

From: Rachael Ross <[REDACTED]>
Sent: 25 April 2023 18:38
To: Aquind Interconnector
Subject: Objection to Aquind Interconnector

Categories: Consultation Response

Dear Mr Shapps

Re: Formal Objection to the Aquind Interconnector

All 5 members of our family would like to object to the Aquind Project on the following grounds:

Alexander Termerco, the Russian former arms executive is of dubious character. His past businesses have failed (they ran out of funding) and there is no apparent funding in the pot to finance this massive proposal. This has all been repeatedly highlighted on TV including a Panorama special and in the media. This is more worrying as since another Russian 'investor' Vicktor Fedotov, has transferred a large proportion of his shares to another company, leaving Termerco as the sole shareholder and bringing his stake to 50%, with no evidence of funding.

Aquind does not currently have the finance to fund this and there is lack of clarity about funding. Representatives of Aquind say they have spoken to private and equity individuals about finance and 'do not anticipate a shortfall'. This was some time ago before the recession. Do we really want to trust such a monumental scheme to 'anticipation' and the supposed interest of parties interested in financing the project which is several years old? It is important we know how much funding they actually have, where the funding lies and also where it has come from, and can they plug any shortfalls along the way. Or will this just be another of Termerco's failed enterprises, but this time with much more at risk than his reputation.

Termerco has made at least eight donations to Conservative ministers and MPs totalling over 1.3 million and he is also on very friendly terms with current MPs. There are obviously conflicts of interest at play, and if the Government approves planning in the face of so many issues, it could be construed that it is possible to buy planning permission.

Previously France has publicly threatened to cut of the energy supply to England (eg. 2021, during the dispute over fishing rights off Jersey's coast). Do we really want to put ourselves in this vulnerable position once again, only with greater consequences if it goes wrong? It is insane to effectively put our energy supply in the hands of the French and Russians.

We live less than 100m from the proposed Aquind site. This borders the South Downs National Park, and the proposed site locality has already been overdeveloped because it is owned by two different authorities, each allowing development without taking into account the other's development.

In the space of a few years an area which is countryside has seen industrial development on a huge scale as well as various housing development, solar farms and substation has doubled in size. There is now planning for Aquind, as well as planning submitted or about to be submitted for several battery storage facilities. The countryside area is being overdeveloped. When the substation was extended, huge swaths of trees and shrubs were taken down around the perimeter and inside, with the promise to replace them but tis never happened. These trees also completely screened the substation, but now it is clearly visible.

The proposed site borders the South Down National Park. It is an old bronze age site, with bats, badgers and a wealth of flora and fauna. It is also an area of historical interest. It is thought that James II was married to Anne Hyde in Hinton Daubnay, and the Hyde family lived here for many years. Monach Way is close by which follows the route taken by Prince Charles as he fled to France, and is one of the longest and most well known English footpaths.

The infrastructure of the area can not withstand such a massive development. The lanes are single lane tractor lanes, with limited access points, and no pavements. When the substation was expanded, it created a lot of mess and heavy-duty transport which is unsuitable for a quiet countryside area. Roads feeding into the lanes are also small residential roads and were not built for heavy vehicles. At the top of the proposed road is a very dangerous blind bend. There has already been an increase in traffic due to the housing developments nearby, and these small country lanes just aren't suitable.

We work in Portsmouth running a charity centre there for vulnerable families with Down syndrome and our extended family live there. None of us want to see the disruption, noise, congestion and increase in traffic pollution that would occur. There is already huge traffic issues coming on and off Portsea Island, and many families struggle to get to us on time for their therapy sessions. The roadworks will cause traffic jams and extra pollution.

There are other alternative sites in the region which already have infrastructure in place and are much better suited. These have been identified, but for some strange reason have not been explored such as Lee-on-Solent, HMS Daedalus. There are many more options, where disruption would be significantly less.

The city of Portsmouth is united in its stance, along with Portsmouth City Council and many more objectors – we do not want Aquind here.

If this project is approved, it will appear that the Government has been swayed by political donations, rather than listening to reason and the needs of those affected.

Please do not grant planning permission to Aquind, or at least, please look more closely at the better suitability of other sites.

Yours sincerely

Rachael Ross MBE

