



ANDREW GRIFFITH MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR ARUNDEL AND SOUTH DOWNS

HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Vaughan Weighill
Project Manager – Rampion 2 Offshore Windfarm
Rampion Extension Development Ltd.

[by email]

29th November 2022
221129/MT

Rampion 2 Offshore Windfarm Cable route changes– Consultation response

Dear Vaughan,

I am writing to share the views, on behalf of the residents of Arundel and South Downs constituency, in relation to the proposed cable route changes as part of the Rampion 2 Offshore Windfarm.

Summary

I responded to the initial RWE consultation on 16th September 2021 to share my views and the concerns which had been raised to me. I do so again with this second submission which is this time focussed purely on the Onshore Cable Corridor route (OCC). These views, based on deep local knowledge, mainly point out the concerns that additional construction vehicles would have on existing local traffic and access, particularly at the Cowfold section, and at the Washington roundabout which is close to Sullington and Storrington. Both Cowfold and Storrington are Air Quality Management Areas, the latter with vehicle weight restrictions in place. Added to this are concerns about the proximity of the route to residential properties and areas of environmental sensitivity.

Detailed submission

As the Member of Parliament for Arundel and South Downs, I represent the constituency which is most impacted by the proposed OCC. Whilst I am supportive of renewable energy, this remains the wrong project in the wrong place. I am disappointed that the routing has not radically changed from the first set of proposals. Much of the



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route is still proposed to cut through vast swathes of the delicate chalklands in the South Downs. Area 2 and Area 4 – Lyminster to Sullington Hill, Area 5 – West and North of Washington, Area 6 – Wiston to Kings Lane, and Area 7 – Substation Approach, all fall within Arundel and South Downs.

I share the view of local residents that the decision to site the new substation at Oakdene has lacked insight from the communities most impacted. Once again, I have heard from affected residents who say that there has been a notable lack of information and consultation. There has been little consideration for the impact that RWE construction works will have on the flow of the A272 traffic – a road which is already one of the most dangerous in Sussex. Oakdene's location - away from the existing substation at Bolney – will require additional cable routing as well as a substantial industrial development, the construction of which will bring a heavy burden of even more traffic onto an already congested road.

Further detail on each section:

Area 2 and 4 – Lyminster to Sullington Hill (Modified Route and Eastern Route)

There is local consensus in support of option LACR-01a, the least damaging of all proposals and the only option with some support. This option is more considerate of residents and the environment. I therefore support the consultation response submitted by Warningcamp Village Meeting. I have also met with residents of neighbouring Burpham village regarding the existing erosion of the single-track road which leads from the A27 to Warningcamp. I share their concerns that this road is not sufficient to cope with constant HGV movements.

Area 5 – West and North of Washington and Area 6 – Wiston to Kings Lane

It is deeply disappointing that the reasonable and workable suggestions put forward through the first consultation have not been engineered for consideration for this consultation, or any evidence submitted that other options were fully explored.

Washington Parish Council held a public meeting in September 2021 and submitted a detailed response to RWE at the time which seems to have been wholly ignored. The



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same can be said for comments made by Wiston Parish Council and Mr Johnny Goring. Washington Parish Council had proposed to RWE for a substantially re-routed cable corridor – for sections kilometre 15 to kilometer 22 – to run south of Washington village to minimise the damage to sensitive areas at Sullington Hill and farmland. Instead, the only option for consultation is one where the OCC runs right through the village and National Trust land.

The RWE proposed route creates multiple access points along the A283 and surrounding roads, at already populated and busy junction areas (Hampers Lane, Millford Grange, Clayton Kennels, Georges Lane). Indeed, the A283 is a busy, high speed, rural road and the reason why West Sussex County Council had already asked RWE to reduce the number of access points. The latest proposals actually increase the number. The expected additional HGVs and traffic from RWE construction will add significant pressure to the Washington roundabout which receives traffic from Steyning (east) on the A283, from Ashington and Horsham on the A24 (north), Worthing and Findon (south), and Storrington on the A283 (west). No RWE construction traffic should go through Storrington village at all which is an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) with vehicle weight restrictions in place.

The proposed route will now run just a few feet from the 400-year old Grade 2 Chanctonbury Lodge on the Washington Road as well as other residential homes, the occupiers of which deserve greater consideration. This section needs to be reviewed again so that it is much further away from the houses.

At Ashurst, the OCC will run through a medieval farmstead at Eatons Farm. The disruption to their land, environment, farming and holiday businesses, and the residents of six properties on the estate, will be deeply felt here. There are also concerns about the inaccessibility of the land and the destabilisation of farm buildings.

Area 6e, North of Shermanbury, and area 6f, South of Cowfold – indicates a route which again runs too close to residential properties in Kent Street when there is in fact open farmland further to the west. The proposal for cable trenching on this route will also prevent the planting of a new woodland at Kent Street – Mr Ralph Dickson's planned Queens Platinum Jubilee Woodland. Mr Dickson has written to me, deeply worried, because this 70-acre site cannot be disturbed, and the surrounding land supports enhanced biodiversity with the habitats for a number of protected species. Any threat to Mr Dickson's land could see any residual local support withdrawn.



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Area 7 – Substation Approach

Area 7a, Kings Land to Oakdene, and 7b Oakdene to National Grid connection – The route runs too close to residential properties in Kent Street and should not be considered as an acceptable suggestion. There are concerns about access for construction, post-completion maintenance, traffic management and visual impact. More concerning is the significant increase in HGV traffic on the A272, a route which already suffers from queuing traffic, especially between Picts Lane and Kent Street. The Cowfold section of the A272 route is an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). Additional volumes of heavy vehicles will impact negatively on the air quality as well as residents' access to the A272 which is already difficult.

Any form of road traffic signalling during the construction phase will have an impact on journey times. Kent Street itself is a narrow road which does not offer safe passing places, particularly for HGVs. Any vehicle obstruction or traffic delays on the dangerous A272 will create rat-running through Picts Lane or Bulls Lane, both narrow country lanes and not suitable for HGVs. The surrounding rural lanes – popular with walkers and cyclists because of their quiet and rural features – will become rat runs if traffic builds up on the A272 because of construction vehicles and access.

The proposed substation will be an industrial eyesore which is visible from Kent Street, and any tree planting to obscure its visual impact will realistically take many years to mature.

The Cowfold community do not feel they have been adequately consulted. Not all of the affected homes say they had received a consultation flyer and very few people were aware of the consultation exercise at all. For those who did receive details, they have commented that the included OS mapping does not include road names or landmarks and has made the assessment of the routes and options very difficult.

On this I share the views of the community that RWE's online documentation is overtly convoluted. I am confident that its lack of proper non-technical summaries will have discouraged a large number of potential respondents from engaging with the consultation. A number of residents have also voiced their concerns that they were unaware of Oakdene being an option for the substation and would like to have had an earlier opportunity to feed in local knowledge before a decision was taken.



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I will continue to be supportive generally to the expansion of offshore power, but I remain unmoved from my original position in pointing out the well-justified concerns that so many residents in the South Downs have regarding the cable corridor and the location of the substation project. It continues to be my long-held view that the North Sea offers far better opportunities to expand the UK's low carbon renewable energy.

You will have received detailed and thoughtful responses to this current consultation, and many will have come from my constituents and parish councils. I associate myself with their submissions and ask that you consider each response carefully and respect the local knowledge they share.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Andrew Griffith".

Andrew Griffith MP