

Witness Statement of Leon Andrew James Litchfield

My name is Leon Andrew James Litchfield and I make this statement following a request for evidence under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 in a letter from the Inquiry dated 26 September 2019 which I refer to and attach to this statement marked "JL1". In addition to my responses below to the questions asked by the Inquiry, I would also refer to the written statements I have made to the Metropolitan Police on 14 March 2018 and 28 March 2018 which give the background to the two companies and my role in them and which I attach to this statement marked "JL2" and "JL3" respectively. For ease of reference, I have used the numbering in relation to the questions asked in the Inquiry letter in my responses below.

1. I was a Director of LB Plastics Limited ("LB Plastics") and Manse Masterdor Limited ("Masterdor") from 1998 to June 2012 and then Managing Director up to the sale of the company assets and launch of the group Creditors Voluntary Arrangement (CVA) in November 2014.
2. As a director of LB Plastics the holding company I had a role also as a Director of Masterdor. I was mainly concerned with the overall performance of the company. The managing on a day to day basis was carried out by firstly Associate Directors : Mr. Mike Hudson, Mr.Phil Hudson, Mr. Keith Hudson and Mr. John Tapscott in the factory at Knaresborough and latterly these Directors and Mr. Barry Gooch and a Financial Director from LB Plastics when sites were operational in both Yorkshire and Derbyshire.
3. Masterdor was a 100% owned subsidiary Company of LB Plastics. The Litchfield Group was a generic name used for all the Companies owned by LB Plastics though as a limited company it only owned 1 specific property asset.
4. Litchfield Group was used only as a title the main holding company was LB Plastics. My role was as described above and was mainly managerial including reviewing budgets, financial performance and sales performance. It did not include the day to day running of the business or being involved in the technical details and testing of the products. This I left to the various individuals who I name further on in this statement.
5. When Masterdor was purchased by the Group in 1998 there was already a product which complied with the 30 minute fire regulations at that time. Over the period of our ownership of the company further products were developed to comply with the 60 minute requirement under the regulations and a new range of Nan -Ya based doors were brought

to the market from 2006 onwards. The testing to the relevant standards were the responsibility of the production and technical departments. I was aware of the general methods used in the relevant tests but not the specific details.

6. 1998
7. Initially when based solely in Knaresborough the company was managed at arms length by the original founders and Management team with the three Hudson brothers all as Associate Directors. The reason being that LB Plastics was actively selling framing materials to a number of their competitors. From around 2003/4 due to increased sales, a satellite factory was opened in Derbyshire to cope with overflow. As the market tightened in the recession of 2008 it was decided to close the plant in Knaresborough (2012) and concentrate production in the larger more modern facility in Derbyshire thereby freeing up the Knaresborough site for disposal. From the start up of the factory in Derbyshire and the closure in Yorkshire there was a slight change in the management structure with Mr. Barry Gooch looking after the production in Derbyshire. The accounting function moved over in 2012. Elements of production, design and testing had already moved to LB Plastics while the sales function remained with the original team the bulk of whom were still based in Knaresborough.
8. Myself and [REDACTED] Leon George Litchfield, were directors of Masterdor with the LB Plastics financial Director Mr. Geoff Rawson up to 2010 and Mr. Mark Llewellyn up to 2012 being involved. Latterly some of the LB Plastics Directors took active roles namely Mr. Terry Hardy – Design and Mr. Barry Gooch – Production.
9. While based in Knaresborough the Associate Directors reported to myself and Geoff Rawson on a monthly basis. During the period of the two sites, this remained similar with the addition of Barry Gooch.
10.
 - a.
 - i. marketing was carried out by the Masterdor staff headed by Mr. Mike Hudson independent from LB Plastics due to concerns of cross over to existing LB Plastics customers.
 - ii. design and testing was initially all based in Knaresborough with the function becoming shared slightly before and after the move to Derbyshire.
 - iii. as the above point.

- b. The move of Manufacturing plants is as described above and described in my statements to the Metropolitan Police. This was mirrored with office space and staff once the Knaresborough site was closed. Transportation had been a shared function from when the company was acquired in 1998 with some exceptions.
11. The Factory in Knaresborough was closed down in 2012, though there had been a transfer of work to Derbyshire prior to that date. For a period, which I believe was from around 2003/4, we ran in conjunction from both sites until the closure at Knaresborough.
- a. the initial set up in Derbyshire was overseen by both Masterdor and LB Plastics Directors.
 - b. it is my understanding that the Suredor product (what we termed as a composite door as opposed to the Masterdor which was of mainly Timber constructed) was made in Derbyshire.
 - c. I believe that the Suredor Fire doors were made in Derbyshire at the Derwent works.
12. I have no access to or knowledge of the production details of the Suredor other than that the main element of its development was designing and testing a PVC frame that would perform in fire test environment, given that we were purchasing an accredited blank from a third party namely Nan-Ya.
- a. Suredors I presume were all made in Derbyshire
 - b. Not relevant if I am correct above.
 - c. all these areas would be covered by Mr. Jim Duncan (Technical services Manager) who would have overseen the testing regime and Mr. Barry Gooch (Production Director) both of LB Plastics with perhaps input from other Masterdor or LB Plastics staff working for them.
 - d. (As above)
 - e. (As above)
 - f. (As above)
13. I am hampered in fully answering this question, and others, as all the records and papers relating to LB Plastics and Masterdor were transferred to Synseal Limited on its purchase of the two companies.
- a. Jim Duncan was Technical Services manager for LB Plastics. His start date is unknown to me though he continued to work for Synseal Limited (Purchasers of

- the LB Plastics and Masterdor assets) after the sale in 2014. His involvement in Masterdor centred around the need to get a PVC frame through the relevant fire tests, so as an expert in PVC window and door systems this became his job.
- b. Gary Fox was employed as the Factory Manager at Masterdor from I think around 2012/2013.
 - c. Dan Jones was not an LB Plastics or Masterdor employee as far as I am aware.
14. LB Plastics' core business was the supply of PVC window and Door systems in the UK, USA, Germany and Poland. Masterdor was a subsidiary though linked in the market place. There was no major change in this up to 2014.
 15.
 - a. I would have expected that the Doors would have complied with the relevant standards.
 - b. We would have had sight of relevant test documents ensuring suitability.
 16. Core business at the time of purchase by LB Plastics was the manufacture and sale of the Timber based Masterdor which was one of the most successful of its type in the UK. Fire doors sales were around 15% to 20% of the total doors sold, though this did vary year to year. The only real change was in the introduction of the Suredor which slowly grew in sales over a period of a few years. The bulk of the sales of Masterdor went to Local Authority and Housing Association clients and was specified in London by the London Housing Consortium. The Suredor was brought in to expand the range of Door types and bring in a slightly more competitive offer. Nan -Ya was actively selling its blanks to over one hundred of our competitors so we used the product generally to attempt to up-sell to the Timber Masterdor.
 17. Myself and both the Masterdor and LB Plastics Directors involved.
 18.
 - a. Mike Hudson was an Associate Director of Manse Masterdor and ran the sales and Marketing function. John Tapscott was the company secretary.
 - b. They and the other Associate Directors ran the day to day operations of the business.
 19. To the best of my knowledge,
 - a. Manse Masterdor and LB Plastics
 - b. Manse Masterdor and LB Plastics

- c. Manse Masterdor and LB Plastics
- d. LB Plastics
- e. Manse Masterdor and LB Plastics

20.

- a. As I have no access to any records or documents for the reason I give in my response "13" above, I can only surmise that the following would have been involved:
 - i. Mr. Jim Duncan, the Masterdor Associate Directors and the LB Plastics Production Director of the time, Mr . Barry Gooch;
 - ii. (as above);
 - iii. (as above).
 - b. I have no record of or access to and information that would answer these questions. These are areas of which I have no knowledge. The possible people who may have known more about this would be Mr. Jim Duncan, Mr. Barry Gooch, Mr. Phil Hudson and their line managers.
 - c. (As above).
 - d. (As above).
 - e. (As above).
 - f. (As above).
 - g. (As above).
21. I cannot provide any information on this matter as all of the documents specified would have been transferred to Synseal Ltd at the time of purchase of LB Plastics and Masterdor.
22. I cannot provide any information in respect of this question other than it would have been a function of the Sales, Mr. Mike Hudson , Production, Mr. Phil Hudson and Mr. Barry Gooch and Mr. Jim Duncan -Technical services, to co-ordinate this matter.
23. I have no access to any of this information for the reason given previously.
24. I have no information relating to this matter. It would not of been an area that I would have been involved with.
25. These reports are the only ones I have seen. Prior to the inquiry I had not seen them before.

26. The Test report is of a representative type door. Whether this has any reference to styles being linked would I believe link back to the fire testing authority. I have no knowledge in this matter.
27. I cannot comment on this as I have no knowledge or information relating to it. I expect it would have been a topic covered by Mr. Mike Hudson and Mr. Jim Duncan.
28. I cannot comment on this as it area outside of my knowledge. Again, Mr. Mike Hudson, Mr. Phil Hudson, Mr. Keith Hudson or Mr. Barry Gooch may have more information relating to this matter.
29. I cannot comment due to lack of information. Mr. Jim Duncan, Mr. Mike Hudson, Mr. Keith Hudson and Mr. Barry Gooch may have more knowledge regards this.
30. Again I do not know how or if this was done. Mr. Keith Hudson, Mr Mike Hudson, Mr. Phil Hudson, Mr.Jim Duncan and Mr.Barry Gooch would know more about this.
31. I do not have any information or knowledge to answer this question. The same named individuals in my response to Question 30 above would have more insight into this area.

I believe the contents of this statement are true and I am willing for this statement and its exhibits to form part of the evidence before the Inquiry and published on the Inquiry's website.

Signed: L.A. Litchfield

Dated: 19/12/2019