

Atkins, Caelan

From: Vanessa Fredanus van Gelder <[REDACTED]>
Sent: 31 March 2023 23:33
To: Aquind Interconnector
Subject: Aquind interconnector
Categories: Consultation Response

I am writing to you today to express my deepest concern about the Aquind Interconnector project.

Environmental impacts of this project for Portsmouth and along the route to Lovedean are enormous. Both MPs of Portsmouth, Portsmouth City Council and the residents have expressed their great concerns and highlighted numerous issues which have been downplayed by the ExA. The SoS in his letter to refuse the DCO recognises that “adverse effects outweigh the benefits”. The destruction to the marine environment, our green spaces, parks, the allotments, playing fields etc is untold. This project would mean nothing but destruction and damage to the city of Portsmouth and beyond.

Aquind proposes to use HDD to drill under the allotments after realisation that PCC and residents fought vehemently to prevent their gardens being dug up. Yet this drilling process uses bentonite and other chemicals which could have a harmful effect on the soil and environment. Inadvertent releases are possible and would have a huge impact on the allotments. We are told that allotment holders would be able to be on site during the works and this would be safe. Is this the case? One only needs to look at pictures of inadvertent releases easily available on the internet to understand the impacts. One allotment holder refers to problems when drilling for repair works to drainage pipes. As the allotment grounds contain high levels of clay, the ground needed to be frozen and access to the allotment was denied. Possible loss of even more green spaces than anticipated. What about wildlife habitats

on the allotments? The allotments are home to many rare species, slow worms, great crested newts, hedgehogs, foxes, a huge variety of birds and insects.

Milton Nature Reserve, looked after by the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust is on the proposed route. One of the few green tranquil places in Portsmouth would be affected.

Today, in 2023, we are all aware of climate change and the huge biodiversity crisis we are facing. Can we afford that a project of this kind could accelerate the harm to our environment profoundly?

Farlington Marshes , another Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust site, will be exposed to the nearby works. What effect will the noise, vibration and pollution have on the species of birds, insects and plants? Mitigation is not an option.

Milton Common, a recreational green space in Portsmouth, loved and visited daily by many people is built on a landfill. Asbestos and mercury are some of the waste materials buried on and around Milton Common.

One documentary shows the evacuation of Lumsden Road, built on a landfill adjacent to the route, in 1991 and highlights that these materials must not be disturbed. What are the potential health risks? This issue has been raised during the examination process in 2020, the video documentary supplied was rejected. The relevant maps showing contaminated areas of asbestos are with the ExA.

How can mitigation resolve this issue? Habitats and Wildlife are under threat. This could have unthinkable consequences for the health of residents living along Milton Common.

Bransbury Park another cherished recreational area for children, dog walkers and residents.

The proposed trenches cut right through the skate Park and one of the main paths.

The playing fields and part of the University campus on Milton Common will be inaccessible during construction time which will have an impact on their physical and mental well-being.

Air pollution in Portsmouth is very high (16th worst polluted city in the UK) . PCC had to introduce a clean air zone to combat this problem. The construction works could cause an even higher level of pollution, gridlock and congestion. Portsmouth is an island with only three access Roads. The trenches along Eastern Road would be very wide which means parts of Eastern Road (at least one lane) would be closed for vehicles for a considerable time.

How could the ambulance service stationed on Eastern Road supply the service needed when faced with congestion and gridlock?

The interference of the Aquind Interconnector with the sea defence work has been recognised by the SoS and is of great importance for Portsmouth. The priority is to prevent Portsmouth from flooding with the danger of rising sea levels, NOT to rip up one of the busiest roads of Portsmouth for an unwanted and damaging project .

The mental and physical impacts on people's health are undeniable, many people expressed their concern, fears and anxieties clearly, in the Open hearing and in their submissions during the examination process.

Could this be seen as cronyism seeking to influence the outcome?

Two ministers had to recuse themselves from this project because they got to " near" to the applicant.

Can we trust this company with an important project like this?

This Interconnector is not needed , not wanted and will do great harm to our city of Portsmouth and beyond. We should focus on producing sustainable renewable energy in the UK, which will strengthen our resilience and independence.

The previous SoS, Kwasi Kwarteng came to the right conclusion and I hope sincerely that you will do the same . The DCO for the Aquind Interconnector MUST be refused.

Please confirm you have received my submission

Regards

Vanessa van Gelder

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Sent from my iPhone