

STEPHEN MORGAN MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

The Rt Hon George Eustice MP
Seacole Building 2 Marsham
St, Westminster
London
SW1P 4DF

25 February 2020

Dear Secretary of State,

AQUIND Interconnector – Portsmouth

I am writing to express concern over the environmental implications of the AQUIND Interconnector project in Portsmouth, which I understand is a result of government decision making.

As you know, on 30 July 2018, AQUIND Interconnector was deemed to be a nationally significant infrastructure project meaning that responsibility now lies with Government for the delivery, maintenance and environmental assessment of the project. I have significant concerns about this project, which I oppose, and have been supporting objections.

Portsmouth's proximity to the sea and surrounding wetlands mean it is home to a great deal of wildlife. AQUIND interconnector has the potential to disrupt this, particularly in the Milton Common area. Breeding, Wintering and Passage Birds along with water voles and Great Crested Newts and countless other vulnerable species all inhabit the area where there are plans to earth cables.

It is imperative that AQUIND does not cause harm to this wildlife, which is already greatly threatened by climate change and environmental degradation. Now more than ever, Government must ensure that the environmental impacts of any infrastructure project are the forefront of the discussion.

I have already been to open consultations on this issue, met with residents and relayed concerns to AQUIND. But as responsibility for this project does not lie with the local authority, it falls on government's shoulders to ensure that these vital wildlife assets are safeguarded.

Member of Parliament for Portsmouth South

020 7219 3906 | stephen.morgan.mp@parliament.uk | [@StephenMorganMP](https://twitter.com/StephenMorganMP)

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Firstly, I am requesting that your department outline the steps taken to ensure the AQUIND Interconnector does not interfere with local endangered wildlife in Portsmouth and the surrounding areas?

Secondly, will you commit to regular, continued environmental assessments and inspections of the AQUIND Interconnector once construction begins?

Finally, can you guarantee that AQUIND Interconnector will not be to the detriment of the cherished wildlife in our community?

We must constantly be looking through an environmental lens if we are to properly combat climate change. I am deeply concerned that government has been failing to do that in the AQUIND case.

I look forward to your prompt response to this issue of concern for Portsmouth South which is also of international and national significance.

Yours sincerely,

Stephen Morgan MP

Member of Parliament for Portsmouth South

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