From: Gail Baird [redacted]
Sent: 04 October 2020 13:48
To: Aquind Interconnector <aquind@planninginspectorate.gov.uk>
Subject: The Aquind interconnector infrastructure Project

Dear Inspector,

I write to object in the strongest possible terms to the Aquind interconnector infrastructure project, due to come to land here in Portsmouth.

I myself am an allotment holder and know how precious and valuable these unique spaces are, not just to the allotment holders but also to the wider population and environment. They provide much needed open space and respite to the holders, their families and friends in the second most densely populated city in the country outside London. They help maintain community cohesion.

Allotments are the hub of many-a-community: a community of growers, environmental champions, horticulturists and families. They also help to combat social isolation for older residents and marginalised individuals, providing a safe and inclusive space.

My objections to these plans are as follows:

1) Lack of clarity, overly complicated/technical and ever-changing plans.

Example: Milton allotments weren't part of the formal consultation with the public as an area that could be affected. In latest plans released by the company this area is now included.

2) Lack of quality engagement with the public.

Example: There have been several poorly managed consultations with the public, including letters to residents asking for home owners details and house prices. This is not robust and not enough, given the long term detrimental effects of this development.

3) Disruption to the city - and beyond.

As well as being the second most densely populated city in the country after London, Portsmouth is an island city. There are only 3 roads off and on the island.

Example: The plans show that one of these roads (Eastern Road) would have lanes closed to traffic. These works would dramatically reduce the access to the city for a considerable period of time, causing huge delays backing up onto the M27 and A, and causing gridlock in the city itself.

4) Environmental impact on the city and its population.

Example: The plans go directly through green spaces, protected areas and areas with specific wildlife protections. Milton common, locks and now Milton and Eastney Allotments. If this goes ahead the effect on wildlife due to increase in pollution/traffic levels of idle vehicles in the surrounding area due to disruption caused by the projects road works will be catastrophic.

My concerns are shared by some local councillors and importantly our constituency Member of Parliament, [redacted] who agrees with my points and has been putting pressure on Government to think again about this national infrastructure project.

I am a passionate community champion - and never have cohesive communities been more important and valuable to everyone than in the recent months during the pandemic and lockdown. I implore you to seriously consider these points I make.

Kind regards

Gail

Gail Baird
[redacted]
An Ambassador for Portsmouth