From: [redacted]
To: Aquind Interconnector
Subject: Objection to the Aquind Interconnector and its route
Date: 05 October 2020 15:08:19

To Whom It May Concern

I am writing to lodge my objection to the Aquind Interconnector.

My objections to the plan for the proposed route are

1) the plans proposed are constantly changing and are vague in specifics as to what the intentions and impacts on the immediate and surrounding area actually are (so that if permission is granted) it gives Aquind carte blanche to do as it likes.

2) Impact on the surrounding area in terms of road closures and traffic on an island which is already densely populated and often grid locked with traffic, which will be damaging to the local economy and peoples' mental health and wellbeing.

There will also be a huge amount of disruption to an already traffic-laden, polluted city. These plans will negatively affect the whole of Portsmouth.
3) These plans do not have the support of the local people or Portsmouth City Council, which objects strongly to the plans

4) Most importantly the potentially devastating impact on three nature reserves. The latest plans carve up three of the most beautiful and rare of environments internationally and vitally important Farlington Marshes, Langston Harbour and Milton Common.

Not only are these areas loved and valued by Portsmouth residents for their beauty. These areas are vital open natural areas in a very densely urbanised and populated city and provide a wealth of physical and mental health benefits for residents providing free opportunities for all to exercise in nature and are used regularly by many for fishing, walking, cycling, bird watching and water sports.

These areas are also important internationally and have a multitude of designations of protection as internationally and nationally important sites of scientific interest which are supposed to be protected

Internationally Protected nature reserve
Farlington Marshes at Langstone Harbour is one of hampshire's oldest nature reserves. It is a Ramsar site a wetland site designated to be of international importance under the Ramsar Convention.[1] It is also designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Areas (SPA)

Farlington Marshes is part of Langston Harbour which is a Site of Special Scientific Interest and a Nature Conservation Review site, Grade I. It is home to harbour and grey seals and rare species of bird and plant.

Important breeding and migratory ground for protected species of bird

This area ranks within the top 10 most important places for birds in the UK. During the winter months as many as 40,000 birds may be present in the harbour, either roosting or feeding on the mudflats.

It is an important year round migratory and breeding and migratory site for birds, including brent geese which are fully protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. This site is home to 6% of the world population of Brent Geese.

In the summer months, the harbour provides the most important breeding location on the south coast for gulls and terns, including the rare Litle Tern. Wigeons, teals, shelduck, dunlin, plover godwit avocets, redshanks, skylarks, meadow pipits, lapwings and dunlins flock to Farlington Marshes in their thousands to breed.

Rare birds of prey

Langstone Harbour and Farlington Marshes is also home to rare birds of prey including Kestrels, Buzzards, Osprey and Little Owls and other rare species such as Spoonbills and Little Tern. It is also home to many woodpeckers, warblers and wagtails.

Seals

The harbour provides one of only two haul out sites for the Solent population of Harbour Seals. The Solent population numbers approximately 25 individuals. There are also a couple of Grey Seals that occasionally visit.

Dolphins

Bottlenose Dolphins, Harbour Porpoise and Otters have also been spotted here on rare occasions.

Fish nursery

Up to 58 different species of fish live in the waters of Langstone Harbour and the harbour is a designated Bass nursery, and also provides an important home for Mackerel, Bream, Herring and Sandeels.

Rare plants food for protected birds

Langstone Harbour also provides a home for beds of Eelgrass. This rare marine flowering plant produces floating seeds and waterproof pollen, and is itself an important habitat for juvenile fish, and food source for Brent Geese.

Important fishing and leisure area

The area is also an important commercial and recreational fishing and water sport area with activities such as yachting, dinghy sailing, motor cruising, wind-surfing, water skiing, jet skiing, paddle boarding, kayaking and canoeing are all well established.

Milton Common

The common is the only large area of natural grass on Portsea Island and is a haven for insects and small mammals. Butterflies, whose caterpillars feed on native grasses, include the Meadow Brown, Small Heath, Wall Brown and Gatekeeper, as well as Small Tortoiseshell, Peacock, Red Admiral and Comma, whose caterpillars feed on the large healthy stands of stinging nettle.

Many species of Dragonfly, Grasshoppers and the Great Green Bush Cricket (Tettigonia viridissma) also live on the common

The grassland provides food and shelter for small mammals, such as the Field Vole, which eats the grass and is fed on in turn by Kestrels, owls and foxes. Common Shrews feed on the abundant insect life in the grass.

Bramble thickets are the other major habitat, valuable nesting sites for many small birds and providing shelter for migrants in spring and autumn. Brambles are an important food supply and shelter for many other species, including Long Tailed Field Mice and Common Lizards.

The three lakes in the common support many aquatic species including frogs, toads and newts. In summer, dragonflies swoop over the lakes, accompanied by Swallows, Swifts and House Martins, all attracted by the small flies and midges emerging from the water.

Around the lakes the reed beds provide shelter for many birds, such as Swan, Moorhen, Coot, Mallard and Tufted Duck. More timid birds like the Great Crested Grebe and Dabchick tend to stay in open water.

In winter, the reeds shelter Long Tailed and Bearded Tits and many other migrant birds on their passage south.

5) The proposed drilling and demolition of a large part of Milton Allotment - removal of plots, sheds all vegetation. These plots are supposed to be protected again under the Allotments Act 1950.

Not only are the allotments again an important habitat for mammals and birds, they
provide an area for exercise, well being and mental health for a number of people to connect with the land, learn about where food comes from and how it is produced .,

Many of these plots have been passed down through families for generations and are the culmination of a lifetime's work.

Some of the plots are also used by community projects to improve mental health and wellbeing for vulnerable residents.

These sites are important for nature and are vital for the physical and mental health and well-being all of us as residents of Portsmouth. They must be protected and left untouched by Aquind Interconnector project at all costs.

I humbly implore you to refuse their planning application and to insist they find another route

Regards
Claire Willcox, Portsmouth Resident and regular user of these areas
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