

Dear Sirs,

We write in response to the Rampion 2 Category 7 Technical notes in respect of A61 and A64 (Kent St Cowfold) dated June 2024 Rev B.

Rampion states that its plan is to muster HGV/ LGV traffic at the Oakendene west compound before managing the onward journey to the construction site via Kent St. This is completely unnecessary as both ends of this journey fall within the same ownership and subject to the same DCO application. Additionally, we can find no modelling of the impact on the A272 of this proposed methodology. It is clear that the impact will be pronounced; the A272 traffic volume is already above design capacity and accidents occur frequently. It is possible the lack of modelling reveals a cynical approach – Rampion knows that the answer would be negative, so they have not asked the question.

Rampion is already turning grazing land into a vehicle and site compound; the construction of a link road creating a single site is not beyond its operational capabilities. Doubtless, it would be at greater cost, but not without the benefit of enhanced operational efficiency.

Rampion has previously stated the advantage of the Oakendene option was direct A272 access. What has happened in the intervening period? Oakendene could operate as a single site and their statement would still be correct.

Rampion is a 'for profit' entity proposing huge financial and other burden on the community. As such, all users of the A272 and Kent St would be 'subsidising' Rampion shareholders. There is no overriding public interest behind this aspect of Rampion's proposal.

We believe the proposal is fundamentally flawed:-

- As all heavy goods traffic will travel on the A272 multiple times, disruption to the A272 traffic will be greater than need be.
 - The use of banksman is complex. Any cyclists, equestrians or walkers north of the Kent St site entrance will travel at a slower speed than the modelled 20 mph and the implied 5-minute journey will take much longer.
 - Rampion's proposed risk mitigation of conflict between non-vehicular traffic and its HGVs is inadequate. Horse temperament is explained in the British Horse Society's advice note 'Advice on Construction sites' (referenced and subsequently deleted from Rev B); in summary, the prospect of holding mixed traffic in confinement combined with construction activity is hazardous. Rampion erroneously treats horses the same as vehicular traffic.
 - The Highway Code revision September 2023 also highlights the special significance of cyclists, horse riders, horse drawn vehicles and pedestrians interfacing with motorised traffic (paragraphs 162 – 169, 212 and 213).
 - The many equestrian users of Kent St are not a group Rampion can ignore. Our horses require daily exercise, much of which involves hacking along Kent St to reach the bridleway network. Inhibiting riders' ability to exercise their horses safely is a huge welfare concern. Inadequately exercised horses will become unfit, unmanageable and prone to injury. Kent St links Buckhatch Lane and thence Shermanbury to the South and Picts Lane to the North.
 - Rampion's proposals will bunch A272 traffic: banksman will be needed to manage all forms of traffic emerging from Picts Lane and Kent St.
 - Creating a site entrance on Kent St will lead to the unnecessary loss of hedgerow and mature trees. The Woodland Trust (amongst others) remind us: 'Vital features in the landscape, hedges are more than an essential refuge for wildlife. Small but mighty, they also clean our air, capture carbon, reduce flooding and give clues to historic land management'.
- Rampion's proposals result in an unnecessary loss of rural amenity.
- As Rampion's detailed design emerges it becomes increasingly evident that the choice of Oakendene is not so clearcut as an alternative. Rampion could improve its proposals limiting the harmful effect on A272 users and local residents and businesses (not limited solely to Kent St) by adopting the most obvious solution of a link road within Oakendene. As it currently stands, the cost they are seeking to impose on others is too high and should not be supported by the Inspectorate, however desirable to drive to a low carbon future.

Yours faithfully,

██████████ Emily Thorpe
Bankfield Grange

