

**PENNY MORDAUNT MP**  
**MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR PORTSMOUTH NORTH**  
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The Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP  
Secretary of State for the Department of Energy Security and Net Zero  
3 Whitehall Place  
London  
(send via email)

31<sup>st</sup> March 2023

Dear The Rt. Hon Grant Shapps MP

**RE:** *National Infrastructure Planning Aquind Interconnector Scheme*

I wrote to the previous Secretary of State for the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy to express my concerns about the Aquind Interconnector project and its potential impact on Portsmouth. The community in Portsmouth strongly opposes the project and does not see any benefit in being the landfall site for it. I have already communicated these concerns to the Secretary of State and the Planning Inspectorate through written and oral deputations, which are a matter of public record.

However, I am writing again to emphasize the importance of making a decision that considers all available information about alternative landfall sites and their assessment, to prevent a repeat of the recent High Court ruling. I am confident that the previous Secretary of State made the right decision in refusing consent. The legal team representing the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy expressed concerns about the lack of information provided by Aquind on comparative analysis regarding alternative sites and the reasons for the shortlisted sites, with Portsmouth being selected as the preferred option. I agree with this view, as do many people in Portsmouth who feel that Aquind has not been transparent about such a major project.

It is unacceptable to conceal within the Project a secondary function to accommodate data cabling, which is not dependent on the Project's primary purpose. The Development Consent Order is for Energy Security, and data cabling for commercial export is irrelevant to energy security. The application is being misused, and the true motives of the applicant are questionable and need careful consideration.

It is clear that the Aquind Interconnector proposal is fraught with issues that undermine its viability and integrity. It is essential that the decision-makers take into account all the available information and carefully consider the impact of this project on the community, environment, and national security before making any decisions. The Government's position is correct.

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I urge you to use your position and influence to ensure that the concerns of the community and other stakeholders are taken seriously, and the decision-making process is transparent and fair. The long-term consequences of this project are too significant to be ignored or treated lightly.

Yours sincerely,



Penny Mordaunt MP

*Cc: Care of the Planning Inspectorate - National Infrastructure Planning  
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