

Glastonbury Councillors Vote to put its 5G Precautionary Policy into Action



Councillor Jon Cousins and the Thomas Way mast location. Image credits: to be confirmed.

At the 15th September Glastonbury Town Council Planning meeting, Councillor Jon Cousins, former Mayor of Glastonbury and Chair of the Council's six-month 5G Advisory Committee, proposed that the Council follow through on the Precautionary Principle it adopted in 2019.

The proposal concerned an application for a 22.85-metre 4G and 5G telecommunications tower at Thomas Way Industrial Estate. Councillor Mike Smyth supported the proposal and the Planning Committee voted in favour by five votes to none, with one abstention.

Following through on earlier work

The decision continues work begun in 2019, when Councillor Smyth proposed - and Councillor Cousins seconded - a motion recognising the Council's responsibility to protect public health and the environment. It led to a six-month investigation by a specialist advisory committee chaired by Councillor Cousins, and to the Council's continuing precautionary position.

Ahead of the meeting, councillors received a written submission entitled Thomas Way Telecommunications Proposal: Applying Glastonbury Town Council's 2019 Precautionary Resolution. It brought together new scientific, legal and local evidence and set out eight ACTION POINTS in section 6.

Government follow-through

As part of the agreed ACTION POINTS, councillors will also pursue the Government's response to Glastonbury's earlier inquiry. In their 2020 reply, the Department of Health and Social Care referred to an independent study into non-thermal effects and commissioned research into electromagnetic hypersensitivity. The Council will now be asking the Department and the UK Health Security Agency to identify that work and provide its status, publications and findings.

What the Council is asking Somerset to do

The agreed action asks Somerset Council to publish the information needed before determining the Thomas Way planning application and allow the Town Council and public at least 21 days to consider it and submit further representations.

- the technical basis of the ICNIRP declaration, including operating frequencies, maximum powers, antenna configurations and cumulative-exposure assumptions;
- scaled plans and vertical sections showing the three-dimensional public exclusion zones;
- evidence supporting the claimed need for the siting, height and design, including coverage maps and the relationship with the existing mast approximately 120 metres away;
- assessment of people with metal or active medical implants, electrohypersensitivity and those who may be vulnerable because of age, health, disability or medical condition;
- a reasoned Environmental Impact Assessment screening opinion covering human health, cumulative exposure, nearby children and environmental receptors; and
- an updated health statement and a site-specific planning-stage public-health assessment explaining how the evidence has been evaluated.

The environmental request includes the nearby Somerset Levels, the West Mendip Environmentally Sensitive Area constraint and a notable Monterey cypress recorded on the Woodland Trust's Ancient Tree Inventory approximately 50 metres from the proposed development. Somerset Council will determine the application; Glastonbury's vote asks it to publish the missing information, allow time for scrutiny and assess the evidence before doing so.

**Closing deadline currently
WEDNESDAY 23rd September**

**To file a comment
bit.ly/ThomasWayInfo**