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To: Aquind Interconnector
Subject: AQUIND OBJECTION

Categories: Consultation Response

To whom it may concern

In the 1980s the sitting government did a massive disservice by putting the UK energy sector into the hands of private enterprises to be run on a "for profit" basis without any caveat around reinvestment of a percentage of the profits to ensure supply and infrastructure were maintained. Consistently and particularly recently, these companies are now publishing profits of eye watering proportions, whilst our citizens struggle to keep warm, and pay their bills.

The lack of investment in our networks and power stations, the alleged asset stripping over decades, now leaves us we are told with an inadequate supply, and no future proofing at all, all this mainly based on the myopic focus on inadequate electric vehicles that have just a 300-mile battery range, and are really not fit for purpose, but are still considered as a route to solving our pollution issues.

These amongst other things have been used to artificially exaggerate the future power capacity requirements for the UK leading to the government making some ill-founded decisions to implement additional third-party supply via massive construction projects. These will come at significantly increased supply cost to customers and massive disruption and massive cost to those in the way of any new implementations of these projects and subject to compulsory purchase orders. In stead we should look to alternative technology like hydrogen powered vehicles that emit steam rather than CO2 which would actually ease our electrical capacity requirements and air pollution. The whole government zero emissions concept is flawed and is totally unacceptable.

National Grid PLC are responsible for the backbone of our Electricity supply network in the UK.. They already have interconnections with other EU countries introduced based on them being used as a two-way transaction with the UK, buying and selling energy. Due to the decommissioning of power stations and lack of investment in alternative sources it is clear that National Grid PLC is buying more than its selling. This new AQUIND interconnect to Portsmouth from France has been muted as a solution to the capacity problem, in that it will facilitate additional energy supply from the well invested French government owned National Grid. It too will sell it to the UK at a profit. We as a nation need to become self-sufficient in energy; money needs to be invested here not in foreign run-for-profit companies and certainly not Russian backed ones!!

I vehemently object to this Portsmouth interconnector project on the following grounds.

For Portsmouth this huge inter-connector project will constitute massive disruption. This high profile and controversial proposal by Russian backed AQUIND for an Electrical and Data Cable Inter-connector between France and Portsmouth highlights the environmental and community impact of any large energy transmission project. This and many other large projects are at the core of this government's net zero target, and it appears there's scant regard for the damage the implementation of these project will have on people, property, the environment, and flora and fauna. This project includes a fibre data cable installation too. Any unmonitored Russian fibre data cable access to the UK's backbone data network is surely a major risk to national security?

As an engineer myself I am very concerned that the level of disruption will be well beyond that anticipated. The streets are full of sewer pipes and their manholes, water pipes and cables that supply the houses. Many of these services will need to be moved to give enough room for the trench line. The space required for the excavation plant and equipment will completely fill the width of the road. The damage and disruption will be immense! Every metre

of road surface will need to be re-built. This is NOT a project that should be allowed to proceed in the residential streets of Portsmouth.

The people of Portsmouth and affected surrounding areas were mobilised to fight what's planned by AQUIND and strongly objected on well justified grounds and have had AQUIND'S planning application refused once already. Portsmouth's own "Stop AQUIND" campaigners were ecstatic in January 2022, when the then Secretary of State turned down AQUIND Limited's application for a Development Consent Order. The project they proposed would have been hugely damaging to this city and beyond.

This particular project in Portsmouth illustrates how much foreign money is involved in these projects and that they have such a massive impact on so much of our daily lives. By allowing this kind of scheme to go ahead the government is effectively handing power and profit to privately owned foreign energy companies at tax payers expense. This is totally unacceptable!

In the light of the ongoing war in the Ukraine and Russia's power hold over gas supplies, why would the UK want to embark on more reliance on a Russian supplier control of our vital energy supplies. It's absolute madness.

The proposed route of the AQUIND cables includes tunnelling under important community facilities and protected habitats, plus deep and disruptive trenches gouging through vital road links, through dense urban areas, as well as areas for recreation and nature. There is also the temporary but deeply disruptive long-term use of carparks and other public spaces for construction vehicles, during the years of installation. For this incredibly invasive project, an entire main road will be dug up, land will be compulsorily- purchased, farmland, allotments, and countryside trenched and contaminated. Traffic disrupted and stationary causing masses more pollution, to a city already badly polluted, with some particulates so small they can transport through lung tissue and into the bloodstream causing all manner of respiratory issues longer term. Surely the NHS has enough to deal with already!

AQUIND launched a judicial review to overturn the original planning refusal decision. AQUIND Ltd v Secretary of State for BEIS hearings were held at the High Court on 22-23 November 2022. On 25 January, judgement was made in favour of AQUIND. I believe the judgement was flawed on the basis of the objections provided and the original planning refusal is fully justified.

Please uphold the original decision to reject this project for once and for all. We don't want our city disrupted on such a massive scale for years, we don't want the infrastructure; implementing it is a risk to us, and a massive cost to us in terms of business lost, and loss of leisure facilities for years. There will be risk to health from additional pollution, risk to life caused by traffic congestion hampering ambulances and fire trucks from attending incidents and moving very poorly patients to hospitals. Loss of green space, trees, loss of use of allotments, potential soil contamination - the list is endless. There only three main access routes to the island of Portsmouth, this will largely disrupt one of the busiest, and dissuade visitors coming to the city, businesses will suffer as a result!

This project will not reduce the cost of energy, it will be sold to us on a "for profit" basis. It will also hand further control of supply to foreign powers. This alone is reason enough not to embark in this project!

Please please work to overturn this as soon as possible. STOP AQUIND!

Yours faithfully