



Our ref: 20025089  
Your ref: EN020022

Highways England  
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AQUIND Interconnector Case Team  
The Planning Inspectorate  
National Infrastructure Planning  
Temple Quay House  
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17 November 2020

Dear Sir/Madam

**Application by AQUIND Limited for an Order Granting Development Consent for the AQUIND Interconnector Project (EN020022): Written Statement**

I refer to your letter of 15 September 2020 regarding the above proposal and your invitation to submit written representations to the Examining Authority's (ExA) by Deadline 4 (17 November 2020).

Highways England's responses are set out below and should be read in conjunction with the Updated Statement of Common Ground between Highways England and AQUIND which has been submitted to you by the Applicant.

Yours faithfully,



Patrick Blake  
Area 3 Spatial Planner  
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## **AQUIND Interconnector Project (EN020022)**

### **Written Statement by Highways England**

**17 November 2020**

#### **Introduction**

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Highways England (HE) have been invited (dated 15 September 2020) to provide written representations to the ExA's Written Questions for this project. The relevant questions to Highways England and our responses are set out below.

#### **Statement of Common Ground**

Matters agreed to date with the applicant are set out in the agreed updated statement of common ground (at deadline 4) which was submitted by the applicant.

#### **Protective Provisions**

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Dialogue continues with the Applicant to agree the appropriate protective provisions in relation to the Strategic Road Network and protection of its assets (which includes National Roads Telecommunications Services) to be incorporated with the DCO.

#### **Traffic and Transport**

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We have issued our response to the FCTMP (Annex A), which sets out our general support for the approach in the framework. To support the implementation of the FCTMP we recommend further dialogue with all relevant highway authorities to manage any potential adverse impacts from construction activities and traffic management resulting from AQUIND.

We suggest it would be appropriate for AQUIND to consider a statement of common ground between Highways England, Hampshire County Council, Portsmouth City Council and AQUIND, setting out how any required approvals and notifications can be expedited by the relevant highway authorities while maintaining the safe and efficient operation of both local and strategic road networks.

We have completed our review of the highway safety section of the transport assessment and the collision analysis section of the supplementary transport assessment (Annex B). The Applicant is considering the request for a review of collision data at the following junctions of the Strategic Road Network:

- A3 (M) Junction 2;
- A3 (M) Junction 3; and
- A27 / A2030.

Once this review has been completed, further details will be submitted to Highways England for comment.

Dialogue continues regarding matters related to the potential adverse impact of construction traffic on A3(M) Junctions 2 and 3 and how if necessary it can be mitigated.

### Proposed Easement

Highways England are awaiting the complete Geotechnical Risk Assessment in accordance with CD622 (Managing Geotechnical Risk) to inform if Highways England can accept in principle an easement to facilitate a crossing beneath the A27. At this stage it is not anticipated to identify any significant issues that could prevent progress.

Positive dialogue is ongoing to agree the heads of terms in advance of an agreed geotechnical assessment. Once in principle agreement has been established, formal negotiations for an easement will commence between Highways England and the Applicant.

<b>Agenda for Issue Specific Hearing 1 dealing with matters relating to the draft Development Consent Order (DCO)</b>
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*Could Highways England please explain why it is necessary to amend the definition of 'relevant highway authority'?*

Highways England has been appointed by the Secretary of State for Transport as strategic highway company under the provisions of the Infrastructure Act 2015 and is the highway authority, traffic authority and street authority for the strategic road network (SRN). The SRN is a critical national asset and as such Highways England works to ensure that it operates and is managed in the public interest, both in respect of current activities and needs as well as in providing effective stewardship of its long-term operation and integrity.

In the case of the AQUIND DCO, this mainly relates to the A27 and A3(M), which are directly impacted from the DCO proposals and activities. Although it is accepted that impacts and issues will be different for Highways England than they are for the other highway authorities Hampshire County Council and Portsmouth City Council, therefore not all matters that refer to 'relevant highway authority' in the draft DCO will include Highways England.

The issue will be discussed with AQUIND prior to the next deadline and it is anticipated that we will provide an update on this matter in the Highways England written statement for Deadline 5. It is not expected that Highways England will need to attend the hearing on December 9<sup>th</sup> 2020 on this matter.