From:	Office of Stephen Morgan MP
To:	Aquind Interconnector
Subject:	Letter of objection from Stephen Morgan MP
Date:	04 October 2020 14:49:10
Attachments:	AQUIND FINAL 041020.docx

Please see attached letter of objection from Stephen Morgan MP with reference to the planning application before the Inspector for the AQUIND Interconnector project

Kind regards

Office of Stephen Morgan MP | Member of Parliament for Portsmouth South | Shadow Minister for the Armed Forces | @StephenMorganMP | www.stephenmorgan.org.uk

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Stephen Morgan MP
House of Commons

Planning Inspectorate
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Temple Quay
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Temple Quay House
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BS1 6PN

Sent via email

4 October 2020

Dear Planning Inspectorate

AQUIND – objecting to proposals affecting Portsmouth South

I write with reference to proposals before you for the AQUIND interconnector project that would affect communities across the South East, and in particular, thousands of my constituents.

Despite engaging with the planning applicant and attending various meetings and events to hear the rationale for their proposals, I agree with hundreds of constituents who have got in touch with me as their Member of Parliament to voice concerns and object to the plans.

Our concerns include:

1) Poor quality communication and consultation with residents, key stakeholders, local businesses and community groups. Considering the scale of this national infrastructure project, the engagement with relevant parties has been insufficient and inadequate.

2) Inconsistency in plans and no clear rationale for the development. This has caused stress and uncertainty to residents and local land owners. For example, recent proposals involving the inclusion of the Eastney and Milton Allotments off Locksway Road in my constituency has alarmed residents - many of whom have a longstanding family connections with the allotment spaces - with limited information being made available to date for those affected.

3) Unnecessary disruption to the city. The proposed corridor where digging and cabling would be undertaken is a major aspect of the city's transport infrastructure and risks impacting on the lives of residents and the local economy, including unnecessary noise, congestion and traffic.

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Stephen Morgan MP
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4) Impacting on the city's precious environment. I have written separately to the Secretary of State over the impact of proposals on Portsmouth's green and open spaces and local wildlife. I share the concerns of residents who have raised with me the risk to local wildlife. In particular, Milton Common is a place for breeding, wintering and passage birds along with water voles and Great Crested Newts and countless other vulnerable species. With the climate emergency we now face, it falls on all our shoulders to ensure that these vital wildlife assets are safeguarded and our local natural environment protected.

It is the view of many of my constituents that insufficient attention has been given to other alternative locations for the proposed works which may have a more reduced impact on communities and the environment. The planning applicant has also been unable to demonstrate to local residents and elected representatives any positive benefit the scheme would bring to the city of Portsmouth, which causes those who I have heard from alarm.

As on constituent has put it to me: "*The allotments are such a wonderful resource for Portsmouth - a densely populated city - providing and supporting recreation, improved mental health, physical exercise and - in these uncertain times - the opportunity to grow healthy food. I am an allotment holder but I am not concerned just for myself but I understand the negative impact that such drilling could have on the number of holdings - already squeezed - but on the life and well-being of the City itself".*

On behalf of residents across Portsmouth South, I would therefore like to record with you my objection to this application at this stage of the planning process and ahead of the hearings later this year.

I urge you to ensure that objections made from the people of Portsmouth are given a strong hearing as deliberations continue.

Yours faithfully,

Stephen Morgan MP

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