In response to the previous letter from the Secretary of State, both [redacted] and [redacted] wrote about the fields at Cratemans Farm which will be severely affected by the cable route if this proposal goes ahead.

Since then, Natural England have accepted these fields for inclusion into the Priority Habitat Inventory as Lowland Meadow. Throughout the Consultation and Examination, Rampion have attempted to discredit the evidence provided by Interested Parties. Worse still, their own surveys described them as 'poor, semi-improved or improved grassland'. They boast how none of the several ecologists who went to the farm found anything of note.

Instead of dismissing the highly accurate observations of residents, *Rampion's* ecology surveys must now be discredited as they completely failed to recognise the ecological value of these fields and their surroundings.

I and others have provided to the examination clear evidence that the flood risk at the proposed substation site at Oakendene is much greater than Rampion recognised in their flood risk assessment, and far higher than at the alternative sites at Wineham Lane. This is because, as previously discussed, the contour maps show that the land is higher at Wineham Lane, but most importantly, from flood maps, it is obvious that water flows *away* from the Wineham Lane sites, but *towards* the tributary along the southern border of the Oakendene site from the east, and to it *through* the proposed substation site itself from the higher land of the High Weald AONB to the north of the A272.

The evidence of significant flood risk at the Oakendene substation site is another example of community evidence which Rampion have sought to denigrate. The discrediting of Rampion's ecology surveys also calls into question the validity of *any of the evidence* they provided regarding

- the flood risk at Oakendene,
- the levels to which the substation may have to be raised as a result (they have form for suggesting that too many things, 'if found to be the case', can be altered post consent)
- any mitigations they claim will be adequate to deal with the flooding

The NPS EN-1 (November 2023) Section 5.8 gives clear guidance that in following the sequential test, putting NSIPs on land which floods should be avoided *where possible,* and *before* mitigations are considered. There **is** a clear alternative at Wineham Lane which does not flood; they did not follow the sequential test, nor have they given adequate reasons why the substation should not be built at Wineham.

The Environment Agency have increased their assessment of flood risk to 2050 and also warned against the folly of putting critical infrastructure in flood risk areas.

I have previously provided photographic evidence of the flooding. As I write, the fields are flooded once again, and the river and tributaries have burst their banks (see below), and not for the first time this winter. **This is the wrong place to put the substation.**

The following photographs and the video were taken on 5th January 2025, unless otherwise stated. They do not represent the worst flooding this winter, but happened to occur just before this deadline.

On 5th January 2025 access to the proposed substation site was almost impossible as the tributary of Cowfold stream had burst its banks and submerged all bridges and footpaths:

Submerged PRoW #1786 between tributary and lake

Submerged western bridge

Eastern bridge, view towards substation site

PRoW #1786 from substation side.

In both the above photos, water can be seen draining from the substation field to the tributary, but it has nowhere to go.

Please also see the attached video taken from the southern end of the footpath (PRoW #1786) between the tributary and the lake. Permission has been given to reproduce the video. There are no voices or human images occurring in it.

The whole proposed substation site is boggy and saturated, with some standing water, and feet leave puddles of water where they tread:

The above photographs are midway up the proposed substation site.

As are those below:



Unlike the Wineham Lane north site, which is much drier, and surrounding ditches are empty, or almost so:


Wineham Lane North (WLN) site, no puddles left by feet.

Dry ditch outside WLN site

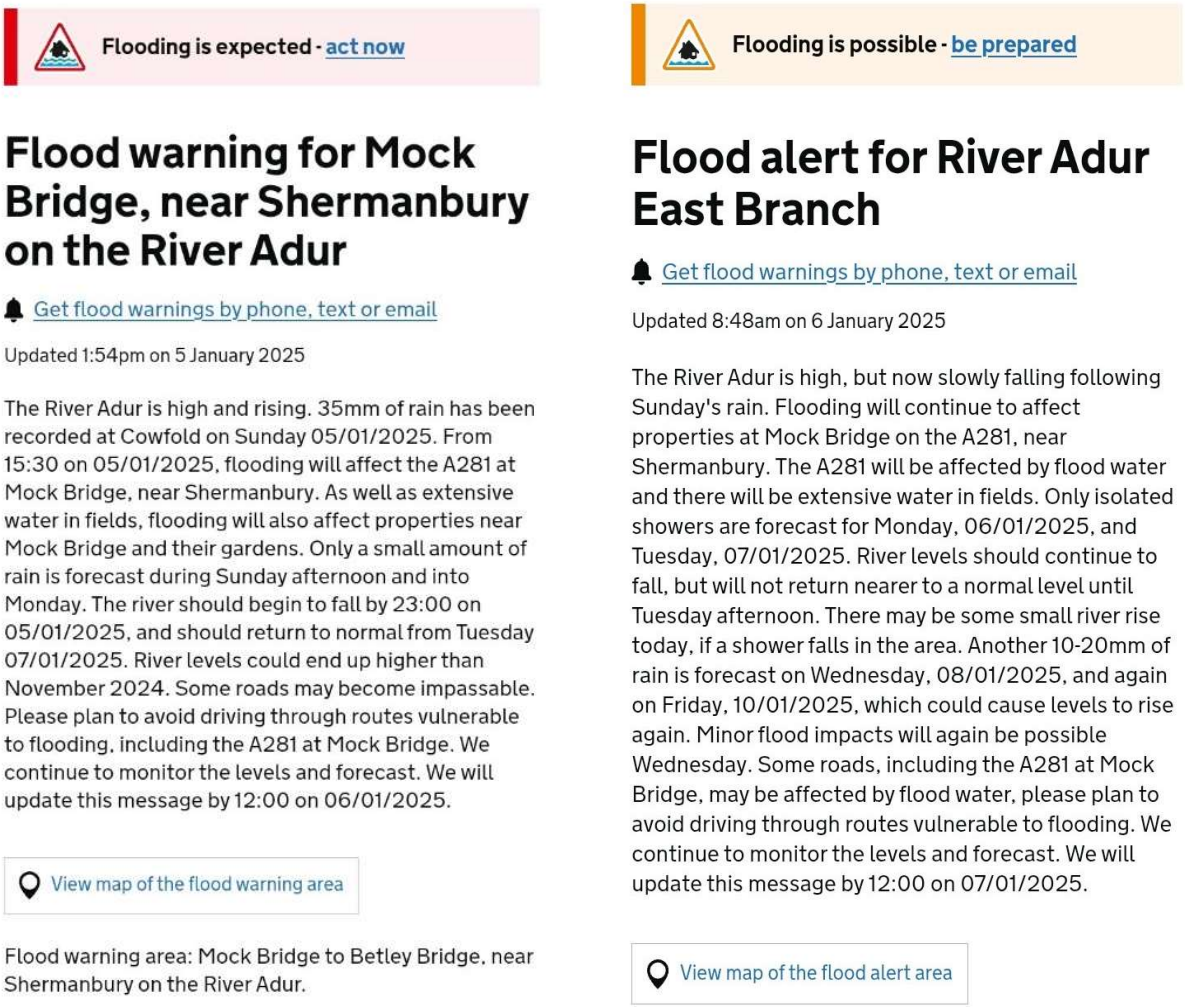
Ditch outside Rampion 1 substation site

The field to the south of the tributary at Oakendene is also saturated:

The removal of hundreds of mature oaks and hundreds of metres of ancient hedges from Oakendene and concreting over the field will make all this so much worse. It will also increase the risk of flooding on Kent Street as the water backs up, and downstream, which already occurs on a frequent basis:

Above: Cowfold Stream between Cratemans and Moatfield Lane, in the path of the cable route. The stream would normally be *behind* the tree line. Please note, this field is where the vast low-loaders coming from Kent Street along the haul road will somehow have to turn round. Rampion say it will be possible, but how can that be?

Below: Mockbridge on the A281 over the River Adur (taken 6th January 2025), past peak flood:



Flooding is expected - act now

Flood warning for Mock Bridge, near Shermanbury on the River Adur

Get flood warnings by phone, text or email

Updated 1:54pm on 5 January 2025

The River Adur is high and rising. 35mm of rain has been recorded at Cowfold on Sunday 05/01/2025. From 15:30 on 05/01/2025, flooding will affect the A281 at Mock Bridge, near Shermanbury. As well as extensive water in fields, flooding will also affect properties near Mock Bridge and their gardens. Only a small amount of rain is forecast during Sunday afternoon and into Monday. The river should begin to fall by 23:00 on 05/01/2025, and should return to normal from Tuesday 07/01/2025. River levels could end up higher than November 2024. Some roads may become impassable. Please plan to avoid driving through routes vulnerable to flooding, including the A281 at Mock Bridge. We continue to monitor the levels and forecast. We will update this message by 12:00 on 06/01/2025.

View map of the flood warning area

Flood warning area: Mock Bridge to Betley Bridge, near Shermanbury on the River Adur.

Flooding is possible - be prepared

Flood alert for River Adur East Branch

Get flood warnings by phone, text or email

Updated 8:48am on 6 January 2025

The River Adur is high, but now slowly falling following Sunday's rain. Flooding will continue to affect properties at Mock Bridge on the A281, near Shermanbury. The A281 will be affected by flood water and there will be extensive water in fields. Only isolated showers are forecast for Monday, 06/01/2025, and Tuesday, 07/01/2025. River levels should continue to fall, but will not return nearer to a normal level until Tuesday afternoon. There may be some small river rise today, if a shower falls in the area. Another 10-20mm of rain is forecast on Wednesday, 08/01/2025, and again on Friday, 10/01/2025, which could cause levels to rise again. Minor flood impacts will again be possible Wednesday. Some roads, including the A281 at Mock Bridge, may be affected by flood water, please plan to avoid driving through routes vulnerable to flooding. We continue to monitor the levels and forecast. We will update this message by 12:00 on 07/01/2025.

View map of the flood alert area

Please note from the EA warning above that flooding at Mockbridge had occurred in November also.

All the original photos are date and location stamped, and this evidence can be provided if required.