



Radio Worthing CIC - Applicant's Planning Statement

1. Introduction

This statement is submitted on behalf of Radio Worthing CIC in support of the application for the installation of broadcast antennas at St Peter's Church tower, High Salvington.

Radio Worthing CIC is a not-for-profit local community radio service for Worthing. The purpose of the station is to provide a genuinely local broadcasting service focused on the town, its residents, its organisations and its day-to-day life. It is intended to serve Worthing as a community asset, rather than as a commercial radio operation driven primarily by profit.

2. The Applicant

Radio Worthing CIC has been developed by a group of directors with longstanding personal and professional ties to Worthing. The directors have all lived in the town for decades and bring extensive experience from broadcasting at both local commercial and national level.

The project itself has a long history dating back to 2011. Progress has been constrained over the years by the limited availability of suitable broadcast licensing opportunities through Ofcom. With those opportunities now becoming available, Radio Worthing CIC considers this to be a rare and timely opportunity to restore a truly local radio voice for Worthing.

The station has been developed with a clear community purpose. It is intended to operate as a local platform for information, participation and engagement, and to reflect the identity and priorities of Worthing itself. Any future surplus generated beyond the running costs required to sustain the station is intended to be directed back into local causes, so that the success of the station can benefit the town in practical as well as editorial terms.

3. Community Benefit

The proposed station will provide a clear public benefit to Worthing by delivering local broadcasting focused specifically on the town and its surrounding community.

Its output is intended to include local news, travel information, events coverage, interviews, emergency messaging, arts coverage, faith and community content, charity support, and the promotion of emerging local talent. The station also intends to be active at local events through live broadcasting and direct engagement with residents, organisations and key local figures.

A key objective of Radio Worthing CIC is to provide a platform for local voices and to ensure that local issues are given proper prominence. The station will offer training opportunities and will actively encourage members of the community to become involved in programme-making and station activity.

There is already evidence of public interest in this type of service. Between January and March 2025, RadioWorthing.co.uk attracted 56,680 unique visitors, demonstrating strong local demand for reliable, uncluttered local news and information. This shows that there is already a growing audience for a dedicated Worthing-focused service.

While the website has been an important way of establishing that demand, online publishing alone is limited to those who are actively using digital platforms. A radio service is more immediate, more reactive and more widely accessible. This is particularly important when communicating time-sensitive information such as travel disruption, severe weather, emergency incidents, public safety information and other urgent developments affecting daily life in the town.

Worthing has, in practical terms, lost the presence of a truly local commercial radio station based in the town. Existing commercial radio services are no longer based in Worthing and are not in a position to provide the same level of immediate and detailed town-level coverage. Other local media continue to play an important role, but radio has a distinct ability to reach listeners as events unfold and to provide accessible, real-time local information throughout the day. Radio Worthing CIC is intended to fill that gap with a service whose sole focus is Worthing and its community.

4. Need for the Proposal

The proposed antenna installation is necessary in order for Radio Worthing CIC to operate as an effective broadcast service on FM Analogue and DAB Digital Radio.

For both FM and DAB broadcasting, site height is fundamentally important in achieving reliable coverage. The location at St Peter's Church in High Salvington offers the elevation required to provide robust coverage across Worthing from a single site. This makes it possible to serve the intended community effectively and consistently, while keeping the infrastructure required to the minimum necessary.

This is particularly important for a community broadcaster operating with finite resources. A suitable single-site solution enables the station to be both viable and efficient, while also reducing the need for additional infrastructure elsewhere.

5. Consideration of Alternatives

Alternative options have been considered.

Commercial mast sites have been explored but have proved financially unviable for a community broadcaster. Town-centre rooftops that might previously have offered comparable coverage are no longer commercially available. Lower sites would not provide the same elevation and would result in materially poorer coverage across the town.

A multi-site solution has also been considered and discounted. Such an approach would be more costly, more complex and more intrusive than a single, well-chosen location.

Radio Worthing CIC must also work within Ofcom's frequency planning and the spectrum constraints that apply to this coastal area. Owing in particular to the proximity to France and the need to avoid interference with other services, many potential sites can be ruled out because they would not be compatible with the available broadcast frequency planning for the proposed service.

Against this background, St Peter's Church tower was identified as the most appropriate site. It provides the combination of elevation, proven broadcast suitability, reuse of existing brackets, and minimal need for new intervention that makes it the

most suitable available option. The tower has previously been used for community radio transmissions with proven results, and the ability to reuse existing antenna brackets further reduces the level of physical intervention required.

The site was therefore selected because it best balances operational need, viability and a restrained approach to installation.

6. Conclusion

This proposal is required to enable Radio Worthing CIC to establish a not-for-profit local community radio service for Worthing.

The station will provide clear public benefit through local news, information, community participation, training opportunities, support for local organisations and improved access to immediate local broadcasting. It is intended to become a community-focused service rooted in the life of the town and responsive to the needs of its residents.

The proposed site at St Peter's Church has been selected only after consideration of alternatives and because it is the most suitable available location. It offers the elevation necessary to provide robust coverage from a single site, while also allowing the proposal to make use of existing infrastructure and to proceed with minimal intervention when compared with other options.

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