

From: SCornwell@winchester.gov.uk
To: [Aquind Interconnector](#)
Subject: FW: Aquind Interconnector: Winchester City Council Deadline 7c response
Date: 15 February 2021 21:01:23
Attachments: [WCC Deadline 7c Response.pdf](#)
[Appendix A copy email to applicant regarding dDCO.pdf](#)
[APPENDIX B skeleton proposals for structure of R7, 8 & 9.pdf](#)

Your Ref reference EN020022

WCC identification No 20025191

Aquind Interconnector Nationally
Significant Infrastructure Project Examination: Deadline 7c (15 February 2021)

Dear Sir,

Please find enclosed the response by Winchester City Council to Deadline 7c (15 February 2021)

These consist of the following 3 attachments:

1. WCC Deadline 7c response
2. Appendix A copy email to applicant regarding dDCO
3. Appendix B skeleton proposals for structure of R7, 8 & 9.

Mindful that some of the issues raised in our submission may reflect on topics covered in the two hearings this week, and as part of the Councils commitment to engagement, I am sending a copied of this submission directly to the applicant.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards

Steve Cornwell
Lead Officer Aquind Interconnector

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Response at Deadline 7c General Paper

15 February 2021

Introduction

The Council is mindful that this is the penultimate deadline which means there is only the final deadline of 1 March 2021 for parties to make comments and representations. Against this background the Council will develop further the approach it started at Deadline 7 of not simply responding to the applicants precious comments, but seeking to identify those issues which have been resolved and those matters where there is still some work to undertake.

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1. Comments on the dDCO

- 1.1 At Deadline 7 the applicant made some changes to the application, specifically the adoption of the southern option for the Hambledon Road HDD5 launch compound. This has meant that some of the comments made by the Council are now unnecessary. In addition, there has been an exchange with the applicant on the remaining matters in the dDCO. I attach as appendix A to this paper a copy of the email exchange and as appendix B the suggested skeletal framework for requirements 7, 8 & 9 that is put forward by the Council. It is intended to use these documents at Issue Specific Hearing No.4.

2. Employment and Skills Strategy

- 2.1 The Council welcomes the submission of the Employment and Skills Strategy at Deadline 7 (REP7-077). This is viewed as a very positive step forward. The Council is in discussion with the applicant on the contents of the document and will make its final submission at Deadline 8.

3. Socio Economic Benefits to Denmead

- 3.1 At D7 the applicant responded to ExAQ2 SE2.15.2. (REP7-038) This question sought an explanation for the predicted socio economic benefits to the rural settlements of Denmead and Anmore. The response did acknowledge the difficulty in setting out precise tangible benefits and talked of three areas, employment. Spending and support for community services. The applicant did generalise in identifying a number of local residents employed in construction and speculated that they could find work associated with the scheme. This attempted link is considered tenuous and lacks any depth of analysis of whether those people are working for the type of contractor who may tender for work on site. The degree of benefit from spending arising from purchases at local shops or from accommodation stays is also speculative. As the applicant intends to encourage contractors to use preferred routes to and from the site and these do not go through the village then the benefits from passing traffic will be limited.
- 3.2 The Council did raise questions over the degree the local community will benefit from the scheme in Section 4.6.18 of its Local Impact Report (REP1-183). The applicant now seem to be acknowledging that the local benefits are not as clear as indicated earlier. Overall the response at ExAQ2 is considered to confirm the Councils view that the scheme will not benefit the local community to any recognisable degree. This position does support the Councils original desire to see the applicant contribute to a local legacy fund for the benefit of the local community. It is understood that some form of mitigation is being offered regarding landscape impacts in the National Park. Such an approach should also apply to the local community who will have to live and work in the shadow of the development for the next 40 years.

4. Calcareous grassland at Lovedean

- 4.1 The Council has discussed the establishment of the calcareous grassland with the applicant. In these conversations the applicant has offered assurances that there will be a sufficient level of surplus chalk based material from the cut and fill work to spread out and mix with the existing top layer of the fields to create the chalk grassland. Limiting the disturbance to the top 150mm which is within the typical ploughing depth means any potential damage to archaeological remains is avoided. Without seeking further details of the calculations of the cut and fill operation and the resultant surplus then the Council does not consider it can seek any further assurances at this time.
- 4.2 Of greater significance is the indication from the applicant that the Biodiversity Metric calculation that forms part of the Biodiversity Position Paper rev-002 (REP3-12) included an element that creates a flexibility which enables the grassland to be either calcareous or species rich and still result in a net gain. On that basis, even if the lesser valued grassland results, the scheme would still be acceptable and no additional enhancement would be required. As this calculation was based on the Natural England formula, Winchester

City Council is looking to them to make the final confirmation that the above assertion is correct.

5. Kings Pond Meadow

5.1 The Council has been in discussions with the applicant on the implications of the proposal on the Kings Pond Meadow SINC. The proposal would see a roadway and cable circuits crossing Field 8 East. (See Appendix 4 Figure 1 Denmead Meadows SINC REP7-071) This field is part of the SINC. The roadway links the Anmore Road access (AC/2/a) as shown on sheet 3 of the Access and Rights of Way Plans (REP7-008) through to the proposed HDD5 recovery compound in Field 13.

5.2 The discussions have reached a stage where the applicant is clarifying three issues:

1. Why the pre commencement survey was removed from the proposals
2. The implications of the roadway being formed on mats over the ground
3. Clarification on the degree of control or influence the applicant will have on the management of the ground for the 5 years after the site is reinstated.

The Council hopes to report on a successful conclusion to those discussions once the above points are satisfactorily clarified.

6. Access Route for Traffic to Kings Pond Meadow Compound

6.1 *The construction traffic route for accessing works within Kings Pond Meadow is identified within Section 3.4.4 of the Framework Construction Traffic Management Plan (REP6-032). HGV construction traffic to/from Anmore Road and Kings Pond will be routed either via the Converter Station Area and A3 London Road, B2150 Hambledon Road and Mill Lane or directly from junction 3 A3(M), Hulbert Road, A3 London Road, B2150 Hambledon Road and Mill Road.*

No construction traffic will use routes along Broadway Lane south of the Converter Station Area or Soake Road. This will be managed and enforced by provision of route planning information by the contractor.

6.2 In the assessment of the traffic route options the Council asks why the option of coming straight down the haul route has not been considered. This haul road will be formed alongside the cable circuits from Lovedean as far south as Anmore Road. The haul road could be extended, crossing Anmore Road and leading directly into the Kings Pond Meadow (KPM) site. This would avoid the need for any HGV traffic to enter the highway. Whilst the Order Limits do narrow as they run through the gap between the residential properties on the north side of Anmore Road, there does appear to be sufficient width to form a temporary roadway. If there is a concern over the available width, then attention to the sequence that the work is undertaken at KMP and in the fields to the north may resolve the issue.

6.3 If the cross country route is not an option, then the option of Soake Road should be considered before Mill Road. Whilst the Council notes the

assessment of Mill Road in terms of traffic numbers there does not appear to have been any assessment of the displaced car parking demand and how this would be satisfied within the surrounding area.

7. Ash dieback.

- 7.1 The Council has noted the plans and documents submitted at D7 no longer show the addition of a new tree belt on the southern side of Mill Copse. The OLBS (REP7-24) shows than any references to the additional tree planting belt have been deleted (Section 1.7.6.43). This deletion has resolved the question raised by the Council at D7 on how the applicant was going to secure the management of this ground considering it was not included within the Order Limit. However, its removal has now raises a new question. If the landscape screening contribution that the additional planting was intended to form was considered an important element of the response to ash dieback in Mill Copse, how is its loss now justified without alternative remedial actions?

8. Converter Station Micro Siting Option

- 8.1 The ExA will recall that the application has presented the two micro siting options of B(i) and B(ii) for the Converter Station. The applicant indicated a preference for option B(ii) that would see the Converter Station positioned closer to the existing substation with the positive outcome that an existing hedgerow with trees on the western side could then be retained. This feature would be lost with option B(i). The applicant indicated that discussion where ongoing with the National Grid with a view to signing off the agreement to allow option B(ii) to move forward as the adopted proposal, before the end of the Examination. The Council notes that these negotiations have not been concluded and wishes to express its view that these discussions should be resolved as a matter of urgency.
- 8.2 In the event that the Examination closes with this matter unresolved, it is assumed that the ExA will consider the suitability of either option. The Council wishes to place on record its objections to option B(i) as this is considered to both result in the loss of a well-established landscape feature and open up the proposed Converter Station to view from the west. The full impacts of the loss of this feature where set out in Section 4.6.9 of the Councils local impact report (REP1-183).

9. Choice of Lovedean for the Connection to the Grid

- 9.1 The Council notes the further letter from National Grid ESO dated 25 January 2021 and which is document REP7-109. The Council has read the letter several times. Unfortunately, it is not consider to provide the clear audit trail that was anticipated. If anything it confuses the matter as it states the applicant provided the planning and environmental considerations in the CION process.

10. Access and Rights of Way Plans

10.1 Following the decision to located the HDD5 launch compound on th south side of Hambleton Road, the Council does not understand why the access reference AC3/a is still shown on sheet 3 of the most recent version of this set of plans (REP7-008). Presumably that is an oversight and it is requested that this is removed.

End

15 February 2021

