

LET'S STOP AQUIND

SIGN  
↓ THE ↓  
PETITION  
TO STOP  
AQUIND



STOP  
AQUIND

HANDS  
OFF  
OUR  
CITY



NO CASH  
TO  
FOR CABLES

JUSTICE  
FOR  
PORTSMOUTH

STOP CORRUPTION



STOP AQUIND!

STOP  
AQUIND

AQUIND  
DON'T CHOKE  
OUR CITY

**NON-AQUIND**

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NON-AQUIND  
MA Design Expanded Practice  
[www.gold.ac.uk/design](http://www.gold.ac.uk/design)

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**What is  
AQUIND?**



The proposed AQUIND interconnector is a 2,000MW subsea and underground bi-directional electric power transmission link between Portsmouth, on the south coast of England, and Normandy, in France.<sup>1</sup> It is a 242 kilometre-long route, a quarter of which is planned on land. The interconnector is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project, and all submissions relating to the application for development consent are archived at the Planning Inspectorate portal.<sup>2</sup> The planning application is being submitted by AQUIND Limited. It is contested by Let's Stop AQUIND, a grassroots group based in Portsmouth who came together at the Eastney and Milton allotment, and campaigns via social media.<sup>3</sup> The issues and activities related to the planning application and the community's response to it, are the focus of NON-AQUIND, a Design brief for students on the MA Design Expanded Practice course at Goldsmiths.<sup>4</sup>

This publication interleaves three sets of material about AQUIND. Firstly, it reproduces excerpts from documents published through the Planning Inspectorate portal, including submissions on behalf of AQUIND Limited relating to the route and plan for the interconnector. The portal also includes letters and statements from local residents, often mobilised by Let's Stop AQUIND, objecting to the application. Secondly, the publication reprints a selection of content published by Let's Stop AQUIND, including

documentation of public events, and a conversation with some of the activists. The third strand of content comes from the design brief, including a documentary film contextualising the allotment, along with material from various phases of the projects undertaken by six student groups in response to the brief. Project phases included conducting fieldwork in Portsmouth, mapping and visualising data from the fieldwork, prototyping design proposals based on research insights and delivery of final outcomes exhibited at Milton Park in Portsmouth in the format of a community 'energy' Fete.

These three layers are arranged in a chronological sequence, starting with excerpts from AQUIND Limited's initial application from 14<sup>th</sup> November 2019, through to the exhibition of student projects at Milton Village Hall Energy Fete on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2022, and ending with an interview with members of Let's Stop AQUIND on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2023. At the time of publication, the development consent order for the electrical interconnector is being reviewed by the Secretary of State.

The notion that design can be a tool for the exploration and expression of social and community issues, is reflected in the editorial approach and design of this publication.



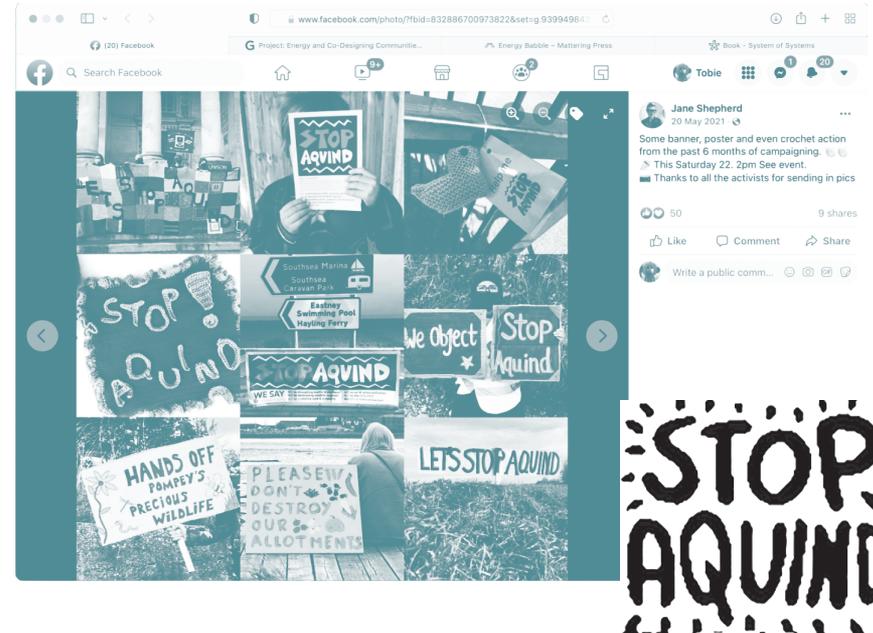
Community  
Response

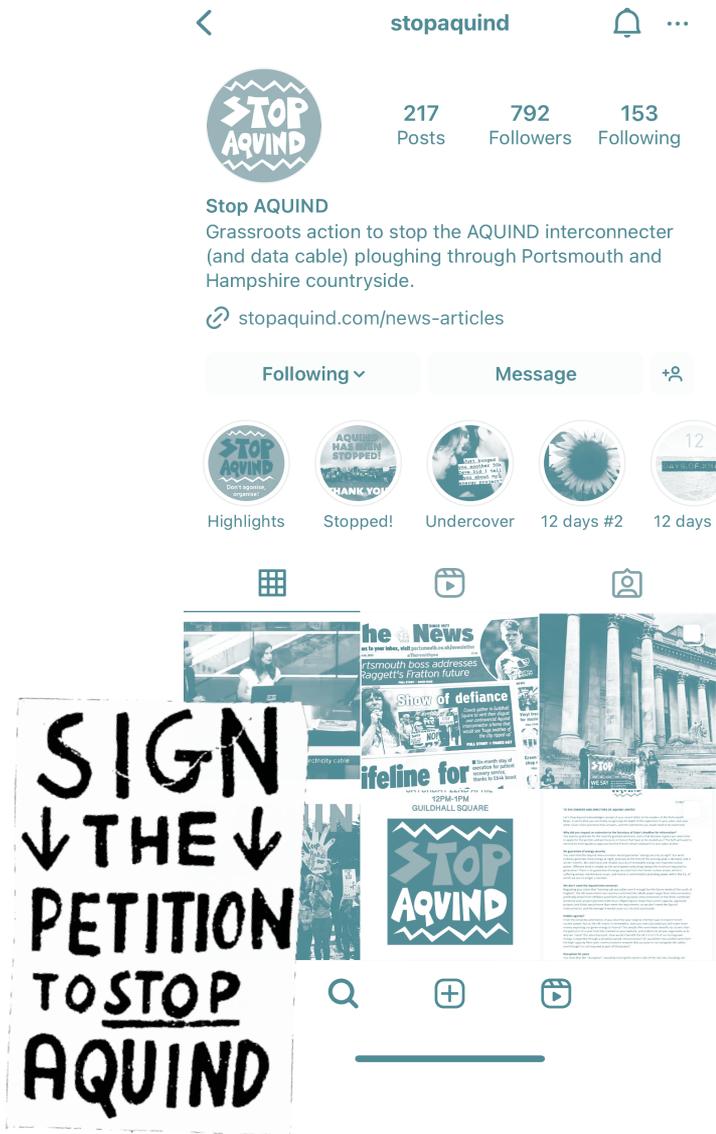


This section provides a selection of content from the social media channels of the community campaign group Let's Stop AQUIND, primarily published between October 2020 and December 2021. The group have described the formation and ambition of their campaign in this way:

"AQUIND Limited held a public consultation but afterwards many people were still not aware of the interconnector proposal and felt they had not been given the opportunity to comment or object. As concerned residents we formed the campaigning group, Let's Stop AQUIND, to scrutinise the project, raise awareness and halt it. We run a number of different events and activities to bring people together and we have a number of different ways to work together to raise awareness about the project."<sup>5</sup>

The activities of the campaigners included messages of objection knitted into blankets, protest banners carried on a walk along the proposed route of the electrical interconnector, and the digital projection of a film onto the hull of a ship in Portsmouth dockyard, about the political donations made by the directors of AQUIND Limited to Conservative MPs. These activities demonstrate how anticipated impacts of the interconnector, and issues undisclosed in the planning application, became presented to the wider community through the material practices of activism. Let's Stop AQUIND's practices provided an initial point of engagement for Goldsmiths' researchers and informed the identity and ambition of the NON-AQUIND brief – an exploration of the responses of communities to the local impacts of renewable energy infrastructure.



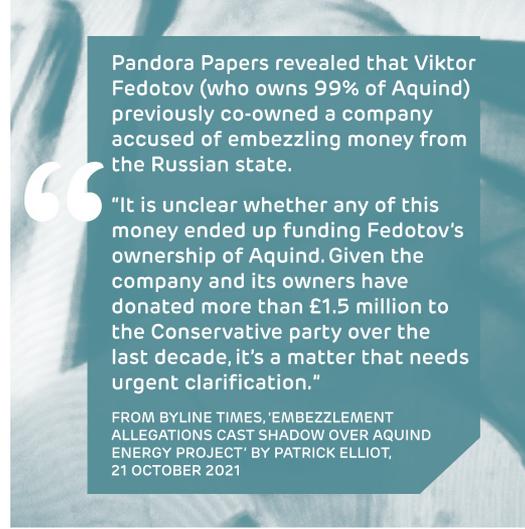




Let's Stop AQUIND and members of the public walk the proposed route for the interconnector.



43 likes  
stopaquind AQUIND is wrong on so many levels. #1  
Wrong company, wrong project, wrong place.  
#stopaquind  
View 1 comment  
28 October 2021



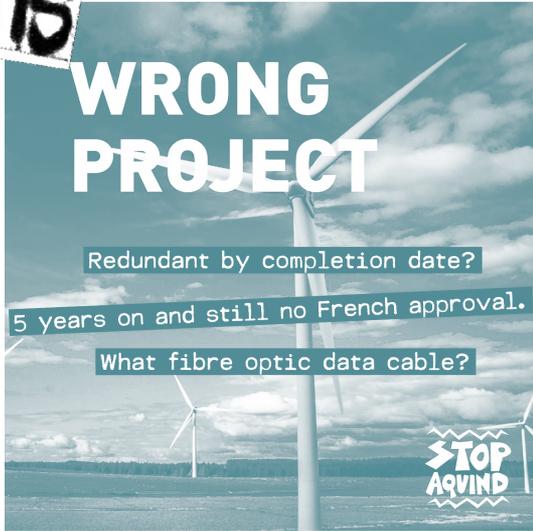
43 likes  
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STOPAQUIND Posts

stopaquind



24 likes

stopaquind An interconnector doesn't generate energy, it moves it about. What's so wrong about that? Well ...

What's wrong with AQUIND #2

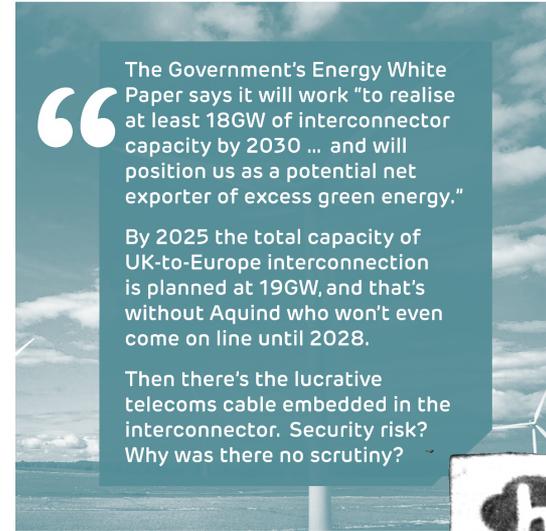
Wrong company, wrong project, wrong place.

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STOPAQUIND Posts

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24 likes

stopaquind An interconnector doesn't generate energy, it moves it about. What's so wrong about that? Well ...

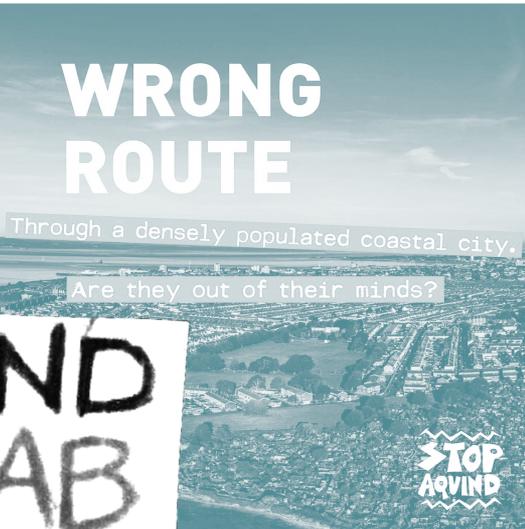
What's wrong with AQUIND #2

Wrong company, wrong project, wrong place.

#stopaquind



stopaquind



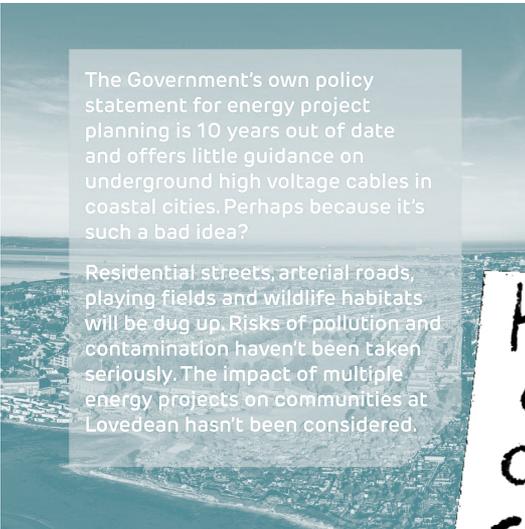
35 likes  
stopaquind Three wrongs don't make a right.

Wrong company, wrong project, wrong place.

#stopaquind  
denise\_black\_uk Mustn't happen. Pompey is so short of green, an island hemmed in on all sides and almost completely concrete. I am so behind you!



stopaquind



35 likes  
stopaquind Three wrongs don't make a right.

Wrong company, wrong project, wrong place.

#stopaquind  
denise\_black\_uk Mustn't happen. Pompey is so short of green, an island hemmed in on all sides and almost completely concrete. I am so behind you!





NO!  
CASH  
FOR  
CABLES

6,000  
reasons to  
Stop Aquind

STOP  
AQUIND

HANDS  
OFF  
OUR  
CITY

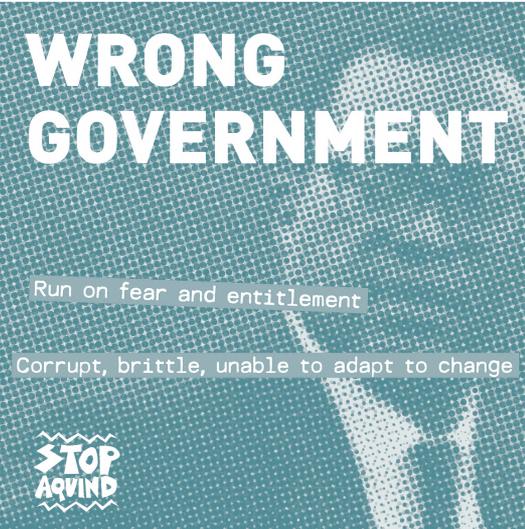
AQUIND  
NO THANKS

STOP CORRUPTION

Let's Stop AQUIND with Stephen Morgan, MP for Portsmouth South, outside Parliament.



stopaquind



32 likes  
stopaquind The final wrong.

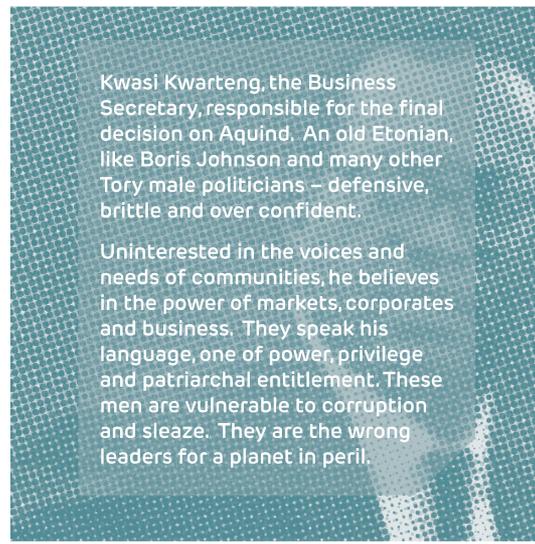
AQUIND: Wrong company, wrong project, wrong place and wrong government.

#StopAquind #torysleaze #stopcorruption  
View all 2 comments  
4 November 2021



STOPAQUIND Posts

stopaquind



32 likes  
stopaquind The final wrong.

AQUIND: Wrong company, wrong project, wrong place and wrong government.

#StopAquind #torysleaze #stopcorruption  
View all 2 comments  
4 November 2021



STOPAQUIND Posts

stopaquind Spinnaker Tower



169 likes

stopaquind Thank you Led By Donkeys. 🙌 Because community activism matters. We are the ones holding those in power to account. Watch the film, link in bio.

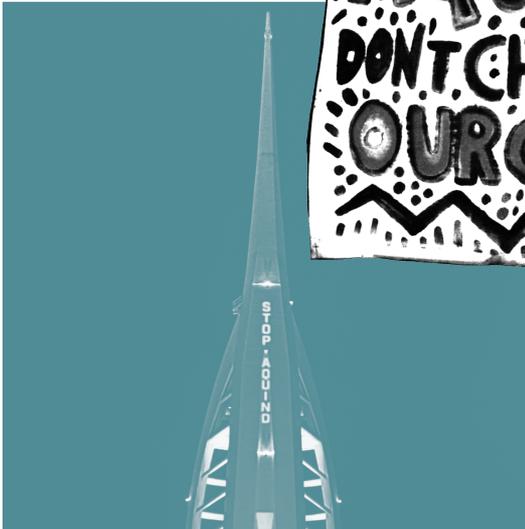
@ledbydonkeys

#portsmouth #portsmouthdockyard #southsea #ledbydonkeys #spinnakertower #illuminations #lightprojection #activism #stopaquind #toriesout



STOPAQUIND Posts

stopaquind Spinnaker Tower



169 likes

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@ledbydonkeys

#portsmouth #portsmouthdockyard #southsea #ledbydonkeys #spinnakertower #illuminations #lightprojection #activism #stopaquind #toriesout





Walking the proposed route for the interconnector.



**Eastney and  
Milton  
Allotment  
Film**





The proposed route of the AQUIND interconnector includes landfall on the south-eastern coast of Portsea Island.<sup>6</sup> From there, the cable twists inland and through Eastney and Milton Allotments. The route, and likely impact of groundworks for the cable upon the landscape, motivated those who grew vegetables and flowers in the allotments to question and dispute the detail of the infrastructure application.

The allotments provided the setting for a research documentary, which captured the motivation and conduct of those who tended the plots and formed Let's Stop AQUIND. Allotment activists were contacted by researchers, and arrangements were made to meet for a set of interviews that took place in and around their plots. Footage for the documentary was shot on 10<sup>th</sup> August 2021 and edited into a five-minute film, which is transcribed and depicted in the following section.

The ambition of the film was to identify the commitments of allotment users and visually assert the importance of the wild sites that exist within the urban environments of Portsea Island. The film also informed the NON-AQUIND brief, by grounding broader research interests in coastal renewable energy infrastructure within a particular location.





Jane gathering vegetables at her allotment plot.

### 0:03 Viola

I've seen many people who've been here for many years, 10 years, 20 years, 30 years. And we've got over there a community allotment as well, which I know has got people coming from the hospital with mental and physical health [issues] and for them it is a lifeline.



### 0:21 Viola

The allotments are very, very important for people to be connected to nature, to find release of their stresses in various ways, whether that is just by tending their vegetables or planning what they're going to do next year, or whether they sit together with other people, and many people have said that to me.



### 0:43 Viola

I don't want to see them, not even temporarily stopped.



### 0:52 Jane

So AQUIND actually is a company and it wants to build an inter-connector which is basically undersea cables that will link French energy sources and British energy sources.

So it will go under sea from northern France and it will come up in Southsea. That's their proposed route. And then it will have to go across the city to the substation, the nearest substation is at Lovedean.



### 1:23 Viola

It's going to go from France to England, but also England to France. In actual fact, quite a good idea, isn't it? I'm not against interconnectors, but of course we also have to look at the impacts, the structure, the construction etc. will have on the environment. So the two have to be put really right into balance.



### 1:45 Viola

We talked and I said, you know, we've got to do something. And that day I went home, put the Facebook group on and then it went viral.



### 1:54 Jane

We started to write the leaflets, I did the logo, then we had leaflets printed and people started mobilising to drop off leaflets and deliver them. And that was the whole first kind of few months because it was all over lock down as well.



### 2:11 Viola

We had the first protest organised within two days. We did lots of banners which have been taken down, lots of leafletting, lots of posters, t-shirts made, the trees...



### 2:24 Group

...That was very good, craftivism. Ohh yeah, we have the vision to craft, and little stones. Little wasn't it. We made it work...



### 2:32 Jane

Walk The Route. We didn't think anyone was gonna come...



### 2:35 David

...Look I brought all the adornments. Look, yeah, we brought all the adornments. Fabulous...



### 2:41 Jane

...So I decided we should make it more of a performance. So I made banners and flags for everyone. And actually a lot of people turned up and then we walked up the Eastern Road. For me that was the most...



### 2:54 Jane

...I mean, that will be one of the special moments in my life. I was walking up the Eastern Road with all the traffic coming and the people were beeping in support and I had this 'No to Corruption' banner and I was flying. And I just, yeah, I felt so... I felt so empowered actually.



### 3:16 David

Our city is paying the price for a political system that is not actually giving due diligence to this project.



### 3:26 Jane

So there's something very important, I think, about this also happening over the pandemic, where people were like, whoa, you know what's going on here? We all need to relook the world that we live in.



The allotments are very, very important for people to be connected to nature, to find release of their stresses in various ways, whether that is by tending their vegetables or planning what they're going to do next year, or whether they sit together with other people.

### 3:37 Jane

So in a way, AQUIND has been quite a focus for that, I think. I think people are just waking up. To their environments and their places, the places that they've suddenly discovered that are really, really valuable to them.



### 3:52 Jane

I think one of the successes of our group is that we are women-led and we have amazing male allies as well. But it's us that do the organising.

The core group of the campaign is run by women. We're the ones that go to the shopping malls to collect petitions for the public petition. You know we're the ones that give up our time and I think that really does add to the success of the group that we've managed to galvanise support. We've managed to stay together.



### 4:23 Jane

We haven't had any arguments. We give each other space to talk and we make sure that we try and encourage each other. To look after ourselves, because you know, self-care is important, especially in activism. No point burning out.



### 4:39 Jane

And we're all going to be activists at some point. Looking at the world ahead.



### 4:44 Viola

We always say we are not experts, we're just ordinary people who just came across this because we're really worried about the project for the city and beyond.





Viola making tea at her allotment plot.

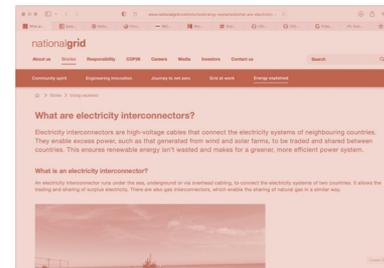


**NON-AQUIND**  
**Brief**



The postgraduate design brief documented in this section was one of seven options for students undertaking the MA Design Expanded Practice programme at Goldsmiths, University of London. These seven briefs were delivered during a ten-week period in the Spring term of 2022. The briefs can be characterised by the investment of design in the practices of particular communities, encouraging diverse methods of participation or engagement with those communities. Often, staff research interests provide a framework for the formation of a brief that develops the ambitions of the students, and in return the activity of the students' responses may catalyse and develop trajectories of staff research.

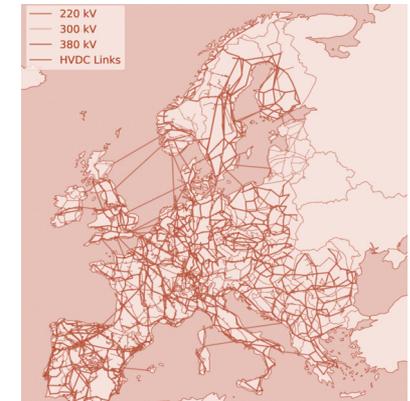
The pitch for the NON-AQUIND brief discussed the ambition for electrical interconnectors to deliver a renewable energy network that supported net zero pledges, while also emphasising that such infrastructure can have local impacts. The brief was described as part of a research project with the involvement of Let's Stop AQUIND. The transcript for the brief is reproduced here, along with a set of screenshots from the presentation given to the students on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2021 in advance of delivery the following Spring.



**0:01**  
NON-AQUIND explores two electrical interconnectors that link France and the UK, IFA2, which is operational, and AQUIND which is in planning. These cables run under the channel then travel across land to connect electricity distribution points, supporting the ambition for smart networks to distribute surplus renewable energy between regions.

**0:26**  
Renewable energy infrastructures are part of the mix of measures needed to meet ambitions for COP26, however, infrastructures have impacts on communities and landscapes and so, despite the importance of climate agenda, delivery is complex.

The AQUIND Interconnector is particularly controversial and has led to community activism on the French and the UK sites.



**0:56**  
As tutors, Naho, Rebecca and I have a background in practice based approaches to renewable energy and activism. I'm undertaking field work with Let's Stop AQUIND, who argue that their allotment will be disrupted by the cable route. Here's an opportunity to bring an empirical and speculative design methodology to renewable energy infrastructure in order to give material expression to the diverse features of the coastal communities and landscapes impacted by these kinds of development.

**1:36**  
Let's dig down a little bit into some of that context and hopefully this will give you a bit more information about the brief.

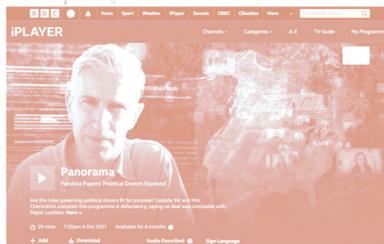


1:57

Firstly, we're interested in these renewable energy infrastructures, we're interested in the scale and the ambition and the substance of these cables. These cables are laid from massive reels on ships at sea and you can see there the inner core transmits DC energy, which is then converted to AC energy on land.

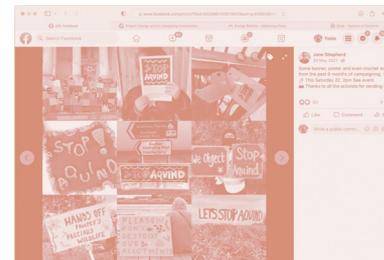
2:31

These interconnectors allow energy to be shared between different countries. At times of overproduction at one site, surplus can be exported to other locations where demand is greater. When North Sea wind is blowing, that will balance a lack of solar generation in the Mediterranean for example. The idea of global smart grids, of green grids, in the context of Brexit is particularly interesting. It provides economic and technological flows between nations.



3:15

Here's a snapshot of the current grid demand in the UK. You can see that currently almost 38% of the energy that we're using in the UK is provided by coal and oil, by fossil fuels. If you look at this section with the interconnectors, you can see that some of our energy is being met by those connections and in some cases, we're actually exporting electricity to other places. If you look down there in the bottom right corner, you can see IFA2, which is one of the cables we're interested in. That's exporting about a GW of electricity to France at the moment.

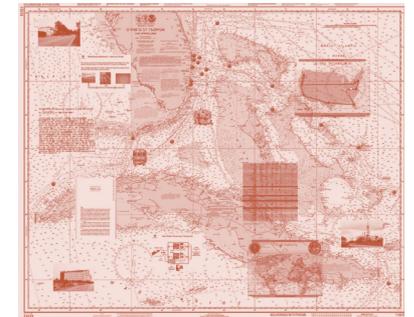
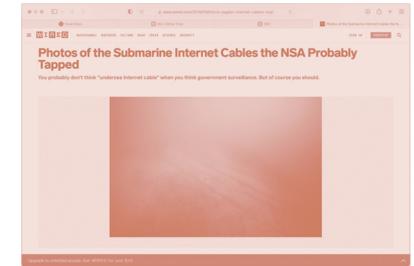


4:09

We can see a commitment to these infrastructures in the text of the COP21-26 agreement. And this is delivered through something called the Energy Transition Council. We can see that smart grids, or green grids, are a priority for this council. These kinds of infrastructures are in the texts of the COP agreement and the work will progress in 2022. I just wanted to emphasise the relationship of the projects to current global policy.

4:47

Let me just show you a quick clip of a film by Panorama, which is a BBC investigative documentary programme:

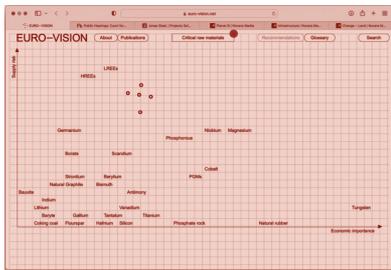
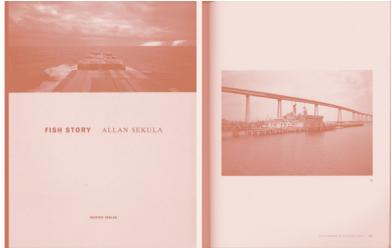


5:02

"France is 100 miles across the Channel now. Later this month, the UK government will decide whether or not to approve an ambitious plan to link the two with an underwater energy and communication cable. It is a £1.2 billion project, but not everyone around here likes it."

5:23

"I'm very worried about the environmental impact. I'm worried about the environmental impact on the only inner city nature reserve that we have."



**5:37**

“But that is not the only controversy. The company behind the proposed undersea cable is called AQUIND. Since the project began in 2015, the business has given £700,000 to the Conservative Party.”

**6:01**

Infrastructures have impacts on communities and on landscapes, and so despite the importance of the climate agenda, the devil is in the detail, and each proposal has a different set of features. While IFA2, which I showed you on the breakdown of current grid demand, is up and running locally, the proposal for AQUIND has been extremely controversial.

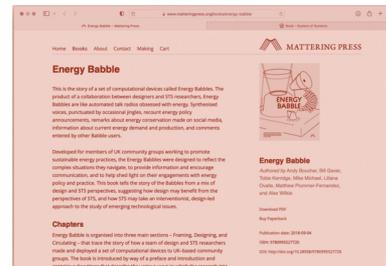
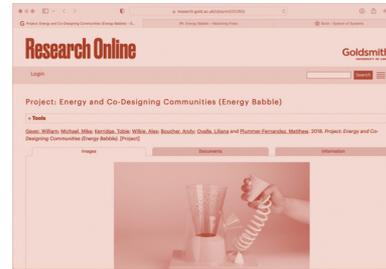


**6:32**

Non à AQUIND is a French activist group, and they are resisting the planning process. On the French side, there’s an emphasis on public disruption from the works associated with these infrastructures. And there’s also some arguments about harm to residents, from the power cable and its proximity to schools, for example.

**7:02**

Meanwhile, on the English side, Let’s Stop AQUIND is a UK group based in Portsmouth, and it’s started by a group of friends who have allotments where they grow vegetables and flowers, and their allotments fall within the proposed route of the electrical cable.



**7:37**

We take Let’s Stop AQUIND and their work, as a kind of provocative and engaged stance, a civic group who form a core element of the brief. And they help us to understand as designers how we can interpret, make and share information and experiences with others.

**8:10**

Here’s a post from Jane. Hopefully Jane will be coming to brief us to help us understand and take her own work as a designer, as a kind of case study that we can become interested in.



**8:28**

As tutors, Naho, Rebecca and I have a background in practice based approaches to renewable energy and activism. Naho and I were researchers on energy Babble. We built a prototype for groups involved in a government scheme which funded communities to install solar panels and heat pumps. You can find some more details about that project online.

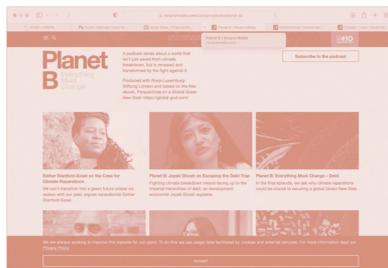


**8:59**

And also there's a publication, you can download this as a PDF that will give you a really clear overview of the project and the approaches taken there.

**9:09**

Meanwhile Rebecca was one of the leads on a project called System of Systems, where with her colleagues she developed a publishing framework for designers who were interested in political activism. And again, you can find out more about her project here. These publications give you an idea of the approaches that we'll be taking with you.



**9:37**

We see this as an opportunity for you to be part of a live research project. I'm working with a documentary filmmaker as one element of my fieldwork with coastal infrastructures. Your own projects can be seen as prototypes which help develop and scale existing research activities.

**10:05**

So I hope that's been useful. Look forward to seeing you really soon and thank you for listening.

# Fieldwork & Mapping

At the outset of Spring term in 2022, the 28 students who had chosen the NON-AQUIND brief organised themselves into six groups. After various iterations, the groups became known as: Portopia, Pillow Bomb, Portsmouth Adventure, Hidden Corner, Orga World and Republic of Pebble Island.

Ahead of fieldwork in Portsmouth on the 25<sup>th</sup> January 2022, the groups were asked to plan the routes and construct the tools they would use to gather and generate research material. In addition to the AQUIND interconnector, they were invited to consider local history and culture, along with geographical aspects and environments. Groups were encouraged to take cameras, recording equipment, sketchbooks, chalk, string, measuring implements, tape, etc. Unstructured interviews were encouraged, surprise and discovery were emphasised. With these expectations providing a frame to their visit, students documented and intervened within a set of locations of interest in and around Portsmouth.

The emotional impact of the interconnector was a concern for some groups, as the member of Let's Stop AQUIND who attended the briefing had highlighted this in their activist approach. Inventive tools for measuring the attitudes of locals towards AQUIND were produced and applied at various sites. Other groups focused on the environmental effects of the interconnector cable, and ways to make these future changes visible in the current landscape. Then, the process of mapping these interventions generated a conceptual territory for their projects. The method of making a map privileged spatial observations and subjective experiences over the identification of opportunities for instrumental solutions.

Portopia visited Lovedean, one potential site for the interconnector to join the grid.



Substation infrastructure at Lovedean from Portopia's fieldwork.





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Installing Fibre Optic Cables  
0800 083 6160

Portopia encountered the installation of fibre optic cables in Portsmouth.

Portopia captured residential development close to the Lovedean site.



An old portable radio at the allotment captured by Pillow Bomb.





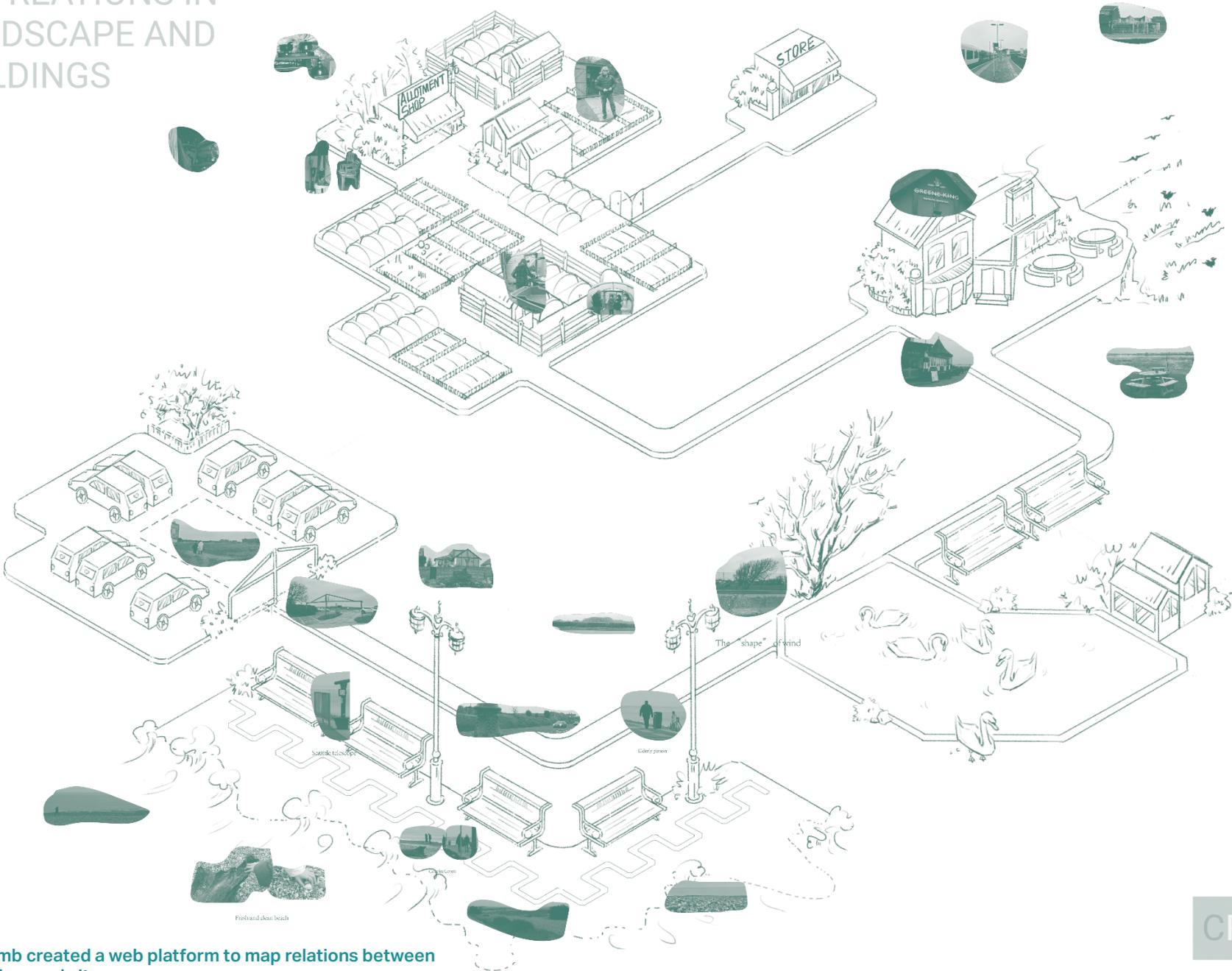


Sea defences being strengthened by Mackley developers, visited by Pebble Island.





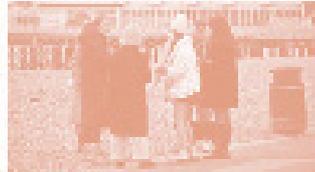
# THE REATIONS IN LANDSCAPE AND BUILDINGS



Pillow Bomb created a web platform to map relations between stakeholders and sites.

LB  
CP RO

**Opinion Balance**



Portopia developed a series of tools to gather and materialise Portsmouth residents' opinions about AQUIND.

Orga World explored the impact of the interconnector on wildlife along past, present and future timelines.

1833 1870 FUTURE



- Before Aquind
- During Aquind
- After Aquind

Inevitably, the construction of the aquinduct caused the destruction of wetlands and the excavation of land, and the aquatic wildlife that depended on the wetlands began to decline on a large scale and began to compete for less space in which to survive. The native animal ecosystem began to deteriorate, with numbers declining and becoming extinct, and the migratory animals that depended on this ecosystem also declined significantly, moving to other, more viable habitats.

1833 1870 FUTURE

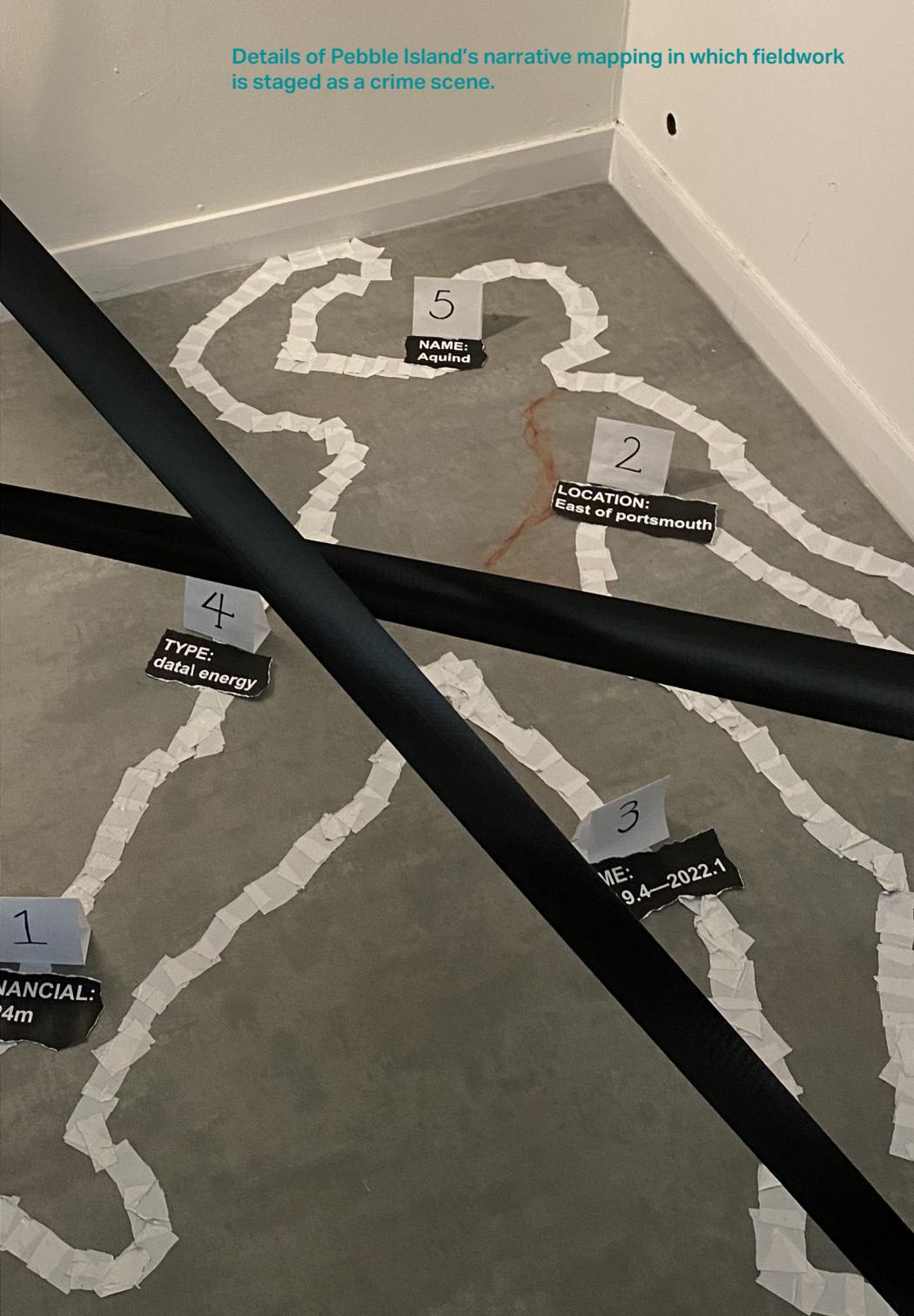


- Before Aquind
- During Aquind
- After Aquind

As a result of the completion of the aquind, the ecology of the neighbourhood has been greatly damaged and the flora and fauna that depend on these wetlands have almost disappeared!



Details of Pebble Island's narrative mapping in which fieldwork is staged as a crime scene.





Prototyping  
&  
Making



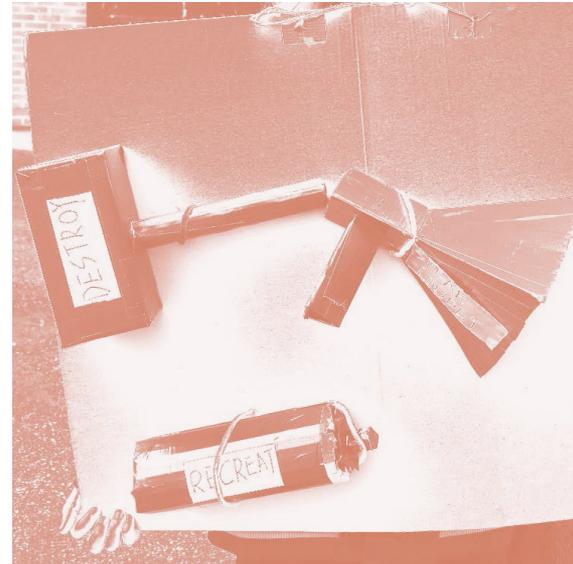
## Hidden Corner

Activist props encourage the dramatic expression of views at the seaside location of the interconnector.

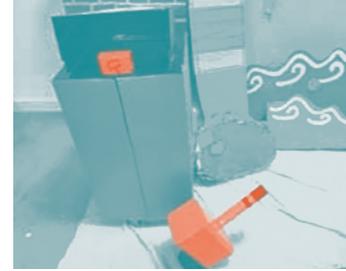
During a workshop on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2022, cardboard and gaffer tape were introduced to the six groups to construct physical props. The process of making supported the translation of their observations, interests, and issues into physical models. The props included protest tools, interactive models, scaled civic buildings and podiums for speeches. Students transformed ideas into physical elements, and this method emphasised a requirement for material arrangements that could be tangibly experienced by the communities encountered during fieldwork.

The format of a village Fete was introduced as a final outcome for the six design projects. A public Fete would deliver an event that brought together communities, members of Let's Stop AQUIND, students and researchers. Moreover, the sorts of interactions traditionally invited by Fete stalls – like moving a puck across buzzing wire, or throwing wet sponges at local dignitaries – encouraged the manifestation of interests as playful and immersive engagements. As such, groups developed lively prototypes through which to embody the serious issues posed by the interconnector proposal, including pillow fights for participants, 'choose your own adventure' puppet shows, micro energy generators and a corporate murder mystery.

On the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2022 – the same day that AQUIND Limited applied for a Judicial Review to challenge the decision of the Secretary of State to reject the interconnector development – students rehearsed the Fete interventions in Deptford, London, ahead of taking them to Portsmouth.



## Explore Tools



**Interactive format:** Knocking open  
**Design point:** Use of magnets and mechanical structures to open and close small organs

The hammer can be used to open the bin with great force



**Interactive format:** Press  
**Design point:** Use of UV lights and special pigments for a discreet effect

Spray paint can be used to discover hidden messages on the benches about future attitudes and thoughts of people when Aquind is being built



**Interactive format:** Listening

The stethoscope can be held close to the waves, the walls and the stones

## Emotional Tools



**Interactive format:** Expression

The megaphone is used to help users express their ideas about sustainable infrastructure after they have learned all the information

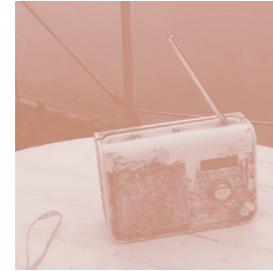


## Pillow Bomb

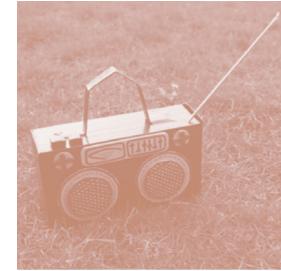
A selection of artefacts that speak to playful engagements with policy makers and stakeholders.



## Inspired Object



## Tape & Cardboard







Detail of a scene in Pebble Island's board game.

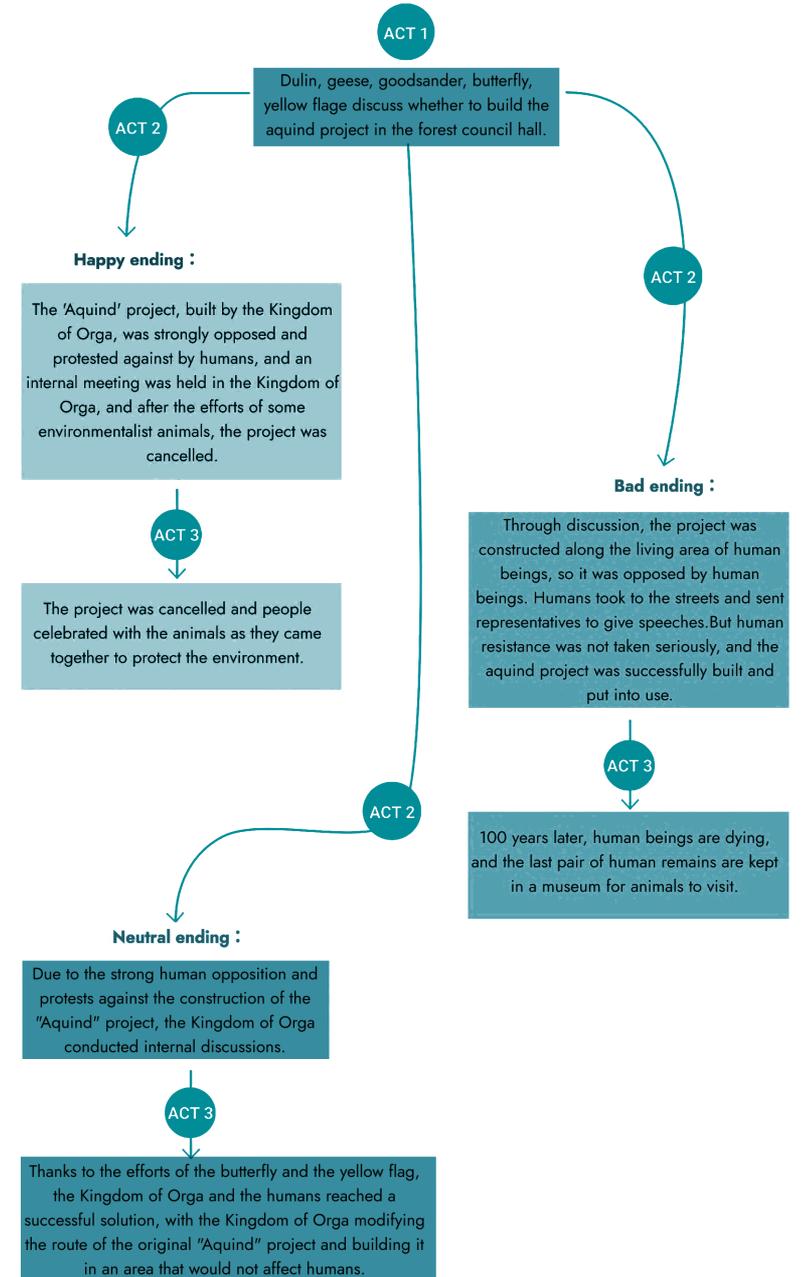


# Orga World

Selection of puppets and a script for a play in which the audience can determine the ending.

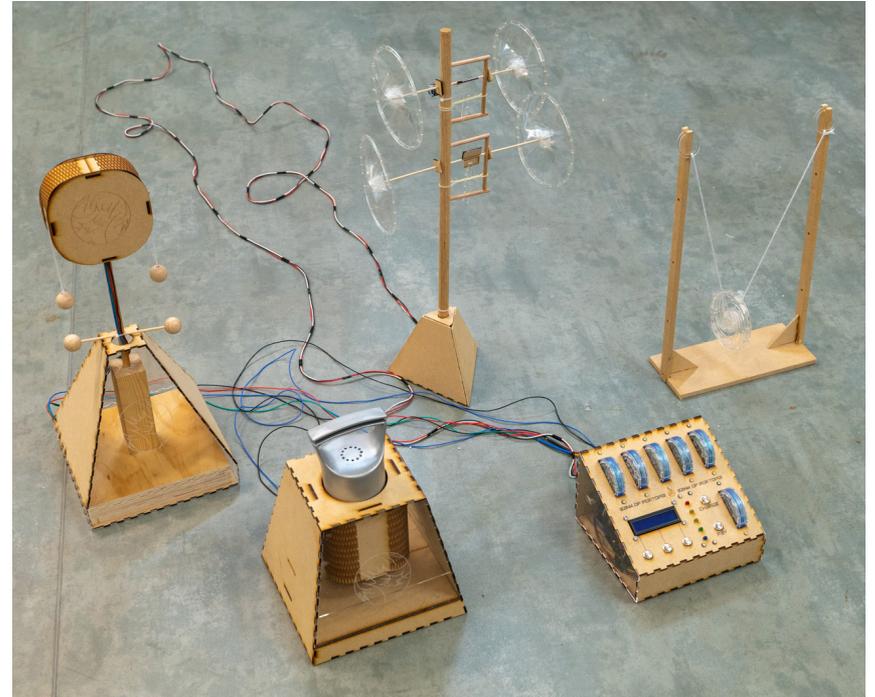


## Introduction to the world view



## Portopia

A series of five energy generating prototypes, encouraging reflections on energy use, efficiency and exchange amongst a group of students and staff.





Tickets and tokens communicate an alternative future for Portopia.

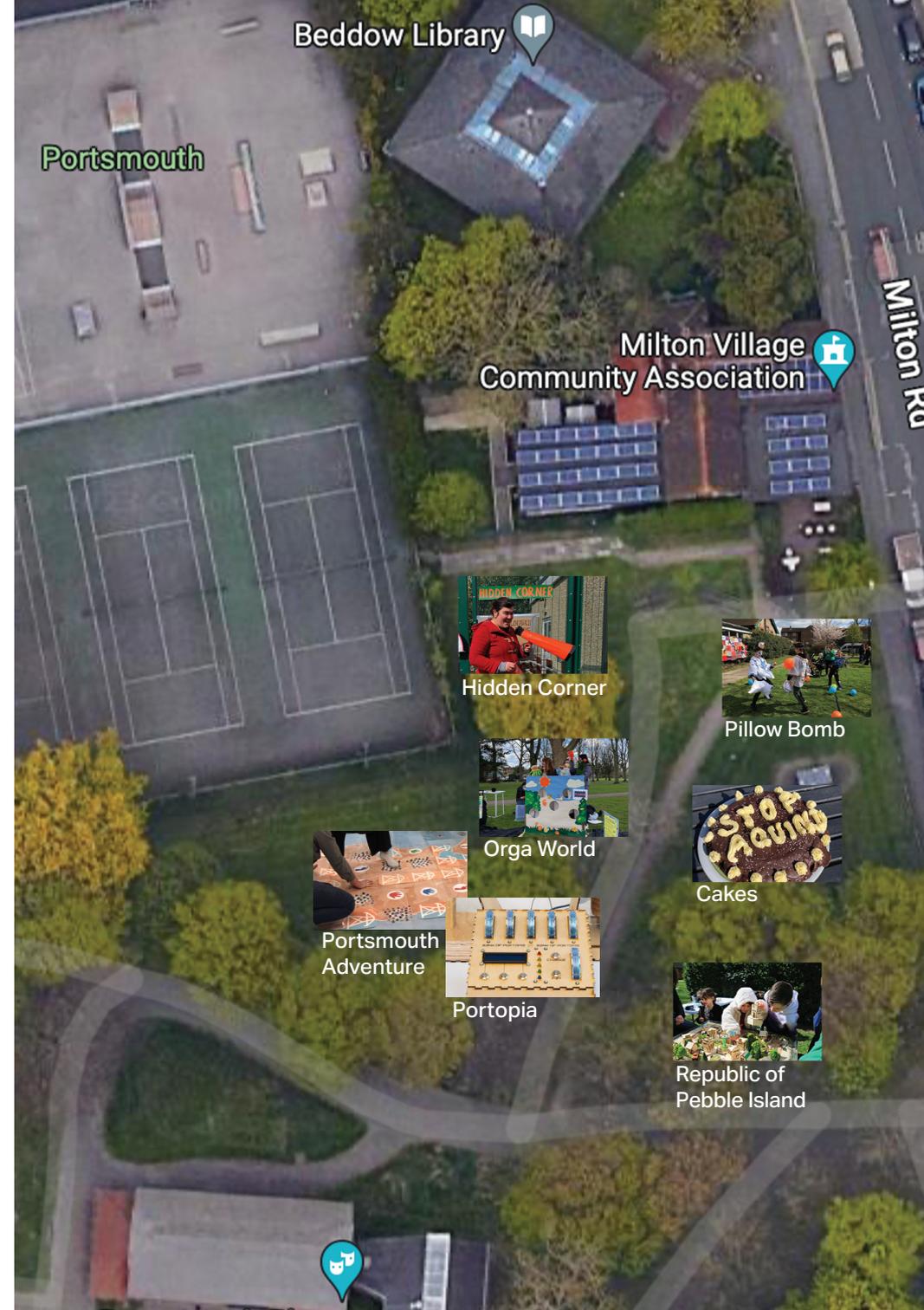


Milton Village  
Hall Energy  
Fete



In this section, students' descriptions of their projects are used to contextualise the Fete held on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2022. The ambition for the event was to provide an endpoint for the brief, where students' outcomes would be performed for the communities that had informed the territories and enquiries of their projects. Milton Village Hall, situated at the northern end of Milton Park, was booked as a venue for the Fete, offering an indoor alternative to the park grounds, should the early Spring occasion be deluged with onshore rain from the Solent.

On what turned out to be a bright, crisp April day, members of Let's Stop AQUIND arrived first, with homemade cakes and tea, along with banners and textiles from their campaign, which were hung to decorate the site. Having set off from their studios in Lewisham, students and staff arrived in Portsmouth on a coach loaded with project materials and set up six installations under the bare trees of the park. Then, friends, families, fieldwork participants and the curious arrived, explored the Fete, had refreshments and shared ideas.





Overview of the Fete in action.

# Milton Village Hall

# Spring Energy Fete

**Saturday 2nd April 2022 11am-3pm**  
**Spring Celebration**  
**Everyone Welcome**

**6 amazing renewable energy stalls**  
**from Goldsmiths Design students**  
**Tea and Cakes**

**Milton Village Hall**  
**182 Milton Road**  
**Southsea**  
**Hampshire**  
**PO4 8PR**

**Goldsmiths,**  
**University of London**  
**in collaboration with**  
**Stop Aquind**

# NON-AQUIND



Posters designed by students to promote the Spring Energy Fete and its individual stalls.





Visitors to the Fete play Pebble Island's murder mystery board game.

## Portsmouth Adventure

"This is an action game that generates electricity for the city! On this trip to Portsmouth, use your hands and feet to generate electricity for Portsmouth.

Generating sustainable electricity will clear the map of power stations and take your trip even further!

Existing energy sources such as coal and oil will affect the ecology, sea and land here. Contribute to Portsmouth in your own way!"

## Portopia

"Through the Aquind event, we can foresee an unstoppable future for the global grid. Electricity has increasingly become the source of the operation of human society. In this context, we envision an energy-depleted future where Portsmouth becomes the last human territory, a society that uses electricity as its currency - Portopia.

People rely on power generation to survive, earn money, and keep human society running. We have moved the device that circulates money in that time and space to the present, so that people can get a glimpse of the survival model in Portopia and think about the relationship between production tools, models and electricity in human society."

## Republic of Pebble Island

"There is a remote country called Pebble Island. Recently, a well-known scientist brought a renewable energy project to the locals, which seems to be able to bring people many benefits. But on the day the project started, the scientist died in his office. In the game, players, playing the role of detectives, will go to pebble island to dig clues of suspects according to hints, complete the detective board and deduce the truth of the incident.

Players are expected to have a more comprehensive understanding of renewable energy in the process of uncovering the truth, and have a more objective view of renewable energy projects that appear in real life in the future."



Digging for clues under model buildings on Pebble Island.



## Pillow Bomb

"The contradiction between sustainability and energy needs has stimulated the confrontation among Portsmouth residents, Aquind and the government. Although the existing communication media has ensured the basic information flow among stakeholders, a potential reason of "inadequate information transmission" has hindered them from reaching a consensus on this international and intergenerational issue. In Pillow Bomb, stakeholders came here to have a "talk" with each other, and strive to get information from the conversation. In order to achieve a win-win situation, they try their best to uncover the illusion and accurately understand the desires of each other. Let's talk!"

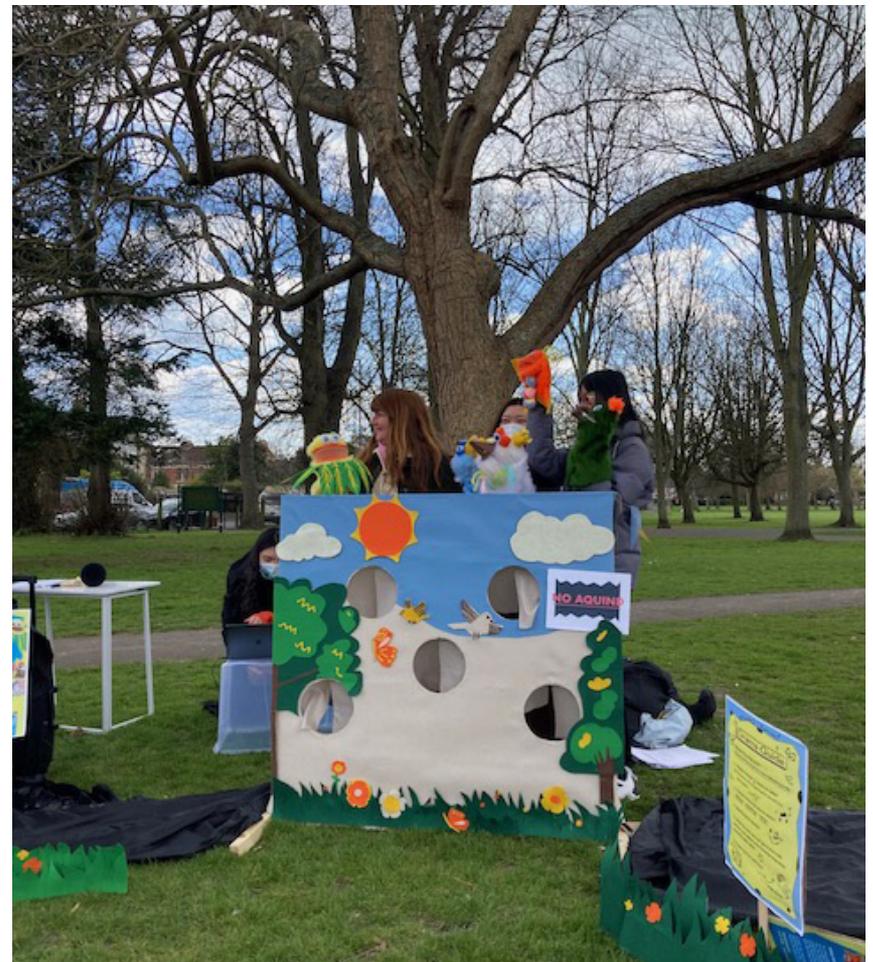


## Orga World

"The story takes place in Orga, a world dominated by living organisms and in which different species live. After the third industrial revolution, the development of science and technology has brought great progress to the Orga, but at the same time it has put great pressure on the environment.

The survival of another species that coexists with the living world - humans - has become precarious. In 2022, the Orga government plans to build a north-south pipeline in Portsmouth to help migratory birds migrate safely in the winter...

...And so the story unfolds..."





Players take the rôles of Government and Resident to fight out their differences in Pillow Bomb.

# Hidden Corner

"Boom! Crash! Hmmm..."

"What happen???"

"Try to use the tools to discover what secrets are hidden around the corners of Portsmouth. Our exhibition has three parts. The first part: you can use a hammer, a megaphone and a stethoscope to explore the information in the exhibition. The second part: after exploring all the information, you can open the back window to discover the secret of the exhibition.

The third part: after visiting all the exhibitions, you can use the megaphone to express your emotions and thoughts about the exhibition. After you finish, you may have new ideas for renewable energy infrastructure."



A delicious chocolate cake made by Let's Stop AQUIND.





Sixty Million  
Pounds Later...



The chronology presented in this publication opened with an initial application to the Planning Inspectorate portal from AQUIND Limited on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2019. While writing these words in September 2023, a final decision on the development consent order for the AQUNID interconnector is yet to be reached.

In bridging the passage of time between those two dates, this publication has combined materials from the planning portal, the social media channels of Let's Stop AQUIND and the project work of 28 students undertaking a postgraduate design brief. The ambition for this assemblage is to offer a case study, demonstrating how inventive design methods can become applied to compose a public event, allowing for the impacts of renewable energy infrastructure to become expressed through, and tangible within, the experiences of local communities.

Given the inconclusiveness of the interconnector dispute, the publication ends with a reflection on the process of activism and the commitments of those involved, through a conversation with two members of Let's Stop AQUIND. We end, then, with questions, rather than answers. Most prominently, given the ferocity of opposition towards Portsmouth as a site for an electrical interconnector, and accounting for the levels of investment from the organisation intent on development at that site, what resolution can be reached? Additionally, a disciplinary question emerges: What are the ongoing responsibilities of design within these extended disputes, given the delimited nature of its involvement?

**Jane** [Reading from Planning Inspectorate document]: "Please note we've received a high volume of submissions from non-registered parties. The examining authority is considering whether to exercise its discretion to accept them into the examination. If accepted, they'll be published as soon as possible." That was on the 9<sup>th</sup> of October. So, there was a flurry of letter writing, there was a shoreline protest, and I wrote in and my submission was accepted. At one point there's a PDF that has all the submissions in it, but that's very hard to find because it's got a number – something like 4358 PDF – and has about 200 submissions in it.

**Viola** It seemed an arbitrary choice at times, which submissions they accepted or did not accept. Johnty, for instance, his first submission or second submission wasn't accepted and then at some stage it was actually uploaded onto the website. I mean, it is very strange. It shows you that the work which has been done by PINs [Planning Inspectorate] is questionable.

**Tobie** **And the selection you mentioned – whoever it is in the office of the Planning Inspector, who's literally doing the admin – the basis for selection is not clear?**

**Viola** Perhaps it is just that they've never expected so much resistance. I think so many submissions arrived at PINs and needed to be considered.

**Viola** I think all the events were connected to either deadlines or encouraging people to sign or to participate or to really share everything. We always chose those moments which were particularly connected to important issues or to important documents the examination board required.

**Jane** So once the examination closed... What date did it close?

**Viola** 8<sup>th</sup> of March.

**Jane** Really?

**Viola** 8<sup>th</sup> of March. Six months. October to March.

**Tobie** March of what year?

**Jane** 2021. We tried to do an event where we all stood outside our doors with torches.

**Viola** Of course, that was December.

**Jane** Yeah I remember that.

**Viola** Nobody really took part. We had about five or six people, you know.

**Jane** So that's when I got involved. It's the 4<sup>th</sup> of November. I did the logo and the first flyer: "Here's an A4 poster you can download and print to display in your window".

**Viola** But to come back again to the examination process, we had two hearings. One was in December and the second one was in February. And we worked hard to get people involved so they would actually read out their submissions. Normally it would have been in person, perhaps

in the Guildhall. But because of COVID it didn't happen in person, it was all online. And I remember, I've got most of the scripts from those hearings, because some people felt very intimidated. It's quite intimidating when you're in front of these planning officers and examiners and you have to get your submission read out, so we had some people reading for others. We organised that all, and I thought it was fantastic. As an example, we had Sid, the eighty-year-old, he was so passionate but he didn't want to want to read it out, so I think it was Paula who read out his.

I still say the hardest work was that examination period, at least for me, because you had to study documents, you had to involve people, you had to get hold of people, encourage them to write their documents. You had to do research, we had to do all sorts of things and that was very tough. Really tough time, the first six months. And what happened afterwards, if I give you the timeline from the planning process... 8<sup>th</sup> of March end of examination, 8<sup>th</sup> of June the examiners had three months to read all the documents to make the decision on whether they would recommend the development consent order or not. But we wouldn't know that until the Secretary of State [Kwasi Kwarteng] made the decision.

So the Secretary of State then had three times a delay because he wanted more answers and each time people were asked again, and they could actually take part

and respond to answers from AQUIND and from other involved organisations. Then we get to the 20<sup>th</sup> of January 2022 when Kwasi Kwarteng made his decision, and he refused it and we were surprised because... I don't know whether you remember, but we had got hold of two letters where he actually said "Dear Alexander [referring to Alexander Temerko], of course I support the AQUIND interconnector." So for us, when he actually refused, it was such a throw!

**Tobie**

Where did those letters come from?

**Viola**

I think Steve might have got hold of them? I mean they must be somewhere on the Facebook site. I didn't keep all the documents, it was so much, but they're out there.

**Jane**

There in the public domain.

**Viola**

There they are. And after that...

**Tobie**

So that was the 20<sup>th</sup> of January...

**Viola**

Then it was very quiet. Nobody really knew what AQUIND was doing. But we all suspected that there would be a Judicial Review. In March 2022, they went to the High Court and asked for Judicial Review. In June 2022, the High Court accepted and said the grounds they have are acceptable, so there will be a Judicial Review.

**Tobie**

So, March...

**Viola**

So, March, application. June, Judicial Review is granted. And the actual hearing took place on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of November 2022.

**Tobie**

And then, I've got the date, this was from the planning website... there's the announcement on the 13<sup>th</sup> of February 2023, which is the decision of the Secretary of State to refuse. The application has been quashed...

**Viola**

January. So, the judge – who was actually a judge on family law not on planning – she said she agreed with AQUIND that it wasn't the decision, it was how he got to that decision. That was what I was told. So, it doesn't mean that the new secretary of state can't refuse it, but the way he handled the whole process – Kwasi Kwarteng – was questionable. And that's what she agreed with and that's why it went back to the new Secretary of State to make a new decision and that's where we really are now.

**Tobie**

And so the last the last thing on the site then is...

**Jane**

It gets really confusing on the Planning Inspectorate site.

**Viola**

We then waited quite a few weeks until he came out with a Statement of Matter, and since then we had three delays again, three more times, questions have been asked.

**Jane**

If you go to documents... what happened after the High Court judgement? Okay, that's quite useful, I think.

**Viola**

I mean, I do know the dates. The 31<sup>st</sup> of March was the first time all interested parties should actually put their documents forward if they had any ideas, or any reasons to write. That date was then delayed to the 28<sup>th</sup> of April

this year, and we put a submission forward, a really substantial one. Then the second date was for the 14<sup>th</sup> of June, and now we are actually into another date which was only because the PINs made a mistake and Portsmouth City Council didn't actually see the NGET [National Grid] document, and therefore asked for another suspension, and so interested parties can answer again. That's really what has happened. That's where we are now...

**Tobie**

And that's going to close on the 28<sup>th</sup> of July.

**Viola**

Yeah, but it doesn't mean it's the end of the of the whole process because there are still so many outstanding questions. We could still have another round, we don't know. It might not be the end. We can ask for more clarification.

**Jane**

From who? From AQUIND?

**Viola**

And NGET. I've got to go back because otherwise it's really difficult to understand. During the High Court hearing, the judge asked for the original feasibility study which led to the connection point in Lovedean because nobody had seen it. But AQUIND must have known, because AQUIND always assured us it was the best option. But we didn't know whether the judge had seen it or not, and then National Grid were asked to respond. And you know what they did? In their last submission, they only responded to the Mannington issue. Anything and everything is only concerned with Mannington. That was the original reason why Kwasi Kwarteng said

he refused Portsmouth – because other alternatives, particularly Mannington, had not been looked at in detail. So, NGET has not answered the question with regard to the original feasibility study. Now, has the new Secretary of State asked for the original feasibility study? I've not seen that request yet.

**Jane**

Did the judge make any comment on the feasibility study?

**Viola**

Only that that it was highly confidential, and she says something like: "the feasibility study has not been available and it's highly confidential". That's why all the people who are actually writing now are asking if they can see that feasibility study. That's why I think it won't be the last date we are going to put something together from LSA [Let's Stop AQUIND]. And I also think they will wait for AQUIND in France, because they are appealing, so if they turn around now in France and they get the appeal through... Yeah it's really getting very dense again, and nobody mentions anywhere the political involvement. Nobody mentions the donations anymore at all. It has been so quiet in the news. We've sent everything out to all the news, nobody has taken it up.

**Jane**

But there isn't really that much more new information is there? Other than AQUIND have kept on giving donations to the Tory party. That's the only new news.

**Tobie**

Donations have carried on?

Yeah, but it doesn't mean it's the end of the of the whole process because there are still so many outstanding questions. We could still have another round, we don't know. It might not be the end.

**Viola** Not much though...

**Tobie** So there wasn't much for the news to report on. When was the Led by Donkeys [event]?

**Viola** December 2020... 22<sup>nd</sup>? No, 21<sup>st</sup>.

**Jane** Yeah, it came at the end of our first sustained campaign, and that was before Kwasi Kwarteng's announcement. So, it was all very good timing, because he had put off one of the announcements didn't he, he deferred.

**Viola** Three times as well...

**Jane** Yeah so we were never sure.

**Viola** One main point is that it's not just about the benefits and harm, but it's also the question of the interference with Portsmouth, right up to Lovedean. You know that's 500,000 people or more [affected]. Does that outweigh the damage it causes, by providing 1.4 million homes with electricity? You've got to weigh that and consider that the company is in about 50 to 60 million debt already. If you look at their history, when they were a company called SLP [SLP Engineering], and they went into liquidation, nobody knows what happened. So, can we trust a company with already such huge debts to take on a project like that? That's a question we've asked many times. But that's not a planning issue – all they look at are planning issues.

**Tobie**

Well, it's interesting isn't it because it's really sterile, that kind of timeline. But what's clear is that there's so much going on around that, it's like if you dig into those documents the amount of time and energy, and the articulation work that's going on in those documents, it's just incredible isn't it?

**Jane**

So many people have written in. I mean written really eloquent letters. It's extraordinary, I think.

**Viola**

And I think one of the other points which perhaps helps us, is that so much time has passed. 2014-15 was when this feasibility study was written, and it's nearly nine years later.

**Jane**

The project would take seven years even if it got the go-ahead today. Like you said, they wanted a seven-year timeline until the interconnector would be operational. It would almost be twenty years from the time of initiation to operation, it seems absurd.

I understand that is the nature of planning, of DCOs. It's an application to have consent for development – that's it. After that, there's all the mitigation which has to be thrashed out, there's a lot of room for things to be changed through mitigation, and so it isn't a done deal. I mean it is in terms of there will be an interconnector going through Portsmouth, but there's lots of things they can move about.

**Viola**

When you read their documents, particularly with environmental matters [they write] 'mitigation negligible', 'mitigation very little needed'...

**Tobie**

The thing that I thought was really sketchy was someone went to visit the sports sites and took photographs of empty fields, it's almost like a case of 'oh these sites aren't being used'...

**Viola**

They went out [to visit the fields] in February, you know. Yeah, rubbish!

**Jane**

The Victorious camping site! They minimized all that they felt were disruptions, to minor inconveniences. Yeah, they're very arrogant.

**Viola**

They had all the evidence we did. Paul Gonella – he designed our website and he's done a lot of work like Jane, particularly on the graphic side – we've had fantastic photographs, you've seen them showing the road and the video over the [affected] area. And Jane made this latest video on Milton Common – I mean, absolutely fantastic. If they don't get it with those visualizations, they're not interested. Money, money, money.

**Jane**

I read their response to the Milton Common asbestos thing. It was very weak, and they actually said there was moderate risk of contamination. There are moderate risks to people's health from laying the pipe in that area. But moderate seems pretty big to me.

**Tobie**

That seems like a risk?

**Jane** That's a risk yeah, I thought that was extraordinary on its own.

**Viola** But everything is either 'negligible', 'moderate', and 'can be mitigated'. But there's no mitigation – how do you mitigate?

**Jane** We should make more [of it], yeah, there's some really important messaging coming out of this stuff.

♦ ♦ ♦

**Jane** I wish [the students] had been working alongside us the year before, because it was all after, that it came. Right at that point...

**Tobie** Yeah, it was the moment when it seemed like everything was solved...

**Viola** Yes, but it's still ongoing. It's not finished...

**Tobie** Exactly! Well that's how we'll end [the publication]. We have the Fete, the cakes and the stuff that they did on that day, and then we'll end here. I'll include something from our conversation, something from what you're saying in some final comments.

♦ ♦ ♦

**Jane** They don't mind if it goes on. He's [Victor Fedotov] essentially just lending money to himself.

So, can we trust a company with already such huge debts to take on a project like that? That's a question we've asked many times. But that's not a planning issue – all they look at are planning issues.

**Viola** In Companies House, it was all very dodgy. Do you remember Patrick Eliot wrote these three really interesting articles? And there were five different companies featuring in AQUIND, one company is giving the money and that's a company called Project Finance Group, and all the debts are coming, or taken from there and paid from there, and that's based in Luxembourg. The owner is Victor Fedotov.

**Tobie** So, it's consolidated.

**Viola** And they've also shifted on the Companies House, the ownership of what they used to call voting rights and... what's the other one?... Anyway, the main owners really are Victor Fedotov and Alexander Temerko who've got voting rights.

**Jane** They've also said that they had major investors lined up for the interconnector, but they refuse to name them and they say they told the government who they are. That really makes me angry because I just think: don't we have a right to know who they are? Shouldn't we all, democratically, have a right to know who these investors are?

**Tobie** That's strange isn't it?

**Viola** Yeah. Before Liz Truss became Prime Minister on the 16<sup>th</sup> of August, there's a picture in Alexander Temerko's gallery with Liz Truss. Just like with Boris Johnson. And then you have a couple of other ministers in the back.

**Jane** Whoa.

**Viola** I've checked it all out – it's incredible. And we know from Paula, and you know what Stephen [Morgan] said, Alexander Temerko was walking in and out of the Houses of Parliament as if he owns the place.



## References

1 Re AQUIND Limited (2023) EWHC 98 [2]

2 National Infrastructure Planning (2023 Oct 11) *Electric Lines: AQUIND Interconnector by AQUIND Limited* <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/south-east/aquind-interconnector/>

3 Let's Stop AQUIND (2023, Oct 11) *THE FIGHT TO STOP AQUIND CONTINUES* <https://stopaquind.com>

4 Goldsmiths, University of London (2023, Oct 11) *MA Design: Expanded Practice* <https://www.gold.ac.uk/pg/ma-design-expanded-practice>

5 Let's Stop AQUIND (2023, Oct 11) *About the Stop Aquind Campaign* <https://stopaquind.com/about-stop-aquind-campaign/>

6 Portsmouth City Council (2023, Oct 11) *Portsea Island Landscape Character Assessment* <https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Portsea-Island-Landscape-Character-Assessment.pdf>

7 Goldsmiths, University of London (2023, Oct 11) *MA Design: Expanded Practice* <https://www.gold.ac.uk/pg/ma-design-expanded-practice>

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### About NON-AQUIND

The publication title NON-AQUIND shares its name with a postgraduate Design brief for students undertaking the MA Design Expanded Practice programme at Goldsmiths, University of London. The brief was delivered during a ten-week period in Spring term in 2022. MA Design Expanded Practice is a 'radical post-disciplinary programme for practitioners who want to push the boundaries of what design can be and do'.<sup>7</sup>

The brief and related research activity benefited from funding awarded by the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee in the Design Department. The brief was delivered by Tobie Kerridge, Rebecca Glyn-Blanco and Naho Matsuda.

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Many thanks to students and staff of NON-AQUIND for all other images

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*Eastney and Milton Allotments* (2022) can be viewed at:  
<https://research.gold.ac.uk/id/eprint/31550/>

#### Student contribution

Thanks to MA Design Expanded Practice students for their commitment to the brief and their contributions to this publication:

##### **Hidden Corner**

Huitian Zhang, Jintao Yi, Tianlu Ye, Yali Chen

##### **Orga World**

Jiazhen Liu, Qingyuan Zhou, Shanshan Zhong, Weniiian Xie, Yawen Deng

##### **Pillow Bomb**

Hanrong Liu, Shengsheng Hu, Xive Chen, Xueyi Li

##### **Portsmouth Adventure**

Chengyi Zhou, Haoran Lei, Xinhui Miao, Xinvue Wang, Ziyuan Wang

##### **Portopia**

Jie Ren, Tian Zhang, Tong Wu, Yusang Jiang, Zhouer Li

##### **Republic of Pebble Island**

Haoyan Li, Jiemei Li, Xiangru Qin, Xutong Zhao, Yu Xue

## 2019

**14 Nov 2019** Application received by the Planning Inspectorate

**12 Dec 2019** The application has been accepted for examination

## 2020

**27 Feb 2020** Relevant representations have been published on the website

**16 Mar 2020** The Examining Authority carried out Unaccompanied Site Inspections

**26 Mar 2020** In light of Government advice relating to Coronavirus (COVID-19), the Examining Authority (ExA) has issued a Procedural Decision to postpone the Preliminary Meeting (PM)

**15 Apr 2020** The Examining Authority has exercised its discretion to accept an Additional Submission from Portsmouth City Council

**3 Jul 2020** The Examining Authority's Rule 6 letter has been published, providing details of the Preliminary Meeting and the revised draft timetable for the examination of the application

**18 Aug 2020** Instructions for those wishing to participate in the Preliminary Meeting have been sent

**15 Sep 2020** The Examining Authority's Rule 8 letter (PDF, 424kb) has been published, giving details of the Examination Timetable and other important information about the Examination

**2 Oct 2020** Stop Aquind is formed in response to politician posts Gerard Vernon Jackson and Stephen Morgan

**3 Oct 2020** Viola sends email encouraging people to join Facebook and send letter of objection

**10 Oct 2020** First protest meeting

**10 Oct 2020** The Examining Authority has exceptionally exercised its discretion to accept a large number of Deadline 1 submissions from people who have not registered as Interested Parties into the Examination. All such submissions received up to and including 12 October 2020 have been accepted

**16 Oct 2020** The Applicant has written to Penny Mordaunt MP and the Eastney and Milton Allotment Holders Association Committee responding to concerns set out in recent submissions

**22 Oct 2020** Line The Route Demonstration – People from all over Portsmouth came together to highlight the damaging route the planned cables would take through the city.

**4 Nov 2020** Let's Stop Aquind branding designed by Jane.

## 2021

**1 Apr 2021** Craftivism and Aquind – Local community use craftivism to get creative and help catch the public's attention

Decorate The Tree – Portsmouth tree decorated to raise awareness

Children's Stop Aquind posters displayed along the proposed interconnector route

**22 May 2021** Static Protest – Covid-safe static protest against the Aquind interconnector

**6 Jun 2021** Walk The Route – Stop Aquind walked the full proposed route to protest and raise awareness

**10 Aug 2021** Eastney and Milton Allotments Film

**15 Sep 2021** Pop-up Petition Picnic held at Bransbury Park

**2 Oct 2021** Stronger Together Protest at Portsmouth Guildhall with Stop Aquind campaign, representatives from political parties, Portsmouth City Council and local organisations pledging to join forces

**5 Dec 2021** Tell The Tree – We 'tell the tree' our thoughts and feelings on the issues around the Aquind project through a collective and creative means

Led by Donkeys film projected in Portsmouth

**26 Nov 2021** Non-Aquind pitched at Goldsmiths with other transfocality briefs

## 2022

**18 Jan 2022** Non-Aquind Project Launch at Goldsmiths, London

**20 Jan 2022** The Secretary of State for the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy has today refused development consent for the project: AQUIND Interconnector

**25 Jan 2022** Portsmouth Field Trip

**1 Feb 2022** Mapping Workshop

**8 Feb 2022** Prototyping of Fete Intervention

**8 Mar 2022** An application has been made for a permission to bring a judicial review of the decision of the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy not to grant the Development Consent Order for AQUIND Interconnector

**8 Mar 2022** Rehearsal of Fete Intervention

**2 Apr 2022** Portsmouth Fete

**20 Jun 2022** Application for permission to apply for judicial review of the decision of the Secretary of State in respect of the Development Consent Order has been granted

**23-24 Nov 2022** Judicial Review takes place at the High Court

## 2023

**24 Jan 2023** High Court judgement published

**13 Feb 2023** The decision of the Secretary of State dated 20 January 2022 to refuse the application by AQUIND Ltd. has been quashed

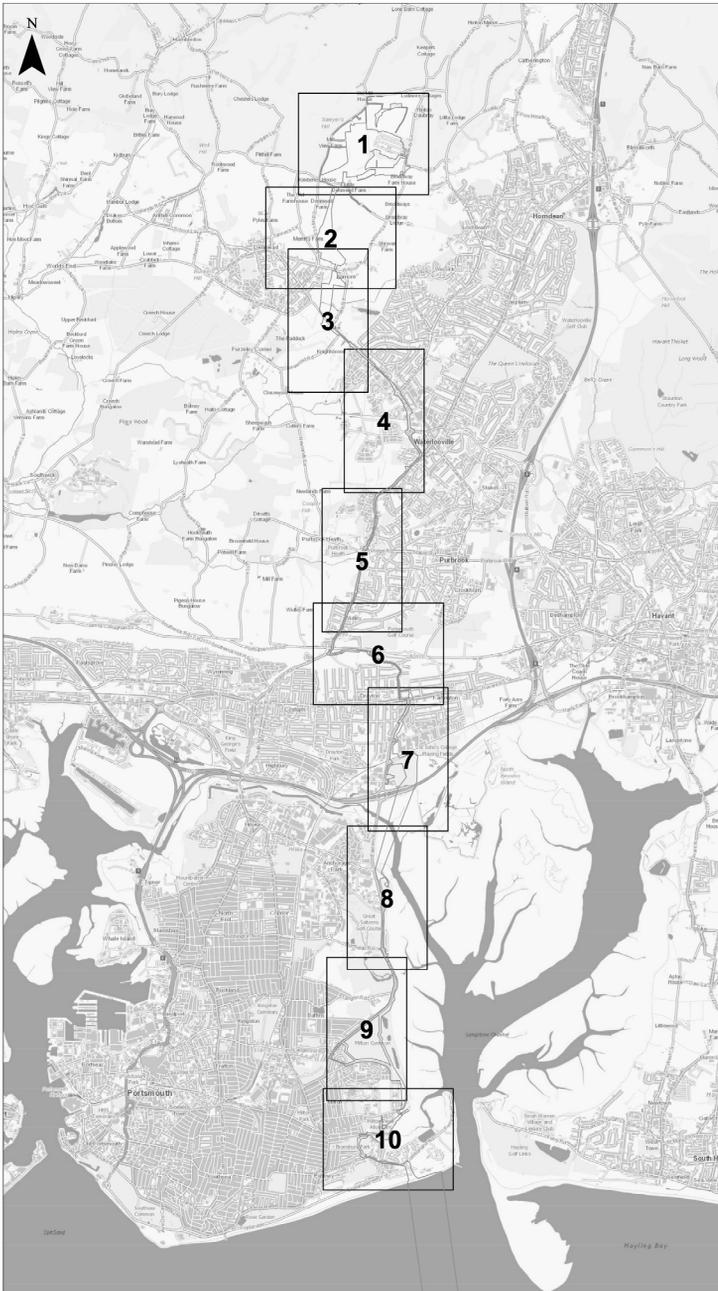
**22 Apr 2023** Protect Portsmouth Rally at Guildhall Square was the last opportunity to raise awareness about the Aquind Interconnector before the deadline for objections the following week

**27 Jun 2023** The Secretary of State invited comments from Interested Parties on the matters contained in the request of 03 March 2023 and the information contained in the Applicant's response dated 28 April 2023

**24 Jul 2023** Conversation between Jane and Viola of Let's Stop Aquind and Tobie Kerridge

**2 Aug 2023** The Secretary of State has received responses to the request of 14 July 2023, and is currently reviewing these responses

**End of 2023** A climate choir event is planned if there is no decision



**AQUIND Interconnector Land Plans**

Order Limits

0 450 900 1,800 Metres

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Infrastructure Planning (Applications) (Prescribed Forms and Procedures) Regulations 2010 - Regulation 5(4) and 5(2)(b)

Order No	Order Description	Order Date	Order Status
03	03	03	03
02	02	02	02
01	01	01	01
00	00	00	00

FOR APPROVAL

**wsp**

WSP House, 11 Charter Lane, London, WC2A 1WJ, UK  
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**AQUIND**

AQUIND Interconnector

Application document reference 2.2  
Low Resolution Land Plans  
Key Plan  
Sheet 6 of 10

Order No	Order Description	Order Date	Order Status
122/500	DL	VB	
EN020022	DL	VB	09/12/2020
EN020022-2-2-LP-Sheet6			03

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The Planning Inspectorate  
National Infrastructure Directorate  
Temple Quay House  
Temple Quay  
Bristol  
BS1 6PN

Our Ref: EN020022  
14 November 2019

Dear Sirs,

**Planning Act 2008 (as amended) – AQUIND Interconnector**

**OVERVIEW**

We are pleased to enclose an application by AQUIND Limited (the '**Applicant**') under the Planning Act 2008 (as amended) (the '**PA 2008**') for a Development Consent Order in respect of the Proposed Development (the '**Application**').

AQUIND Interconnector (the '**Project**') is a new 2,000 MW subsea and underground High Voltage Direct Current ('HVDC') bi-directional electric power transmission link between the South Coast of England and Normandy in France. By linking the British and French electric power grids it will make energy markets more efficient, improve security of supply and enable greater flexibility as power grids evolve to adapt to different sources of renewable energy and changes in demand trends such as the development of electric vehicles. The Project will have the capacity to transmit up to 16,000,000 MWh of electricity per annum, which equates to approximately 5% and 3% of the total consumption of the UK and France respectively.

The Application seeks development consent for those elements of the Project located in the UK and the UK Marine Area (the '**Proposed Development**'). The Proposed Development includes:

1. HVDC marine cables from the boundary of the UK exclusive economic zone to the UK at Eastney in Portsmouth;
2. Jointing of the HVDC marine cables and HVDC onshore cables;
3. HVDC onshore cables;
4. A Converter Station and associated electrical and telecommunications infrastructure;
5. High Voltage Alternating Current ('HVAC') onshore cables and associated infrastructure connecting the Converter Station to the Great Britain electrical transmission network, the National Grid, at Lovedean Substation; and
6. Smaller diameter fibre optic cables to be installed together with the HVDC and HVAC cables and associated infrastructure.

Whilst interconnectors are not directly listed among the types of energy infrastructure that are assigned the status of Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project ('**NSIP**') under the PA 2008, on

Aldermay House  
10-15 Queen Street  
London  
wsp.com

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Registered in England and Wales No. 01383511



# The Planning Inspectorate

National Infrastructure Planning  
Temple Quay House  
2 The Square  
Bristol, BS1 6PN

Customer Services: 0303 444 5000  
e-mail: [aquind@planninginspectorate.gov.uk](mailto:aquind@planninginspectorate.gov.uk)

---

Louise Rich  
WSP UK Ltd

Your Ref:

By email only.

Our Ref: EN020022

Date: 12 December 2019

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Dear Sir/Madam

## **Planning Act 2008 (as amended) – Section 55**

### **Application by Aquind Limited for an Order Granting Development Consent for the Aquind Interconnector**

#### **Notification of decision to accept an application for Examination for an Order Granting Development Consent**

I refer to the above application for an Order granting development consent made under section 37(2) of the Planning Act 2008 (as amended) (PA2008) and received by the Planning Inspectorate on behalf of the Secretary of State on 14 November 2019.

The Secretary of State has decided to accept this application for Examination. In reaching this decision, the Secretary of State has:

- in respect of section 55(3)(e) had regard to the matters set out in section 55(4), and concluded that the applicant has complied with Chapter 2 of Part 5 of PA2008; and
- in respect of section 55(3)(f), had regard to the extent to which those matters set out in section 55(5A) have either been complied with or followed, and concluded that the application (including accompaniments) is of a satisfactory standard.

Please be aware of your duties under:

- sections 56, 58 and 59 of PA2008;
- Regulations 8, 9 and 10 of the Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 (as amended); and
- Regulation 13 of The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2009 or, for projects scoped after 16 May 2017, the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017.

Yours faithfully

<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk>





# The Planning Inspectorate

National Infrastructure Planning  
Temple Quay House  
2 The Square  
Bristol, BS1 6PN

Customer Services: 0303 444 5000  
e-mail: [aquind@planninginspectorate.gov.uk](mailto:aquind@planninginspectorate.gov.uk)

---

Your Ref:

Our Ref: EN020022

Date: 20 January 2022

---

Dear Sir/Madam

**Planning Act 2008 (as amended) - Sections 116 and 117 and The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 – Regulation 32**

**Application by AQUIND Limited for an Order granting Development Consent for the AQUIND Interconnector project**

**Notice of the decision by the Secretary of State**

The Planning Inspectorate previously consulted you on the above project, which has now been decided. This letter notifies you of the publication of the Secretary of State's decision in relation to the above application.

The Secretary of State as the decision maker under s103 and s104 of the Planning Act 2008 (as amended) (PA2008) has decided that development consent should be refused under s114(1)(b) of PA2008.

Electronic copies of the decision documentation, including the Secretary of State's decision letter and statement of reasons, can be viewed at:

<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/south-east/aquind-interconnector/?ipcsection=overview>

The Recommendation Report submitted to the Secretary of State by the Examining Authority is also available at the same link.

If you have any queries about the Secretary of State's decision letter please contact:

Energy Infrastructure Planning Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy  
T: +44 (0)20 7215 5000  
E: [beiseip@beis.gov.uk](mailto:beiseip@beis.gov.uk)

1 Victoria Street  
London

<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk>



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# Statement from Stephen Morgan MP on Aquind's decision to launch a Judicial Review

8 March 2022



Reacting to Aquind's launch of an application for a Judicial Review against government's decision to not approve the interconnector project, the Member of Parliament for Portsmouth South, Stephen Morgan, said:

*"Aquind's desperate decision to apply for a Judicial Review changes nothing. The facts remain that it would bring untold disruption to our city, but offers no clear local benefits.*

*"At a time of widespread calls to clean up alleged dirty-money in Britain linked to Putin's Russia, this application is not worth the paper it is written on. I am continuing to work alongside local campaigners and I will be monitoring Aquind's challenge closely as it develops.*

*"Portsmouth is united in its opposition against Aquind. Government was right to finally arrive at the correct decision to not approve it. Whatever the outcome of this application, this remains the case*



Neutral Citation Number: [2023] EWHC 98 (Admin)

Case No: CO/755/2022

**IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE**  
**KING'S BENCH DIVISION**  
**ADMINISTRATIVE COURT**

Royal Courts of Justice  
Strand, London, WC2A 2LL

Date: 24/01/2023

Before :

**MRS JUSTICE LIEVEN**

Between :

**THE KING**  
**(on the application of)**  
**AQUIND LIMITED**

**Claimant**

and

**SECRETARY OF STATE FOR BUSINESS, ENERGY  
AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY**

**Defendant**

and

**PORTSMOUTH CITY COUNCIL**

**Interested Party**

-----  
-----  
**Mr Simon Bird KC and Mr Hugh Flanagan** (instructed by **Herbert Smith Freehills LLP**)  
for the **Claimant**

**Mr James Strachan KC and Mr Mark Westmoreland Smith** (instructed by **Government  
Legal Department**) for the **Defendant**

**Ms Celina Colquhoun** (instructed by **Portsmouth City Council**) for the **Interested Party**

Hearing dates: **22 and 23 November 2022**



Department for  
Energy Security  
& Net Zero

1 Victoria Street  
London  
SW1H 0ET

Web:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-energy-security-and-net-zero>

---

To:

Our Ref: EN020022

AQUIND Limited  
National Grid Electricity Transmission Plc  
National Grid Electricity System Operator Limited  
Portsmouth City Council  
Coastal Partners

cc: Any interested party

Date: 03 March 2023

Dear Sir or Madam,

**Planning Act 2008 and The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010**

**Application by AQUIND Limited (“the Applicant”) for an Order granting Development Consent for the proposed AQUIND Interconnector (“the AQUIND Interconnector project”)**

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION**

1. Following the completion of the Examination on 8 March 2021, the Examining Authority (“the ExA”) submitted a Report and Recommendation in respect of its findings and conclusions on the above application to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (“the Secretary of State for BEIS”) on 8 June 2021.
2. On 20 January 2022, the Secretary of State for BEIS took the decision to refuse the application for development consent. Following an Order of the High Court made on 24 January 2023, the decision to refuse the application was quashed.
3. The Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero<sup>1</sup> (“the Secretary of State”) will now re-determine the application for development consent made by the Applicant.

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<sup>1</sup> On 7 February 2023 the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero was created with focus on the energy and climate change portfolio of the former Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

**From:** [Hazel Lyness](#)  
**To:** [Aquind Interconnector](#)  
**Subject:** Objections to the Aquind Interconnector  
**Date:** 19 June 2023 08:43:26

---

Dear Grant Shapps MP and the Planning Inspectorate,

I am writing yet again, to object to this ill thought out and destructive project that will trash Portsmouth and the surrounding areas, just for the profit of a company with dubious finances.

As a person who does not write objections I am here again as I have strong concerns, along with the many local residences that have also written in as they vehemently object to this pernicious project.

I have read the Portsmouth and Winchester City Councils objections and a strong objection from Blake and Morgan solicitor, that should put this to bed once and for all.

Please ensure that you read all the objections as they say it all better than I can. WE DO NOT WANT AQUIND HERE. This should be clear but we are made to keep jumping through hoops, trying to navigate an over complicated administration platform for a project that should be dead in the water. Kwasi Kwarteng was right when he rejected it, so please uphold his decision.

The French have also strongly objected to Aquind's proposal and do not want it and have made this clear, so why is this still on the table?

Please reject this project once and for all.

Hazel Lyness

**In response to ‘Aquinds plans’** are you aware of (The protected habitats and animals) along the eastern side of Portsmouth, a (coastal habitat) where the proposed route will be.

### **GREAT CRESTED NEWT**

#### **Activities that can harm great crested newts**

Activities that can affect great crested newts include:

- maintaining or restoring ponds, woodland, scrub or rough grassland
- restoring forest areas to lowland heaths
- ploughing close to breeding ponds or other bodies of water
- removing dense vegetation and disturbing the ground
- removing materials like dead wood piled on the ground
- excavating the ground, for example to renovate a building
- filling in or destroying ponds or other water bodies

#### **Building and development work can harm great crested newts and their habitats, for example if it:**

- removes habitat or makes it unsuitable
- disconnects or isolates habitats, such as by splitting it up
- changes habitats of other species, reducing the newts’ food sources
- increases shade and silt in ponds or other water bodies used by the newts
- changes the water table
- introduces fish, which will eat newt eggs or young
- increases the numbers of people, traffic and pollutants in the area or the amount of chemicals that run off into ponds.

**THE BRENT GOOSE** The geese regularly seen in this area are the sub-species called Dark-bellied Brent Geese, *Branta bernicla bernicla*. They breed on the Taimyr Peninsula in Northern Siberia, and spend the winter on the east and south coasts of England, and other sites in north-western Europe. The total (world) population is about 300,000 geese, and about 100,000 come to the UK,

# STOP AQUIND!

PORTSMOUTH  
SAYS

AQUIND  
NO THANKS

SAVE OUR  
GREEN SPACE!

NO!

LAN  
GRA

HIDDEN CORNER

T U I  
Base, Cook, Home - THE WHAT MATTERED

COME & TRY

NO!  
CASH  
FOR  
CABLES

STOP  
AQUIND

Recommend player:   
Time:  Min  Sec

GET YOUR PASSPORT  
TO START 

SAVE  
THE  
PLANTS



## NON-AQUIND

While renewable energy networks support global ambitions for net zero, delivery is complex, as related infrastructure has impacts upon landscapes and communities.

NON-AQUIND explores the repercussions of a proposal for an electrical interconnector between Normandy and Portsmouth.

