

Notification under section 49(4) of the Communications Act 2003

Draft decision by Reading Borough Council in response to a proposal by British Telecommunications plc for the removal of public call boxes pursuant to Part 2 of the Schedule to a Direction published by Ofcom on 14 March 2006 ('the Direction').

1. Reading Borough Council, in accordance with section 49(4) of the Communications Act 2003 ('the Act'), hereby make the following draft decision in response to a proposal by British Telecommunications plc for the removal of public call boxes pursuant to Part 2 of the Direction as set out in BT letter dated 18 September 2019
2. The draft decision is set out in the Schedule to this Notification.
3. The effect of, and Reading Borough Council's reasons for making, the draft decision is set out in the Schedule to this Notification.
4. Reading Borough Council considers that the draft decision complies with the requirements of sections 45 to 50 of the Act, as appropriate and relevant to the proposal.
5. In making the draft decision, Reading Borough Council has considered and acted in accordance with the six community requirements in section 4 of the Act.
6. Representations may be made to Reading Borough Council about the draft decision by 1700hrs on 11 December 2019
7. A copy of this Notification has been sent to the Secretary of State in accordance with section 50(1)(b) of the Act.
8. The Schedule to this Notification shall form part of this Notification.



Richard Eatough on behalf of

Francis Martin

Executive Director of Economic Development and Neighbourhood Services

A person authorised by Reading Borough council to sign this Notification

Date: 11 November 2019

**Draft Decision Relating to Notification under section 49(4) of the
Communications Act 2003**

Schedule:

1. Junction of Holmes Road and Wokingham Road, Earley, Reading RG6 7DT

This box is relatively well used with 119 calls per year.

The box is sited within Lower Super Output Area Reading009A which is within the lowest 20% of deprived areas in England on the Index of Multiple Deprivation.

One objection has been received in response to public consultation, citing the significant demand for the box due to the numbers of calls made. It is considered that the level of use indicate that the box remains important and should be retained for the benefit of residents and local school children.

Decision: Object

2. Usk Road, Tilehurst, Reading RG30 4HG

This box is relatively well used with 141 calls per year.

It is located close to primary and secondary schools, with pupils being less likely to be in a position to make use of mobile phones.

The box is sited within Lower Super Output Area Reading009A which is within the top 10% of deprived areas in England on the Index of Multiple Deprivation. Residents are therefore less likely to have full access to mobile phones and therefore more reliant on public phone boxes.

One objection has been received in response to public consultation, citing the significant demand for the box due to the numbers of calls made. It is considered that the level of use and the socioeconomic characteristics of the location indicate that the box remains important and should be retained for the benefit of residents and local school children.

Decision: Object

3. Harvaston Parade, Hardwick Road, Tilehurst, Reading RG30 4LH

This box is relatively well used with 149 calls per year.

It is located close to primary and secondary schools, with pupils being less likely to be in a position to make use of mobile phones.

The box is sited within Lower Super Output Area Reading009C which is within the top 50% of deprived areas in England on the Index of Multiple Deprivation.

One objection has been received in response to public consultation, citing the significant demand for the box due to the numbers of calls made. It is considered that the level of use indicate that the box remains important and should be retained for the benefit of residents and local school children.

Decision: Object

4. Spey Road, Tilehurst, Reading RG30 4DZ

This box is well used with 340 calls per year.

It is located close to a primary school, with pupils being less likely to be in a position to make use of mobile phones.

The box is sited within Lower Super Output Area Reading006D which is within the top 20% of deprived areas in England on the Index of Multiple Deprivation. Residents are therefore less likely to have full access to mobile phones and therefore more reliant on public phone boxes.

One objection has been received in response to public consultation, citing the significant demand for the box due to the numbers of calls made. It is considered that the level of use and the socioeconomic characteristics of the location indicate that the box remains important and should be retained for the benefit of residents and local school children.

Decision: Object

5. Junction Tylers Place and Pottery Road, Tilehurst RG30 6BA

The site is adjacent to Meadow Park Academy School and a Pharmacy.

The box has low usage with 7 calls a year.

The box is sited within Lower Super Output Area Reading006D which is within the lowest 40% of deprived areas in England on the Index of Multiple Deprivation.

One objection has been received in response to public consultation, citing the significant demand for the box due to the numbers of calls made, and the inaccuracy of the usage data as the phone box is reported to not be accepting coins.

It is considered on the basis of the siting of the phone box close to the school and pharmacy, which act as focal points for the community, and inaccuracy of the

phone usage data, that the phone box remains socially important and should remain.

Decision: Object

6. Outside the Milestone Way Shops, Buckingham Drive, Emmer Green, Reading RG4 8RZ

This phone is located within the Emmer Green District Centre as defined in the Development Plan and outside a parade of well-used shops which provide a focal point for the local community. A more accurate postcode is RG4 8XW.

The phone is well used with 103 calls recorded in the last year.

One objection has been received in response to the public consultation referring to the significant number of calls made.

It is considered that the significant existing usage and the location of the phone at a community focal point, within the District Centre are indications that the phone remains important to the local community and that it would be in the public interest for it to remain.

Decision: Object

7. Junction of St Barnabas Road and Grove Road, Emmer Green, Reading RG4 8LN

Two objections have been received on the grounds that the removal application is based on flawed data, and that the site is in close proximity to schools, and could be used by vulnerable persons.

One objector states that they checked this phone box on 26 September 2019 and that it was out of order and may well have been out of order for many months.

They reason that the figure of zero calls is therefore not representative and request that the removal application is rejected.

The phone box is sited in a location where a number of community uses coincide, a surgery, church, youth and community centre, and primary school. The box is also close to a secondary school and 6th form centre serving a significant proportion of the north of the Borough. Many pupils could be expected to pass the box between the school and main bus stops on Grove Road.

It is considered that insufficient information is available currently to justify removal of this box. This is on the basis that usage data cannot be reasonably relied upon and the box is sited within a significant grouping of community uses, many of which serve young or more vulnerable members of the community.

Decision: Object

8. Junction of Ashampstead Road and Southcote Lane, Reading RG30 3AR

The box has relatively low usage with 44 calls a year.

The box is sited within Lower Super Output Area Reading015E which is within the top 30% of deprived areas in England on the Index of Multiple Deprivation.

One objection has been received in response to public consultation, citing the significant demand for the box due to the numbers of calls made, and the proximity of the site to the manor primary school

It is considered on the basis of the siting of the phone box close to the school, that the phone box remains socially important and should remain.

Decision: Object

9. Outside Morrisons Supermarket, Basingstoke Road, Reading RG2 0DY

The box has high usage with 835 calls a year.

The box is sited within Lower Super Output Area Reading017E which is within the top 30% of deprived areas in England on the Index of Multiple Deprivation.

One objection has been received in response to public consultation, citing the significant demand for the box due to the numbers of calls made.

It is considered on the basis of substantial use that the phone box remains socially important and should remain.

Decision: Object