

Statutory Consultation on proposals for AQUIND Interconnector ends

Consultation on proposals for AQUIND Interconnector ended this week after an eight-week Statutory Consultation which began on Wednesday 27 February 2019.

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The consultation was also advertised in seven local and national newspapers, with a combined circulation of 200,000, whilst a Facebook advert publicising the consultation was viewed by over 115,000 individuals in the south of England.

The consultation included nine public exhibition events where members of the public were given the opportunity to view the proposals, speak with the AQUIND project team and provide feedback. A total of 709 local residents attended the drop-in events which took place at local venues in the vicinity of the proposed interconnector.

Throughout the consultation, the consultation documents were made available to view at 10 deposit locations across Portsmouth, Havant, East Hampshire and Winchester and online via the project's dedicated consultation website at www.aquindconsultation.co.uk.

The consultation built on the informal consultation that AQUIND undertook in early 2018 and presented AQUIND's updated proposals, including a number of cable route options which were identified to help to minimise traffic disruption, together with further detail regarding the location and approach to design and landscaping of the new Converter Station near Lovedean.

Local residents were given the opportunity to provide feedback via a range of methods, including feedback forms at the public exhibition events, an online feedback form, via Freepost and via email. A total of 155 responses to the consultation were received from members of the local community, with the most frequent comments relating to the cable route options, the approach to traffic management and the approach to mitigating the impacts of the Converter Station.

Following the close of the consultation, AQUIND has said it will now carefully consider all comments received before submitting an application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) to The Planning Inspectorate (PINS) on behalf of the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy to grant the rights required to build and operate AQUIND Interconnector in the UK. An explanation of how feedback received has been considered will be detailed in a Consultation Report which will be submitted with the DCO application.

Commenting at the close of the Statutory Consultation, a spokesperson for AQUIND said:

"We would like to thank all of those who took their time to attend a public exhibition event, consider the consultation documents and provide feedback on our updated proposals.

"The feedback we have received will help to refine our proposals before submitting an application to The Planning Inspectorate later this year.

"We remain committed to engaging with the local community and will endeavour to keep local people informed throughout the planning process."

The local community can get in touch with the AQUIND project team to discuss the proposals via the project's freephone information line on **01962 893869**, via email at aquindconsultation@becg.com or via freepost to '**AQUIND CONSULTATION**'.

More information is available online at www.aquindconsultation.co.uk.

- ENDS -

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Notes to editors:

AQUIND Interconnector is a proposed High Voltage Direct Current ('HVDC') marine and underground electric power transmission link between the south of England and Normandy in France, with the capacity to transmit up to 2,000 MW of electricity between the France and Great Britain ('GB') net of transmission losses.

It is estimated that AQUIND Interconnector will have sufficient capacity to transmit up to 16,000,000 MWh of electricity annually between GB and France, accounting for approximately 5% and 3% of their respective total electricity consumption and enough to keep the lights on in up to four million British households.

AQUIND Interconnector will make a significant contribution to improving GB's security of electricity supply and achieving greater affordability by improving competition, making the GB energy market more efficient and enabling greater energy flexibility. This should ultimately benefit consumers via increased access to lower prices due to competitive pressures on domestic energy generators.

AQUIND Interconnector will help to integrate a greater proportion of intermittent renewables generation into the GB energy mix. It is also expected that electricity imported from France will have much lower CO2 intensity. This will reduce reliance on fossil fuel power generation plants and in turn reduce GB's CO2 emissions from the burning of such fuels. AQUIND Interconnector will therefore make a significant contribution to the decarbonisation of the GB electricity grid and meeting the net UK carbon reduction targets by the year 2050, set in accordance with Section 1 of the Climate Change Act 2008.

The project is being developed and promoted by AQUIND Limited, a UK-registered company with the sole business of developing AQUIND Interconnector. AQUIND is not associated with any UK or European utilities or national electricity transmission system operators.

In July 2018, the Secretary of State for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy recognised AQUIND as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project under the Planning Act 2008. AQUIND must therefore submit an application for a DCO to the Planning Inspectorate to obtain the necessary authorisation for the construction and operation of the Project.