

PROOF OF EVIDENCE OF:

Simon Ruddleston

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 Simon Ruddleston.

2. [REDACTED]

3. [REDACTED]

4. I am not related to the land owner and haven't worked for them.

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

5. From 1987 to 1991 and 1993 to 1996 we lived [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] During this period my wife and I, together with friends and family regularly walked along the disputed route to the reservoirs and on to the Roman Villa or in a loop along a track used by other walkers to Witcombe Park.
6. These routes were undertaken on average once a fortnight during the daytime at any time during the week. We regularly spoke to other people using the same routes and no objection to using the road or path was ever made.

7. There were no signs in place to say that the routes were not to be used and we didn't seek permission to use the routes.
8. From 1997 to 2003 we lived in the centre [REDACTED] During this period we used the disputed route and the loop path to Witcombe Park on a more regular basis, once to twice a week.
9. We didn't seek permission to use the disputed road or footpath and were never given it. On occasions members of the [REDACTED] family passed in their vehicles and never made any comments regarding our walks.
10. My wife and I undertook the walks by our self and with friends and family.
11. In early 2000's the road and path access became very popular. On a sunny weekend day there could be 10's of people walking along the road and sometimes wheelchair users.
12. It was sometime during 2003 to 2004 that things changed and the land owners spent weekends 'in wait' for walkers to strongly inform them to vacate their land and stop using the road. Whilst walking on the circular route we were informed by [REDACTED] that it was private land and we should stop walking the route.
13. The number of walkers using the disputed road access reduced from possibly hundreds over a sunny weekend to just a few.

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:

08 August 2026