From: [redacted]
To: Aquind Interconnector
Subject: Objection to Aquind Connector Power Line
Date: 06 October 2020 18:30:58

Dear Inspector

I write to lodge my objection to the proposed route across Eastney/Milton for the Aquind Connector power line.

The route poses a huge threat to the last remaining green corner of Portsea Island.

The attempts at consultation by Aquind have been shamefully inadequate. They have not consulted widely enough. Their activity regarding consultation was to a very small Milton based area. There was no consultation to the wider affected area, the whole of Portsmouth.

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).

The latest plans carve up three local nature reserves: Farlington Marshes; Langston Harbour and Milton Common.

Not only are these three areas loved and valued by Portsmouth residents for their beauty, they are vital open natural areas in a very densely urbanised and populated city. They 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.

The route through Bransbury Park and the allotments will be disruptive and cause irreparable damage to wildlife and green space. I understand that there are rare newts (the Great Crested Newt – Triturus cristatus) living at the allotments which could be lost for ever should their habitat be disturbed by this plan.

This species of newt can live up to 25 years and its population is rapidly declining. Therefore, this species and its habitat is strongly protected by law (under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981). It is also a priority species under the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework and is listed as a European Protected Species under Annex IV of the European Habitats Directive.

On the government's own website, there is a page dedicated to the great crested newt and some of the activities the government themselves have said could harm great crested newts include: excavating the ground, filling in or destroying ponds, removing materials such as dead wood on the ground, removing dense vegetation and disturbing the ground.

I would like to know whether this has been taken into consideration when considering changing the route through the allotments or even with the original plan to follow the allotment path.

Has Natural England been briefed about the disruption to the allotments and the nature reserves, as I have not seen a mitigation licence from them or a report from an ecologist on the planning inspectorate's documents online? The government cannot put up rules about protecting rare species then allow the wanton destruction of their environment by Aquind's cable.

The route along Furze Lane, Moorings Way and beyond will be disruptive to local residents, hindering the bus route which will lead to fewer journeys by public transport and increasing the number of cars on the road which in turn will impact on the already poor air quality.

Given the amount of work that has recently been undertaken along the foreshore, would not a better solution have been to include laying the cable at that point?

This matter has been poorly handled from the start, and by circumventing any decision by our local council it feels as though we are being used as pawns in a politically motivated game.

This route needs to be independently reviewed along with the names behind the project and their contributions to the Conservative Party.

Finally, with the Prime Ministers pledge today to invest £160 million in offshore wind farms, is the Aquind Connector power line even necessary now?

I beseech you to refuse this planning application and to insist Aquind find another route.

Regards

Irene Hogarth

(Portsmouth resident and regular visitor to the local nature reserves)

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