



**AQUIND Limited**

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# **AQUIND INTERCONNECTOR**

Consultation Report – Appendix 1.1A Non-Statutory Consultation – Example Frequently Asked Questions on Project Website

The Planning Act 2008

The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 – Regulation 5(2)(q)

Document Ref: 5.1.1A

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# AQUIND Website FAQs

November 2017

[How much electricity will AQUIND interconnector be able to supply?](#)

AQUIND Interconnector will have the capacity of 2,000 MW and transmit up to 16,000,000 MWh\* of electricity each year between the two connected countries, which is 5% and 3% of the total consumption of Great Britain and France respectively, enough to keep the lights on in millions of households.

*\* The actual utilisation rate of the interconnector depends on market conditions, limitations by national transmission system operators and other factors.*

[Who will pay for AQUIND Interconnector? Will it cost the UK taxpayer?](#)

AQUIND Limited is not associated with any UK or European utilities and the AQUIND Interconnector project is currently being developed without government subsidies, meaning it would deliver enhanced value for energy consumers in the UK without costing the taxpayer.

[Why connect the UK and France?](#)

France's proximity to the UK makes it a logical linkage point for an interconnector. Existing interconnectors between England and France have proven successful.

[How will AQUIND Interconnector affect electricity prices?](#)

The Interconnector will promote greater competition within the energy market, helping to reduce energy prices for consumers and businesses.

[What will be done to mitigate any environmental impacts?](#)

Initial environmental survey work along the terrestrial cable route requires surveys for protected species including great crested newts, dormice and bats.

Noise and tree surveys have been undertaken around the proposed converter station location and surveys of the subsea cable route are ongoing.

As part of the final planning application process, AQUIND will undertake an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and submit an Environmental Statement (ES) to support its planning application. The purpose of the EIA is to identify the potential for the environmental impacts of the project and take account of the necessary design amendments required to mitigate any significant environmental impacts.

In preparation for the EIA, a formal Scoping Report will be submitted to the relevant Local Planning Authorities to agree the scope of the assessment.

AQUIND will also inform the EIA with the offshore surveys being undertaken.

### How will construction be managed?

AQUIND will work closely with the relevant Local Authorities in the UK to establish a Construction Management Plan which will help manage the impact of construction.

The Construction Management Plan will mitigate the impact of construction traffic on congestion, specifically during peak hours, and set out best practice in terms of acceptable operating hours to minimise any disruption to local residents.

Construction work affecting local roads will be staged with every effort taken to ensure that local road closures will be limited to one lane at any one time, as opposed to a total closure. It is also proposed that, during the construction process, only short sections of road will be affected in order to minimise congestion and disruption to local roads and infrastructure.

The Construction Management Plan will also manage the construction work associated with the new converter station at Lovedean to ensure any impact on neighbouring residents is minimised.

Regarding the offshore element, AQUIND will work closely with the local and national level stakeholders who have the potential be impacted by the installation activities in order to inform them of when activities would take place and help manage any impact.

### How will AQUIND consult on the proposals?

Consultation is planned for early 2018. Further information is available on the News & Events page.

### What impact will Brexit have on the project?

The UK Government's policy on interconnectors has not changed since the EU referendum in June 2016.

## January 2018

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The Interconnector will promote greater competition within the energy market, which could help to reduce energy prices for consumers and businesses.

### What will be done to mitigate any environmental impacts?

Extensive studies and detailed optioneering have been undertaken to inform the development of the offshore and onshore cable routes, as well as the landing point and converter station sites.

AQUIND will undertake an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and submit an Environmental Statement (ES) in respect of each of the onshore and offshore elements to support its applications for planning permission and a marine licence.

The purpose of the EIA is to identify the potential for significant environmental impacts to arise from the project, and identify and incorporate necessary measures required to mitigate those potential impacts. Potential cumulative impacts including cross-boundary impacts will be described and assessed.

In preparation for the EIA, formal Scoping Reports will be submitted to the relevant Local Planning Authorities and the Marine Management Organisation to agree the data required to inform, and the scope of, the assessments.

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### Why is Eastney identified as the preferred landing point location?

Eastney was chosen as the preferred option after an extensive optioneering process which took account of a wide range of factors.

The search for an appropriate landing point began in 2014/15 with 29 possible landing points being identified between Weymouth, in the west, and Bognor Regis, in the east.

When Lovedean was identified by National Grid as the preferred grid connection point, a total of seven potential landing points were prioritised accordingly.

These landing points were then subjected to a further detailed study to assess them against a total of 23 engineering and environmental Criteria. As a result of this work, Eastney, Hayling Island and East Wittering were shortlisted as potential landing points.

Hayling Island was subsequently removed from the shortlist. This was primarily due to the requirement to cross Chichester / Langstone Harbour at Langstone Bridge. The bridge crossing was considered not viable, whilst an Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) would be difficult at the appropriate location.

A more detailed review of East Wittering and Eastney was undertaken from a marine cable installation perspective, and in discussion with experienced marine installation contractors. Eastney was eventually chosen as the preferred option in order to minimise the length of the cable route between the landfall location and converter station location, and to minimise environmental impacts.

### Why is Lovedean identified as the preferred converter station location?

Lovedean substation in Hampshire was identified as the optimal connection location for AQUIND Interconnector following an assessment by National Grid who have an obligation to develop and maintain an efficient, coordinated and economical electricity transmission network. The assessment considers factors such as National Grid's knowledge of the existing network (including agreed future connections), agreed cost information, environmental considerations and other constraints associated with the project, alongside input from AQUIND on the details of the assets to be connected.

The converter station needs to be located as close as possible to the substation, in order to minimise the length of AC cable used as part of the Interconnector. This is because AC cables take up a wider corridor of land when compared to DC cables. Therefore, in order to reduce impact on land, it is favourable to maximise the use of DC cables, which take up a considerably narrower corridor compared to AC cables. AC cables also have higher transmission losses and pose other technical challenges, meaning that a longer AC cable would partly offset and reduce the benefits of the Interconnector.

February 2019

## The Land Interest Questionnaire (LIQ) Process

### **What is the Land Interest Questionnaire ('LIQ') and why have you sent these to people?**

AQUIND Limited has a legal duty to carry out diligent inquiries to identify all owners of land that might be affected by the Development Consent Order ('DCO') application for AQUIND Interconnector. This includes not only those who own freehold interests, but also those who occupy or have interests in the land in other capacities.

The purpose of this exercise is to identify those persons who have an interest in the land potentially affected by AQUIND Interconnector so as to allow those persons to be consulted directly by AQUIND regarding the Proposed Development and their comments taken into account and addressed as necessary prior to an application for Development Consent being finalised. The information gathered will also be used to assist with the production of documentation to be submitted in support of the application for the DCO.

### **Why have I received an LIQ and others haven't?**

The LIQ was only issued to people with an interest in the land that is understood to be potentially affected by the proposals for AQUIND Interconnector.

### **Where did you source my information from?**

The information gathered to date has been sourced from public records, such as HM Land Registry. Your information will be used for the purpose of fulfilling statutory obligations in connection with the project, including to contact you to keep you informed of the proposals, and to engage further with you in connection with the proposals for AQUIND Interconnector.

### **Why is my information outdated?**

We have pre-populated the LIQs with information obtained through HM Land Registry and the information will reflect the information they currently hold. Sometimes this information can be outdated, therefore it is important that we gather up to date information so that we may consult with all persons with an interest in the land potentially affected by the proposals for AQUIND Interconnector.

Please let the team at WSP know if you think any of the information provided with the LIQ is incorrect. WSP may be contacted by e-mail at [aquindinterconnector@wsp.com](mailto:aquindinterconnector@wsp.com) or by telephone on **020 3116 9389**.

### **Why do AQUIND want information regarding my property?**

As part of the planning process, AQUIND are required to identify and consult with all those parties that have a legal interest in land potentially affected by the project. Those parties with a legal interest in land include owners, tenants, occupiers, mortgage interests, beneficiaries and parties holding rights over the land.

### **Am I required to fill out the LIQ? What will happen if I choose not to?**

There is no duty for you to complete the LIQ, however we encourage you to do so to ensure the information held is up to date and correct and so that all future communication regarding the proposals for AQUIND Interconnector can be directed towards the correct persons.

**What is the purpose of door knocking?**

The purpose of the door knocking exercise is to ensure AQUIND, in accordance with Section 42 of the Planning Act 2008, fulfils its legal duty to carry out a diligent inquiry to identify and consult with all owners of land that might be affected by the Development Consent Order ('DCO') application for AQUIND Interconnector.

AQUIND will not carry out the door knocking exercise for any property where a Land Interest Questionnaire ('LIQ') has already been returned.

**Who is carrying out the door-knocking?**

The door knocking exercise will be undertaken by the WSP Lands team – the appointed land referencing consultants for the AQUIND Interconnector.

All WSP staff will be wearing ID badges and have received the necessary training on interacting with members of the public.

**I don't want to respond to the LIQ or have my door knocked on. What can I do?**

Door knocking is an important exercise for AQUIND to fulfil its legal duty to carry out a diligent inquiry.

WSP's methodology – which has been successful during many Examinations and approved by The Planning Inspectorate ('PINS') – is to contact all properties where a Land Interest Questionnaire ('LIQ') response has not been received.

However, if anyone does not wish to be contacted, they can request this either by telephone on 020 3116 9389 or by email at [aquindinterconnector@wsp.com](mailto:aquindinterconnector@wsp.com).

**Will AQUIND return to my property more than once?**

The project team will only return to a property if it has been unable to contact the person at that property.

If someone makes it known to AQUIND that they do not wish to be contacted, the project team will not re-visit their property.

If we do not have the opportunity to meet with the person at that property, the team will leave a calling card which will provide contact information if they wish to speak to the project team.

**Why has AQUIND erected site notices?**

As part of AQUIND's legal duty to conduct a diligent inquiry, AQUIND must ensure that it has identified all parties with an interest in both registered and unregistered land (as per HM Land Registry). The purpose of the notices is to capture parties with an interest in land where we have been unable to obtain information through public sources to date (e.g. HM Land Registry).

The notice requests that parties with an interest in land (illustrated on the notice) contact us to ensure that going forward they are kept informed with the progress of the proposals and are given the opportunity to be consulted.

AQUIND will not be erecting site notices on private property, all notices will be affixed to street furniture on public land.

**Why do AQUIND require mortgagee details?**

We need to ensure that all interests in land that may be affected by the proposals for AQUIND Interconnector are consulted. As mortgage companies have a registered interest



in properties we need to ensure that they are identified and consulted on the proposals in the same way as the owner of the property.

**The LIQ is the first piece of correspondence I have received regarding the project – why had I not been contacted previously?**

AQUIND issued invitations to informal consultation events held in January 2018 to around 10,000 households within the vicinity of the proposals for AQUIND Interconnector. In addition, these events were publicised by posters displayed at consultation venues, press coverage, paid-for advertisements in local media publications, and online social media advertising.

As a result of the feedback received following as part of the informal consultation, we have been assessing alternative options for the onshore cable route. Due to this, the number and location of households within the vicinity of the cable route has been subject to alteration and may therefore explain why you did not previously receive correspondence related to AQUIND Interconnector.

The latest cable route for the project is available on the [Onshore Elements of AQUIND Interconnector in the UK](#) page of this website.

Moving forward, all persons identified as having an interest in land potentially affected by the Proposed Development will receive information on the next stage of consultation.

**Why are you writing to me now, rather than after the planned consultation events in 2019?**

Legislation requires that we undertake a process of identifying those persons with an interest in the land potentially affected by the proposals prior to the formal consultation being undertaken, so that those persons may be consulted with as part of that consultation.

As such, we need to contact you in advance of the formal consultation so that we may ensure you are kept informed of the consultation and given the opportunity to have your say on our proposals.

How much electricity will AQUIND Interconnector be able to supply?

It is estimated that AQUIND Interconnector will have sufficient capacity to transmit up to 16,000,000MWh of electricity annually between GB and France, accounting for approximately 5% and 3% of their respective total electricity consumption and enough to keep the lights on in up to 4 million British households.

\*BEIS, Energy Consumption in the UK (ECUK) (2018):

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/729326/ECUK](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/729326/ECUK)

Tables\_2018.xlsx

[How will AQUIND Interconnector be funded?](#)

AQUIND is not associated with any UK or European utilities or national electricity transmission system operators. AQUIND Interconnector is being developed as a private project without government subsidies.

### Why connect the UK and France?

The UK Government and the European Commission have identified that interconnectors are vital for achieving an integrated energy market in which families and firms get the best value for their money. These links will help achieve the Government's ambition of widening access to international markets, thereby increasing competition and security of supply. France's proximity to the UK makes it a logical linkage point for an interconnector and existing interconnectors between England and France have proven successful.

### What impact will Brexit have on this project?

The UK Government's policy on interconnectors has not changed since the EU referendum in June 2016.

### How will AQUIND consult on the proposals?

AQUIND is committed to engaging with stakeholders regarding its proposals and is consulting on its proposals for AQUIND Interconnector between Wednesday 27 February and Monday 29 April 2019. The consultation documents are available to view [here](#), together with details on how you can provide feedback.

Consultation is an important part of the Development Consent process and the Planning Act 2008 requires developers of Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects ('NSIPs') to publicise their proposals widely and consult with the local community, local authorities, statutory bodies, other prescribed persons and persons with an interest in land potentially affected by the proposals.

Before accepting the application for examination on behalf of the Secretary of State, PINS must be satisfied that adequate pre-application consultation has been conducted. Prior to the public consultation taking place, AQUIND has published a [Statement of Community Consultation](#) ('SoCC') setting out how it proposes to consult with the local community on its DCO application.

All comments submitted during the consultation will be recorded and carefully considered by AQUIND and will be taken into account when further developing the proposal. An explanation of how the comments received have been taken into account will be detailed in the Consultation Report submitted as part of the application for Development Consent.

### What are the timescales for this project?

Consultation is taking place on proposals for AQUIND Interconnector between February and April 2019. The submission of an application for a Development Consent Order ('DCO') is anticipated to take place later in 2019, with a decision expected from the Secretary of State by 2020. Offshore and onshore cable installation is set to begin in 2021.

### What will we be done to mitigate any environmental impacts?

Extensive studies and detailed optioneering have been undertaken to inform the development of the offshore and onshore cable routes, as well as the landing point and converter station sites.

Due to the environmental and human sensitivities within and surrounding the Proposed Development the decision has been taken to voluntarily undertake an Environmental Impact Assessment ('EIA') for the Development and to submit an Environmental Statement ('ES') in support of any application for consent to report any likely significant environmental effects.

The purpose of the ES is to identify any likely significant environmental effects which may be caused by the project, together with any proposed mitigation.

#### How will construction be managed?

The construction of AQUIND Interconnector has the potential to give rise to impacts during the construction period. AQUIND will be assessing the impacts that may arise during the construction period as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment ('EIA') process, and will outline any proposed measures to mitigate those impacts within the Environmental Statement. In developing the proposals, AQUIND will work closely with the relevant authorities to implement any necessary mitigation measures to address the impacts of the construction of AQUIND Interconnector.

Preliminary information regarding the potential impacts of the construction of AQUIND Interconnector and how it is intended those impacts will be mitigated is to be contained within the Preliminary Environmental Information that is available as part of the consultation documents for AQUIND's statutory consultation.

#### Why is Lovedean identified as the preferred converter station location?

Lovedean substation was identified as the preferred connection location for AQUIND Interconnector following an assessment by National Grid, who have an obligation to develop and maintain an efficient, coordinated and economical electricity transmission network. The assessment considers factors such as National Grid's knowledge of the existing network (including agreed future connections), agreed cost information, environmental considerations and other constraints associated with the project, alongside input from AQUIND on the details of the assets to be connected.

The converter station needs to be located as close as possible to the substation, in order to minimise the length of AC cable used as part of the Interconnector. This is because AC cables take up a much wider corridor of land when compared to DC cables. Therefore, in order to reduce the impacts of the proposals, it is favourable to maximise the use of DC cables, which take up a considerably narrower corridor. AC cables also have higher transmission losses and pose other technical challenges, meaning that a longer AC cable would reduce the benefits of the Interconnector.

#### Why is Eastney identified as the preferred landing point location?

Eastney was chosen as the preferred option after an extensive optioneering process which took account of a wide range of factors.

The search for an appropriate landing point began in 2014/15 with 29 possible landing points being identified between Weymouth, in the west, and Bognor Regis, in the east.

When Lovedean was identified by National Grid as the preferred grid connection point, a total of seven potential landing points were prioritised.

These landing points were then subjected to a further detailed study to assess their suitability and as a result of this work, Eastney, Hayling Island and East Wittering were shortlisted as potential landing points.

Hayling Island was subsequently removed from the shortlist. This was primarily due to the requirement to cross Chichester / Langstone Harbour at Langstone Bridge, which presented significant engineering and environmental constraints.

A more detailed review of East Wittering and Eastney locations was undertaken from a marine cable installation perspective in discussion with experienced marine installation contractors. Eastney was chosen as the preferred option as this minimised the length of the onshore cable route between the landfall location and converter station locations, which in turn minimised disruption and the impacts of the proposals.

#### What development is proposed at the landfall location at Eastney?

At the landfall location in Eastney, a Transition Joint Bay ('TJB') will be constructed – this will be a buried structure that contains the joints between the onshore and offshore cables. The onshore cables will enter the structure underground, and the offshore cables will leave it underground – either through a backfilled trench or through a duct installed by Horizontal Direct Drilling ('HDD') or similar means.

#### Why has Langstone Harbour been discounted as a potential landfall location?

Langstone Harbour was discounted as a potential landfall location due to the significant constraints posed by numerous environmental designations, which heavily protect the Harbour and surrounding areas from development for the benefit of protected species and habitats.

In addition, the Harbour's limited depth and sedimentary composition renders it too unstable for the use of cable installation technologies and machinery.

#### Can I view a copy of the proposed cable route?

AQUIND presented its emerging onshore cable route to the local community at consultation events in January 2018. Since this time, and in direct response to the feedback received from local residents and stakeholders, ongoing work has been undertaken by the project's engineering, environmental and planning teams to consider the potential for variations to the proposed underground cable route in order to minimise impacts on local residents, businesses and the highway network.

The Red Line Boundary ('RLB') can be viewed (in overview) [here](#). To get a clearer view of the individual RLB sections, please click [here](#).

At this stage, the process of selecting a proposed cable route is ongoing and the options depicted are currently being assessed for technical and environmental feasibility.

As part of our formal consultation, we are inviting the local community and stakeholder to comment on the proposed cable route – together with the other onshore and marine elements of the project – before an application for a Development Consent Order ('DCO') is finalised for submission to the Planning Inspectorate ('PINS').

Our formal consultation will also include the provision of Preliminary Environmental Information, which will incorporate the initial findings of surveys and assessments to enable consultees to develop an informed view of the Proposed Development.

[I have called the information line but have been unable to get through](#)

At some periods we have been receiving a higher than usual volume of calls. Where a call cannot be taken due to all call handlers being engaged with other queries, or when a call is made outside of staffed hours (9am-5.30pm, Monday to Friday) an answerphone system is in operation to enable us to return your call, which we endeavour to do as soon as possible.

All calls missed as a result of high volumes of calls are being systematically returned to ensure we can speak with members of the public as soon as possible.

## October 2019

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In preparation for the EIA, formal Scoping Reports will be submitted to the relevant Local Planning Authorities and the Marine Management Organisation to agree the data required to inform, and the scope of, the assessments.

## How will construction be managed?

The construction phase for the onshore elements (cable and converter station) has the potential to give rise to adverse environmental impacts for a temporary period. AQUIND will work closely with the relevant Local Authorities in the UK to establish a Construction Management Plan which will achieve the following:

- Provide a mechanism for ensuring that measures to mitigate potentially adverse environmental impacts are implemented
- Ensure that standards of good construction practice are adopted throughout the construction;
- Provide a framework for mitigating impacts that may be unforeseen or unidentified until construction is underway
- Provide assurance to third parties that their requirements with respect to environmental performance will be met
- Provide a framework for compliance auditing and inspection to enable the principal contractor to be assured that its aims with respect to environmental performance are being met

The Construction Management Plan will mitigate the impact of construction traffic on congestion, specifically during peak hours, and set out best practice in terms of acceptable operating hours to minimise any disruption to local residents.

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## How will AQUIND consult on the proposals?

AQUIND is committed to engaging with stakeholders regarding its proposals. Further details of our forthcoming consultation with the local community will be made available on this website in due course and will be extensively publicised locally.

Consultation is an important part of the development consent process and the Planning Act requires developers of Nationally Significant Infrastructure projects to publicise their proposals widely and consult with the local community, local authorities, statutory bodies and persons with an interest in land potentially affected by the proposed development.

This process is referred to as 'pre-application consultation' and must be carried out before an application for a DCO can be accepted by the Planning Inspectorate on behalf of the Secretary of State.

Our pre-application consultation will be important in understanding your views on what is being proposed and shaping the proposed development. It will also be important in relation to the examination process that follows and once an application is accepted for examination by the Planning Inspectorate.

## What impact will Brexit have on this project?

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