

Guildford

Strutt & Parker
Meridian House
9-11 Chertsey Street
Guildford, Surrey GU1 4HD
Telephone 01483 400770



guildford@struttandparker.com
www.struttandparker.com

Transport Infrastructure Planning Unit
Department for Transport
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR

Direct Dial:
Email:
Our Ref:
Your Ref:

01483 400773
James.dear@struttandparker.com
JD/cp
NK

7 December 2020

Sent by email:
M25Junction10@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

Dear Sir/Madam

**M25 Junction 10/A3 Wisley Interchange Improvement Scheme
Proposed M25 Junction 10/A3 Wisley Interchange Development Consent Order
Christopher Norman – owner of Plots 26/5A, 26/5 & 26/6**

I am writing to you on behalf of our client, Chris Norman, the owner of plots 26/5, 26/5a and 26/6.

This letter is in response to the Secretary of States letter dated 4 November, specifically point 3 which is relevant to Mr. Norman, and more recently the letter dated 27 November requesting a response from all interested parties on this point.

Mr. Norman welcomes the proposal for his land not to be included in the Development Consent Order. This is for the reasons provided below.

From the outset, we have questioned why some of the country's most productive agricultural land should be converted into common land. Agriculturally, the topsoil is of a free draining sandy loam over a sand-based subsoil, giving excellent, free draining properties even in the depths of winter. Conversely, within a mile of this site, the soil type changes to London Clay, impervious to water but suitable for the manufacture of bricks. The farm is now predominantly a livestock farm, capable of grazing cattle, horses or sheep. Grazing animals on the heavier clay land damages the grass when waterlogged, but they can use the lighter free draining sandy land throughout the year. The ongoing removal of this type of land for transport and infrastructure projects will impact the number of animals and type of crops that the farm can handle as a whole, reducing the farms viability. All three plots selected as suitable replacement land have potential for high productivity which we argue should be maintained.

Mr. Norman accepts the principle of replacement land, but we question why this specific land has been chosen. The original proposal put to my client, by Highways England made no reference to connecting the common, to join Footpath 71. Our concern is that this land has been selected without careful consideration of its appropriateness. I also challenge whether Mr. Norman should incur further blight to his retained land, which we anticipate through the connection of Ockham common to what is currently a relatively unused footpath. For reference, this footpath came to existence as it was used to connect the old school house, to the Hatchford church both of which are now demolished. This seems to go beyond what replacement land



should achieve, and if this is the purpose of replacement land, why did Highways England not originally propose the connection of the common to the footpath? I will come onto Mr. Norman's concerns about the connection of Ockham Common to Footpath 71 later on.

Given Mr. Normans land is not in close proximity (One mile from the M25), it is surprising, that he is now at risk of being served a Development Consent Order for a scheme that relates to this road. I would argue that any owner of this land, would not reasonably expect to receive such an order for a scheme relating to the M25. This again raises questions as to why it has been selected as suitable replacement land.

Mr. Norman's concern about the connection of Ockham Common to Footpath 71 will leave his retained land, succumbing to a significant increase in footfall that in a non scheme world was unlikely to happen. An increase in the number of people using the footpath will lead to challenges over the safety and wellbeing of livestock grazed on this land and concerns over public safety. As stated above, this block of land is important for the overall viability of the farm. The ability to graze livestock safely outdoors all year round is a premium, with many soil types not allowing this. It is surely the view that nationally important infrastructure projects should be doing their utmost to retain the country's most productive land, not to remove it.

It is for the reasons stated above that Mr Norman is in support of the Secretary of State's proposal for Plots 26/5, 26/5A and 26/6 to not be included within the Development Consent Order.

Yours sincerely



James Dear MRICS FAAV
Associate Director
On behalf of Chris Norman

