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Mr. Trevor Stark
Chairman
Eastney and Milton Allotment Holders Association Committee

20 October 2020

AQUIND Interconnector

Dear Mr Stark,

I am writing to you, in your capacity as Chairman of the Eastney and Milton Allotment Holders Association, to provide clarity in response to concerns raised regarding the potential impact of AQUIND Interconnector ('the Project') on the Eastney and Milton Allotments and the adjacent Milton Locks Nature Reserve.

At no point has it been proposed to “clear” any allotments and AQUIND confirm no allotment plots will be cleared as part of the construction, operation or maintenance of the Project.

The Project's cables are to be installed under the allotments and Milton Locks Nature Reserve via a process known as Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD), which will take place between the car park located west of the Thatched House Pub and the grassed area east of Kingsley Road. This approach allows the cables to be installed deep underground with no impact at surface level. To allow for inspections during construction and operation, AQUIND is seeking access rights over some existing paths and internal roads of the allotments site but not over any of the allotment plots.

The cables that AQUIND will install along the onshore cable route will be delivered and laid in sections between joint bays at different locations along the route. The locations of the joint bays will be determined as part of the detailed design process and will depend on physical characteristics such as space availability, as well as minimising impact when maintenance is required. On behalf of AQUIND, I confirm there will not be any joint bays located on the allotments and the adjacent Milton Locks Nature Reserve as, whilst the joint bays will be below ground level, they are positioned close to the drilling locations, with the cables pulled through the ducts installed via HDD between them. In addition, maintenance activities associated with HDD cable sections will take place at the joint bays.

This installation method is tried and tested on numerous other cabling projects around the world and the maintenance requirements are minimal. The types of maintenance can be classified into two categories; scheduled maintenance and unscheduled maintenance.

Scheduled Maintenance – This would consist of walk over inspections of the cable route to ensure activities are not taking place above the cable route which could impact its operation (e.g. deep excavation or piling). The frequency of the walk over surveys would typically be once per quarter. In the allotments, this would consist of a short walk over the existing paths to undertake a visual inspection of the areas which will sit above the cables.

Other scheduled maintenance activities in relation to the cable route include taking readings from a number of underground link boxes and above ground link pillars located along the cable route. There will be up to 6 link boxes and up to 6 link pillars per cable circuit along the onshore cable route and these will be installed adjacent to the joint bays. As mentioned above, AQUIND will not install any joint



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bays on the allotments and the adjacent Milton Locks Nature Reserve as they are to be installed close to the drilling location and, as a result, they also won't install any link boxes/link pillars on the allotments either.

Unscheduled Maintenance – This would consist of repairing a cable in the rare event of a cable fault and would comprise removing the section of cable in which the fault was present and replacing it with a new section of cable. In areas where HDD is used to install cables, any replacement would take place by removing the section of cable between the two joint bays either side of the section of cable in question, then pulling a new section of cable through the underground duct already installed and jointing the new section of cable to the existing cables at the two joint bays in question. This means that, in the very unlikely event there was a cable fault along the section of cables to be installed under the allotments, the repair of that section would be undertaken from joint bays located off the allotments.

I hope this letter provides some clarity and I would be most grateful if you could share this information with your fellow allotment holders to ensure they are in receipt of accurate information regarding the Project.

We are committed to engaging with representatives of the Allotment Holders Associations, and other stakeholders, throughout the Examination process. If you have any other questions, please contact us via our freephone information line on 01962 893869, or via email at aquindconsultation@becg.com.

Further information on the proposed development is also available on our dedicated project website at www.aquindconsultation.co.uk.

Yours sincerely,

James Wood

AQUIND Interconnector – Community Engagement Team