From: [redacted]
To: Aquind Interconnector
Subject: Opposition to AQUID interconnector project
Date: 05 October 2020 23:00:06

Hello,

I am writing to register my concerns regarding, and opposition against, the planned development involving the pipeline that is to affect Portsmouth's few green spaces.

As a trained ecologist I am acutely concerned about the adverse effects this development would have on protected wildlife. There are numerous priority species, including migratory birds, reptiles, rare coastal flora and whole rare communities/habitats, including the salt marshes themselves, that will almost certainly experience negative effects of the work to be done on-site. On the landscape scale, habitats and populations stand to be cut off and isolated, endangering the genetic diversity of already rare groups, and destroying corridors such as those running through Farlington, Milton common (Salterns Heath, Langstone) through to Milton Allotments. Such corridors are vital for the integrity of already compromised populations. As a densely-populated city, Portsmouth has relatively proportionately few green spaces as it is. These green spaces, such as the reedbeds and coastal marshlands and grasslands of Farlington, are therefore all the more important to protect.

Saltmarshes themselves are a rare and vital habitat in the whole of Europe, comparatively few remaining today. They not only provide for wildlife but provide essential and priceless ecosystem services to humans, acting as natural filtration systems to remove and mitigate against pollution (an important asset for such a big city), capturing carbon and fostering high biodiversity. All of this combined helps to increase the area's resilience to climate change and change in general. Without it, the city would be much poorer environmentally, economically (the marshes and common provide rare and much-beloved walking, ecotourism, birding and outdoor recreation opportunities) and socially. The allotments are one of few places those not privileged to have access to gardens may grow their own food and enjoy outdoor spaces. The growing of food, especially in such unprecedented and worrisome times, is an essential skill and one that fewer adults and children can and do engage in every year.

Destruction of these spaces is, in my opinion and in the opinion of many others, fiercely irresponsible compared to the small gains, which are only projected as being POSSIBLE gains and not certain, to be obtained by it. When the environmental, social and economic value of such spaces is so high and so rare, how could such small potential energy industry-related gains take precedence?

I believe I have registered my opposition against this project, and sincerely hope that this stance will be duly considered. I am seriously concerned for the fates of wildlife and for those people, including myself as a resident of Milton and frequent user of the common and Farlington, and previously of the allotments. And I hope that the situation can be resolved in favour of preserving biodiversity and the ecosphere at the landscape scale, at a time in which we desperately need to preserve what natural defences we have in the face of climate change.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I would be most happy to hear back from you, and will be watching the forthcoming developments with interest and heartfelt concern.

Yours sincerely,

Millie Barrett
BSc Wildlife Ecology and Conservation, FdSc Animal Management and Conservation.