



Please reply to:
2a Lion Road
Twickenham
Middlesex
TW1 4JQ

Mr. Ian Coucher
Network Rail
Kings Place
90 York Way
London
N1 9AG

7th April 2010

Dear Mr. Coucher,

Thank you for your prompt response of 29 March. However I am afraid it does not adequately respond to the situation.

It is now clear that the strong feeling about the barbed wire fence is shared by a number of my constituents, the Teddington Society and the ward Councillors. Equally the local planning authority, while accepting there are permitted development rights, strongly objects to the detriment to the street scene caused by their exercise in this case. I must say I find it quite unacceptable that a public body should hide behind its permitted development rights to inflict harm on the street scene that would not conceivably be allowed if planning permission were required. It throws the whole exemption for transport operators into disrepute and provides an argument for abolition or restriction of the exemption, something I am minded to raise in the next Parliament.

Secondly Network Rail's precipitate action in this case starkly contrasts with its failure over many years to put into repair the station footbridge which has had missing windows and a dilapidated appearance again harming the street scene which, on one side, is part of a Conservation Area. You will recall that I have asked for an urgent meeting about this.

Thirdly can I also draw your attention to Section 164 of the Highways Act 1980 which suggests that barbed wire at a low level adjacent to a public highway may be illegal in any event.

Could I ask for your urgent personal attention to this matter and an early reply?

Yours sincerely,

Vincent Cable MP

MP for Twickenham

Liberal Democrat Deputy Leader and Shadow Chancellor of the Exchequer

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