

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Aquind Interconnector](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Application for Development Consent by AQUIND Limited for an Interconnector through Portsmouth
Date: 16 November 2021 17:12:38

AQUIND Interconnector Case Team

Unique Reference: 20025182

I am Chair of the Milton Neighbourhood Planning Forum and an "Interested Party" invited by you on 4th November 2021 to comment on the Secretary of State's Letter to the applicant of the same date. The "Janet" e-mail address has been adopted as more reliable than the "Chair e-mail" address copied above. I shall be grateful if you will reply/acknowledge to both.

The Secretary of State is seeking further information from the applicant on alternatives to routing the Interconnector through Portsmouth. The Milton Neighbourhood within Portsmouth will be adversely affected.

Portsmouth City Council has raised many issues on the proposed scheme in their letter of 30 September 2021 and few, if any, have been satisfactorily responded to. That absence of credible responses is apposite to this e-mail.

The Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy is on public record in the BBC's Andrew Marr broadcast of 10 October 2021:-

[REDACTED] that he will be guided by "Official Advice" uncompromised by donations of £1.4m to the Conservative Party.

We in the Planning Forum remain seriously concerned that the applicant is misrepresenting the necessity that routing the Interconnector through Portsmouth is either critical or reasonable. Indeed, the applicant's insistence that Equipment Compound sizes in excess of any reasonable requirement to accommodate data associated with the provision of monitoring cabling should alert decision makers to inherent divergencies of purpose.

The Lovedean Substation is one of many sub-stations near the UK's South Coast capable of accommodating additional energy supply but none of the others (Mannington for example is quoted by the Sec of State), would entail such social and environmental disruption. The Rights applied for are both unreasonable and disproportionate. They will also be permanent. Permanent because there will inevitably be required to reserve rights to maintain, renew and replace cables, equipment, and wires, associated with the provision of the Interconnector infrastructure. Portsmouth residents will therefore be exposed, as will the sensitive natural environment adjacent thereto and within the cable route; to future harm and nuisance in perpetuity.

If the necessity for that Interconnector infrastructure through Portsmouth cannot be demonstrably justified, then the principles of Sustainable Development within the context of National Planning Policy cannot be complied with. Compliance requires an overriding public benefit and political donations should be irrelevant.

It is not for the Planning Infrastructure Commission to be tainted by political donations to any incumbent administration of whatever persuasion, but rather; it is to act independently, impartially, and objectively on the relevant facts, and to exercise sound and reasonable judgement in so doing.

From the facts we have, it is neither sound, or reasonable, to grant consent for an Interconnector route adjacent to, and affecting, an Internationally Designated Special Protection Area for the protection of wildlife habitats. Indeed, were there to be an overwhelmingly justifiable "overriding public benefit" to connect into the Lovedean Substation Site impacting these habitats, the applicant could have opted for an easier and far less disruptive scheme by using the former Hayling Island railway link to the mainland at Havant. This has been utilised in the past as an overhead HV Electricity cable route. Disruption and damage to the most densely populated City in the UK would in that event be entirely avoided.

Portsmouth has benefitted from an electricity supply since the 1800's and indeed, generated its own power from 1894 to 1977. We are on the National Grid.

Why, of all of the towns and cities on the UK's South Coast, could Portsmouth possibly benefit from the AQUIND Interconnector? There could not be, cannot be and nor will there ever be; any reasonable justification for granting rights in perpetuity for an HV Interconnector through Portsmouth from France.

Rod Bailey
Chair Milton Neighbourhood Planning Forum
16 November 2021