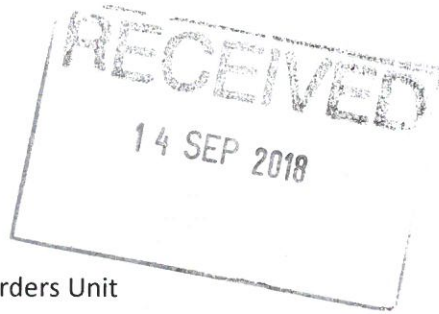


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Transport and Works Act Orders Unit  
Department for Transport  
1/14-18, Great Minster House  
33 Horseferry Road  
London SW1P 4DR

**By courier**

Our ref: BLE001/0001/SR  
7 September 2018

Dear Sir or Madam

**The Network Rail (East West Bicester to Bedford Improvements) Order (the "Draft Order")**

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 We act for Bletchley Developments Limited, which holds the freehold interest in plot 1067. Plot 1067 forms part of the land and buildings surrounding a former office building known as "**Mercury House**", which our client is the freehold owner of. We will refer to Mercury House and the land and buildings within our clients' ownership that surrounds it as the "**Property**".
- 1.2 Plot 1067 is subject to compulsory purchase by Network Rail Infrastructure Limited (the "**Applicant**") under article 22 of the Draft Order.
- 1.3 Our clients object to the Draft Order on the basis that it would detrimentally affect the development potential of Mercury House.

**2. Mercury House and our client's proposals**

- 2.1 The Property comprises:
  - (a) Mercury House, a five storey former office building;
  - (b) a group of ancillary buildings;
  - (c) a surface car park, which is separated from Water Eaton Road by a group of trees (it is this "wooded area" (in the words of the Draft Order) that the Applicant proposes to acquire).
- 2.2 Our clients have obtained prior approval:
  - (a) first, for the conversion of all of the existing buildings at the Property from office to residential use (Milton Keynes Council reference 17/03226/PANB1C);

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- (b) second, for the conversion of the main Mercury House building to residential use (Council reference 18/00678/PANB1C);
  - (c) third, again for the conversion of the main Mercury House building to residential use, but with a revised layout (Council reference 18/01085/PANB1C).
- 2.3 The third prior approval (the “**Prior Approval**”) would allow for the creation of 131 residential units.
- 2.4 Our clients have also made a planning application (the “**Planning Application**”) for the addition of three floors to the main Mercury House building, replacement of cladding and demolition of the remaining buildings on site. The proposals under the Planning Application are intended to be carried out alongside the Prior Approval. Together, these proposals would result in the creation of 154 residential units.
- 2.5 Further down the line, our client proposes to develop the other areas of the Property for residential use as well as supplementary retail and commercial uses. Our clients intend to develop approximately 550 additional residential units over and above the 154 units currently consented or applied for.
- 2.6 Our clients also intend to make an application for a multi-storey car park to serve their residential development. Our client intends to build the multi-storey car park on a part of the Property that includes plot 1067.
3. **The effect of the Draft Order**
- 3.1 The acquisition of plot 1067 would adversely affect the development potential of the Property. The proposed multi-storey car park is a key element of the residential scheme that our client proposes to bring forward and would adversely affect the value – and the viability – of their proposals.
- 3.2 Not only would this detrimentally affect the value of the Property, but it might also frustrate one of the key aims of Phase 2 of the East West Rail project, to “*stimulate economic growth, housing and employment*” (as stated in the Applicant’s statement of aims).
- 3.3 The Draft Order does not state what plot 1067 is required for. There is no justification from the Applicant as to why the acquisition of this parcel is necessary for Phase 2 of the East West Rail project to come forward and on this basis we believe that the parcel should be removed from the Draft Order, particularly in light of the detrimental impact that its inclusion would have on our client’s development proposals.

Yours faithfully



Simon Ricketts  
Partner  
Town Legal LLP