

Unrestricted Report

ITEM NO: 10

Application No.
14/00068/RTD
Site Address:

Ward:
Ascot

Date Registered:
20 January 2014

Target Decision Date:
16 March 2014

Land Adj To Electricity Substation Fernbank Road Ascot Berkshire

Proposal:

Replacement of existing 13.8M high monopole and internally shrouded antennas with new 13.8M high monopole, 1 no. additional cabinet with ancillary development.

Applicant:

Waldon Telecom Ltd

Agent:

(There is no agent for this application)

Case Officer:

Laura Rain, 01344 352000

environment@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Site Location Plan (for identification purposes only, not to scale)



OFFICER REPORT

1. REASON FOR REPORTING APPLICATION TO COMMITTEE

This application has been reported before the Planning Committee as the application has to be determined within 56 days.

2. PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS FOR TELECOMMUNICATIONS DEVELOPMENT

Class (a) A, Part 24, Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 deals with permitted development for telecommunications development.

Class (a) A relates to the installation, alteration or replacement of any telecommunications apparatus.

A.1 states that development is not permitted by Class A (a) if-

(b) in the case of the alteration or replacement of apparatus already installed (other than on a building or other structure), the apparatus, excluding any antenna, would when altered or replaced, exceed the height of the existing apparatus or a height of 15m above ground level, whichever is the greater.

The proposal would not exceed the existing 13.8m high mast and as such the mast complies with this.

The GPDO also allows for cabinets where they do not exceed 1.5 sqm. The ground area of the proposed cabinet would be 0.91sqm.

However as the proposal is in close proximity to the highway it is considered necessary to assess the siting of the mast in terms of highway safety and as such Prior Approval is required to ensure that there is no detrimental impact upon highway safety.

3. SITE DESCRIPTION

The site is an area of raised grass verge adjacent to the footpath on Fernbank Road.

The area is residential in character with 8m high lamp columns and telegraph poles. To the north of the site is a 12m high large mature tree.

Behind the area of verge are the grounds of the sheltered accommodation at Christopher Gardens. On the opposite side of the road is 98, 100 and 100a Fernbank Road.

4. RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

10/00837/RTD Application for siting of a 13.8m high telecommunication mast supporting 6 internal antennas with ground based equipment cabinet. Approved.

5. THE PROPOSAL

This application seeks prior approval to replace a 13.8m high street pole with 13.8m high mast with internally shrouded antennas. One associated equipment cabinet coloured green (as exists) measuring 1.89m x 0.798m x 1.65mm would remain on site and an additional cabinet 1.3m (l) x 0.7m (w) x 1.45m (h) would be installed to the north east of the mast.

The mast and associated antennas are 'permitted development', but the developer must apply to the Local Planning Authority to ascertain whether prior approval is required for the siting and appearance of the development. In this instance the applicants have submitted these details for approval and the Council has 56 days in which to consider them. If no decision is made within the timeframe the application will be deemed as approved.

The applicant has submitted a certificate, which confirms that the proposed mast meets ICNIRP (International Commission on Non-Ionising Radiation Protection) guidelines.

6. REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

Three letters of objection has been received. This raises the following concerns:

- The relocation of the mast would have a detrimental impact upon the views from apartments in St Christopher Gardens.
- There are other more suitable sites for the relocation of the mast i.e. on the other side of the electricity substation.
- The tree that previously screened the existing mast has been removed and therefore it is more visually prominent.

7. SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Transportation Officer:

The proposal is not considered to be detrimental to highway safety. The replacement equipment and additional cabinet fall outside the 4.5m by 33m sight line at the junction of St Christopher's Garden and Fernbank Road secured by condition when the equipment was original granted permission under application number 10/00837/RTD.

8. DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Development Plan for this Borough includes the following:

Site Allocations Location Plan 2013 (SALP)
Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2008 (CSDPD)
'Saved' Policies of the Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan 2002 (BFBLP)
Bracknell Forest Borough Policies Map 2013

9. PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

In assessing RTD application the Council must only consider the impact upon highway safety and the impact upon the character and appearance. As such the principle of the development is not required to be assessed.

10. IMPACT ON CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF AREA

CSDPD Policy CS7 states that development will be permitted which builds upon the local character of the area, provides safe communities and enhances the local landscape where possible. BFBLP 'Saved' Policy EN20 states that development should be in sympathy with the appearance and character of the local area.

'Saved' Policy SC4 of the Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan states:

"Planning permission for network telecommunications development will be permitted provided that... There is no reasonable possibility of erecting antennas in an existing building or structure or of sharing facilities... The development must be sited so as to minimise its

visual impact, subject to technical and operational considerations. " This is considered consistent with para 43 of the NPPF which states that planning should aim to keep the numbers of radio and telecommunications masts and the sites for such installations to a minimum. Existing masts, buildings and other structures should be used, unless the need for a new site has been justified and where new sites are required, equipment should be sympathetically designed and camouflaged where appropriate.

These policies are considered to be consistent with the objectives set out within the NPPF. In addition para. 56 the NPPF states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and should contribute positively to making places better for people to live.

The proposed mast would be a replacement of an existing mast of the same height and colour and as such the impact upon the character and appearance of the area would be minimal. The additional cabinet located between the mast and the existing cabinet would not have a cluttering affect upon the character of the area and its impact would not be so great as to merit refusal.

As such, the proposal would not adversely affect the character and appearance of the surrounding area and would be in accordance with 'Saved' Policies EN20 and SC4 of the Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan, Policy CS7 of the Core Strategy DPD and the National Planning Policy Framework.

11. RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

BFPLP 'Saved' Policy EN20 refers to the need to not adversely affect the amenity of the surrounding properties and adjoining areas. In addition to this, part of the requirement for a development to provide a satisfactory design as stated in BFPLP 'Saved' Policy EN20 and CSDPD Policy CS7, is for the development to be sympathetic to the visual amenity of neighbouring properties through its design implications. This is considered to be consistent with the general design principles laid out in paras. 56 to 66 of the NPPF, and para. 66 in particular where applicants are expected to work closely with the surrounding community and generate designs that take into account their views.

The nearest residential properties are those within Christopher Gardens, 15m to the west and the proposal replaces an existing mast.

The proposed mast would be considered to appear visible to surrounding residential properties, however due to its slim line design, it would not be considered to appear so prominent and unduly overbearing to surrounding residential properties as to warrant refusal of the application.

As such, the proposal would not be considered to affect the residential amenities of neighbouring properties and would be in accordance with 'Saved' Policy EN20 of the Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

12. TRANSPORT IMPLICATIONS

CSDPD Policy CS23 states that the LPA will seek to increase highway safety. This is considered to be consistent with the NPPF.

The proposal is not considered to be detrimental to highway safety and as such is considered to be in accordance with Policy CS23 of the Cores Strategy DPD and the NPPF and would not result in highway implications.

13. HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

The NPPF states in para 46 that the LPA should "not seek to prevent competition between different operators, question the need for the telecommunications system, or determine health safeguards if the proposal meets International Commission guidelines for public exposure."

The applicant has submitted a certificate, which confirms that the proposed mast meets ICNIRP (International Commission on Non-Ionising Radiation Protection) guidelines.

The International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) is an independent scientific body which has produced an international set of guidelines for public exposure to radio frequency waves.

These guidelines were recommended in the Stewart Report and adopted by the Government, replacing the National Radiological Protection Board (NRPB) guidelines.

It is considered; therefore, that there are no grounds for refusal based on perceived health risks and the proposal complies with the NPPF.

14. NEED

'Saved' Policy SC4 of BFBLP refers to telecommunication development being permitted provided there is a need for the development.

As stated above the NPPF states in para 46 "Local planning authorities must determine applications on planning grounds. They should not seek to prevent competition between different operators, question the need for the telecommunications system."

The applicants have stated that they need to upgrade the mast to provide 4G coverage for both Vodafone and O2. However, the issue of need is not a planning consideration and therefore in this respect 'saved' policy SC4 of BFBLP carries limited weight.

15. CONCLUSIONS

It is considered that the proposed telecommunications equipment to accommodate both Vodafone and O2 would be acceptable as a mast share, not adversely impacting upon the residential amenities of adjoining properties or appearing visually intrusive to the detriment of the surrounding area. The proposed replacement mast and additional equipment cabinet would therefore be acceptable subject to no adverse impact upon highway safety.

As such, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with policies CS7 and CS23 of the CSDPD, Policy CP1 of SALP, 'saved' Policy EN20 of BFBLP and the NPPF. With regard to 'saved' policy SC4 limited weight is given to this policy for the reason given above.

RECOMMENDATION

The siting and appearance of the development proposed be **APPROVED** in accordance with the plans as stated below:-

Proposed Site Plan 201 received by the Local Planning Authority on 20th January 2014.
Proposed Site Elevation 301 received by the Local Planning Authority on 20th January 2014.
Site Location Maps 100 received by the Local Planning Authority on 20th January 2014.

Informative(s):

01. The applicant is advised to seek consent from the Council's Traffic Manager for any works on the highway. The Traffic Manager can be contacted at the Environment Department, Time Square, Market Street, Bracknell, RG12 1JD, telephone 01344 352000.

Doc. Ref: Uniform 7/DC/Agenda

The application file to which this report relates can be viewed at the Council's Time Square office during office hours or online at www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk