

As a Portsmouth resident I am writing to raise my objections to the proposed route of the Aquind Interconnector.

Portsmouth is incredibly crowded – a high density city, second only to London. It seems therefore inconceivable that the planned route should still involve the city considering that the landfall position in France has now changed from the one that was originally proposed. The shortest route, and presumably the cheapest and safest to lay and maintain, should involve landfall much further east, in East Sussex. This would then pass through areas of lower population density, leading to less disruption.

Portsmouth island and has only three land exit points and Aquind intend to cut off one, not only to lay the cable but also to be able to do so whenever changes/ repairs need to be made. When all three exit points are open, they can still become completely congested during busy periods- with Eastern Road closed it's easy to imagine how the city could become completely grid- locked.

The proposed route would also cut into areas containing dangerous materials – former naval dumping grounds containing a variety of hazardous materials such as asbestos. I understand that these are now contained underneath a secure membrane which will be damaged – surely sheer madness with little concern for the potential release of hazardous materials.

The route also proposes drilling under marine environments, parks and allotments. I attended a meeting of allotment holders and felt that we were totally misinformed by Aquind representative as to what this might involve. I now understand that the material to be used to assist the drilling is bentonite, that is potentially hazardous and that this could be released to the surface- surely dangerous for those growing their own food.

This misinformation has also surely been replicated at a macro level – first the cable was only carrying electricity and as a result any planning decision was taken out of the hands of local decision makers. However, now it seems it will also become a telecommunication cable. Surely this could be seen as verging on a level of corruption especially when put alongside the vast amounts of money Aquind has donated to a variety of Conservative MPs. Added to this is the secrecy regarding at least one of the owners of the company.

In conclusion I would ask the Secretary of State to reject this proposed route on environmental, ethical and common sense grounds.

Christine Elmer

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