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Axione targets 4 million full fibre connections in sub-urban and rural areas contributing to the UK digital transformation

To address the challenge of digital transformation in the UK, Axione supported by its shareholders Bouygues Energies & Services and Vauban Infrastructure Partners has created Axione Fibre, a company dedicated to deploying and operating a full-fibre network targeting sub-urban and rural areas to help bridge the digital divide.

Axione Fibre will design, build and operate a wholesale full-fibre network. Based on an open access network model, Axione Fibre acts as a wholesale-only operator partnering with internet service providers, integrators, operators and channel partners to offer reliable ultrafast broadband services to end-users.

This £300m investment raised along with third party equity partners is the first phase of a large-scale project aiming to reach **4 million premises throughout the UK.**

Axione Fibre will be able to rely on its shareholders' experience, knowhow, and financial strength to achieve this major project alongside building on **Axione's** industrial and commercial expertise backed by Bouygues Group, a major international player in construction and telecommunications, and **Vauban Infrastructure Partners**, an affiliate of Natixis, a major investment management company in the infrastructure space.

Axione have a long history of successfully deploying and operating digital infrastructure assets. Axione was a pioneer in the deployment of full fibre networks in France operating under an open-access model. This success resides first and foremost in a philosophy based on developing essential digital infrastructure to support local social and economic transformation.

Dominique Astier, Managing Director of Axione UK, said: *"Full-fibre networks are essential infrastructure to deliver digital services to all residential, corporate and public sector premises. Axione is delighted to partner with Vauban to create Axione Fibre, a large scale FTTP pure wholesale operator targeting small towns and villages across the UK".*

Pierre Vanstoflegatte, Managing Director of the Bouygues Construction Energies & Services Division; Chairman of Bouygues Energies & Services and President of Axione, said:

"Having proved the strength of its model in France, Axione is leveraging its expertise in the UK, a key market in the development strategy of Bouygues Construction's energy and services division, through Axione Fibre. In all the countries in which we operate, we want to do more to deliver essential resources to local and regional communities, helping them to forge their future. Digital infrastructure forms the basis of this value-creating digital transformation."

Gwenola Chambon, CEO and founding partner of Vauban Infrastructure Partners, said:

"More than ten years ago, we were among the very first infrastructure investors to invest in the digital sector, in France, as we were convinced that FTTP networks were both essential for the development of communities and presented a unique business growth opportunity. Since 2009, as a result of our ongoing commitment to this essential sector, we have built a major digital infrastructure portfolio in France alongside Axione. Axione is

the wholesale broadband operator partner with whom we have built a very strong partnership over the years, crowned by a participation in Axione's capital from the beginning of 2019. Our objective as shareholder of Axione is to support its development in France and foster its diversification of business by exporting its expertise abroad. Axione Fibre in the UK paves the way for this strategic development and represents the first step of this strategy."

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About Axione

Founded in 2003 in response to a drive to develop digital services in local areas initiated by the French digital economy act (Loi sur la confiance numérique), Axione has based its mission on its ability to design, build and operate infrastructure, with the aim of accelerating and facilitating access to digital technology. Axione is a leading fibre player in France where Axione is on track to manage a footprint of 6 million homes. Strong of its experience in the development of digital infrastructure across rural areas of France, Axione is expanding in the UK, bringing its experience in digital transformation of territories to support current and future uses of digital.

About Bouygues Energies & Services

Bouygues Construction's Energies & Services division is a leading player in digital and energy transformation solutions for regions, industries and buildings, it is an essential growth driver for Bouygues Construction.

With over 21,000 employees, the Energies & Services division operates primarily in Germany, Canada, France, the United Kingdom, Italy and Switzerland, while also carrying out missions for customers in Africa, Asia and Oceania. The development of regions, industries and services depends on the ability to guarantee optimal flows of energy, data, services and people. This is why Bouygues Energies & Services designs, builds and operates solutions for the production, distribution and operation of the energy of the future, while supporting the digitalisation and development of innovative services for local residents, industry and service sector users. The Energy & Services division accounts for a third of Bouygues Construction's business.

About Vauban Infrastructure Partners

Vauban Infrastructure Partners ("Vauban") is a management company of the BPCE group, dedicated to infrastructure investments. Vauban operates on the European market in 4 sectors: digital infrastructure, mobility, energy transition and social infrastructure, with landmark investments such as Oc'via - Nîmes-Montpellier Bypass, the Ministry of Defense in Balard, the Nord Pas de Calais Very High Speed Broadband or Cityfast. Vauban's strategic positioning is based on a vision of long-term investment aimed at sustainable returns and a strong commitment to all stakeholders. Vauban's team is made up of 40 professionals who have been working together for ten years. Vauban now manages more than 4 billion Euros with more than 40 investors through six infrastructure funds and has made more than 60 investments in more than ten countries.