

**Report on proposed erection of EE Ltd Telecommunications Apparatus at Sol Joel Park**

Telecoms operators have enhanced rights to install, operate and maintain telecommunications equipment on public and private land under the Electronic Communications Code (the code) 2017 for improving telecommunications networks.

A telecoms operator can ask a landowner to grant them a lease with a right of access to install and maintain telecommunications equipment. If a voluntary agreement cannot be reached between the telecoms operator and the land owner, a telecoms operator can apply for compulsory rights to erect equipment on private land without the landowner's consent.

In late 2019, Earley Town Council was contacted by the Harlequin Group who are working on behalf of EE Ltd Telecommunications, identifying Sol Joel Park as a possible site to erect a telecommunication mast and on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2020, the Harlequin Group carried out a site survey.

Due to the Covid-19 situation, no further information was received from the Harlequin Group until an email on 31<sup>st</sup> July advising that they wished to proceed with Sol Joel Park as a proposed site. The Harlequin Group were advised that Reading Borough Council are the landowners of Sol Joel Park and Reading Borough Council subsequently advised Harlequin Group that, as ETC are the leaseholders of the park, the initial request would need to be dealt with by ETC, who in turn would then need to seek Reading Borough Council's consent to the underletting to EE Ltd Telecommunications.

Reading Borough Council have highlighted that ETC may need to seek legal advice on the matter due to a clause in the lease between ETC and Reading Borough Council which states:-

*Clause 7.9 AERIALS, SIGNS AND ADVERTISEMENTS.*

*7.9.1 - Not to erect upon the premises any pole mast or wire whether in connection with telegraphic telephonic radio or television communication or otherwise EXCEPT for one single domestic television aerial receiver.*

The reason for Sol Joel Park being identified as a potential site is because it is close to the railway line and the erection of a mast is designed to enhance the 5G network for train users using the line. But the erection of the equipment would have a huge visual impact and there will be a loss in space. Sol Joel Park is a very popular park with high footfall and sporting activities. Also, Sol Joel Park is in the close proximity to Earley St Peters School.

Documents sent under separate cover, via email:-

- The Terms of Contract between EE Ltd Telecommunications and Reading Borough Council
- Site Plans
- Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport – Collaborating for Digital Connectivity
- Introduction to the Electronic Communications Code
- Meeting notes from Site Visit on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2020.

Emma Carroll, Deputy Town Clerk  
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