

# THE DONCASTER (CITY GATEWAY – RAILWAY SQUARE AND PHASE 1) COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER 2023

**PINS reference: APP/PCU/CPOP/F4410/3324357**

**ACQUIRING AUTHORITY: DONCASTER CITY COUNCIL**

---

## **PROOF OF EVIDENCE OF ANDREW SKORUPKA**

---

I, Andrew Skorupka of 8 Leodis Court, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS11 5JJ will say:

1. I am the managing director of Taskmaster Resources Limited (“**Taskmaster**”).  
I have held this role for 14 years. I have worked with Taskmaster for a total of 25 years.
2. Taskmaster operates from ten locations in England and Scotland. My role includes securing premises for the business and negotiating leases.
3. The Doncaster branch of Taskmaster has been based in Unit 4, Trafford Court, Doncaster (“**Unit 4**”) since 1 January 1999. It was leased from the freeholders, Trafcourt Properties Limited (“**Trafcourt**”), in 1999 and again, under its current lease dated 24 June 2014. I attach at appendix AS1 and AS2 a copy of the current lease and the Land Registry’s Office Copy Entry and title plan of Taskmaster’s leasehold interest in Unit 4.

4. The lease relates to Unit 4 and 2 car parking spaces. However, Taskmaster has had use and control of 12 further spaces at Trafford Court since its entry into Unit 4 in 2004. Attached at appendix AS3 are records from the Valuation Office Agency's website regarding the car parking spaces assigned to Unit 4. Taskmaster has security of tenure under the lease subject to the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954.
5. Taskmaster, as a group, works in England and Scotland, and provides agency workers to employers in a wide range of sectors including driving, industrial, FM, catering, commercial, utilities, waste and recycling and non-clinical NHS staff. In Doncaster, the focus is on the manufacturing and driving sectors. The Doncaster branch of Taskmaster works with approximately 80 industry and driving sector employers in the Doncaster area. The driving aspect of the business in Doncaster includes supplying drivers for HGV and other heavy vehicles.
6. The turnover for the Doncaster office is within the region of £3.5 million annually, which is the amount that the business invests in the local economy. We currently have approximately 250 agency workers on our books in the Doncaster office and work with over 80 employers.
7. The Doncaster office is the ideal location for the business because of its proximity to the railway station and local bus routes and because it is very well established in Doncaster as a job agency. It has been in its current location for over 20 years. Agency workers drop in, often using public transport, to seek work, drop in their timesheets or make enquiries.
8. I first heard about the compulsory purchase and scheme in July 2022 when I received a letter from the Council. The letter is attached at appendix AS4. I

spoke to the Council's in-house surveyor, Ms Joanne Chipp-Smith, and asked her to let me know when the scheme would start and when Trafford court would be demolished but she was unable to give me this information. She asked me whether we would want to move to the new offices which were being built as part of the scheme. I said that would depend on whether the space in the new office would meet our needs. I also expressed concern about moving twice – moving out of our current premises into temporary accommodation and moving back into the new office.

9. After this, I sought legal advice. I received a requisitions notice from solicitors, Browne Jacobsen in October 2022, which I attach at Appendix AS5 and then the compulsory purchase order in May 2023. This was very stressful for me and for us as a business as I had no idea where the Doncaster office would move to and when it would be required to move. I was advised that I had a short period to object to the CPO – 21 days – which I did as I felt that our operations in Doncaster were at risk.
10. In May 2023, I was also notified by the Council that they had purchased Trafcourt's freehold interest in Trafford Court. On the 23 February 2024, I received, from Browne Jacobsen Solicitors, a notice under section 25 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954, purporting to end our tenancy at Trafford Court. I have passed this notice to my solicitors.
11. I was contacted by a Council officer, Mr Adrian Barnes, about the relocation of our Doncaster branch and I put him in touch with the branch managers at the Doncaster office, Mr Bertman and Mr Chandler to deal with this issue.
12. In respect of whether the Council has made the required case which is to demonstrate that there is a compelling case in the public interest for the CPO

Scheme, which is being made to boost economic activity, I attach at appendix AS6, a summary from the Office for National Statistics regarding economic activity in Doncaster.

I believe that the facts stated in this proof of evidence are true. I understand that proceedings for contempt of court may be brought against anyone who makes, or causes to be made, a false statement in a document verified by a statement of truth without an honest belief in its truth.

Andrew Skorupka

March 2024

## **Appendices**

1. Appendix AS1: Lease of Unit 4 to Taskmaster
2. Appendix AS2: Office copy entries and title plan regarding Taskmaster's leasehold interest in Unit 4
3. Appendix AS3: Records from Valuation Office Agency
4. Appendix AS4: Letter from Council dated 12 July 2022
5. Appendix AS5: Requisitions from Browne Jacobsen Solicitors
6. Appendix AS6: Summary of economic activity in Doncaster