

LOCAL Economic Impact

The Oakendene industrial estate comprises 52 units, 10 office suites and about 60 containers, along with 26 compounds, housing over 120 businesses and sole traders. Many of these businesses are small, independent artisan firms that rely on the industrial estate for an easily accessible and reasonably priced place to work and or store items.

If the substation is built at Oakendene, the predicted increase in traffic and access to Kent St and the Oakendene site will necessitate some form of traffic management to allow safe access. This will result in even longer traffic queues, leading to millions of pounds of lost productivity for the thousands of commuters who use this stretch of the A272 daily. Most significantly, it will impact businesses in and around Cowfold, particularly those on the industrial estate and along this stretch of the A272.

A few years ago, roadworks along the A272 towards Cowfold caused significant delays as delivery drivers avoided the area. Local residents noticed that deliveries were significantly delayed or returned to sender. Many businesses located at Oakendene rely on just in time (JIT) deliveries of materials or spare parts, as they lack storage space and cannot afford to carry spare parts due to costs. These businesses, along with their customers, will be directly affected. This project will not disrupt businesses for a few weeks or months; it will take several years to complete, potentially jeopardising the very survival of these local businesses and harming the very people this was supposed to help.

Water Pollution

In addition to the disruption to the natural water flow and damage to the local ecosystems, there is also the potential contamination of water sources with hazardous materials from the substation.

- I Oil and chemical leaks. Rampion has confirmed that there will be transformers and underground cabling that use oil for cooling and insulation. In the event of a flood, these oils can leak into the surrounding water, introducing harmful substances. Some of these oils contain polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB's), which are toxic in the environment.
- li Heavy Metals. The electrical equipment and batteries within the substation can contain heavy metals such as lead and zinc. Floodwaters can corrode these components, causing heavy metals to leach out and contaminate the water supply.
- lii Firefighting Runoff: In the event of a fire caused by an electrical faults or short circuits due to flooding, firefighters might use foam or other chemicals to combat the fire. These substances can mix with floodwaters and further contaminate the local water sources and River Adur.
- Iv Toxicity to aquatic life. The PCB's and heavy metals can be toxic to fish and other aquatic organisms, disrupting local ecosystems and food chains.
- V Drinking water. If the contaminated floodwaters infiltrate groundwater supplies or surface water sources for drinking water, they can pose serious health risks to humans, including neurological damage, cancer and other illnesses.

Avoiding floodplains is the most effective preventative measure. However, barriers or containment systems around equipment, regular and comprehensive inspections and rapid

emergency response plans could be implemented. These additional ongoing costs will, however, be passed onto the end user.

Rampion does not have a very good track record regarding spillages or re- instatement. The residents of Bolney notified Rampion 1 of a diesel leak from a pipe exiting the substation site. These concerned local residents repeatedly urged Rampion to deal with the contamination, but Rampion ignored their concerns until the residents were forced to contact the Environmental Agency, which rapidly intervened.

Flood Plain

It's an extra ordinary decision by Rampion to propose a flood plain as the site for the substation, since it will be prone to regular annual flooding and power outages.

The critical electrical equipment is prone to water damage, which could cause short circuits and equipment failure, leading to power outages and expensive repairs. This will ultimately affect the reliability of the power supply to homes, businesses and essential services. Concerning the ongoing costs of repairing the damaged equipment and prohibitively high costs of insurance due to increased flood risk, consumers will bear these additional costs through higher electricity tariffs. In the coming years, when the substation floods causing the River Adur to break its banks, villages downstream are flooded, and the region loses power, RWE will be long gone, having received their very lucrative grants.

It would be a catastrophic failure to accept or support this poorly conceived substation proposal at Oakendene, given that the authorities are now fully aware of its significantly damaging short -term and long- term implications for both the environment and the economy. The alternative site at Wineham Lane should be reconsidered.