



Planning Act 2008 – section 91

Application by AQUIND Limited for an Order granting Development Consent for the AQUIND Interconnector Project

Agenda for Issue Specific Hearing 5 dealing with Environmental Matters and Highways (ISH5)

In its letter dated 11 January 2021, the Examining Authority notified Interested Parties of its decision to hold an Issue Specific Hearing on the following date:

Hearing	Date and time	Location
Issue Specific Hearing 5 Environmental Matters and Highways	18 February 2021 10.00 am Arrangements conference starts at 09.30 am	Online via Microsoft Teams invitation ¹

Participation, conduct and management of the Hearing

This Issue Specific Hearing is being held because the Examining Authority wishes to question the Applicant and hear from Interested Parties about various environmental and highway matters arising from documentation submitted with the application documents, together with updates and responses at the preceding submission Deadlines and Hearings.

Strict Government restrictions relating to Coronavirus (COVID-19) are currently in force, requiring people to work from home if possible. The Examining Authority will therefore conduct this Hearing using digital and telephone technology. Invited participants can join using a computer, laptop, tablet, mobile phone or landline telephone. It is the Applicant's intention to livestream the Hearing, and a recording will be made available on the project page of the Planning Inspectorate's National Infrastructure website.

Invitees will receive a joining link or telephone number in a separate email, shortly before the Hearing. You can use these to join the Arrangements Conference. This is solely for your use. Please join the Arrangements Conference at the appointed time shown above and wait until the Case Manager registers you, and then admits you to the Hearing. The Arrangements Conference allows procedures to be explained and enables the Hearing to start promptly.

¹ Further information is available in Advice Note 8.6, available at: <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/legislation-and-advice/advice-notes/advice-note-8-6-virtual-examination-events/>

The Examining Authority invites and would particularly like to hear from the following Interested Parties during this Hearing:

- The Applicant;
- Hampshire County Council;
- East Hampshire District Council;
- Havant Borough Council;
- Portsmouth City Council;
- South Downs National Park Authority;
- Winchester City Council;
- The Parish Council of Denmead;
- University of Portsmouth;
- First Hampshire Dorset and Berkshire.

In addition, the Examining Authority has exceptionally invited the following to participate:

- Stagecoach.

The named parties have been invited because they are:

- public bodies or other parties that are named in the draft provisions in the draft DCO;
- public bodies with policy and regulatory responsibilities associated with the subject matter;
- national and local authorities for the affected area; or
- persons or organisations with another related and relevant special interest.

Participation in the Hearing is subject to the Examining Authority's power to control the Hearing. Interested Parties may be invited to make oral representations at the Hearing² (subject to the Examining Authority's power to control the Hearing). Oral representations should be informed by the Relevant Representations, Written Representations and Local Impact Reports made by the person by whom (or on whose behalf) the oral representations are made.

However, representations made at the Hearing should not simply repeat matters previously covered in a written submission. Rather, they should draw attention to those submissions in summary form and provide further detail, explanation and evidential corroboration to help inform the Examining Authority.

The Examining Authority may ask questions about representations or ask the Applicant or other parties to comment or respond. The Examining Authority will probe, test and assess the evidence through direct questioning of persons making oral representations. Questioning at the Hearing will therefore be led by a member of the Panel, supported by other Panel members.

² s91 Planning Act 2008

This agenda is for guidance only. It is not designed to be exclusive or exhaustive. The Examining Authority may add other issues for consideration, may alter the order in which issues are considered and will seek to allocate sufficient time to each issue to allow proper consideration. In particular, it is noted that this agenda was largely compiled in advance of written submissions for Deadlines 7, 7a and 7c. As such, matters may have progressed in the interim and any other information or updates provided at those Deadlines may not have been taken into account. The detail of the agenda may change once all of these documents have been fully considered.

Any lack of discussion of a particular issue at a Hearing does not preclude further examination of that issue, including through questions that might subsequently be raised by the Examining Authority in any Rule 17 request.

Should the consideration of the issues take less time than anticipated, the Examining Authority may conclude the Hearing as soon as all relevant contributions have been made and all questions asked and responded to.

If there are additional matters to be dealt with or there are submissions that take a considerable amount of time, there may be a need to continue the session for longer on the day or at a subsequent sitting.

Breaks will be taken during the Hearing as directed by the Examining Authority. All parties should note that the agenda given below is to provide a framework for this Hearing and offer discussion points; it does not constrain the Examining Authority to specific topics. The Examining Authority may wish to raise other matters arising from submissions and pursue lines of inquiry in the course of the discussions which are not included in this agenda.

References in square brackets [] are to the unique document identification number in the Examination Library. This is regularly updated and can be found on the project page of the Planning Inspectorate's National Infrastructure website at:

<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/ipc/uploads/projects/EN020022/EN020022-000996-Exam%20Library%20%E2%80%93%20Published%20Version.pdf>

Our letter dated 11 January 2021 withdrew the request on the original Examination Timetable for a transcript to be provided in advance of this Hearing, as such these do not need to be provided. May we draw your attention to Deadline 8 on the Examination Timetable (Monday 1 March 2021) and our request to receive full summaries of all oral submissions given at this Hearing by that date.

Please contact the case team if you have any questions:
aquind@planninginspectorate.gov.uk



Agenda

Title of meeting	AQUIND Interconnector Issue Specific Hearing on Environmental Matters and Highways
Date	Thursday 18 February 2021
Time	10.00 am
Venue	Online via Microsoft Teams invitation
Attendees	Invitees

1. Examining Authority's opening remarks

2. Purpose of the Hearing and speakers' introductions

3. EIA and ES

- 3.1. Should ES Addendum 2 submitted at Deadline 7 [REP7-067] be subject to any formal consultation process under the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017?
- 3.2. Have the figures associated with the new viewpoint photography and visualisations ([REP7-062] and [REP7-063]) been added to the schedule of documents forming the ES? If not, should they be?

4. Landscape and visual effects

- 4.1. Does the South Downs National Park Authority have any remaining points of dispute with the Applicant with regards to the landscape mitigation proposals for the Converter Station and the surrounding area? Are these likely to remain in dispute at the end of the Examination?
- 4.2. The Applicant included proposals for a 10m strip of planting to the south of Mill Copse on agricultural land as part of change request 2 [AS-054]. This was said to create a screen at eye level from some key receptors. This appears to have been deleted from the Outline Landscape and Biodiversity Strategy at Deadline 7 [REP7-023]. Why? To what extent does this reduce the effectiveness of the additional visual mitigation identified to be required in relation to ash die-back disease, and the additional mitigation strategy and plan in change request 2?

5. Onshore ecology

- 5.1. With reference to Deadline 7 submissions, including the Outline Landscape and Biodiversity Strategy (section 1.5.3.7) [REP7-023], can the Applicant explain the reasons for the changed approach to the creation of species-rich grassland at the Converter Station site?

- 5.2. The Deadline 7 selection of the southern option for the launch compound at Denmead Meadows/ Hambledon Road is noted. Can the Applicant summarise the changes, including implications for the ecological and hydrological assessment and mitigation for the King's Pond, Denmead Meadows and Soake Farm area? Also, could confirmation be provided about how the commitment is secured through the dDCO, including foot access only along the route of the HDD across the high value habitat. (Outline Landscape and Biodiversity Strategy section 6.4.)
- 5.3. At Deadline 7, Natural England [REP7-107] draws attention to a 'bird refuge for brent geese' at Milton Common, and, apparently, the possibility of a second area coming forward. This appears to draw on information provided by Portsmouth City Council. Can the Examining Authority be appraised of what these areas are, where they are, the level of usage by brent geese, and the implications for the HRA and the proposed 'winter working principles'.

6. Socio-Economic

- 6.1. What position has been reached regarding the amount of land required to be taken from Farlington Playing Fields to allow the construction and subsequent operation of the Proposed Development? Is the amount of land and the timed phases of work upon it adequately secured in the Order limits and DCO?
- 6.2.
 - a) Has agreement been reached with regard to the requirements, timescales and quality of reinstatement at the Farlington Playing Fields, including the underlying drainage system? If not, why not?
 - b) What is the position between the Applicant and Portsmouth City Council with regards to the anticipated Reinstatement Method Statement for Farlington Playing Fields? If this Reinstatement Method Statement cannot be relied on, what confidence can be given to the Examining Authority and the Secretary of State regarding the robustness of the Framework Management Plan for Recreational Impacts [REP4-026]? Should the relied-upon mitigation measures be transferred from this into an appropriate outline management plan to ensure that they can be secured through any DCO?
 - c) Do any inconsistencies remain in the Applicant's information about the timing of restoration works, noting that November is mentioned in the Deadline 4 Framework Management Plan for Recreational Impact, apparently in conflict with a commitment to avoid times when brent geese could be present (Solent Waders and Brent Geese Strategy)?
- 6.3. Is the proposed drafting of the Applicant's Employment and Skills Strategy [REP7-077] acceptable to the relevant local authorities?
- 6.4. Are any mitigation measures (onsite or offsite) with regards to the displacement of users of Farlington and other playing fields still under discussion or likely to come forward within the Examination? If not, why not?
- 6.5. Does the University of Portsmouth have any comments on the mitigation measures and method statements now offered by the Applicant (paragraph 6.2.9.11 of [REP7-032]), and do these ameliorate or alleviate the University's earlier concerns regarding the effects of the Proposed Development on its sports pitch provision and operation?

7. Highways and Transportation

- 7.1. Have any conclusions been drawn by the parties in relation to the use of the Lambeth method to establish a maximum 200m walking distance to reach cars displaced from street parking outside residential properties? Can the Applicant advise whether 200m or 400m is considered a reasonable walking distance for retrieving displaced cars, provide a rationale for this and describe if and how this influences any of the ES assessments and documents. Where this is the case, please provide updates.
- 7.2. Could the Applicant briefly set out the outcomes of the Road Safety Audit shared with Hampshire County Council. Are there any remaining differences between the parties or concerns regarding this?
- 7.3. What is the status of negotiations with the bus companies? Are any further mitigation measures being considered, and are outstanding objections likely at the end of this Examination?
- 7.4. Does the Joint Bay Feasibility Report [REP7-073] replace parts or supersede in full the Joint Bay Technical Note [REP6-070]? Should it be appended to a management plan?
- 7.5. The Supplementary Transport Assessment at paragraph 2.5.12 [REP7-065] lists 17 joint bays that it is said will be taken forward. A number of joint bays are within the carriageway (including bus lanes) or within the highway limits, requiring single lane closures for cable drum deliveries. For all, if maintenance is required at a joint bay location, what are the implications for traffic management (type of closure, nature of closure, type of vehicles attending, nature of traffic management etc)? Have the effects of this been taken into account in the ES? Will joint bays in the highway require acquisition of highway subsoil?
- 7.6. Has work progressed on the s278 Agreement to secure the facilitation of passing bays on Day Lane? Is Hampshire County Council content with the traffic management measures on Day Lane? If not, why not?
- 7.7. What evidence is before the Examination that the passing bays on Day Lane can be delivered without causing significant effects on biodiversity, landscape and views? What root area protection measures would be required to ensure tree and hedgerow integrity, and how would these be secured through any DCO?
- 7.8. Could Hampshire County Council expand on its concerns [REP7-085] in relation to the proposed traffic management measures on Anmore Road and the potential for residents' parking displacement on that highway during construction works.
- 7.9. Could the Applicant respond to the Deadline 7 submission from James Bunbury [REP7-122], with particular reference to Abnormal Indivisible Load (AIL) deliveries to joint bay 1. In addition to the issues raised by Mr Bunbury, are there any consequential noise or vibration effects of AILs accessing this joint bay that are not reported in the Environmental Statement?

8. Miscellaneous

- 8.1. Is Portsmouth City Council in agreement with the Applicant [REP7-088] that there is 'substantial headroom' for PM_{2.5}, PM₁₀ and NO₂ between the predicted levels and target levels to the extent that they are not a concern and unlikely to suffer an exceedance?

9. Any Other Relevant Issues

- 9.1. Winchester City Council's response to the Examining Authority's Rule 17 request for further information in relation to site inspections.
- 9.2. Any items the Examining Authority considers necessary and relevant to raise before the close of the Hearing.

10. Close of Hearing