

Atkins, Caelan

From: Andrea Moorcroft <[REDACTED]>
Sent: 28 March 2023 17:27
To: Aquind Interconnector
Subject: Objection to the Aquind Interconnector project

Categories: Consultation Response

To whom it may concern

I am writing to voice my very strong objections to the proposed AQUIND interconnector scheme which has been planned through Portsmouth, Hampshire.

Being in a position where we even have to write our objections to a scheme that not only threatens the homes, livelihoods and nature of the island is outrageous, but the fact it will also directly go against the UK's target for green energy and its pledge to reduce emissions with our Net Zero pledge is a shocking disregard for what this Government promised to deliver on.

"UK Net Zero Strategy sets out a comprehensive economy-wide plan for how British businesses and consumers will be supported in making the transition to clean energy and green technology – lowering the Britain's reliance on fossil fuels by investing in sustainable clean energy in the UK, reducing the risk of high and volatile prices in the future, and strengthening our energy security."

This scheme will do the exact opposite of putting the UK in line to meet targets, by ploughing through Nature Reserves that are home to a variety of native and migrating birds; some of which depend on Farlington Marshes and Langstone Harbour (both sites of Special Scientific Interest and one a Grade 1 Nature Conservation review site) for vital places to nest and prepare for their next migration. These critical environments cannot easily be found elsewhere in the area, and have also featured on TV as part of the important seagrass restoration scheme with The Wildlife Trust, just last year. The proposed route will also rip through parks and commons that are much needed and much loved by the communities that use them, as well as the wildlife that call them home.

This is before we address the serious issue of the proposed route for the cables also going through Milton Common, which is not only used daily by lots of people, but also the site of a formal landfill and is reclaimed land. Digging through this poses a serious threat to health, by potentially releasing a soup of toxic waste into the ground, and again risks directly affecting Farlington Marshes by poisoning the land.

Residents who sit on the proposed route now face years of disruption, noise, congestion and heightened levels of traffic and the resulting pollution that will also spread across the city. The island already has higher than wanted levels of pollution and the Portsmouth City Council have been working hard to look at ways to improve this with green schemes across the city, however if the AQUIND scheme goes ahead, it will make it impossible to achieve this reduction in pollution, or improve the traffic problems and allow the Council to meet their targets.

As an island city there are only three routes onto the island and AQUIND has set its sights on running through one of them which will make navigating an already busy island, tricky, slow and difficult to

navigate with the potential for traffic backing up for miles each day, due to the bottlenecking effect this will have, for possibly years to come. This will damage property prices and lower the quality of the life of anyone that this will affect.

Some of those residents and communities on the proposed route, also have the worry of compulsory purchase orders being placed on their lands and homes, or the upset of the cables carving through allotments that people work hard to maintain, and in this present climate, rely on for food. This shows a clear disregard for any of the residents on the island and their quality of life, and is yet another shocking example of profit before people.

With resources and access to NHS services already squeezed, and with Portsmouth being flagged as one of the worst for access to healthcare in the country, this route will also have a direct impact on access to the only A&E hospital in the area (Queen Alexandra); as impacts of the congestion caused by these works that plan to go up near the hospital, will create massive backlogs to the roads around the hospital, making it very hard for people to get in, and ambulances to get out to emergencies.

AQUIND Ltd is a company owned by those who have previously had direct links with the Kremlin, and hold no record for completing any such project previously or on such a scale. With relationships with Russia currently very tense and the UK being on high alert for security threats from Russia (who have already disabled our Postal Service for weeks with cyber attacks) it is a very questionable that this scheme has now added the inclusion of data cables into the planning application, and this could well be considered a threat to national security.

With Portsmouth recently voted as one of the top trending destinations to visit in 2023, it is ludicrous to allow a scheme that will cause such economical harm and disruption to a large and popular tourist destination. With all eyes now watching the Government over recent behaviours and poorly thought out schemes, that have also had extremely negative effects, and have spiralled out of control financially, surely they cannot afford to make another such error in judgement? To not only impact the lives and livelihoods of hundreds of people for an unwanted energy scheme, but to potentially put the UK into a position of weakened national security, with close links to those with such questionable backgrounds, and business history, seems like a recipe for disaster.

All political parties in Portsmouth including Labour and the Conservative Commons leader Penny Mordaunt, have already put forward their concerns and objections to the AQUIND scheme, and have even had an audience with the members of the Houses of Parliament to discuss this, and make their views heard.

We urge you to reconsider this proposed scheme, and to take into account the hugely detrimental effect it will have on the residents of Portsmouth, and the surrounding areas. Please also note that this scheme has received the same level of objections from those who will be impacted in France, along the proposed route in Normandy. This clearly shows that this is not wanted on either side of the Channel and should seriously be reconsidered.

I very much hope that the right thing for the residents, wildlife and local economy will be done and you will reject this application.

Kind regards

Andrea

Andrea Putnam-Moorcroft

Portsmouth resident