

Date: 11 December 2025
Application: 252762



**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

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Dear Mr Jonathan Haddrell,

TELECOMMUNICATIONS PRIOR APPROVAL DECISION LETTER

Application Number: 252762

Site Address: 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.

I refer to your application for prior approval for telecommunications development registered on 11 November 2025 under the above reference number. The proposal is for:

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.

Wokingham Borough Council hereby confirm that **prior approval is required and is not given** for the siting and appearance of the development proposed in the above mentioned application in accordance with the submitted plans referred to above, due to the following reason(s):

Reasons

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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.

Confirmation

Given that the onus falls on Local Planning Authorities to ensure that prior approval decisions reach Operators, please confirm that you have received this letter as a matter of **urgency**.

Appeals

If your application has been **refused** by the Borough Council or **granted subject to conditions** that you are not happy with, you have the right to appeal to the Planning Inspectorate (under Section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990). This must be within six months of the date of this letter. Please note an extension of time for lodging an appeal is unlikely to be granted except in special circumstances.

The Planning Inspectorate is an Executive Agency reporting to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government. The Inspectorate has an online appeals service with information and guidance about the process. You can submit [full application appeals](#) and [householder application appeals](#) with the new appeals service. [Other application types](#) should be submitted on the current appeal service. Alternatively, you can obtain a form from the Planning Inspectorate at Temple Quay House, 2 The Square, Temple Quay, Bristol, BS1 6PN, 0303 444 5000 or through the [Inspectorate's website](#). Please note all documents will be published online by the Planning Inspectorate and therefore you should not include personal information you

do not wish to be displayed in this way. This includes personal information of third parties.

If you intend to submit an appeal to be considered as a Public Inquiry you must notify the Local Planning Authority (**planning.appeals@wokingham.gov.uk**) and Planning Inspectorate (inquiryappeals@planninginspectorate.gov.uk) at least 10 days before you submit the appeal.

Yours sincerely,
Development Management & Compliance