

Matthew Porter
Albery House,
Springfield Road,
Horsham,
West Sussex
RH12 2GB

27th May 2026

Dear Matthew,

DISC/26/0133

**DCO Requirement 19 (Archaeological Investigations Onshore) Discharge
Request in relation to Rampion 2 Onshore Site Investigation Campaign**

2a

**Rampion 2 Onshore Substation Compound Land West of Kent Street
Cowfold West Sussex**

West Sussex County Council (WSCC) Comments

***Rampion 2 Wind Farm Onshore Site Investigations Campaign 2a:
Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief
ASE 260077, April 2026***

Summary

Horsham District Council has consulted WSCC in relation to onshore site investigations for the Rampion 2 Offshore Wind project. These activities fall within the definition of '*onshore site preparation works*' as set out in the Rampion 2 Development Consent Order (DCO) (The Rampion 2 Offshore Wind Farm Order 2025 (as corrected)). WSCC has been asked to respond to application **DISC/26/0133**, submitted to discharge Requirement 19 (Archaeological Investigations Onshore) of the DCO. The Rampion 2 Onshore

Site Investigation Campaign 2a forms the second phase of onshore site investigation works and is proposed to take place in 2026.

The County Archaeologist for WSCC has reviewed the above document, a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for archaeological monitoring of the proposed SI works, located at the Oakendene substation site near Cowfold, West Sussex.

The WSI is considered to be methodologically sound and proportionate to the scale and nature of the proposed works to be undertaken during Phase 2a of the SI Campaign. The WSI is compliant with Requirement 19 of the DCO, and is also generally compliant with the Outline Onshore Written Scheme of Investigation (OOWSI; RWE 2024 Revision C, document reference 7.9) as certified under Schedule 16 of the DCO in all key respects.

However, a number of points require clarification or minor amendments:

- The document is not fully consistent with the WSI produced for the Phase 1 SI Campaign in 2025, particularly in respect of having less emphasis on avoidance and on a structured decision-making framework during fieldwork. As a result, it is less clearly aligned with the DCO mitigation framework than the Phase 1 approach.
- The WSI would benefit from clearer explanation of how the results of this phase of SI works will inform subsequent stages, including further GI works, archaeological evaluation and the wider mitigation strategy for the Project.
- The document proposes a reduced geoarchaeological scope compared with Phase 1. This is broadly proportionate to the lower anticipated geoarchaeological potential, but minor enhancements are recommended (see below).
- Clarification is required regarding the provision of a temporary hardstanding area, which is referenced in supporting documentation but is not addressed within the WSI.

Geoarchaeology

The reduced geoarchaeological emphasis within the Phase 2a WSI is accepted as proportionate, given the Site's location within a Low Weald clay landscape with no mapped superficial deposits and therefore generally low geoarchaeological potential (ASE 2026, figs.1-3). The use of a watching brief with contingent geoarchaeological input is consistent with a proportionate approach under the OOWSI.

However, this approach is largely reactive, relying on the identification of deposits during works. This contrasts with the Phase 1 SI works, where proactive geoarchaeological monitoring (including boreholes) contributed to improved understanding of colluvial and alluvial sequences and informed deposit modelling.

There remains a residual risk that localised superficial deposits (including river terrace or colluvial material) may be present but unmapped. Opportunities to record data of value may also be missed, including from poorly understood Adur Valley river terrace deposits.

To address this proportionately, WSCC recommends that a basic geoarchaeological review protocol is applied to borehole and trial pit logs, including:

- systematic review for superficial deposits; and
- identification criteria for deposits of potential geoarchaeological interest (e.g. stratified gravels, buried soils, organic horizons).

Clear trigger criteria should also be included within the WSI for geoarchaeological specialist attendance and/or targeted recording and sampling where appropriate.

In addition, Section 4 should be amended to include clearer geoarchaeological aims and objectives, including:

- the identification and characterisation of any superficial deposits encountered;
- assessment of their palaeoenvironmental and Palaeolithic potential; and

- where appropriate, contribution to the understanding of local depositional sequences (including potential river terrace deposits).

These amendments would retain proportionality while ensuring that any significant or unexpected geoarchaeological deposits are not overlooked.

Temporary Hardstanding Area

The supporting methodology document refers to the potential requirement for a temporary hardstanding area to facilitate the SI works. However, the location and construction methodology are not defined. The WSI does not include explicit provision for archaeological monitoring of these works, with the current scope of the watching brief restricted to test pits and trenches.

Should construction of a temporary hardstanding area, archaeological monitoring may be required. Accordingly, WSCC requests that the applicant clarifies the location of the temporary hardstanding and confirms whether its construction or any other enabling works (if required) will involve topsoil stripping or other intrusive groundworks. If so, the WSI should be amended to confirm that the watching brief will extend to all intrusive groundworks associated with SI activities, including the temporary hardstanding. This clarification is necessary to ensure that archaeological coverage is complete and compliant with the requirements of the OOWSI.

Minor corrections

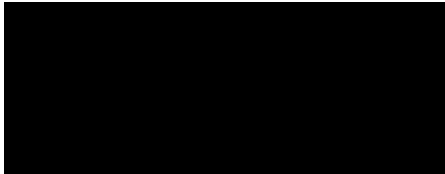
- Please ensure that the overarching WSI is referred to correctly throughout; Outline Onshore WSI (OOWSI) (e.g. paras. 1.3 and 1.5).
- Para. 1.5, final sentence: Please make reference to the protocol set out within the OOWSI (Appendix B and paras. 4.4.10 - 4.4.17) for the hierarchy of mitigation options in the event of discovery of significant remains. Whilst this WSI relates to monitoring of site preparation works (as opposed to evaluation or mitigation during main phase construction), the same principles of prioritising avoidance where appropriate should still apply.

- Para. 3.3: Make reference to the adjacent Grade II listed Oakendene, with which the historic parkland is associated.

Conclusion

Subject to the minor amendments and clarifications set out above, the WSI is considered acceptable in principle.

Yours sincerely,



Chloe Hunnisett MCIfA

County Archaeologist, West Sussex County Council