prohibiting this choice was financial, saying that the longer undersea cables route would cost an extra £200m which would make the *project unviable*. The previous client estimate cost for the whole project (this was before recent increases in construction costs around 30% over the last 18 months) was circa £3bn, a normal contingency for such an early estimate would be around 10-15% for most construction projects being costed at an early pre planning stage. The client is saying the whole project becomes unviable due to the same monies as a contingency in the cost plan. To be polite I would say this is disingenuous or they should be changing their cost accountants.

We also do not believe the two Wineham sites were properly investigated and analysed, as described in depth in the Cowfold Impact Statement.

The applicant should be doing more in-depth analysis of the Wineham options and using the Rampion I cable route as this is already subject to scarring from the previous installation as discussed by The National Park in the hearings. If the cable has to come onshore it makes more sense to use the Rampion I cable route and investigate the Wineham sites again

It should be noted that on the 13th and 14th June 2022 PLG meeting, Rampion showed some slides for why they chose Oakendene however very little public and neighbourhood consultation had taken place by then in Cowfold.

The applicants seem to have chosen Oakendene and then 'managed the data' to fit the choice, based on a lack of objections – but this was down to a lack of local Cowfold consultation, many residents were kept in the dark.

I would categorise the findings of the applicant as

Why else have they chosen the site with:

The most biodiversity

The greatest impact of businesses and the wider economy

An underground high voltage cable

The fastest road, with the worst accident rate and impact on air quality

The greatest flood risk both to the site and to nearby properties and the risk of water loss to the Adur created by the open cable channels and upstream flooding at the substation site

A location in the parkland of a grade 2 listed building

The greatest heritage significance and impact for both construction and operation (PEIR SIR appendices D and G)

The answer? Because there was no opposition as local residents were not consulted: Rampion have been unashamedly clear in later discussions with locals that they took the path of least resistance.

Negative economic impact and loss of employment in the area

Oakendene estate is a very important local employer, many of these small businesses will fold when they have delays from suppliers and customer visits. Why would people queue for time to visit this site when they can source items elsewhere. The traffic delays will be fatal for these small tight cash-flow firms. Also many businesses in the main Cowfold village will be negatively affected by the delays on local roads. The local negative economic impact is not covered enough in the applicant's representations to date, business will be devastated in Cowfold and the surrounding area, it is not just tourism that will suffer.

Traffic issues A272 and Kent Street

Kent street is a quiet lane for single use traffic with soft verges on both sides of the road and only intermittent place for cars to pass. Indeed, there was an accident on the A272 (one of many) on the 20/10/23 with a large overturned trailer and the road was closed with a diversion through Kent Street for days afterwards. This caused complete chaos on the local lanes with time delays and extensive damage to the verges along Kent Street (and other small lanes) with cars unable to pass. It is not viable to use Kent Street for even temporary access as per conversations with Rampion on the point above.

No safety audit has been undertaken on the Oakendene / A272 junction and also the Kent Street / A272 junction and no Traffic Impact Assessment has been undertaken along Kent Street

No allowances for small vans and construction workers transport arriving and leaving every day. This will amount to possibly hundreds of thousands of extra journeys at peak times along the A272, it will be disastrous for the local road network and soft clay verges on local lanes.

Kent Street has passing places which are privately owned and made up of mud and hard core. They are currently full of potholes. If these passing places are removed by the restrictive landowners there would be nowhere to pass at all on the lane, how will residents be able to negotiate with large lorries or walk and ride on the lane.

KENT STREET IS NOT A VIABLE LANE FOR CONSTRUCTION TRAFFIC

There is also an access for the pipe along Kent Street which is very close to our residential turning which will make access to our residential dwelling dependant on large lorries using the lane.

I would also like to repeat what I said in the last written reps below as it is so important.

- During the informal consultation and the first round consultation Kent Street was recognised as ' a single track lane unsuitable for HGVs', being concerned I wrote to Rampion II and received an email on the 30th July 2021 from James d'Alessandro (Commercial Manager Rampion) about the use of Kent Street by construction traffic saying: *"In January 2021, the Council responded to the Rampion 2 informal consultation process to the effect that Kent Street is not deemed appropriate for temporary construction access..."* .

Photos of the chaos below on Kent Street Nov 2023 due to blockage on A272, THE. LANE CANNOT TAKE LARGE AMOUNTS OF TRAFIC.

Bus going the wrong way and trying to do a 3 point turn onto clay soft verges





Flood Risk

Flood risk is a large issue on the substation fields and one where the desk top studies do not compare to local knowledge and lived experiences.

Many other photos and videos have been sent in by other members of the Cowfold V Rampion action group and are contained in the Impact Document from the residents.

The applicant did not realise the extent of the flooding in and around Oakendene until very late in the day, most likely in 2023. Even though a local resident Janine Creaye told them of the flood risk in her 2021 consultation response. The substation is away from the A272 and away from the east cable route and so it is sited in the south of the field where it mostly floods during winter.

See flooding photos below from Oct 2023









Ecology around the Oakendene site

Please also see the extensive work and report sent in by Janine Creaye – a local resident who has recorded local wildlife for over 18 years as part of her work.

The flood land in the fields is very distinct from the Oakendene industrial site which is well hidden and low lying. These fields have been left untouched for decades and all form part of the Cowfold stream catchment area.

The sub station field is a tranquil flood plain full of wildlife and connected to the lake to the south. Residents know of

- Red kites
- Badgers
- Nightingales
- Bats
- Snakes – Adders

Are all visible in the area if local site surveys are properly conducted.

DESK TOP SURVEYS ARE NOT ENOUGH TO CAPTURE THE ECOLOGY IN THE SUB STATION SITE

Janine has repeatedly told Rampion of her findings, but these have been ignored much to the dismay of local walkers and residents.

The meadow is often uncut and normally only cut once a year, a special eco system full of insects and wildflowers – a lowland habitat, which is next to woodland and ponds. WSCC did raise concerns in 2021 about the size and environmental impact of the substation and that there had been poor assessment of the site.

This is a special site and we cannot destroy such green places to make way for medium term green renewable energy sub stations, the environmental equation just does not work.

Water neutrality

Recent planning applications in the area have been refused by Horsham District Council due to

- Insufficient information provided to prove that the scheme would not contribute to an adverse effect on the INTERNATIONALLY designated Arun Valley Special Area of Conservation, Special Protection Area and Ramsar sites by way of increased water abstraction during construction. **The scheme cannot show a water neutrality response to the development.**

The substation site currently has a baseline water usage of zero. The site will use copious amounts of water for construction and especially for wheel washing of vehicles over years. The applicant has not sent in a Water Neutrality Statement.

This site cannot prove to be water neutral.

High Voltage Cable

There is a high voltage 132 kV cable along the north of the site, it will go under the access road and part of the substation site. This is not talked about at all in the documentation, however another high voltage cable was given as a reason against using a site in Rampion 1. The applicant seems to be only using information that confirms its choice for using Oakendene and discounting any negative information that comes to light.

Conclusion

We as residents of Cowfold and the surrounding area truly believe a large economic and environmental disaster is about to take place close to our homes and livelihoods. Masquerading as a green energy project with all the current macro economic push behind it, the applicant must have realised that this site was the wrong one. By this time they were too far down the road to change and so massaged the data to prove the Oakendene site was optimal.

The site is a flood plain near a Listed Building and its historic setting, off a single-track lane and busy accident prone A road. It has an abundance of wildlife and ecology, all surrounded by busy roads and a village that has bad pollution and traffic jams.

As our local MP said in the hearings – this is not the place, but the lack of consultation in our area meant the applicants thought they could push it through riding a positive green wave of publicity. We do not accept the inadequate consultation around Cowfold and this below par application and we hope to show the inspectors this is the wrong site.

Thank you for reading this and please also refer to

- **Cowfold Parish Council Statement and Objection describing harm to local residents in and around Cowfold 27/2/24 as discussed in the Parish Council meeting of 26/2/24**
 - **CowfoldVRampion Impact Statement on Rampion 2**
 - **Janine Creaye wildlife and ecology document**
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