

PD TELECOMMUNICATIONS 56 DAYS **DRAFT DECISION NOTICE**



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Expiry Date: 6 January 2026

Application Number: 252762

Location: West Court Land, Park Lane, Finchampstead, Wokingham, RG40 4QF

Proposal: Prior approval submission for a proposed installation of electronic communications apparatus comprising a 29.1m high slimline lattice mobile phone mast, 3 no. aerials, 2 no. transmission dishes, 1 no. GPS aerial, radio equipment housing and development ancillary to radio equipment housing.

Recommendation: Prior Approval Refusal

Reasons

1. By virtue of its excessive height, utilitarian design and inappropriate siting within the West Court Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG), the proposal would introduce a highly prominent and urbanizing feature that would be starkly at odds with the naturalistic character of the SANG and the wider countryside. The proposal would erode the wooded and heathland qualities that define this landscape and fails to demonstrate that it would not have a detrimental impact on existing trees, the removal of which would further degrade the quality and integrity of the area. Accordingly, the proposal is contrary to Core Strategy Policies CP3 and CP11, MDD Local Plan Policies CC03 and TB21, and guidance contained within the Borough Design Guide SPD, Arborfield Garrison SDL SPD, and the Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan.

2. By virtue of its inappropriate siting within the West Court Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG), the proposal's physical and visual intrusion would materially reduce the attractiveness of the SANG for recreational use, thereby undermining its effectiveness as mitigation for the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA), contrary to Core Strategy Policy CP8, saved South East Plan Policy NRM6, Local Plan Policy TB21, and Natural England's SANG guidelines. As the SPA was designated under the European Birds Directive, the failure to maintain the SANG's functionality as an alternative to SPA recreation conflicts with the requirements of that Directive and the agreed SPA Mitigation Strategy.

3. The proposal fails to demonstrate that adequate details have been provided regarding construction access arrangements, delivery methodology, and vehicle manoeuvring. In particular, no swept path analysis has been submitted to confirm that the largest delivery vehicle can enter and leave the site in forward gear, nor has sufficient information been provided on visibility splays or compliance with the width restriction along the site frontage. As such, the application does not demonstrate that

the development can be carried out without detriment to highway safety, contrary to the requirements of Part 16 of the GPDO and Core Strategy policy CP6.

4. The application fails to robustly demonstrate that alternative sites, which could accommodate a new base station and result in less harm to visual amenity, are not feasible. In the absence of such evidence, the proposal is considered contrary to the guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which seeks to ensure that the need for new telecommunications equipment is balanced against the impact on the character and appearance of the area.

BJC

Recommendation and conditions/reasons agreed:

Date: 11.12.25

REMEMBER - The earliest date for a decision on this application is: **3 December 2025**