

SEFTON COUNCIL

Sefton Council (Southport Eastern Approach)

Compulsory Purchase Order 2025

Summary Proof of Evidence of:

Peter Eustance

20 January 2026

Summary

1. Personal Details

1.1 My name is Peter Eustance, and I am employed by SLC Property (SLCP) as Associate Director, Acquisition & Development, working from my home in Liverpool. SLCP is a specialist infrastructure property consultancy with offices in Birmingham and Newcastle.

1.2 I am a Chartered Surveyor (MRICS), having qualified in 1990 after completing a BSc in Land Management at Reading University. Before joining SLCP, I held senior roles including Associate Director in the Claimant and Compensation team at Ardent, and Director of the North West Valuation Team at CBRE.

1.3 Since 2018, I have undertaken significant land acquisition work for Sefton Council, Wirral Council, Kirklees Council, and Northumberland County Council, including involvement in major infrastructure projects such as the Northumberland Line reopening.

1.4 I have been instructed on the Southport Eastern Approach for Sefton Council (SC) since spring 2023, leading the land and property workstreams from an early stage. Where I have not engaged personally with landowners, I have remained fully informed through colleagues at SLCP, WSP, Brabners LLP, and DAC Beachcroft LLP via meeting notes and correspondence.

1.5 The evidence in this Proof has been prepared in accordance with RICS guidance, and the opinions expressed are my true and professional opinions.

Structure of this Evidence

1.6 This Proof summarises the objections to the Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council (Southport Eastern Approach) Compulsory Purchase Order 2025, together with the status of each objection and the Council's responses.

1.7 Section 2 outlines the objectors, the grounds of objection, the level of engagement, and progress toward resolution.

1.8 Section 3 provides my conclusions.

1.9 Other witnesses provide supporting evidence:

- Andrew Dunsmore (SC) – Scheme need and justification for the CPO
- Andrew Ivey (WSP) – Scheme design and land requirements

2. Summary of Objections

2.1 The CPO and associated documentation were published on 12 July 2025, with objections due by 8 August 2025.

2.2 6 statutory objections were received of which, 2 objections have since been withdrawn and 3 have underlying agreements upon which the objections can be withdrawn

2.3 4 objections remain at the time of completing this evidence

2.4 The Statutory Objectors are:

OBJ1 – Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority (MWDA) – Withdrawn

OBJ2 – McDonald's Real Estate LLP & McDonald's Restaurants Ltd

OBJ3 – SP Energy Networks (SPEN) – Withdrawn

OBJ4 – B&Q Limited

OBJ5 – Veolia ES Merseyside & Halton Ltd

OBJ6 – Leicestershire County Council (LCC)

2.5 Sefton Council responded to each objection upon receipt and held multiple meetings to clarify issues and encourage withdrawals. A summary was included previously in the Statement of Case and is also referenced in this Proof.

2.6 The details of the Statutory Objections are as follows:

- OBJ1 – Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority (MWDA)

2.7 Issues: Severance and operational disruption relating to plots 7, 9, 11, 12, 17, and tenant operations on plot 19.

2.8 Response: Objection withdrawn following discussions between SLCP, MWDA, and their representatives (Bruton Knowles).

- OBJ2 – McDonald's Real Estate LLP & McDonald's Restaurants Ltd

2.9 Issues: Scheme deliverable without acquiring McDonald's land and Insufficient efforts to acquire by agreement

2.10 Response: SLCP and Montagu Evans agreed a draft settlement, approved by McDonald's Board. The objection will be withdrawn.

- OBJ3 – SP Energy Networks (SPEN)

2.11 Issues: Protection of SP Manweb utility assets and the need for ongoing engagement.

2.12 Response: A Protective Provisions agreement has been finalised and the objection has now been withdrawn.

- OBJ4 – B&Q Limited

2.13 Issues: No agreed terms with the Acquiring Authority and possible constraints on their operational activities

2.14 Response: SLCP and B&Q's representatives (Sanderson Weatherall / Womble Bond Dickinson) have agreed a draft settlement which B&Q has approved. The objection will be withdrawn.

- OBJ5 – Veolia ES Merseyside & Halton Ltd

2.15 Issue: Concerns regarding plot 19, including: Loss of northern access and major operational disruption to the HWRC and WTS, Impacts on circulation, service continuity, and user access, Potential diversion of users to Formby, causing congestion and inconvenience and need for clear markings and signage if access arrangements change

2.16 Response: MWDA and SC (via their agents) have agreed a draft tripartite agreement with Veolia to address concerns. Additional adjacent land acquisition may assist in resolving operational issues. As agreement has been reached with MWDA the objection by Veolia is expected to be withdrawn before the Public Inquiry.

- OBJ6 – Leicestershire County Council (LCC)

2.17 Issue: Alleged insufficient grounds to acquire the land and claims of limited engagement and inadequate information

2.18 Response: Engagement timeline demonstrates extensive contact and there was early correspondence with former asset managers (Colliers IM) in late 2023. There were meetings and repeated follow-ups with DTZ IM who were subsequently appointed in early 2025. We were only advised Savills were formally appointed in August 2025 despite 5 months of attempts to progress negotiations.

2.19 Heads of Terms (save for price) were issued on multiple occasions in early and mid-2025. Given documented engagement efforts, both objection grounds are considered unsubstantiated.

2.20 During further due diligence, additional land was identified as necessary, now being pursued under Section 14 of the Acquisition of Land Act 1981. Further detail is provided in the Proofs of Evidence by Mr Ivey and Mr Dunsmore.

3. Conclusion

3.1 This evidence summarises:

- All statutory objectors to the CPO
- The nature of their objections
- Sefton Council's engagement and negotiated progress
- The current status of objections, with most expected to be withdrawn

3.2 My evidence supports Sefton Council's case that the CPO is justified, negotiations have been conducted appropriately and reasonably, and remaining objections have either been resolved or lack substantive grounds.