

Sizewell C

Compulsory Acquisition Hearings

Written Submission to Deadline 7 on behalf of Justin and Emma Dowley

We are writing to confirm our oral representation at the Compulsory Acquisition Hearing on Wednesday 18th August. This written representation is made on behalf of Mr & Mrs Justin and Emma Dowley of [REDACTED].

The Dowley's have run a fully integrated estate and farm business at [REDACTED] for over sixty years and their property at Theberton and Eastbridge extends to approximately 420 acres and is best described as a quintessential small country estate with all of its component parts fully integrated, to the benefit of the whole.

It consists of:-

- A Grade II* Listed country house with a Grade I Listed staircase
- A range of Grade II Listed outbuildings
- An historic parkland extending to 70 acres which surrounds Theberton House itself
- A number of residential properties
- Approximately 220 acres of highly productive, irrigated arable land
- Approximately 115 acres of woodland and marsh land, the latter being an integral part of their livestock business.
- Two set of farm buildings including at Potters Farm and Eastbridge Farm, the latter housing a prize winning herd of Simmental cattle in the winter which in the spring and summer are grazed across the above marshes.

It is an extremely valuable property and would be of interest to a large number of potential purchasers if it ever became available but it is now, in our opinion, totally blighted by the applicant's proposals within the DCO application.

This blight arises from the aggregate effect of the whole proposal including the main development site as well as the Sizewell Link Road (SLR).

The proximity of the main development site including its substantial accommodation campus which bounds the Estate will create a multitude of problems for our clients, as well as the wider local community.

We are aware that the applicant is obliged to take all reasonable steps to acquire the land and rights they need by agreement. Given the problems which would be created by the overall development, our clients have indicated they will be prepared to sell their whole property at Theberton and Eastbridge, but this offer has been turned down without substantive reasoning by the applicant. This view has been recently confirmed to us by their agents in a letter at the end of July.

In trying to reach an agreement, we have thus been forced to suggest that our clients may be prepared to sell part including the main house, with our clients now being expected to submit a proposal to the applicants agent rather than the applicants applying themselves to a proposal, which we believe they potentially are obliged to do in the circumstances. It is our understanding that it is the applicants duty to take the initiative, and not us.

Since the applicants began their engagement on land acquisition during the winter of 2019, there has only been one site meeting over the last twenty months which involved the applicant's agents meeting us at Theberton House on 30th April this year.

Our concerns are that the applicant lacks the full understanding of our clients property.

This was evidenced in July this year when the applicant's agents suggested a farm impact assessment be undertaken. For some reason, this was presented to us as an urgent matter with access being needed within a fortnight. This was completely impractical, given that it was the beginning of harvest with our clients farm contractors committed on that vital operation.

We have suggested a wider estate impact assessment is undertaken and have just completed a scoping brief including in our opinion what should be covered and distributed to the applicant's agents accordingly. We have asked that all costs including the financial and legal effects of a disposal are paid by the applicant.

Inevitably the aggregate effect of the applicant's proposals can be broken down into individual issues which in themselves are very important.

From reference to the land acquisition schedules and plans, there are 13 plots of land owned by the Dowley family which the applicant proposes to acquire and presumably these include the sporting rights associated with them.

Land Adjoining the B1122 on the edge of Theberton House Park

Plot No's SLR 22- 24

The proposal to remove part of the tree belt, which is an integral part of the landscape of the park, and acts as protection for Theberton House, has caused significant concern and although we acknowledge and welcome the recent news that this area is to be reduced in size, we are still uncertain whether any

of the tree belt will be left unaffected and suspect that by its reduction in width, its protective effect on Theberton House itself, will be less than substantive, causing a reduction in that property's value.

Main Entrance Roundabout

Plot Nno MDS02/01

The construction of the main entrance roundabout will have a major impact on the Estate. We consider that the proposed compulsory acquisition is unreasonable and the land take proposed is excessive and unjustifiable.

The detailed design of the roundabout was only made available to us on 30th April and we understand has five "legs", two related to the B1122, one north of Theberton and one south to Leiston. A further "leg" relates to the realigned Eastbridge Lane and two "legs" relate to the access, proposed by the applicant to their development site. We have been informed that one is for temporary use and the other for permanent use.

Clearly the greater number of "legs" on a roundabout, the larger its radius has to be, increasing the area required accordingly. The existing proposed roundabout takes up to 9 acres of our clients productive arable land. A more reasonable proposal, which would reduce the amount of land to be acquired would involve one access for the applicant into their site, which could then involve being divided within their land holding.

Having taken advice from our clients highway consultants Create Consulting, we gather that by reducing the size of the roundabout through the removal of the temporary access it would be possible to reduce the land required by approximately 25%.

We also have significant concerns that the lack of substantive landscaping proposals so far submitted by the applicant will result in a detrimental impact on our client's property including [REDACTED]. Given it will be illuminated by tall lighting columns it will create potential light pollution which will be especially evident in the winter months.

Borrow Pits

Plot No MDS01/03

We have made previous representations as to the detrimental affects caused by the applicants proposal to site borrow pits on our clients boundary including the acquisition of land from them. This impact will also have a detrimental affect on the village at Eastbridge including our client's camp site.

The use of the borrow pits will have a substantive affect on our clients shoot which is based at Potters Farm close to the boundary with the borrow pit activity. Together with the loss of land to the proposal, the general disturbance caused by the borrow pits will reduce the number of drives on the Estate to the point where the shoot may well become unviable which will have a substantial financial effect on our clients business and cause a potential loss of employment through the keeper having to be made reductant.

We consider that these borrow pit proposals remain un-thought through and the detrimental affects including a substantive generation of noise and light, are being under played by the applicant. Our clients have commissioned separate advice in respect of noise attenuation issues which are the subject of other Issues Specific Hearings representations.

M G Horton, BSc MRICS
On behalf of Savills (UK) Ltd
27th August 2021