

**THE HIGHWAYS ACT 1980
AND
THE ACQUISITION OF LAND ACT 1981**

**THE DORSET COUNCIL (DINAH'S HOLLOW IMPROVEMENT SCHEME)
COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER 2024**

**SUMMARY PROOF OF EVIDENCE OF JOHN DAVIES
ON BEHALF OF JONES LANG LASELLE (JLL)**

10 June 2025

**PLANNING INSPECTORATE AND PLANNING CASEWORK UNIT REFERENCE:
DPI/D1265/25/6**

John Davies
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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 My name is John Davies. I am a Director at Jones Lang Laselle ("**JLL**"). My qualifications and background are set out in my main proof of evidence dated 10 June 2025 (my "**Proof of Evidence**").

1.2 JLL have been instructed by Dorset Council since 2023 to primarily deal with the negotiations with landowners in respect of the CPO. Whilst I have not been directly involved in these negotiations, these negotiations have been conducted by colleagues at JLL and I have been provided with the relevant information and documents by those colleagues. My Proof of Evidence gives my opinion on the extent to which the following have been dealt with:

1.2.1 The applicable Guidance on Compulsory Purchase Process published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (last updated in January 2025) (the "**CPO Guidance**") and what the Council has done to satisfy the Guidance.

1.2.2 Identifying the property interests in the Order Land of which JLL have been appointed to acquire through negotiation

1.2.3 I summarise the current position of the negotiations with landowners.

2 SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

2.1 My evidence is provided in relation to the Dorset Council (Dinah's Hollow Improvement Scheme) Compulsory Purchase Order 2024 (the "**CPO**") of land on the east and west sides of Dinah's Hollow, Melbury Abbas ("**Order Land**") which was made 6 December 2024. The purpose of the CPO is to facilitate the

improvement of the existing highway at Dinah's Hollow and afford it protection against landslide.

CPO Guidance

- 2.2 I have set out in section 3 of my Proof of Evidence the relevant provisions of the CPO Guidance which specifically deal with what is expected of an acquiring authority when negotiating with an affected party/landowner.
- 2.3 The Council, via its appointed agents JLL, has actively engaged in meaningful negotiations with affected landowners, making reasonable attempts to acquire all of the property interests it needs in the Order Land through private treaty agreements. In my opinion, having reviewed relevant documents provided to me, the Council has made reasonable offers and has also engaged constructively with landowners over environmental concerns, mitigation and accommodation works where relevant. This has now led to in principle agreements on compensation being reached with both affected landowners.
- 2.4 In addition to its offers of compensation, the Council has had regard to a range of other issues that have concerned landowners and in all cases, the Council has worked with landowners to address the issues they have raised.
- 2.5 In conjunction with following the CPO Guidance, the Council has ensured that the affected parties have ready access to all to all the CPO Guidance and information on the Scheme to review themselves.

The Order Land and Interests to be Acquired

2.6 The Order Land consists of two distinct parcels of land either side of the C13 at Dinah's Hollow.

2.6.1 Plot 1 shown edged red and shaded pink and plot 7 shown edged red and shaded blue on the CPO Map) (**West Site**); and

2.6.2 Plots 2, 4, 5 and 6 shown edged red and shaded pink and plot 3 shown edged red and shaded blue on the CPO Map (**East Site**).

2.7 The West Site is owned by Mr and Mrs Phillips and the East Site is owned by Maurice Flower & Son Limited (both of whom have lodged statutory objections to the CPO).

Negotiations with landowners

2.8 I am instructed that the Council have been negotiating with both landowners since 2014. However, my Proof of Evidence can only comment on the negotiations that have taken place since the appointment of JLL since February 2023.

2.9 Details of the negotiations that have taken place with the landowners are appended to my Proof of Evidence. It is my opinion that the accounts demonstrate that the Council, via JLL, has at all times taken a proactive approach and acted reasonably in their negotiations. Furthermore, where issues have arisen (further described in my Proof of Evidence) the Council officers have sought to address and accommodate landowners concerns as far as reasonably practicable.

Negotiations with the West Site landowner:

2.10 You will see from my Proof of Evidence and the documentation appended thereto that negotiations have been extensive and there have been various meetings between the parties. You will see how the Council have provided detailed reasoning for the Scheme design and where possible, have accommodated the West Site landowners' requests.

2.11 Most recently, JLL issued revised Heads of Terms on 2 June 2025. These Heads of Terms have now been agreed, and solicitors have been instructed by both parties to progress the legal documentation. Therefore, the Council is optimistic that this objection will be resolved in advance of the inquiry.

Negotiations with the East Site landowner

2.12 You will see from my Proof of Evidence and the documentation thereto that negotiations have been extensive. The main issues have revolved around the design of the Scheme particularly regarding drainage and access issues.

2.13 Most recently, JLL issued revised Heads of Terms on 15 May 2025. The Council consider that these Heads of Terms address all the points raised by the East Site landowner. The terms have been substantively agreed with the only substantive outstanding point pertaining to timing of acquisition of the East Site. The Council remains committed to acquiring the land by agreement and is optimistic that this objection will be resolved in advance of the inquiry. Solicitors have been instructed by both parties and the necessary contractual documentation is being negotiated.

- 2.14. Having reviewed the approach that has been taken by the Council to the acquisition of property interest and rights in the Order Land, I am of the opinion that the Council has acted in a reasonable manner in respect of the negotiations with the landowners of the East Site and the West Site that is fully compliant with the CPO Guidance

3 **CONCLUSION**

- 3.1 Having reviewed the approach that has been taken by JLL, under instructions of the Council, to the acquisition of property interest and rights in the Order Land, I am of the opinion that the Council has acted in a reasonable manner in respect of all the negotiations with the landowners of the East Site and the West Site.
- 3.2 I am also of the opinion that the Council's actions have been fully compliant with the CPO Guidance.