

Design and Access Statement

Proposed Installation of Gigaclear Broadband Infrastructure at Dunt Cottage, Dunt Lane, Hurst, RG10 0TA

Applicant: Simon Roberts

Property: Dunt Cottage (Grade II Listed Building)

Local Planning Authority: Wokingham Borough Council

Date: 6th January 2026

1. Introduction

This Design and Access Statement accompanies an application for Listed Building Consent for the installation of fibre broadband infrastructure to serve Dunt Cottage, a Grade II listed property within the administrative area of Wokingham Borough Council.

The proposal seeks to introduce modern, high-speed broadband connectivity (Gigaclear fibre) while preserving the historic and architectural character of Dunt Cottage and its immediate setting.

2. Site Context and Heritage Significance

Dunt Cottage is a **Grade II listed dwelling**, recognised for its **historic vernacular character, traditional materials** (including timber framing, brick infill, and clay tile roofing), and its contribution to the rural landscape.

The property is located within Hurst CP and is set within a modest residential curtilage that retains a largely traditional appearance. The building's listing identifies its architectural interest as being primarily derived from its age, construction form, and detailing typical of rural domestic buildings in Berkshire.

The surrounding area is characterised by agricultural uses and low-density residential dwellings of various ages. Modern utilities and services are discreetly integrated within the streetscape.

3. Design Proposal

3.1 Overview

The proposal comprises the installation of Gigaclear fibre broadband service to Dunt Cottage through the connection of an underground fibre duct to a small termination point at the property.

The installation involves:

- The **connection of existing underground fibre ducting** from the public highway to the property boundary via buried fibre cable along the west and part of the north face of the building.
- The **discreet entry of a fibre cable** into the building fabric, adjacent to an existing BT service route.

- Installation of a small and discreet external fibre termination unit adjacent to the entry point .
- Internal installation of the consumer connection point within the dwelling (non-visible externally).

3.2 Design Approach

The design has been carefully developed to ensure:

- **Minimal visual impact** on the listed building by laying the cable underground up to the point of entry.
 - **No loss of historic fabric**, through the reuse of existing service penetrations wherever possible.
 - **Reversibility** of the intervention, with all works capable of removal without lasting harm to the building.
 - **Material and colour compatibility**, ensuring that external components are subdued and sympathetic to the existing palette.
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4. Access and Construction Details

Access for installation will be achieved via the existing vehicular entrance and pathways. All excavation and duct-laying works will be confined to existing soft landscaping or previously disturbed ground to minimise disruption.

There is **no alteration to access arrangements** for residents, emergency services, or visitors. Temporary barriers may be used during works to ensure safety, with the area reinstated immediately upon completion.

5. Heritage Impact Assessment

The installation represents a **minor and reversible intervention** that will not adversely affect the special architectural or historic interest of Dunt Cottage.

- No historic materials will be removed or damaged.
 - The works will **preserve the setting** and character of the listed building.
 - The installation aligns with the **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** paragraph 208, which supports proposals that sustain heritage assets while meeting modern needs.
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6. Sustainability and Community Benefits

The installation of full-fibre broadband will enhance the long-term viability and functionality of Dunt Cottage by enabling access to essential digital services.

Improved connectivity contributes to:

- Reduced need for travel (through home working).
- Enhanced energy efficiency of operations.
- Increased resilience for rural communities.

The proposal therefore accords with Wokingham Borough Council's objectives to support **digital infrastructure, sustainability, and rural economic vitality**.

7. Conclusion

The proposed Gigaclear broadband installation at Dunt Cottage has been sensitively designed to ensure that it:

- Preserves the historic character and significance of the Grade II listed building.
- Introduces essential modern infrastructure in a **sympathetic, reversible, and low-impact manner**.
- Complies with local and national heritage and design policies.

Accordingly, the applicant respectfully requests that **Listed Building Consent** (and any associated consents) be granted.

Prepared by:

Simon Roberts

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6th January 2026