

Dear ExA

[REDACTED]  
Kent Street Objection

Can we please reiterate our request for an examiners' site visit to Kent Street as per our previous requests  
We are members and active participants of the CowfoldVRampion action group and also speak on behalf of many elderly residents along Kent Street

We continue to object strongly to the applicant's use of Kent Street and the complete ignorance of how the lane is used day to day

We would like to comment on the below responses by the applicant  
REP1-006 Traffic Addendum

We have seen the applicant's comment on Kent Street from REP1-006 Addendum for Traffic WSP statement proposed by RED - this whole document is totally inadequate and not fit for purpose due to WSP stating

"the baseline traffic data

has been estimated because traffic survey data is not available"

The Examining authority have already flagged the issue of Kent Street in the Brighton Hearings (we were there) and yet still the applicant is not investigating the issues properly and only insists all will be well with a new Traffic Management Plan for the next deadline - this low level of detail is completely unacceptable, we cannot believe that the applicant can say

"Given the single lane track nature of Kent Street, the Applicant is currently reviewing options for the implementation of traffic management along Kent Street and accesses A-61 and A-64 to provide safe access for construction and general traffic. This may involve measures such the implementation of a speed limit reduction, passing places, or managed access via banksmen. A traffic management plan for Kent Street will be produced as required at Deadline 2".

The applicant has not taken detailed traffic surveys of the lane, we find this incredible considering it is next to the substation site

Table 2-27 only summarises impacts as 'negligible' - this cannot be true and the ExA would see this on a site visit and a walk along the lane

The applicant has only guessed at traffic movements and state traffic movements will be more than 100%, We believe the actual number will be over 4000% percent increase based on Enso Energy and their traffic data for their current battery Site application on Kent Street DM/24/0136

We do not want to have 2 x access points along Kent Street and do not understand the point of this - the will cause complete chaos along the lane and completely remove the current amenity for walkers, horses and dog walkers. Access should be off the A272 and off Wineham Lane, access off Kent Street will only lead to delays for all local people and accidents as people rush to move along the lane and pull out from the lane on the main road A272

Why use Kent street access Point 61, so far along the single track lane, instead of access A63 on the A272?

KENT STREET access points need to be looked at in detail - please, indeed the applicant says in response APP-044

Kent Street: existing mature trees and hedges along this wooded road corridor will be retained and strengthened with additional native woodland planting provided to ensure limited views of the substation even in winter. The wooded, rural character of Kent Street will be retained.'

We do not see how this statement can possibly be true

Residents had a meeting on Kent Street with representatives from WSCC Highways Dept ([REDACTED]) and local Councillor [REDACTED] on the 5/3/24 regarding the battery site application on Kent Street. During the period all parties witnessed the constant use of Kent Street with dog walkers, horse riders and also people walking along the lane both for amenity and also access to the post box at the end of the lane which is imperative for many elderly residents who do not use smart phone technology. There is no way people can time their walks to make use of a quiet 2 minutes as per the applicants submission and report by WSP

How will the applicant deconflict issues arising when lorries and vans meet residents along the lane with no passing places and only soft verges either side? The soft verges are not under ownership by WSCC and are privately owned, if local landowners wanted they could close all of these ad hoc passing places curing chaos on the lane. Cars will not pass lorries and horses will not be able to pass safely.

No details are yet forthcoming on Kent Street, the applicant chose Oakendene without looking into Kent Street in any detail, indeed as mentioned in other reports The Rampion team came to my house and said Kent Street would not be used and all access was off the A272

REP1-032 Response to [REDACTED] and her Ecology data

We do not agree with much of the applicant's wording. The applicant's consultation responses were very low for Cowfold and The Oakendene site as Cowfold residents were not informed or consulted until after the Oakendne site was chosen. The applicant said they sent consultation packs to Oakendene Industrial estate on 28th Oct 2022. By then it is too far gone in the process to change anything. The applicant said there were failings to deliver letters - why - there is not an excuse for not sending out letters to local people and businesses.

REP1-023 - Flood risk at Oakendene

The applicant's REP1-023 reference flooding on the Oakendene site shows that they are still not taking all the RRs into account and our concerns of flooding in the field and close proximity to Cowfold stream. There is now extensive photo and film evidence over the year that this site has flooding issues which will increase over time as rainfall increases as it has over the last 5 years. Much local land and our fields are completely unusable for farm machinery from Oct to March due to clay boggy wet fields.

The site does flood, the applicant is not saying by how much they will have to raise the compound, this will have effects on local viewpoints. Having built my house locally I do not see how construction will be possible for such a large sub station site in these wet fields.

Comments on REP1-044 Horsham District Council Local Impact report

We support the comments by the local Council below

HDC would like to point out that it is common theme that even though Major and Significant effects are identified in many

of the assessed receptors in the initial stages of the development (construction, operational year 1 and year 5) at year 10, effects such as loss of woodland are then considered to be negligent. We contend this is deceptive and a tendency to downplay the effects, putting into question the robustness of the conclusions of the LVIA.

Access points A-60 and A-59 are positioned in very close proximity to one another and in turn reduces the rural experience along Kent Street. HDC queries the need for both accesses if one access point could not be used instead? Is this associated with the recent application (DC/24/0054) for the Installation of Battery Energy Storage System which also shows two success points in similar locations, one operational and one emergency? This application, only recently received by HDC (Jan 2024) has not been considered as part of cumulative effects but given the likely impacts on PRoW's, Kent Street and character, we consider this should be reevaluated.

We also are in agreement with the comment that standing traffic in Cowfold will be detrimental to local businesses and the health of residents, especially as such traffic will be in the morning around the same time children walk to school in the village - local concerns should be addressed by the applicant

We agree with WSCC that the substation will cause substantial harm to Oakendene Manor and that insufficient consideration has been afforded to the historic environment in consideration of substation location alternatives.

Table 3-14 Applicant's Response to Shermanbury Parish Council RR350

In the applicant's response to Shermanbury Parish Council document by WSP in answer to point 2.24.s the applicant says because the 2 x Kent Street access points are north of many dwellings there will be no traffic routing past these properties. This shows the complete ignorance of the applicant of the lane and how it works. All dwellings need to go north past these access points to get to the A272 to be able to leave towards to A23 or Cowfold, it is really is very frustrating that the applicant has not properly consulted with residents of Kent Street and has proposals that will cause many issues and blockages on the lane. The applicant only says in this same response that "they will implement traffic management along Kent Street to provide safe access", we await to see what this could possibly be??

We are also appalled by the Applicant's repose to the Cowfold Parish Council's RR. In WSP document (Applicant's response to Cowfold Parish Council RR-083) and table 3-7 ref point 2.17.3 The applicant only uses word like 'where possible' for their commitments. This gives no legal responsibility and we all know that contractors and sub contractors will use the quickest method the SAT NAV says on the day.

We are currently in discussions with WS Council and Highways [REDACTED] what is the current road make up along Kent Street as it is not a robust a road as the newly improved Wineham Lane. We want to know if such a road can take the weight of the proposed lorry fully laden and what impact this will have over time. Also the small culvert 200m into Kent Street is merely a concrete pipe with a thin layer of concrete and tar Mac over it, this will no be able to withstand constant fully laden lorries.

Alternate Sites Objection REP1-019 Fawley / Dungeness

Regarding RED's response to [REDACTED] comment and criticism of Alternative Sites (Applicant's Action Point 3 - Fawley and Dungeness ref 8.25.1).

We noted that in the Brighton hearings the applicant talked about these alternatives being dismissed due to cost (as mentioned in our previous deadline representation). However in this document the client only talks about technical and environmental issues being the main drivers for using the proposed scheme. Why this change in tact? Why have they not provided detailed cost analysis as asked for by the ExA?

We do not agree with the applicant saying UXOs in the Solent make this impossible. There are companies who specialise in this work and clearing ordinance so it would be a cost but small compared to the overall project budget and not impossible to achieve.

We believe the data has been massaged to fit the site RED want to use and do not believe a complete and satisfactory investigation was completed for the alternative sites.

We would like to see more information on this choice and a clear table showing the 3 sites and the pros and cons for each and how they have compared and ranked harm for Fawley / Dungeness and the proposed site at Oakendene

Other Comments

We are pleased that Rampion are now finally recognising the cable we previously mentioned as local residents, UKPN 132 kV running near the Oakendene site - however this exact reason was given to discount the Wineham Lane site - again an example of data and information being used to fit the narrative and not analysed objectively.

At our Cowfold Parish Council meeting in March it was noted that "WSCC's Road Traffic Monitor on the Bolney Road has identified an increase in traffic levels passing through Cowfold of 6.5% in 2023 and a further 5.9% in the first two months of 2024 thus saturation capacity is already rapidly approaching."

The dangers for Cowfold residents is being grossly underestimated due to underplaying of traffic flows (not constant during the day), and for not including smaller sub contractor vans passing through using Sat Nav for the quickest journey

Summary  
The Applicant states

"The Applicant considers that these benefits [towards achieving net zero] and need for renewable energy outweigh the adverse effects identified in the ES of the Proposed Development as a whole including those related to the onshore substation site at Oakendene"

The applicant is using flawed analysis and macro economic and macro environmental reasons to completely bulldoze through local planning policies and they have a complete disregard to local people and their opinions. They wanted to site the onshore cabling route and sub station at Oakendene and have then used data to justify this fit.

As our local MP Andrew Griffith said "it is the wrong project in the wrong place' and we as residents along Kent Street and as part of Action group CowfoldVRampion completely agree with him.

We have felt that the whole consultation has been geared, not to a genuine desire to listen and formulate the best options, but to obfuscate and mislead. To paraphrase [REDACTED], ' We are fighting a multi-billion pound organisation supported by the British Government. We're just little people. What chance do we have?' Nevertheless, there is a legal process here, which must be followed if it is to have any legitimacy.

As local residents we very much feel the same way as [REDACTED] against The Post Office - hopefully things will change and our views will be heard fairly by the ExA.