

The Trustees of the W E Gale Trust (“the Trustees”)

Land located to the west of the Didcot to Oxford Railway Line, adjoining and to the north of the A4130, registered under title ON316754

Statement in Support of the Petitioners’ request for an Alternative Access

This is a statement in support of the request on behalf of the Trustees of the W E Gale Trust (“the Trustees”) for an alternative access outlined in this statement below to be incorporated into the Oxfordshire County Council Planning Application R3.0138.21, and for any permission granted to include such alternative access.

The Trustees own approximately 20 acres of land to the north of the A4130 in Didcot, registered under title number ON31754 “(the Property)”. We refer to the Land Registry office copy plan of the Property at Annex 1.

The plan below (a larger copy of which is at Annex 2) is one produced to the Petitioners by Oxfordshire County Council (“the OCC”) and which shows the extent of the Property in respect of which the OCC has powers of compulsory purchase under the OCC (Didcot Garden Town Highways Infrastructure – A4130 Improvement (Milton Gate to Collett Roundabout), A4197 Didcot to Culham Link Road, and A415 Clifton Hampden Bypass) Compulsory Purchase Order 2022 (“the CPO”), shaded pink and green.



The Trustees submitted a formal objection to the CPO on two main grounds:

1. The extent of the land taken by the CPO; and
2. The failure of the scheme to provide an appropriate access to the Petitioners’ retained land as part of the scheme.

Unless an appropriate solution can be agreed with the OCC in advance, the Trustees will need to appear at the Public Local Inquiry scheduled to commence on Tuesday 31 October 2023 (“the Inquiry”).

Failure of the scheme to provide an appropriate access to the Trustees’ retained land

The current access point from the A4130 into the Property is at the eastern most point of the frontage with the A4130, all of which is due to be permanently acquired under the CPO. In other words, the Trustees’ access will be compulsorily acquired from them.

The Trustees have sought to engage with the Council in respect of this access issue over the last few years. In 2020, the Trustees commissioned and produced to the OCC a report prepared by Hub Transport Planning Limited dated 2 September 2020 which proposed an alternative configuration of the Scheme that would provide an appropriate access from the proposed highway works into the Trustees’ retained land (“the Alternative Access”). A copy of the Hub Transport Planning Limited report is included with this statement at Annex 3.

The Scheme presently does not involve the provision of such access despite acquiring the frontage of the Property to the A4130.

Pre-Application advice was sought from the OCC planning department in around November 2020 and the report at Annex 4 was produced by the OCC on 3 December 2020.

The Trustees maintain that the Alternative Access (or a variant of it which achieves the same end), should be incorporated within the Scheme and any required amendment to the planning application, or subsequent permission sought. Given that the planning permission for the scheme has not been issued then the Trustees formally request that the Alternative Access proposals provided to the OCC through the September 2020 report should be brought within the scheme by an amendment to the proposed development.

The Trustees maintain that the Alternative Access would have no adverse impact on the scheme objectives.

If that is not done, then the land becomes in effect land locked.

Although the quantification of compensation is not on the face of it a matter for the Planning Committee, given the development potential of the Property in the absence of the scheme, the provision of the Alternative Access will likely significantly reduce the cost of the scheme by reducing the compensation payable to the Trustees.

It is suggested that it would be significantly more efficient and would allow more control for the OCC if it promoted the Alternative Access (or such variant as achieves the same end) as part of its planning application for the Scheme, and that the Alternative Access or necessary variant should be incorporated into any planning permission granted.

Knight Frank
18 July 2023