



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Mr D. Cheetham  
Chairman, Bishampton Parish Council  
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October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2007

*D. Mr Cheetham,*

It was good to talk to you on the telephone today about the problems of the Bishampton mobile phone mast.

Bishampton is the only village in my constituency to have had serious concerns in recent years about a mobile phone mast although it is true there were significant concerns a little while back about a proliferation of masts near one primary school in my constituency on the edge of Worcester.

The position is very simple – the law is inadequate. The views of local communities are not properly taken account of and it is something that should be changed as I have said to people in Bishampton.

Sadly there is absolutely nothing I can do to alleviate the problem. The mast is up and operating and it has all been done perfectly legally. It is the law that is inadequate and the law that needs changing and it will take a new Government to do that, I fear.

Residents should not blame the parish council or the district council. The information offered by T-mobile is that the other sites suggested by members of the local community were not suitable. I am not in possession of sufficient technical knowledge to be sure that they are true or not.



I am, however, clear that the views of local communities should be taken much more clearly into account and the planning process adjusted to make this possible.

I have, of course, cooperated fully with local residents who have sought information and I have had extensive correspondence with them and with the parish council soliciting information from the regulatory authorities on their behalf – indeed I currently have a letter outstanding awaiting reply from Stephen Timms from the Department of Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform dealing with further subjects raised with me by the parish council.

I want to make it clear that the Conservative Party policy has been set to enable the views of local communities better to be taken into account during the planning process. This will require, as I understand it, a change in the law not just in the guidance of the planning authorities but I may be wrong on that point. I am, however, confident that if my Party forms the next Government communities such as Bishampton will have a much better chance of ensuring their wishes are respected.

I should add that I have myself made representations to T-mobile both in writing and in person but they maintain that this is the optimum site for the mast, that there is no health risk associated with the mast, and that it is the right place for it to go.

In the face of such a clear view from the mobile phone operator no power on earth that I am aware of can change the situation. I agree that it is unsatisfactory but it is how things are, at least for the time being.

I will be meeting T-mobile again next month,  
and I will re-iterate to them the concern of the  
people of Bishampton.  
With best wishes  
Yours sincerely,

RW