

A New Substation Compound at Roadchef Rownhams Motorway Service Area, M27 Westbound, Southampton SO16 8AP

Attention of Mark Staincliffe Principal Planning Officer – Ref: PP-12188751

Planning & Building
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Supporting statement to planning application **Ref: PP-12188751** outlining why the specific location to the above substation was proposed within the Roadchef Motorway Services Area.

The proposed substation is to provide the infrastructure in Rownhams for EVs and low-carbon technologies as part of an OFGEM funded scheme called “Green Recovery”. This will create 30MW of additional capacity, enabling delivery of EV charge hubs at critical points for the UK's transport infrastructure.

Discussions in early 2023 with the landowner Roadchef assessing other potential locations on the site were discounted for various reasons, primarily due to customers parking provision, potential development of the Roadchef services property and the fact that Roadchef need to retain all existing parking, so any use of existing hard standing areas was deemed not possible. Roadchef also have plans to develop the existing building in the future, which left us with little option.

There are also multiple underground utilities to consider in the area, such as fuel lines to the petrol station, which added to the constraints of the site.

The proposed location was determined to be most viable as it still maintains the access/relief road adjacent and was chosen, as part of the new compound was previously hard standing prior to where it becomes woodland.

We had a full ecological impact assessment report completed earlier in 2023 and further to the results of this, we have discussed and offered potential offsetting replanting across the Roadchef services site to mitigate the loss of any impacted trees. Also, the use of other possible ‘wooded areas’ would have resulted in the loss of a larger proportion of mature and semi mature trees.

Furthermore, with this chosen location the proximity from the actual services buildings it was felt the impact of any noise disturbance would also be reduced.