

PROOF OF EVIDENCE OF:

Michael George Roberts

Title of Order:

S53 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981
Definitive Map of Public Rights of Way for Gloucestershire
(Additional Length of Footpath at Witcombe Farm)
(Parish of Great Witcombe) Order 2009

Planning Inspectorate Reference:

ROW/3354782
Public Inquiry: 6 October 2026

INTRODUCTION

1. My name is Michael George Roberts.
2. [REDACTED]
3. I have known the claimed route since 1965 (aged 10).

I wish to state to this Public Inquiry that...

4. From the age of 10 years [REDACTED] Having the freedom to roam the area on my own and with friends. The Reservoirs and surrounding areas were my playground - walking, cycling and later on a motorcycle and sometimes in the car. Whilst passing through Witcombe Farm on no occasion was I approached by anyone and told that there was no public right of way. This would have been evenings, weekends and school holidays.
5. [REDACTED] therefore visits to the reservoirs were few.

6. On moving in 1985 to a property closer to Witcombe and having children able to walk the distance. [REDACTED] regularly walked (weekends and light evenings) from our home near the Cross Hands along the Cirencester Road taking the road through Droys Court then along EBW15 to the reservoirs then heading along the road through Witcombe Farm a circular route. We were never approached or challenged. There were no signs or indication that this road/track though Witcombe Farm was not a public right of way.
7. Around 2000 a "Private Road" sign appeared on both sides of the entrance to Witcombe farm at the junction to the reservoir pump house. These signs were only visible if you were approaching the farm from the north past Hill View Cottages.
8. We continued to use the access through Witcombe Farm without being challenged.
9. In June 2005 we were approached and told we could not walk through the farm. I disputed this and on this occasion we were begrudgingly allowed to pass. I made my feeling known to the Bailiff that the alternative route, down the bank over a stile and that the land at the bottom was muddy and churned up by numerous horses in the field and that I was also not happy about walking through this field with the dog.
10. We attempted the alternative route on another occasion, sadly it was too difficult and dangerous for my [REDACTED] and the horses felt to be a threat to the dog (who was well behaved and on a lead).
11. I have lived on farms while growing up where freedom of access was always respected. Many other walkers must have experienced the same.

STATEMENT OF TRUTH

I hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the facts I have stated are true and correct.

Signed: [REDACTED]

Date: 14/8/2026

NB: You should keep a copy of the completed Statement