

**THE DONCASTER (CITY GATEWAY — RAILWAY SQUARE AND PHASE 1)
COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER 2023**

REBUTTAL EVIDENCE

OF

JOANNE CHIPP-SMITH

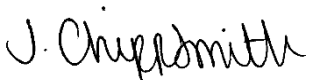
10 APRIL 2024

PINS REF: APP/PCU/CPOP/F4410/3324357

STATEMENT OF TRUTH

The evidence which I have prepared and provide for this public inquiry reference APP/PCU/CPOP/F4410/3324357 in this proof of evidence is true and has been prepared and is given in accordance with the guidance of my professional institution and I confirm that the opinions expressed are my true and professional opinions

Date: 10 April 2024

Signature: 

1. QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

- 1.1. I am Joanne Chipp-Smith and I am a Principal Surveyor in the Strategic Asset Management team at City of Doncaster Council ("the Council").
- 1.2. My qualifications and experience are set out in full at Paragraphs 1.2 – 1.6 of my Proof of Evidence, dated 27 March 2024.

2. OBJECTION OF ANDREW SKORUPKA

- 2.1. Mr Skorupka's Proof of Evidence raises a number of grounds of objections to the use of compulsory purchase powers. I have commented below in respect of those that are pertinent to my expertise and involvement with the scheme.

Paragraph 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.

- 2.2. In response to the objection from Mr Skorupka in Paragraph 4, I cannot confirm or deny the information set out in this paragraph. For the benefit of the Inspector, I have however clarified this further below:

- 2.2.1. As part of Taskmaster's lease dated 24 June 2014, there are 2 car parking spaces which are included within the demise and there is an exclusive right to park on 5 further spaces;
- 2.2.2. In addition, Taskmaster have a licence with Doncaster Assets Limited and Doncaster Assets (No 2) Limited (who were the former freehold owners of Trafford Court) which was granted in June 2022 for and expires 31st August 2024 for an additional 5 car parking spaces.

Paragraph 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.

2.3. In response to the objection of Mr Skorupka at paragraph 8 of his Proof, I have set out the below information to clarify the steps taken by the Council to advise Taskmaster of the CPO and the options available:

2.3.1. The Council's first contact regarding the CPO was sent by letter on 24 June 2022. This is covered at paragraph 9.2 of my proof of evidence.

2.3.2. As is also demonstrated by my Proof at paragraphs 9.4 and 9.5, this was followed up by myself, several times prior to the meeting with Taskmaster on 30 September 2022, which Mr Skorupka refers to above. My reference POE/JCS/42 provides a copy of the note of this meeting and this was emailed to Mr Skorupka the same day. Mr Skorupka did not request any amendments to this note.

2.3.3. From recollection and consideration of my note appended as POE/JCS/42, I dispute the comment made by Mr Skorupka at Paragraph 8 with regard to the Council asking Taskmaster would be interested in moving to the new building being delivered by the Scheme. I can confirm that at no point was this mentioned or discussed directly with me.

3. CONCLUSION

3.1. As can be seen from my Proof of Evidence dated 27 March 2024, the Council (along with Business Doncaster) have remained actively engaged in a course of correspondence with Taskmaster. The Council have worked hard, with the assistance of Business Doncaster, to assist in the relocation of Taskmaster's business.

3.2. I have considered the points raised by Mr Skorupka in his proof of evidence and confirm that nothing within his proof alters the conclusions made in my proof of evidence, specifically in relation to taking all reasonable steps to assist with the relocation efforts.

4. OBJECTION OF MR NEIL BERTMAN

4.1. Mr Bertman's Proof of Evidence raises a number of grounds of objections to the use of compulsory purchase powers. I have commented below in respect of those that are pertinent to my expertise and involvement with the scheme.

Paragraph 9: During the visits, Council officers told us that the CPO was a done deal and that they would help us find a suitable property within the town centre as they did not want another business to leave the centre and were aware of the timescale. We wrote to the Council regarding the properties that they showed us and what we were looking for. We asked for an update on 14 February 2024. We were contacted again on 18 March 2024 by the Council regarding the car parking arrangements.:

4.2. The Council's response to the objection from Mr Bertman in Paragraph 9 is largely dealt with in the rebuttal proof of Chris Dungworth of Business Doncaster. I do however, set out the below for clarity:

4.2.1. In relation to the correspondence referred to by Mr Bertman regarding the request for an update on 14 February 2024 – as can be seen from my proof of evidence and supporting documents at paragraphs 9.18 and 9.19, the Council was in regular correspondence with Taskmaster despite the delay mentioned above, specifically as follows:

4.2.1.1. The Council met with Darren Chandler of Taskmaster on 27 February 2024, during which some premises (DBIC) were inspected together. I followed up via email on 28 February to seek feedback on the space on offer. I also sought clarification on 28 February 2024 to seek further details to ascertain how the 10 parking spaces are allocated.

4.2.1.2. I chased Taskmaster for a response to my email on 5 March 2024 and it was not until 7 March 2024 when I received a response from a different contact at Taskmaster (the same email response as is mentioned above).

4.2.1.3. I sent a further email to Taskmaster on 18 March 2024, setting out some Council car park season ticket options. Taskmaster replied on 19 March stating for various reasons that the options provided were not suitable. I replied on the same day suggesting Taskmaster made enquiries with other non-council owned car parks such as the Frenchgate car park and the NCP car parks. This was discussed in a call with Mr Skorpuka on 20 March 2024 as can be seen in my proof at paragraphs 9.18 to 9.21.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1. The Council (along with Business Doncaster) have been actively engaged in a course of correspondence with Taskmaster. The Council have worked hard, with the assistance of Business Doncaster, to assist in the relocation of Taskmaster's business.

5.2. The Council have remained actively engaged and continue to do so. I have considered the points raised by Mr Bertman in his proof of evidence and confirm that nothing within his proof alters the conclusions made in my Proof of Evidence, specifically in relation to the duty to take all reasonable steps to assist with the relocation efforts.