

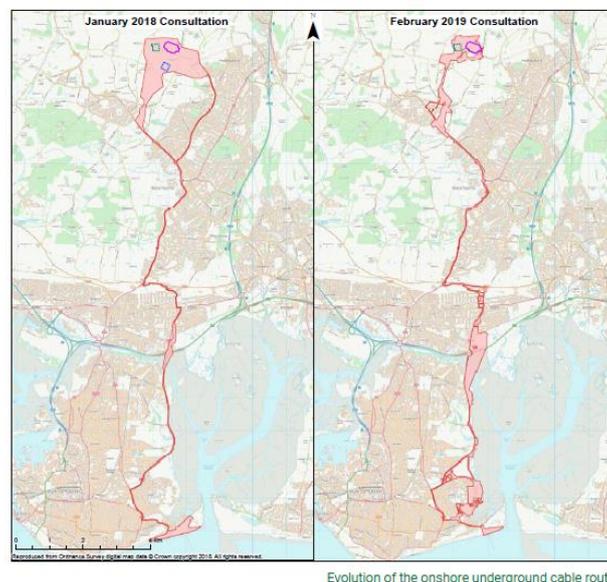
Q. The Chairman, Cllr Langford-Smith, began by making the observation that the location of Denmead could have been avoided, particularly in respect of the low turnout of residents to the initial consultations in 2018. She stated that out of 98,000 people, only 239 residents attended, highlighting the fact that many Denmead residents were not given the opportunity to submit their feedback. She concluded by asking how they would ensure the countryside would be protected if AQUIND's preferred cable route should be chosen.

A. It is important to stress that AQUIND has not yet selected a "preferred cable route". The onshore (underground) Cable Corridor identified as part of the current consultation includes the majority of the "consultation route" as presented to the local community in January 2018, together with some additional alternatives (referred to as 'cable route options'). These cable route options are situated within the Cable Corridor for the project which is described in the consultation documents by reference to "sections". The term "corridor" is used to reflect the fact that in some cases a larger area is shown than that through which the cable will ultimately be routed, and consent applied for.

Numerous assessments and investigations have informed the onshore (underground) Cable Corridor being discussed as part of the current consultation, including initial desktop studies; procured utility information; highway boundary information; ground investigation results; HDD feasibility studies; environmental surveys and public feedback.

The feasibility and practicability of the cable route options presented is still being considered and further technical and environmental work is needed in some locations, together with ongoing stakeholder and landowner discussions. In parallel with those exercises, AQUIND is keen to receive further feedback from the local community to allow for a decision on the final cable route to be taken with that feedback in mind.

A comparison of the onshore (underground) Cable Corridor presented during the informal consultation in 2018 and the current (statutory) consultation is depicted below. The cable route options within the wider Cable Corridor are described in detail on pp.52-89 of the Consultation Document.



With regard to the environmental impacts of the project, it is important to stress that, whilst electricity interconnectors are not infrastructure of a type which falls within the ambit of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017, AQUIND has decided to carry out an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) on a voluntary basis, in recognition of the need to assess for likely significant environmental effects associated with the project.

The scope of the EIA has been agreed with the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) and the relevant local planning authorities in a Scoping Opinion, which can be viewed on the Planning Inspectorate's website at: <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp->

[content/ipc/uploads/projects/EN020022/EN020022-000059-AQUI%20-%20Scoping%20Opinion.pdf](https://www.aquindconsultation.co.uk/content/ipc/uploads/projects/EN020022/EN020022-000059-AQUI%20-%20Scoping%20Opinion.pdf)

The Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) presented as part of this consultation contains a summary of the preliminary environmental information which AQUIND has collated and assessed to date. The PEIR is available to view online at www.aquindconsultation.co.uk, at all public exhibition events and at the deposit locations (until Monday 29 April 2019).

Once the EIA has been carried out, an Environmental Statement (ES), which reports the findings of that assessment, will be submitted as part of the application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) for AQUIND Interconnector. The ES and this will identify the likely significant environmental effects associated with the project during construction, operation and, where relevant, decommissioning. Where likely significant environmental effects are identified, the ES will also seek to identify the measures that will be employed to mitigate those impacts.

With respect to the onshore (underground) cable route, AQUIND's intention is to locate the cables within existing highways or road verges wherever practicable. AQUIND Interconnector has purposefully been designed to avoid the need for the construction of overhead lines and their associated lasting visual impact. Due to the cable being installed underground, with the land reinstated to its previous use, there are not considered to be any long-term significant landscape and visual effects associated with it. Although every effort will be made to reduce any impacts on existing vegetation, should any hedgerow or tree planting be lost during construction, replacement planting would be proposed.

With regard to the informal consultation carried out by AQUIND in January 2018, a wide range of measures were employed to raise awareness and encourage feedback from the local community and stakeholders, including

- An invitation leaflet was mailed to more than 10,000 residential and businesses addresses in the vicinity of the proposals, together with other identified stakeholders including elected representatives and representatives of third-party and community groups;
- A press release was issued to the *Portsmouth News*, *Horndean Post*, *Southern Daily Echo* and *Hampshire Chronicle*, while quarter-page, paid-for newspaper adverts were placed in the *Portsmouth News*, *Hampshire Chronicle*, *Petersfield Post*, *Clanfield Post*, *Horndean Post*, *Bordon Post* and *Southern Daily Echo* – with a combined circulation of more than 70,000;
- The public exhibitions were further publicised through paid-for Facebook advertising – reaching more than 18,000 Facebook users across the south of England.

The local community was given the opportunity to provide feedback via a range of methods, including feedback forms at the public exhibitions. For those that were unable to attend a public exhibition, feedback could also be submitted via email at aquindconsultation@becg.com, via freepost to 'AQUIND CONSULTATION', or via the consultation website at www.aquindconsultation.co.uk. A freephone information line (01962 893869) has been live throughout the course of the informal and formal consultation periods to enable the local community to contact the project team with any questions.

Q. Cllr Brown asked why preference was being given to laying the cables along Hambledon Road, when it seemed obvious that less traffic disruption would be caused if Anmore Road and Soake Road were to be chosen instead, as these are narrower roads containing minimal road infrastructure.

A. During the initial cable route optioneering exercise, Soake Road was considered as an option and presented within the informal consultation in January 2018. However, after further investigation, a combination of technical and environmental factors deemed this option as unfeasible to progress to detailed design stage.

The narrow width of the road coupled with the number of existing services (including an existing power cable) did not favour the installation of two cable circuits. Added to this, the road is lined by considerable hedgerow and arboriculture cover with the root coverage of the trees further encroaching into any potential space for a cable corridor.

Q. Cllr Andreoli expressed his concern about the large Interconnectors, particularly in relation to noise levels and possible flood lighting which would be clearly visible around the village, due to the height of the infrastructure. He stated that the areas to the North of Denmead is a dark sky area.

A. AQUIND recognises the importance of minimising noise impacts arising from the operation of the Converter Station. A preliminary optioneering assessment of the potential for noise impacts identified that the potential for impacts from operational noise associated with the western option (known as "Option B") option was less than the other options considered, taking into account the surrounding environment.

The Converter Station will generate some noise, predominantly from the transformers. An assessment of noise levels and how these can be mitigated has been carried out, including considering the types of equipment used and how this orientated on the site to reduce the operational noise. Mitigation measures, such as acoustic enclosures, sound shields, acoustic lining and acoustic barriers, will be included to reduce noise impacts if necessary. The proposed mitigation measures will be subject to monitoring to ensure that the noise limits agreed with the relevant local planning authorities are achieved.

Normal operation will not require lighting of the site, although lighting columns will be installed along the perimeter fence and around the outdoor equipment areas for emergency use only.

Finally, with regard to the siting of the Converter Station, some levelling of the Converter Station site may be required and where this is the case the Converter Station may be sunk into the landscape. It is unlikely it will be feasible to substantially sink the converter station due to engineering and environmental constraints.

Q. Cllr Crichton asked if it is currently legally binding that the Secretary of State would be making a decision in 2020.

A. It is currently anticipated that an application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) will be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) on behalf of the Secretary of State later in Autumn 2019. As such, the current anticipated project timeline is as follows:

- February to April 2019: Statutory consultation on AQUIND's proposals takes place. Responding to the consultation is the course of action for influencing the proposals, whether you agree, disagree or believe they could be improved.
- Autumn 2019: Anticipated submission of the DCO application seeking the permission to build and operate AQUIND Interconnector. At the Acceptance stage, The Planning Inspectorate (PINS) will decide whether the application meets the requirements of the Planning Act 2008 to confirm whether it may proceed to the Examination stage.
- Autumn 2019 – Spring 2020: At this stage, the public will be able to register their interest in the application with PINS and give their written views on the application.
- Spring 2020: The Examination phase will begin, with PINS having up to six months to carry out the Examination.
- Late 2020: PINS will make a recommendation to the Secretary of State three months following the close of the examination, who will have a further three months to make the final decision, taking into account the local impacts of the proposals.
- Early 2021: If approved, construction works for AQUIND Interconnector will begin.
- 2023: AQUIND Interconnector will become operational.

For further information about the DCO planning process, please visit the PINS website: www.infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk

A decision by the Secretary of State on whether to approve and make the DCO has not yet been taken, and will not be until the application for this has been examined and reported on in accordance with the requirements of the Planning Act 2008.

Q. Cllr Berry asked how AQUIND would ensure that the large culverts would avoid becoming damaged.

A. The installation design for the project will address the protection of all existing infrastructure and safe clearances will be adhered to in order to allow future maintenance.

Q. Cllr Brown asked why has personal information such as mortgage details been requested in relation to ownership of land.

A. As part of the planning process, AQUIND Limited has a legal duty to carry out diligent inquiries to identify all owners of land that might be affected by the Development Consent Order (DCO) application for AQUIND Interconnector. This includes not only those who own freehold interests, but also those who occupy or have interests in the land in other capacities.

The purpose of this exercise is to identify those persons who have an interest in the land potentially affected by AQUIND Interconnector so as to allow those persons to be consulted directly by AQUIND regarding the project and their comments taken into account and addressed as necessary prior to an application for the DCO being finalised. The information gathered will also be used to assist with the production of documentation to be submitted in support of the application for the DCO.

AQUIND needs to ensure that all persons with interests in land that may be affected by the proposals for AQUIND Interconnector are consulted. As mortgage companies have a registered interest in properties, we need to ensure that they are identified and consulted on the proposals in the same way as the owner of the property.

AQUIND would like to provide reassurances that acquisition of homes or gardens is not proposed. Where owners of houses adjoining the proposed onshore cable corridor have been contacted, this is purely in their capacity as the presumed owners of subsoil under public highways where the underground cable is proposed to be laid, and which will need to be acquired for this purpose.

There is no duty to complete the LIQ and the correspondence provided has confirmed this, however recipients are encouraged to do so to ensure the information held is up to date and correct and so that all future communication regarding the proposals for AQUIND Interconnector can be directed towards the correct persons.

If residents have been contacted in regard to land they have an interest in, and would like to discuss this further, they can contact the Land Referencing team via:

Phone: **020 3116 9389**

Email: **aquindinterconnector@wsp.com**

Further information regarding the LIQ process is available on the FAQs section of the consultation website at **www.aquindconsultation.co.uk/faqs**.

Q. Cllr Rusbridger wished to know how AQUIND intend to prevent possible damage to the hedgerows and farmland, as stated in their report.

A. Where practicable, removal of hedgerows and veteran vegetation will be avoided through siting of the onshore (underground) cable route and Converter Station. Where avoidance is not possible, measures to minimise or reduce the duration, intensity, extent or likelihood of impacts will be proposed, as appropriate.

The construction of the Converter Station Area would result in the permanent loss of semi-improved neutral grassland, hedgerows and mature trees. The sensitivity of the grassland and trees is considered to be negligible, while the hedgerows are yet to be assessed.

Minimal impacts on habitats are expected along the onshore (underground) cable route, as roads are utilised for large sections in Sections 4 to 10. Unimproved neutral grassland is

present in Section 3, due to the planned use of HDD in this area, no impact is currently anticipated. Sections of hedgerow along the route are likely to be required to be removed which have not yet been assessed. The effect on unimproved neutral grassland and water bodies are currently considered to be negligible due to avoidance.

Within Sections 1, 2 and 3 of the Onshore Cable Corridor, mature trees and tree groups have been identified of medium arboricultural value in the rural landscape. Moderate impacts are expected in the fields east of Denmead in Sections 2 and 3. These impacts can be mitigated in part by local adjustment of the Onshore Cable Corridor during detailed design to avoid and retain arboricultural features, particularly those of medium and low value.

Within the mostly urban sections 4-10 the Onshore Cable Corridor will pass many trees and tree groups. Some will be in an already constrained area therefore impacts are expected to occur on a high proportion of trees. However, many trees are of low value so that mitigation by replanting will be possible.

Higher value features in these sections occur mainly in parks such as Zetland Field (Section 6), Farlington Playing Fields (Section 7) and Bransbury Park (Section 9). Limited medium value arboricultural features occurred within highway.

Q. Cllr Andreoli stated that some residents in Denmead, who do not appear to own properties within the “red zone” area, have received letters in relation to the ownership of land. This has caused anxiety and confusion by many residents.

A. Without specific information AQUIND, of course, cannot comment on individual cases. As mentioned above, AQUIND has a legal duty to carry out diligent inquiries to identify all owners of land that might be affected by the DCO application for AQUIND Interconnector, and AQUIND would like to apologise if this process has caused any concern to local residents.

To begin to explain why some residents who do not appear to own properties within the “red zone” (known as the “Site Boundary”) for the project may have received letters in relation to the ownership of land, it is important to note that the Site Boundary for the project has evolved over the past few months meaning that some residents that were previously identified and subsequently contacted as part of the Land Referencing process may have an interest in properties that are no longer within the Site Boundary for the project. In addition, it is possible that some parties that live in Denmead would have received letters due to the fact that their addresses are listed on Land Registry, and they have an interest in land elsewhere within the Site Boundary for the project.

Finally, as mentioned above, the acquisition of homes or gardens is not proposed in connection with the project and where owners of houses adjoining the proposed onshore cable corridor have been contacted, this is purely in their capacity as the presumed owners of subsoil under public highways (known in legal terms as the “ad medium filum” rule) where the underground cable is proposed to be laid, and which will need to be acquired for this purpose. As such, Land Interest Questionnaires (LIQs) were sent letters to the residents along Mill Road and Martin Avenue due to their interest in the subsoil of the highway, as they own properties adjacent to these roads.

If residents have been contacted in regard to land they have an interest in, and would like to discuss this further, they can contact the Land Referencing team via:

Phone: **020 3116 9389**

Email: **aquindinterconnector@wsp.com**

Further information regarding the LIQ process is available on the FAQs section of the consultation website at **www.aquindconsultation.co.uk/faqs**.

Q. Cllr Carden asked what is the design process in relation to the DCO.

A. The Converter Station will be approved in 'outline' with the details of the design to be confirmed after the grant of the DCO. The details will be strictly required to comply with spatial and design parameters which are to be approved by the DCO. This is because it is important that some design flexibility is retained for when a construction contractor for the Converter Station is appointed.

AQUIND is consulting on the spatial parameters and 'design principles' which the final design will be required to comply with. The spatial and design parameters will be further developed prior to the submission of the application for the DCO, taking into account the feedback received during the consultation and further discussions to be held with the relevant local planning authorities and the South Downs National Park Authority. For further information on the design principles for the Converter Station, please see pp.35-37 of the Consultation Document.

The design and location of the cable route will be more fixed, though some flexibility within a corridor will be retained to allow for engineering solutions to be implemented. The corridor within which the cable will be laid will be fixed and clearly shown on the plans to be approved as part of the DCO.

Q. Cllr Brown asked how many access covers and man holes would be along the route?

A. Along the onshore (underground) cable route, joint bays will be required at regular intervals to joint together the individual sections of cables which, when joined together, form the full extent of the underground cables between the Converter Station and the Landfall.

The number of joint bays along the length of the cable route is dictated by two factors: (1) the length of cable that can fit on a cable drum (the drum-shape reel on which the cable is stored prior to installation); and (2) limits to the pulling tension required to pull the cable through the ducts. For these reasons, joint bays are likely to be required every 600 – 2,000m along the route. The distance between joint bays will depend on the technique employed by the contractor appointed by AQUIND to execute the project, and some flexibility as to the number and location of joint bays will be sought in the DCO application to cater for this.

Link Boxes (also called "link pillars" or "link cabinets") will also be required approximately every 6km along the onshore (underground) cable route, typically located alongside a joint bay and accessed via a manhole cover. These will enable tests to be undertaken to establish the integrity of the cable. These are approximately 0.8m x 0.8m x 0.6m in size.

Indicative images of joint bays with link boxes are set out below (images courtesy of Prysmian):



Q. Cllr Rusbridger referred to the underground culverts to be installed under fields, which AQUIND predicted would measure 20 metres wide. Cllr Rusbridger wished to know how this would affect the meadows and ensure it remained a protected site.

A. During cable installation, Aquind will aim to minimise the impact to the local environment. In this area, the use of HDD (Horizontal Directional Drilling) is being considered. HDD is a trenchless solution which tunnels beneath the landscape therefore removing the need to excavate a continual trench. Aside the entry and exit point, this method causes minimal disruption to the landscape and uses plastic ducts rather than culverts within which the cables are positioned. The width of the installation will be determined by the detailed design process, but an HDD solution would consist of four spaced ducts each expected to be less than 300mm diameter.

Q. District Cllr Brook expressed her view by saying that the representatives from AQUIND had not provided any examples of what the landscape would look like during or after the completion of the project. She continued that the area, which is part of the South Downs National Park, is very high up and therefore a visual impact of the large structures would be inevitable. She concluded that in her opinion there was a level of disquiet amongst local authorities due to a lack of clarity from AQUIND.

A. Illustrative images of the Converter Station are provided on p.34 and p.37 on the Consultation Document (please see below). Additional images (wirelines and photomontages) are included in Figures 15.17 to 15.39 of the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR).

FIGURE 9 ILLUSTRATIVE IMAGES SHOWING EXISTING BASELINE FROM VIEWPOINT B AND INDICATIVE IMAGE WITH CONVERTER STATION (HEIGHT AT 22M)



FIGURE 11 ILLUSTRATIVE IMAGES OF CONVERTER STATION FROM VIEWPOINT B 10 AND 20 YEARS POST CONSTRUCTION



The proposed Converter Station is located outside the boundary of the South Downs National Park (SDNP). AQUIND recognises the need to ensure that the Converter Station design minimises any adverse impact on views from within the SDNP and the setting of the SDNP.

The extent to which the proposed Converter Station would be visible from the SDNP and how far it has an influence on the landscape character of the SDNP will be determined by the screening of the Converter Station and other visible infrastructure in views from within the SDNP to the north, north east and west. Localised screening is provided by existing tree and hedgerow cover. The development of a planting plan, with proposed tree and hedgerow planting, as part of the landscape mitigation plan will further reduce visibility.

There have been regular meetings with all local authorities, including Winchester City Council and South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA), and through an iterative design process and consultation with the local planning authorities, a draft landscape mitigation plan for the proposed Converter Station location has been prepared, identifying measures to reduce potential landscape and visual effects and potential to create positive new habitats as well as improving connectivity and creating links to existing ancient woodland. For further information on the Converter Station in relation to SDNP, please see p.38 of the Consultation Document.

It is acknowledged that the potential landscape and visual impact is a key concern of local residents as well as of the local stakeholder groups and the local planning authorities (LPAs) and South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA). The project takes this issue very seriously and is committed to minimising the visual impact of the Converter Station so far as is feasible. As set out above, in addition to considering the feedback received during the consultation, the project team will be further engaging with the relevant authorities to progress the spatial parameters and design principles for the Converter Station as well as the proposed mitigation measures, with a focus on minimising this impact.

Q. County Cllr Stallard asked how AQUIND intended on approaching the issue of the long-term inconvenience and considerable disruption, to both residents and businesses. She asked if there had been any negotiation or mitigation in relation to traffic management at HCC. She also asked for a predicted time frame for the inevitable disruption.

A. It is inevitable that the installation of infrastructure in the highway will result in temporary disruption to the transport users on those highways. With that in mind, AQUIND is committed to implementing traffic management measures to reduce in so far as is possible disruption to the transport network during the period of construction of the project.

It is important to emphasise that the underground cable ducts will be installed in sections of approximately 100m meaning that any impact will be temporary and localised. Typically, the installation rate for cable ducts per circuit (or trench) is approximately 18m to 30m per day and this it is estimated that it could take an average of 1 week to install the cable ducts for a 100m section. It is anticipated that more than one (up to six) 100m sections on the cable route may be constructed at the same time. The installation of cable ducts across the full onshore (underground) cable route is estimated to take approximately 18 months.

The onshore (underground) cable route options which are yet to be fixed along the Cable Corridor have principally been identified to minimise traffic disruption in constrained areas, following feedback received from the informal consultation in January 2018 asking for this to be considered. In undertaking this further identification of options, AQUIND has sought to explore all the alternatives available for the installation of the cable route between the Landfall and the Converter Station. As previously noted, a description of the onshore (underground) cable route options is provided on pp.52-88 of the Consultation Document, with the options within Section 3 (relating to Denmead) described on pp.56-60.

With regard to installation and traffic management, an overall philosophy has been to keep at least one lane of traffic flowing and road closures to a minimum. The approach to traffic management outlined below is intended to give an indication of the type of measures which may be employed during construction. AQUIND is engaging with Hampshire County Council, as a highways authority, and a full traffic management strategy will be produced in connection with the DCO application:

- Where closure of one half of the carriageway is required, temporary traffic signals will be used to manage traffic. During peak hours, these traffic signals will be manually adjusted to ensure that delays are kept to a minimum. Three-way temporary traffic signals may be required but will be avoided where possible;

- On dual-carriageway roads (such as Eastern Road), one lane of the carriageway will be closed intermittently where the cable cannot be installed within the footway or verges (with the closure relating to the section of the highway being worked on at that time only);
- On wide single-carriageways (such as A3 London Road) it may be possible for two-way traffic to continue at a safe passing distance when the construction area is located within the existing bus lane;
- In some instances, there will be insufficient space for traffic to safely pass the construction area, meaning a full road closure will be required. On residential streets these restrictions would be kept to a minimum, with temporary access allowed where possible. Where required, diversions will be agreed with the local highway authority;
- Where pedestrian crossings are impacted by lane or full road closures, alternative crossing locations will be explored and provided;
- Providing there would be no unacceptable impact on nearby properties, consideration will be given for opportunities to extended construction hours and/or night working to further minimise traffic disruption;
- The programme for installing the cables will factor in major scheduled events (e.g. football matches), major shopping events (e.g. Christmas), and school term times where possible.

Indicative periods for traffic disruption against each section of onshore (underground) cable route, based on the current understanding and options to minimise this, are set out on pp.54-88 of the Consultation Document.¹ With regard to the onshore (underground) cable route options presented within Section 3 (relating to Denmead), the current estimated worst-case traffic disruption for each of these option would be approximately as follows:

OPTION 3A(I) – SUB-OPTION HDD UNDER ANMORE ROAD:

- Hambledon Road – 6 days shuttle working²

OPTION 3A(II) - SUB-OPTION TRENCHING FROM NORTH OF ANMORE ROAD TO KINGS POND MEADOW, THEN HDD TO FIELD NORTH OF HAMBLEDON ROAD:

- Hambledon Road – 6 days shuttle working
- Anmore Road – 1 day full closure

OPTION 3B - ANMORE ROAD:

- Hambledon Road – 6 days shuttle working
- Anmore Road – 4 days full closure

OPTION 3C - HIGHWAYS ROUTE:

- Anmore Road – 30 days full closure per circuit along the road as the cable ducts are installed in approximately 100m sections
- Martin Avenue – 10 days full closure (one circuit only down this road)
- Mill Road – 19 days full closure (one circuit only down this road)
- Hambledon Road – 48 days with single lane closure and shuttle working

¹ These figures are based on an installation rate for the cable ducts of 20 m per day. All periods quoted are per circuit and are a worst-case preliminary view, with the actual impact dependent on further assessment of the installation and mitigation in relation to this. The information on traffic disruption is principally presented to provide an understanding of the broad impacts likely to be associated with particular options, which may be used to inform comments on preferred options to be provided in response to the current consultation.

² “Shuttle working” is where a lane closure is required on single carriageway roads two-way traffic flow will be maintained through the use of shuttle working traffic signals placed at either end of the construction zone. In peak periods these traffic signals will be manually controlled to minimise delay.

A summary of the onshore cable route options, including anticipated traffic disruption, is set out on pp.52-89 of the Consultation Document. Additional information regarding the traffic mitigation measures being considered is set out in Chapter 5 of the Consultation Document.

Q. Mr Sansom living in Anmore Road said he could clearly see the lighting of the Lovedean Power Station from behind his property. He asked whether the existing power station would be removed and replaced.

A. The infrastructure discussed in relation to proposals for AQUIND Interconnector is to be treated in addition to the existing National Grid substation at Lovedean, though we highlight that as previously set out save for in the case of emergency the Converter Station will not be lit at night.

Q. Jeremy Warren referred to the two options of cable route described in the original consultation documents. He asked that in light of Option B being chosen, was there any chance of the decision being changed to consider Option A.

A. Two potential Converter Station sites (known as Option A and Option B) were consulted on in January 2018 and the feedback indicated that the local community favoured the western option (Option B). Option B was subsequently identified as the preferred location for the Converter Station following further assessment against a range of environmental, planning and technical considerations, as well as listening to the feedback received.

The area within which the proposed Converter Station will be located is now considered to be fixed, although the precise location within that area remains to be determined.

Q. Chris Barker asked if the cable route options consisted of one of the three options or a multiple of three options which were to be considered.

A. Within Section 3 of the onshore (underground) cable corridor, AQUIND is consulting on a total of four possible cable route options, although just one of these options will ultimately be selected, based on further technical assessments and feedback from the local community and stakeholders.

Further information regarding the onshore (underground) cable route options within Section 3 of the Cable Corridor (relating to Denmead) is set out on pp.56-60 of the Consultation Document.

Q. Caroline Lynch was interested to know where the motivation for the project had come from. She asked if it had been suggested by the French Government or whether it was a private interest.

A. The UK Government and The European Commission have identified that interconnectors are vital for achieving an integrated energy market in which families and firms get the best value for their money.

AQUIND Interconnector will have the capacity to transmit up to 16,000,000 MWh of electricity annually or approximately 5% of Great Britain's total electricity consumption – enough to keep the lights on in up to 4 million British households.³

It will make a significant contribution to improving the security and sustainability of electricity supply and will help to make energy more affordable by improving competition and making Great Britain's energy market more efficient, as well as helping to fight climate change by integrating more renewable energy sources.

The project is being developed and promoted by AQUIND Limited, a UK-registered⁴ company with the sole business of developing AQUIND Interconnector. AQUIND is not associated with

³ BEIS, Digest of United Kingdom Energy Statistics (2018), p.136: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/736148/DUKES_2018.pdf

⁴ AQUIND Limited, a company registered in accordance with the laws of England and Wales with company number 06681477 and the registered address at OGN House, Hadrian Way, Wallsend, NE28 6HL.

any UK or European utilities or national electricity transmission system operators. AQUIND Interconnector represents a significant investment in the UK's energy infrastructure and is being developed without government subsidies.

Q. Mr Lynch asked what experience AQUIND had of this kind of project and whether AQUIND has the capability to deliver. He also asked if there would be a financial guarantee to complete the project.

A. The project is being developed and promoted by AQUIND Limited, a UK-registered company with the sole business of developing AQUIND Interconnector. The AQUIND project team is dedicated to the management of the project and have extensive experience working in oil and gas, and renewable energy sectors. Given the multi-disciplinary nature of the project, the AQUIND project team is supported by leading European advisors specialising in the development of high voltage systems, engineering, planning and market analysis.

AQUIND is fully financed for the pre-construction stage of the project. Further finance will be attracted for the construction stage. AQUIND's approach to funding is the standard industry approach for an infrastructure project of this kind and AQUIND is fully confident of being able to deliver the project.

Q. Rebecca Marsden gave the view that AQUIND should provide more reassurance to the public in relation to the company's financial backing.

A. This is noted, and the response to this question is the same as the response provided above.

Q. A resident wished to know how much the overall project would be costing.

A. The estimated cost of AQUIND Interconnector is £1.2bn.

Q. Judith Clementson asked who would be providing the funding for the long-term maintenance. She said her concern was that the general public would be responsible. She also asked if a health assessment had been carried out to ensure the buildings would be safe.

A. The project is privately-owned and AQUIND will be responsible for the continued maintenance of its assets as necessary.

The AQUIND system will be designed such that it is fully compliant with International and UK health and safety standards. Preliminary environmental information is presented in the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) on human health, and further assessment will be carried out in this regard and reported on in the Environmental Statement (ES).

Q. Steven Coult from Lovedean asked why AQUIND had made the choice of location for the Converter.

A. The existing substation at Lovedean was identified as the preferred connection location for AQUIND Interconnector following an assessment by National Grid, who have an obligation to develop and maintain an efficient, coordinated and economical electricity transmission network. The assessment considers factors such as National Grid's knowledge of the existing network (including agreed future connections), agreed cost information, environmental considerations and other constraints associated with the project, alongside input from AQUIND on the details of the assets to be connected.

The Converter Station needs to be located as close as possible to the substation in order to minimise the length of AC cable used as part of the Interconnector. This is because AC cables take up a much wider corridor of land when compared to DC cables. Therefore, in order to reduce the impacts of the proposals, it is favourable to maximise the use of DC cables which take up a considerably narrower corridor. AC cables also have higher transmission losses and pose other technical challenges, meaning that a longer AC cable would reduce the benefits of the Interconnector.

Four potential sites were initially identified in the vicinity of the existing Lovedean substation where the required Converter Station could be located. This was reduced to two sites

following a first stage review. Further detailed work was undertaken on the remaining two Converter Station site options, focusing on engineering and environmental considerations. The two remaining sites (known as Option A and Option B) were consulted on in January 2018 and the feedback indicated that the local community favoured the western option (Option B). Option B was identified as the preferred location for the Converter Station following further assessment against a range of environmental, planning and technical considerations.

The area within which the proposed Converter Station will be located is now considered to be fixed, although the precise location within that area remains to be determined.

Q. Sally Priddey asked what the main difference would be in relation to digging trenches through the fields or the main roads.

A. The construction techniques are broadly similar however the impact as a result of each option will be dependent on the local conditions. In both circumstances, the land will be required to be restored to its state prior to the installation.

Q. Cllr Langford-Smith asked if it is possible to build houses on top of laid cables.

A. It is not normal practice to build houses above installed cables. Normal agricultural uses and non-construction uses may continue, subject to being in compliance with any relevant easement. At present the cable route and cable route options do not cross under any existing housing developments in Denmead, nor is it anticipated that the route will cross land which in the future may be used to provide housing. Should housing be proposed on top of the cable any potential impact on the cable would need to be assessed at that time.

Q. Neil from Mill Road asked what traffic management would be put in place during the building phase in relation to the private parking along residential roads.

A. Vehicular access to properties may be restricted along certain parts of the route for the period when the section of open trench is outside properties. Once a section has been worked on and the cable duct installed, the highway or land would be reinstated and vehicular access would be available again.

Typically, sections of open trench would typically be 100m at any one time, for the duration of that section being worked on, which is typically 1 week. The extent of any restriction will depend upon the width of the road and the location of the trench in the road.

Further technical studies are ongoing to fully identify the potential impact on residents along the final cable route and we will further engage with persons along the cable route where necessary to inform them of the impacts, as well work with them to manage this impact during the installation of the underground cables.

Q. Dave Cox from Anmore Road asked if there are any images for the public to see, which shows the size of the equipment to be used during the construction phase. He also asked if the trenching would be laid during 24-hour periods. He concluded by asking where would the construction vehicles and equipment be parked when not in use.

A. A contractor has not yet been appointed but indicative images of the cable installation process and equipment used can be found on pp.42, 47, 48, 51 of the Consultation Document.

For the majority of the route, cables will be installed in excavated trenches. Rather than being laid in the trench, a form of housing (known as cable ducts) will be installed in the trenches. The cable ducts will be installed in sections of approximately 100m and following installation backfilled and the surface restored. Using cable ducts avoids the need to keep long lengths of trench open to lay the cables. It allows short sections of cable route to be worked on, the duct installed, and the highway or land reinstated to its previous use when finished.

Typically, the installation rate for cable ducts for each of the two circuits is approximately 18m to 30m per day and typically in 100m sections within urban areas, and approximately 50m per day for areas of open land. Based on the above, is estimated that on average it will take 1 week to install the ducts and backfill and restore the surface for a 100m section. It is

anticipated that more than one (up to six) 100m sections on the cable route may be constructed at the same time.

It is inevitable that the installation of infrastructure in the highway will result in disruption. With that in mind, AQUIND is committed to devising and implementing traffic management measures to minimise the disruption to the transport network during construction.

An overall philosophy has been to keep at least one lane of traffic flowing and road closures to a minimum. Providing there would be no unacceptable impact on nearby properties, consideration will be given for opportunities to extended construction hours and / or night working to further minimise traffic disruption. A full traffic management strategy will be produced as part of the DCO application. For more information regarding traffic management, please see Chapter 5 of the Consultation Document.

During the installation of the cables along the whole of the onshore route, there will be a variety of construction zones depending on the phase of work. In addition to work areas required for the activities described above, it is anticipated that two temporary construction compounds at locations along the cable route of approximately 100m x 50m will be required for the cable drum, accessory deliveries and temporary storage of cable laying plant. For more information regarding cable installation, please see pp.46-53 of the Consultation Document.

Q. Mr Dorking asked if there would be noise or vibration permeating underground, both during operation and on completion.

A. During operation, there will no noise or vibration arising from the AC or DC cables.

AQUIND recognises the importance of minimising noise impacts arising from the operation of the Converter Station. A preliminary optioneering assessment of the potential for noise impacts identified that the potential for impacts from operational noise associated with the western option (known as Option B) option was less than the other options considered, taking into account the surrounding environment.

The Converter Station will generate some noise, predominantly from the transformers. A further assessment of noise levels and how these can be mitigated has been carried out. Mitigation measures, such as acoustic enclosures, sound shields, acoustic lining and acoustic barriers, will be included to reduce noise impacts if necessary. The proposed mitigation measures will be subject to further assessment to ensure that the noise limits agreed with the relevant local planning authorities are achieved.

Q. Helen Brinkwell asked if there is a cost implication relating to the different options for the installation of cables and she wished to know whether the comments from the public would be taken into account.

A. Further technical and environmental work is needed in some locations to further assess the feasibility of the cable route options presented as part of the current consultation, however AQUIND is keen to receive feedback from the local community and stakeholders before making a final decision on the final underground cable route.

All feedback received during the consultation will be recorded and carefully considered by AQUIND. An explanation of how all feedback received has been taken into account will be detailed in a Consultation Report to be submitted as part of the DCO application.