

From: [REDACTED]
To: [AQUIND Interconnector](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: AQUIND Interconnector Scheme - comment and additional representation.
Date: 15 December 2021 21:39:53

To Gareth Leigh / The Planning Inspectorate,

Further to your letter dated 1st December 2021, Ref: EN020022, please find the response from The Rt Hon Penny Mordaunt MP, Member of Parliament for Portsmouth North in respect of the AQUIND Interconnector scheme below.

Yours sincerely,

Robert New

c/o The Rt Hon Penny Mordaunt MP

Dear Planning Inspector,

I'm making further representation to you with regards to the AQUIND Interconnector scheme that is due for consideration in January 2022. Portsmouth continues its united front against the scheme. Many of the reasons for opposition have been robustly made previously by myself, Portsmouth City Council and local campaigners.

You have asked for more specific information about the Coastal Defences Scheme and also issues related to the Lovedean substation.

I am aware your remit is very specific and narrow and that other consultees will be better placed technically to give you information about the impact of the proposed project.

My prime concern is that the scheme would have an extremely concerning impact on our security. Concerns have been raised about the telecommunications ambitions of the project and I am not at all satisfied that they have been mitigated from AQUIND's recent replies.

Although you may not be able to consider such concerns I hope that in your assessment and any recommendations you note that the Secretary of State taking the decision will need to be fully appraised of the consequences of such a scheme going ahead. It is my understanding that the chosen route for the scheme and particularly the location at Lovedean are a concern in this respect.

Our city understands what it is to be resilient, which is one reason why we are all united against the AQUIND project. To let the unwanted, unnecessary and unsafe project proceed would be a mammoth error of judgement. He can be in no doubt of the arguments we have made about how this scheme would damage both our national security and resilience.

With only three roads on and off the island (Portsmouth), this would cause huge disruption to the city, stall much-needed development and our recovery from the pandemic as well as negatively impact the local environment. Portsmouth City Council has also objected to the project and the chosen route. However, alongside these local concerns, there are others that could impact on the whole country and affect other areas of policy too.

I have previously written to Rt Hon Kwasi Kwarteng MP, Secretary of State for BEIS, the Rt

Hon Robert Jenrick MP, Secretary of State for MHCLG and Lord Frost, the Minister for Europe in the Cabinet Office to highlight these wider concerns about the project.

I think there are serious strategic errors with relying on such programmes to deliver energy for the UK, both in terms of the UK's resilience but also wider issues concerned with future negotiations.

Under our Brexit deal with the EU, at France's insistence, the Energy Chapter runs out in 2026 at the same time as the Fishing agreement. They have been specific that the reason for this is to hold energy cooperation as a price for further access to UK fishing grounds (Minister le Drian's speech to France 3 Bretagne in January of this year being one example of this).

It will be argued that the EU could not stop a French energy company selling to the UK, but increasing our dependence on French nuclear increases the likelihood it will become politicised and involved in any future discussions, in particular on fishing. To do so seems a bad idea and one I am sure UK fishermen would not support. We saw with the vaccine Article 122 issue that is at least possible. More recently we saw another French Minister threatening to shut off power supplies to Jersey over a local fishing dispute. I do not think it is plausible to say the French would not dare to behave in such a way. They have threatened to, repeatedly.

Whatever our plans regarding the freedom to take back control of our exclusive economic zone and for the UK to become a more resilient nation they are not served by reliance on such energy supplies. Nor are there clear upsides for the UK either, as the European Federation of Energy Traders (EFET) have pointed out, because of pricing differences and uncertainty when cross border capacity is booked.

Other points to consider are; The impact that this will have on the new Flood and Sea Defences on the eastern side of Portsea Island. The Sea Defence building programme works are currently taking place and with recent storm events and flooding, are needed more now than ever.

We are now entering into Phase 4 of the Portsea Sea Defence scheme: Eastern Road, the sea defence project team will be constructing these important defences through the summers of 2021 – 2023. The construction of these works is restricted to the summer months due to ecological constraints during the winter months (October – March). Protected birds spend the winter in Langstone Harbour and the surrounding areas, so this ensures that minimal disturbance occurs to them. These works will give the area a new sea wall, a new, wider footpath as well as areas with a glass flood wall. There will also be areas of seating and enhanced landscaping, alongside many environmental enhancements. The proposed AQUIND interconnector route will run through some of the new sea defence works, public realm and new public pathways. My constituents are concerned the Aquind Interconnector scheme would risk damage to the new flood defences, specifically around the Harbourside and Kendall Wharf sites on the Eastern Road (Baffins and Copnor wards).

As a side note, the new sea and flood defence scheme is designed to increase the standard of protection against flooding, reducing the risk of coastal flooding to one of the highest in the country, helping to protect 4200 properties and 500 businesses in the area. The North

Portsea Sea and Flood defence scheme has been costed at £44m to date, funded by government bodies.

Environment: The proposed route of the interconnector scheme will disrupt the local ecology, including protected species and habitats. Local campaign groups and the Let's Stop Aquind movement have detailed the many aspects of environmental and ecology concerns in their own representations to both the Planning Inspectorate and the Secretary of State, The Rt Hon. Kwasi Kwarteng MP.

Impact on movement in and out of the city: The proposed route would create havoc and congestion on the Eastern Road (A2030) which also is directly adjacent to the new Sea Defence building scheme. These roads are congested at the best of times and the proposed scheme from AQUIND will negatively impact local people and businesses alike for a considerable amount of time. This will result in more congestion, idling of vehicles and more emissions concluding in worse air quality.

The UK's ambitions on the environment, on resilience and to maximise the full opportunities that come from Brexit are not helped by this scheme. I have urged that these issues be considered in full before determining if the scheme should go ahead. I have been raising these concerns since December 2018 and have left people in no doubt as to the strength of feeling from my city and many from across The Solent on this issue.

Sincerely,

Penny Mordaunt MP

Robert New

Campaigns Manager & Parliamentary Assistant

Penny Mordaunt MP, Portsmouth North Constituency Office.

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