



**Robbie Gillett**

Possible  
8 Delancey Passage  
London, NW1 7NN

robbie@wearepossible.org

31st March 2021

**Avenesh Sharma, Chief Operating Officer**

Spark44  
The White Collar Factory  
1 Old Street Yard,  
London, EC1Y 8AF

Dear Avenesh and Spark44,

We are sure that you won't have missed the growing public concern about the present and future impacts of air pollution and climate breakdown in the UK. The most recent global estimate, for example, points to 8.7 million premature deaths in a single year caused by the air pollution from burning fossil fuels. Transport and cars in particular are a major source of this pollution. We're seeking clarification on whether your company has any existing policies on reducing your climate impacts with particular relation to the high carbon products that you advertise and help promote.

We note that you currently hold the account for some of the UK's most polluting vehicle models, including, but not limited to:

- Range Rover Evoque
- Land Rover Discovery
- Jaguar F-Pace

These models were listed as having the most polluting engines in our report 'Upselling Smoke' published in August 2020.

<https://www.badverts.org/s/Upselling-Smoke-FINAL-23-07-20.pdf>

From the videos displayed on your website home page, we see that you are marketing these vehicles using both 'escape to nature' adventure motifs, as well as suggesting the same vehicles' "capability credentials are as useful in the city".

We think that in the context of the air pollution and climate crises, your marketing approach could be seen as dangerous, misleading and irresponsible. Suggesting an SUV's off-road capabilities would be useful or appropriate in urban spaces has real world consequences in terms of pedestrian safety (especially children), air pollution and climate breakdown.

As a consequence of successful marketing campaigns by advertisers, more than 4 in 10 new vehicle sales in the UK is now an SUV, up from just 1 in 10 just a decade ago. Our forthcoming research shows that 75% of these sales are to urban addresses. Future benefits of the switch to electric vehicles (including the 2030 ban on petrol, diesel and plug-in hybrid vehicles) will be undermined if the surge in polluting vehicles continues throughout the 2020s.

We are aware of Spark 44's intimate connection with Jaguar Land Rover as a founding company. Nonetheless, many sectors of the UK economy are publishing commitments to reduce both their direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions to help the UK meet its ambitions to reach net zero emissions by 2050. The advertising industry as a sector is making tentative steps forward through initiatives such as #AdNetZero to reduce emissions from its operations ahead of the UN COP26 climate talks in Glasgow this November 2021.

Please would you clarify how you seek to reduce your own emissions from both your direct operations, but more importantly, from the emissions arising from the products that you advertise. In the name of tackling these generational crises, would you consider a policy of not promoting high carbon products?

Yours sincerely,

**Robbie Gillett**

Campaign Lead, advertising for high carbon products



**Possible.**  
Inspiring climate action

**Robbie Gillett**

Possible  
8 Delancey Passage  
London, NW1 7NN  
robbie@wearepossible.org

31st March 2021

**Florian Haller, Chief Executive Officer**

Serviceplan Group SE & Co. KG  
House of Communication  
Brienner Str. 45 a-d  
80333 Munich  
Germany

Dear Florian and Serviceplan,

We are sure that you won't have missed the growing public concern about the present and future impacts of air pollution and climate breakdown. The most recent global estimate, for example, points to 8.7 million premature deaths in a single year caused by the air pollution from burning fossil fuels. Transport and cars in particular are a major source of this pollution. We're seeking clarification on whether your company has any existing policies on reducing your climate impacts with particular relation to the high carbon products that you advertise and help promote.

We note that you currently hold the account for BMW X5 and 8 Coupé models, one of the most polluting vehicles available.

BMW was listed among other brands as having the most polluting engines in our report 'Upselling Smoke' published in August 2020.

<https://www.badverts.org/s/Upselling-Smoke-FINAL-23-07-20.pdf>

We think that in the context of the air pollution and climate crises, your marketing approach could be seen as misleading and irresponsible.

It is misleading because your adverts use images of the outdoors and nature – but many of the cars will be sold to urban drivers. As a consequence of successful marketing campaigns by advertisers, more than 4 in 10 new vehicle sales in the UK is now an SUV, up from just 1 in 10 just a decade ago. Our forthcoming research shows that 75% of these sales are to urban addresses. Future benefits of the switch to electric vehicles (including the 2030 UK ban on petrol, diesel and plug-in hybrid vehicles) will be undermined if the surge in polluting vehicles continues throughout the 2020s.

The advertising industry as a sector is making tentative steps forward through initiatives such as #AdNetZero to reduce emissions from its operations ahead of the UN COP26 climate talks in Glasgow this November 2021. We are aware that you have taken steps to become climate neutral and committed to reduce carbon emissions from your own operations and prioritise travel by train or in hybrid/electric vehicles. Your efforts to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions of your direct operations will be outweighed by continuing to advertise vehicles such as the BMW X5 which ranks among the highest polluting vehicles (209 grams of CO<sub>2</sub>/km WLTP).

Please would you clarify how you seek to reduce the emissions arising from the products that you advertise. In the name of tackling these generational crises, would you consider a policy of not promoting high carbon products?

Yours sincerely,

**Robbie Gillett**

Campaign Lead, advertising for high carbon products



**Robbie Gillett**

Possible  
8 Delancey Passage  
London, NW1 7NN

robbie@wearepossible.org

31st March 2021

**Karen Martin, Chief Operating Officer**

BBH  
60 Kingly Street  
London  
W1B 5DS

Dear Karen and BBH,

We are sure that you won't have missed the growing public concern about the present and future impacts of air pollution and climate breakdown in the UK. The most recent global estimate, for example, points to 8.7 million premature deaths in a single year caused by the air pollution from burning fossil fuels. Transport and cars in particular are a major source of this pollution. We're seeking clarification on whether your company has any existing policies on reducing your climate impacts with particular relation to the high carbon products that you advertise and help promote.

We note that you currently hold the account for some of the UK's most polluting vehicle models, including those from car manufacturers Volkswagen and Audi.

Some of these carmakers' models were listed as having the most polluting engines in our report 'Upselling Smoke' published in August 2020.

<https://www.badverts.org/s/Upselling-Smoke-FINAL-23-07-20.pdf>

We think that in the context of the air pollution and climate crises, your marketing approach could be seen as misleading and irresponsible.

It is misleading because your adverts use images of the outdoors and nature – but many of the cars will be sold to urban drivers. As a consequence of successful marketing campaigns by advertisers, more than 4 in 10 new vehicle sales in the UK is now an SUV, up from just 1 in 10 just a decade ago. Our forthcoming research shows that 75% of these sales are to urban addresses. Future benefits of the switch to electric vehicles (including the 2030 ban on petrol, diesel and plug-in hybrid vehicles) will be undermined if the surge in polluting vehicles continues throughout the 2020s.

Many sectors of the UK economy are publishing commitments to reduce both their direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions to help the UK meet its ambitions to reach net zero emissions by 2050. The advertising industry as a sector is making tentative steps forward through initiatives such as #AdNetZero to reduce emissions from its operations ahead of the UN COP26 climate talks in Glasgow this November 2021.

Please would you clarify how you seek to reduce your own emissions from both your direct operations, but more importantly, from the emissions arising from the products that you advertise. In the name of tackling these generational crises, would you consider a policy of not promoting high carbon products?

Yours sincerely,

**Robbie Gillett**

Campaign Lead, advertising for high carbon products