

AQUIND ON LINE STATEMENT (Janice Burkinshaw)

Thank you for the opportunity to speak at this Hearing.

I am in my 46th year as an allotment holder at Milton Piece, in the area shown in your diagram of affected plots, a resident of [REDACTED] and Chair of the Milton Neighbourhood Forum so feel that this matter is very relevant to my situation.

I must state clearly that I do not support the installation of this new cable through Portsmouth's streets as a matter of principle since the City is already suffering from a high level of stress. This is due to its poor infrastructure:- below standard school sites, Victorian mixed rainwater/sewage drainage systems, narrow streets, poor air quality, lower than average life health outcomes, very high density of population, shortage of open green spaces, poor bus service and a low wage economy. The installation will increase pressure on all levels of society and the city's infrastructure particularly traffic congestion along the Eastern Road already peaking at air pollution legal limits.

Further, the UK has stated its intention to switch resources to green sources of energy with the potential to make the new supply to Lovedean unnecessary.

On a personal level I am fearful of the effect on health of the installation of electrical cabling near my home and do not believe it is free of harms.

As an allotment holder I have serious concerns at the proposed route of the cable which will most probably pass through my plot and others nearby. 20 years ago, Southern Water had to install pipes for its sewage discharge and also chose the route under my plot. They encountered liquid mud close to the surface resulting in the need to clear all allotments and refrigerate the area through the installation period. This of course, destroyed the plots and the area had to be reformulated with new soil, new buildings and new ploholders.

Groundwater level in the area of the allotments which Aquind plan to access is 1.5m from the surface depth. At the current season, the land is severely seasonally waterlogged in addition. I am concerned that if drilling is intended through this 1.5m zone, it will remove roots from plants, trees and affect installations on the plots.

Initial plans showed cabling using the main access path along the allotment edges as the route. Use of this area would be preferable as the site could then be improved by re-instated with tarmac and avoid the current potholes and

mud. The route could then follow the internal path, across the Showground and out to the nature reserve and Thatched House car park.

There have been numerous consultation events in the City to receive comments from residents on the Aquind proposals. Objections to use of the allotment site and disruption it could cause have been made clear but still, no alternative is coming forward. Bearing in mind that Portsmouth City Council, itself, is planning to reclaim one of the last wild corners of Portsmouth Harbour as a 'super peninsula' by draining and concreting over protected intertidal habitat, then build 4000 new houses and other facilities on a reclaimed coastal floodplain. The area is protected as a Site of Special Scientific Interest, a Special Protection area and a Ramsar Site in recognition of its value to wildlife and internationally recognised vulnerable bird and other species. The site helps fight climate crisis by capturing and storing carbon dioxide, protects Portsmouth from erosion. These proposals will PERMANENTLY destroy the protected zones.

Yet the AQUIND developer states that the cable cannot be routed through Langstone Harbour as it is a RAMSAR site and Site of Special Scientific Interest. Installing a cable is only a construction project. Once it had been installed the site would return to its natural state.

If Portsmouth Council is permitted to permanently destroy such sites in Portsmouth Harbour why should a temporary disturbance to Langstone Harbour be refused for the new cable.

Additionally, as Portsmouth has every confidence in being able to pursue their development through Portsmouth harbour, why can't Aquind lay its cable first, on the Council's intended development site, then let the city proceed with its destruction of the harbour site. This would leave the east of the city undisturbed or don't the Navy like that plan whereas the plan for the east side of the city will merely distress local people?

Thinking about the Navy, Portsmouth is of course, the major Naval city and a key location in our nation's defence, particularly now that the aircraft carriers are sited here. Many Naval movements both above and below the water pass through the Solent. There are suspicions that the Aquind cable installation could incorporate fibre optic cabling for communication purposes. Not only part of Fort Cumberland car Park but also additional land at Lovedean is being permanently reserved for an Optical Regeneration Station under this scheme. The cable route passes the new 5G mast in Bransbury Park and can easily connect to the system. Has the political decision been taken yet as to whether we should be opening our country's systems to commercial or foreign parties so easily and willingly?

