

**Statement of Case**

**Makins Enterprise Ltd and Christopher William Makin**

**Transport and Works Act 1992**

**The Network Rail (Leeds to Micklefield Enhancements) Order 2023**

**16<sup>th</sup> November 2023**

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This is the Statement of Case of Makins Enterprise Ltd and Christopher William Makin, the owners of Sturton Grange, Ridge Road, Micklefield, Leeds, LS25 4DZ in response to the proposed Network Rail (Leeds to Micklefield Enhancements) Order 2023 (“the Order”).
- 1.2 On 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2023, our agent, Anna Morley, submitted an objection to the Order and this Statement of Case provides further information to support our grounds of objection.
- 1.3 Both Makins Enterprise Ltd and Christopher William Makin will be affected by the Order’s proposals at Brady Farm Bridge (HUL4/15), Ridge Road Bridge and Ridge Road Gas Main – Reference numbers 11-005, 11-005a, 11-006, 11-006a, 11-007, 11-009, 11-011, 11-012, 11-012a, 11-012b, 11-012-c, 11-014, 11-015, and 11-017.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 Sturton Grange and the surrounding land has been owned by the Makin family since 1958.
- 2.2 Brady Bridge has always been used by the Makin family to access land either side of the railway and transport water for irrigation purposes from one side of the railway to the other.
- 2.3 Ridge Road Bridge provides an essential access road to Sturton Grange Farm which is home to the following businesses: Makins Enterprises Limited, Makins Soft Fruit Limited, Annabel’s Deliciously British, Tame and Wild Soft Drinks, GXO Logistics, Graham Firth Communications and Arla.

## **3. Grounds of Objection**

- 3.1 The first ground of objection relates to the fact that Brady Bridge is a Grade II listed structure and is an important heritage asset in this area. The proposed permanent removal of it will have a significant impact on the heritage of this area and we do not believe that simply proposing to use some of the material in the re-build of Ridge Road Bridge is adequate compensation for this loss.
- 3.2 The second ground of objection relates to the fact that since the 1980’s, a water pipe has run across Brady Farm Bridge linking the land either side of the railway and enabling the land to the south of the railway, known as Peckfield House Farm, to be irrigated from the borehole at Sturton Grange. Irrigation is imperative to growing a wide variety of crops on the land.

If Brady Bridge is removed in its entirety, the water pipe will be removed thereby severing the irrigation system between the two farms, which is of considerable concern for the following reasons:

- There is already a significant shortage of irrigated land in the area suitable for growing root crops.
- As our climate continues to change our reliance on a good water supply to grow crops of all types, not just root crops, is going to increase and particularly on free-draining limestone land like Peckfield House Farm.

- Water is a very valuable resource; **removing the ability to irrigate 116 hectares of prime Yorkshire arable land, goes against every principle of Sustainable Agriculture and Global Food Production and everything our business believes in.**
- Sustainable agriculture is at the heart of our businesses. It promotes healthier and more diverse farmland ecosystems while aiming to enhance efficiency and profitability. Since arable land is finite, the needs of a growing global population require that we increase productivity while maintaining a sustainable approach to agricultural production. Our agriculture business focuses on soil health and resource conservation, which are critical for long-term productivity. We protect the natural resources entrusted to us by managing them sustainably and embracing agricultural innovations that support value for our stakeholders and the environment.

Businesses, governments, and people from all walks of life are increasingly recognising that sustainable and responsible business practices are crucial to confronting some of the world's most pressing economic, social, and environmental challenges. From a finite supply of arable land, the planet needs to nourish and sustain a global population that's already grown to 7.8 billion and is expected to reach nearly 10 billion by 2050.

In recognising the challenge to feed our increasing population, there has been a growing demand for assurance around sustainable practices. Now more than ever, consumers want to know that the food they are buying and eating was produced sustainably, maintaining the capability to continue to supply the needs of future generations. That's why we focus on three key areas: firstly sustainable and regenerative practices, secondly water resource management (in terms of water storage and irrigation systems) and thirdly agricultural innovation. We have achieved Carbon Neutral Status and continue to invest in reducing our carbon footprint where possible. Our brand 'Annabel's Deliciously British' enables us to have a voice driving Sustainable and responsible Agriculture which is at the heart of our business.

- We feel that Network Rail have failed to consult properly with us in relation to our concerns over the permanent removal of the irrigation system. Despite informing Network Rail about the location of the water pipe and its imperative use, Network Rail have not discussed or suggested any alternative ways of keeping the water pipe in situ, re-locating it or placing it under the railway as they are proposing with other utility pipes.

3.3 The third ground of objection relates to the work proposed to Ridge Road Bridge and Ridge Road Gas Main. We have significant concerns about the impact that this work will have on our business given Ridge Road Bridge provides the main access to the farm. We do not feel that Network Rail have consulted adequately with us with regards to the impact this work is going to have.

#### **4. Conclusion**

- 4.1 The loss of Brady Bridge is a significant loss for the heritage of our area.
- 4.2 There has been a complete lack of consultation from Network Rail to address our concerns raised or to look at alternative routes in terms of the location of our water pipe. This will lead to the loss of a substantial area of irrigated agricultural land, which goes against every principle of Sustainable Agriculture and Global Food production, not to mention the impact on our business.
- 4.3 The proposed works to Ridge Road Bridge are going to have a significant impact on the various businesses that operate from Sturton Grange Farm and we request that Network Rail liaise and consult with us further to try and minimise the impact and losses to our business as a result of the work.

Christopher William Makin

16<sup>th</sup> November 2023