From: [redacted]
To: Aquind Interconnector
Subject: OBJECTION to AQUIND INTERCONNECTOR Land Plans AQUIND Limited PINS REF: EN020022 PORTSMOUTH UK
Date: 06 October 2020 22:53:27

Dear staff,

I want to object in the strongest possible terms about the AQUIND INTERCONNECTOR Land Plans AQUIND Limited PINS REF.: EN020022 Portsmouth for the following reasons:

1) Lack of clarity and specificity from Aquind and overly complicated/technical, ever-changing plans. i.e. Allotment plots weren't being affected and now they are at risk of being cleared with trees removed and sheds etc being knocked down. It seems that they are being intentionally vague, so they do what they like. We are not legally trained, and it is difficult to understand what is happening to us
2) If this goes ahead the effect on wildlife, pollution/traffic levels in the surrounding area and physical and mental wellbeing may be catastrophic.
3) During a pandemic (and future spikes/pandemics), it is a terrible idea to invade one of the few green spaces and places where people can safely meet. It is further a terrible idea to remove green spaces in an already over-developed city.
4) It is morally bankrupt to impact on so many people's lives (many elderlies or with disabilities) in this way I'm afraid it's a case of a big corporation bullying allotment holders and our community.
5) There are other route options that have less impact even though they might affect profit!
6) The potential removal of the community allotment which falls in the purple zone is completely unacceptable given that (already disadvantaged), sections of the community depend on it for independent living skills, respite support and personal development.

The information that has now been brought to light that suggests that the previous promise from Aquind that the allotments would be untouched has
now been broken. There is a suggestion that the cable will no longer follow the path in the allotments but will now go through the allotment patches meaning that sheds, trees, wildlife and plant life will be demolished and destroyed to make way for this cable.
Several the allotment patches have been tendered to and nurtured for decades by the same families and every single allotment holder has taken significant time to establish the beautiful plants that they have grown there. Please also bear in mind that the allotment holders have grown fresh fruit and veg which they often donate to the community to eat allowing healthy eating and a more varied diet – something that is especially important which also goes back to a previous point I have made earlier on about the levels of obesity in Portsmouth. Another point is that these allotments are vital towards people's mental health, especially in the times we face with limited contact with family and friends. It is an outlet for many people and is a comforting place to go to and enjoy. If you take that away from people, it will be extremely detrimental towards the resident's wellbeing.

There is also the question as to the fact that there is a species of newt (the Great Crested Newt – Triturus cristatus) that has been sighted a significant amount of times all over the allotments. This species of newt can live up to 25 years and its population is rapidly declining. Therefore, this species and its habitat are 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 includes excavating the ground, filling in or destroying ponds, removing materials such as deadwood 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 and, with the original plan to follow the allotment path.

Has Natural England been briefed about this 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 this rare species then allow the wanton destruction of their environment by Aquind and their cable.

Regards,

Moses Milner

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