



The countryside charity
Sussex

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Mr Chris Tomlinson
Development and Stakeholder Manager: Rampion 2
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24th May 2023

Dear Sir

RAMPION 2: proposals to build a 15-acre substation at Oakendene, Cowfold, West Sussex

You shortly plan to seek permission for onshore and offshore works linked to the nationally significant Rampion 2 development through the DCO planning process.

We believe the consultation process your company has undertaken has been flawed in important respects.

Central to this process is consultation with affected communities and residents.

At Cowfold in West Sussex the local community's residents were not advised of the consultation until almost the very end leaving too little time for them to examine and consider in the detail the documentation provided by the company before the consultation closed.

There is concern, too, that environmental information required to inform the consultation process has been either withheld or not collected, and that significant decisions may have been made by the company despite the lack of data obtained by onsite surveys.

This precludes sound decision taking. After all, to enable sound decision taking there must be an adequate body of up-to-date evidence available to weigh up, and desk-top surveys and assessments are not sufficient.

The Rampion 2 consultation should accord with the four Gunning Principles.

The Gunning Principles are the founding legal principles from which the legitimacy of public consultations in the United Kingdom is assessed and are frequently referred to as a legal basis for judicial review decisions.

[They were first laid down in 1985 by Mr Stephen Sedley QC](#) Sedley defined that a consultation is only legitimate when these four principles are met:

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President: Lord Egremont

Campaign to Protect Rural England Sussex Branch CIO | Registered charity number: 1156568

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1. proposals are still at a formative stage. A final decision has not yet been made, or predetermined, by the decision makers
2. there is sufficient information to give 'intelligent consideration'. The information provided must relate to the consultation and must be available, accessible, and easily interpretable for consultees to provide an informed response
3. there is adequate time for consideration and response. There must be sufficient opportunity for consultees to participate in the consultation. There is no set timeframe for consultation, despite the widely accepted twelve-week consultation period, as the length of time given for consultee to respond can vary depending on the subject and extent of impact of the consultation
4. 'conscientious consideration' must be given to the consultation responses before a decision is made and decision-makers should be able to provide evidence that they took consultation responses into account.

[The Gunning Principles.pdf \(local.gov.uk\)](#)

Gunning can work in a more digital world (The Gunning Principles and Digital First – Staying out of Court in an Online World, see link below signature) and applying these principles would help ensure people have enough time to respond in an informed way. Unfortunately, the current consultation has not allowed for this sufficiently.

To enable a sound DCO process we therefore ask you to reopen the consultation for the Cowfold community and residents.

This should cover both the substation and all cable works in the area, which cross valuable landscape features and habitats, and would have substantial and permanent impacts on them.

Yours faithfully,



Prof Dan Osborn
Chair CPRE Sussex

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The Gunning Principles and Digital First – Staying out of Court in an Online World
<https://www.consultationinstitute.org/consultation-news/the-gunning-principles-and-digital-first-staying-out-of-court-in-an-online-world/#:~:text=The%20Gunning%20Principles%20are%20the%20founding%20legal%20principles,public%20consultations%20that%20take%20place%20in%20the%20UK>