From: [redacted]
To: Aquind Interconnector
Subject: Aquind Interconnector Objection
Date: 05 October 2020 17:47:17

Dear Inspectorate,
Re: Application for Interconnector - Portsmouth
My Political group first became aware of Aquid's intentions to build an interconnector cable though the city of Portsmouth, in the autumn of 2017. We met in the Summer of 2018 at a public consultation in my ward of Drayton and Farlington.
Having considered their scheme in detail ahead of meeting, I made clear to the Aquind representatives that I was opposed to their proposed route for the new interconnector cable. The route they shared. This caused me some concern due to the environmental impacts disruption and others. The route was planned through Milton in the bottom south east corner of the city of Portsmouth. The aim was to channel the cable underground the whole length of the A2030 - Eastern Road. I shadowed the view of my colleagues who pointed out that not only was Portsmouth the most densely populated city in the UK outside of London, but owing to its geography being an island peninsular, there were three main roads on and off the island. Channelling underground one of the cities 'key-route network' roads for months at a time, was going to cause significant issue and congestion in the city. As Portsmouth is a small city, when one of the roads has an blockage, the other two quickly become an issue and the city is known to 'grid-lock' when this happens. Other specific issues with the proposed route were two-fold: firstly Portsmouth Football Club is at the end of the A2030 and on match-days the traffic is very heavy often backing up on the A27/M27 controlled by Highways England. The second concern I had was the on-going battle the city was and still is having with the DfT regarding the improvement of air quality. The city has breached the acceptable levels if Nitrogen Dioxide in the atmosphere for several years. One of the worst breach points in the city is at Velder Avenue - immediately at the southern end of the A2030.
During the consultation I enquired about the other routes Aquind had considered, such as Langstone Harbour. They explained to me that due to the Special Scientific Interest in the harbour, they would be unlikely to gain the permissions they required as Natural England would object. I explained the SSI in Eastney on the beach and the air pollution issues. These were noted and no resolution was reached. I wrote to Aquind a week later to formally register my objection as the local authority.
I have since had time to consider the new route, and whilst I am pleased to see that the proposed route misses out large sections of the A2030 - Eastern Road, I am seriously concerned about the proposed route through Farlington at the top of Portsmouth and through the key-route networks of Farlington Ave and London Road through Widley and into Waterlooville. The congestion and air quality issues this will cause will have a direct and detrimental impact on human life and the living conditions of hundreds of thousands of people living in the surrounding areas.
Previously I have enquired to the possibility of routing the cable under the motorway and along the M3 motorway to reach the new proposed sub-station in Lovedean. This is would have a minimal impact on the lives of those people that live in the area. Clearly Aquind have not prioritised the best way to cause the minimum impact on businesses, public transport and homeowners, but instead I can only assume have gone for the route where the consents due, come from local authorities instead of Highways England and or multiple farmers and landowners. Is this for financial reasons? This is a sad inditement on this company and one I hope local people note.

My main concern in my capacity as Shadow Cabinet member for Education, Children and Families is the variations of the route proposed going past Solent Infant School. Schools are congested areas at the best of times, and with large sections of the road dug-up, in particular Farlington Ave. This road is a key route, when there is an accident on the M27/A27, I cannot see anyway these works could be carried out with maximum disruption and a significant detrimental effect on thousands of people's lives.

Thank you for taking my objections into consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Cllr Terry Norton
Shadow Cabinet Member for Education, Children and Families.
Drayton and Farlington Ward Conservative
Portsmouth City Council
[redacted]

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