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For the attention of Hefin Jones

Dear Sir,

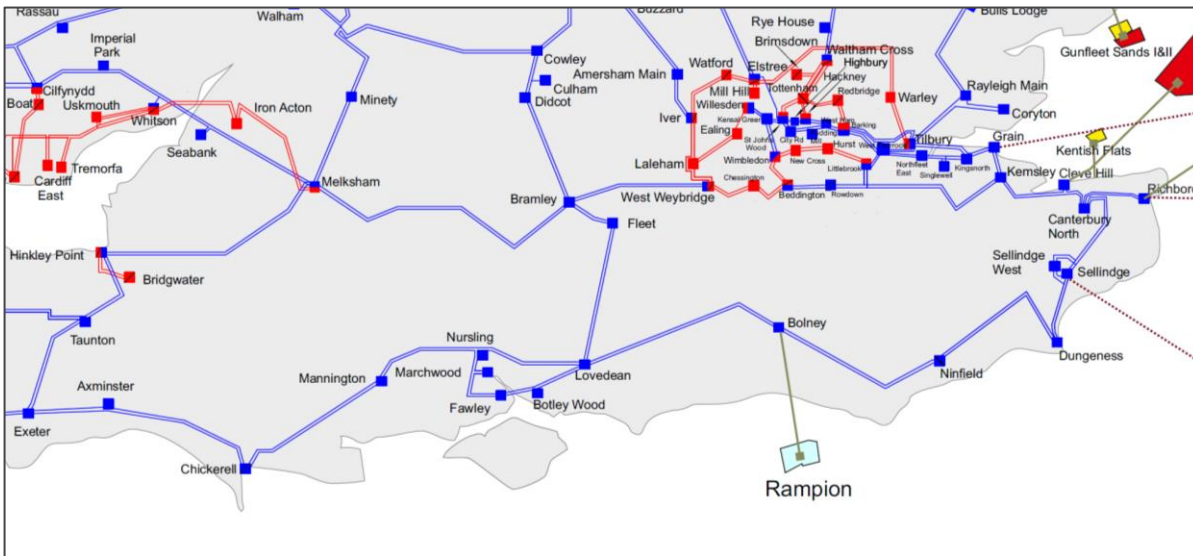
EN020022: AQUIND INTERCONNECTOR The Examining Authorities further written Questions for National Grid Electricity System Operator, Reference EIA 2.6.1

I'm writing today in relation to The Planning Inspectorate's further written question requesting a reply from National Grid Electricity System Operator dated 7th January 2021 regarding Aquind Limited's application for a Development Consent Order. In the letter, there was a question regarding National Grid Electricity Systems Operator's limited scope of activities in relation to the Feasibility Study and subsequent Connections and Infrastructure Options Note (CION), reference EIA 2.6.1.

The Connection and Infrastructure Options Note (CION) process (a licence requirement delivered through STCP 18-1 Issue 009 Connection and Modification Applications) is used to identify a connection location following an application for a connection agreement. This industry approved procedure documents the role and responsibilities of the parties responsible for offshore grid connections, who comprise the Developer (in this case the Applicants), the Transmission Owner (TO) (in this case NGET) and NGENSO (in its role as System Operator (SO)).

The CION is a collaborative process resulting in a preferred point of connection to the transmission system to inform the connection offer and scope of the transmission works. The CION records the output of the work between the Developer, TO and NGENSO to identify the overall most economic, efficient and coordinated connection option. Planning and environmental considerations are considered in the process by the Developer, as they must be willing to accept the connection offer following the CION process. Therefore the developer must believe the option identified is feasible in terms of consenting and deliverability, in this case recognising the designation of the South Down National Park. All parties to the CION are mindful that the necessary consents must be subsequently obtained through the planning process to deliver the identified option. Parties to the CION process are also subject to amenity duties under Schedule 9 of the Electricity Act 1989

Figure 1 : The Southern Transmission System¹



In the case of AQUIND Interconnector, the CION did not progress with 7 existing substations. Bolney , Botley Wood, Fawley, Marchwood, Nursling, Mannington and Fleet these substations were not taken forward to the next stage of the CION due to the following reasons.

1. Options to the West of Lovedean required all or nearly all the same network reinforcements as a connection at Lovedean plus additional reinforcements to either get the power to Lovedean or reinforcements to the west to Exeter substation and as far northwards as Minety.
2. Options to the East of Lovedean again required the same reinforcements as a connection to Lovedean plus additional reinforcements to either get the power to Lovedean, or further on the east coast.
3. Options to the North of Lovedean would require more infrastructure than for the coastal connections. It is assumed that a longer inland cable route would have a greater environmental impact. In this case the cable length was almost 3 times the length of the connection to Lovedean and the shortest route suggested would have been passing through the National Park.

With the above considerations in mind these 7 substations were not taken forward for further assessment. This is because these sites would likely have resulted in more overall reinforcements, which would therefore lead to more environmental impact, and increased costs to the GB consumer. The extent of these additional works will vary from site to site but may involve new overhead lines or cables, additional operational equipment and multiple substation extensions in addition to the works identified for a connection at Lovedean.

It is worth noting that even though the basis of the decision to discount these options does not directly state the environmental impact of each option, each connection point must be accepted by the developer whom must be confident that environmental impacts wouldn't prohibit development.

¹ Taken from GB Electricity Transmission System Diagram A2 <https://www.nationalgrideso.com/document/181446/download>

We trust that this addresses The Planning Inspectorates questions and allows them to continue with the Examination for the Development Consent Order.

If you have any further questions or queries in the please do not hesitate to contact myself or *Alex Curtis* on [REDACTED]@nationagrideso.com or [REDACTED]

Yours faithfully

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

JAMES GREENHALGH
HEAD OF ELECTRICITY CONNECTIONS