

## Unrestricted Report

### ITEM NO: 10

Application No.  
**14/00141/RTD**  
Site Address:

Ward:  
Hanworth

Date Registered:  
11 February 2014

Target Decision Date:  
7 April 2014

## Telecommunications Mast Birch Hill Road Bracknell Berkshire

Proposal:

**Replacement of existing 12.5M high Jupiter monopole telecommunications mast and cabinet with 15M Jupiter dual stack 'S' type monopole with 6 no. internally shrouded antennas and 3 no. associated equipment cabinets.**

Applicant:

CTIL and Vodafone Ltd

Agent:

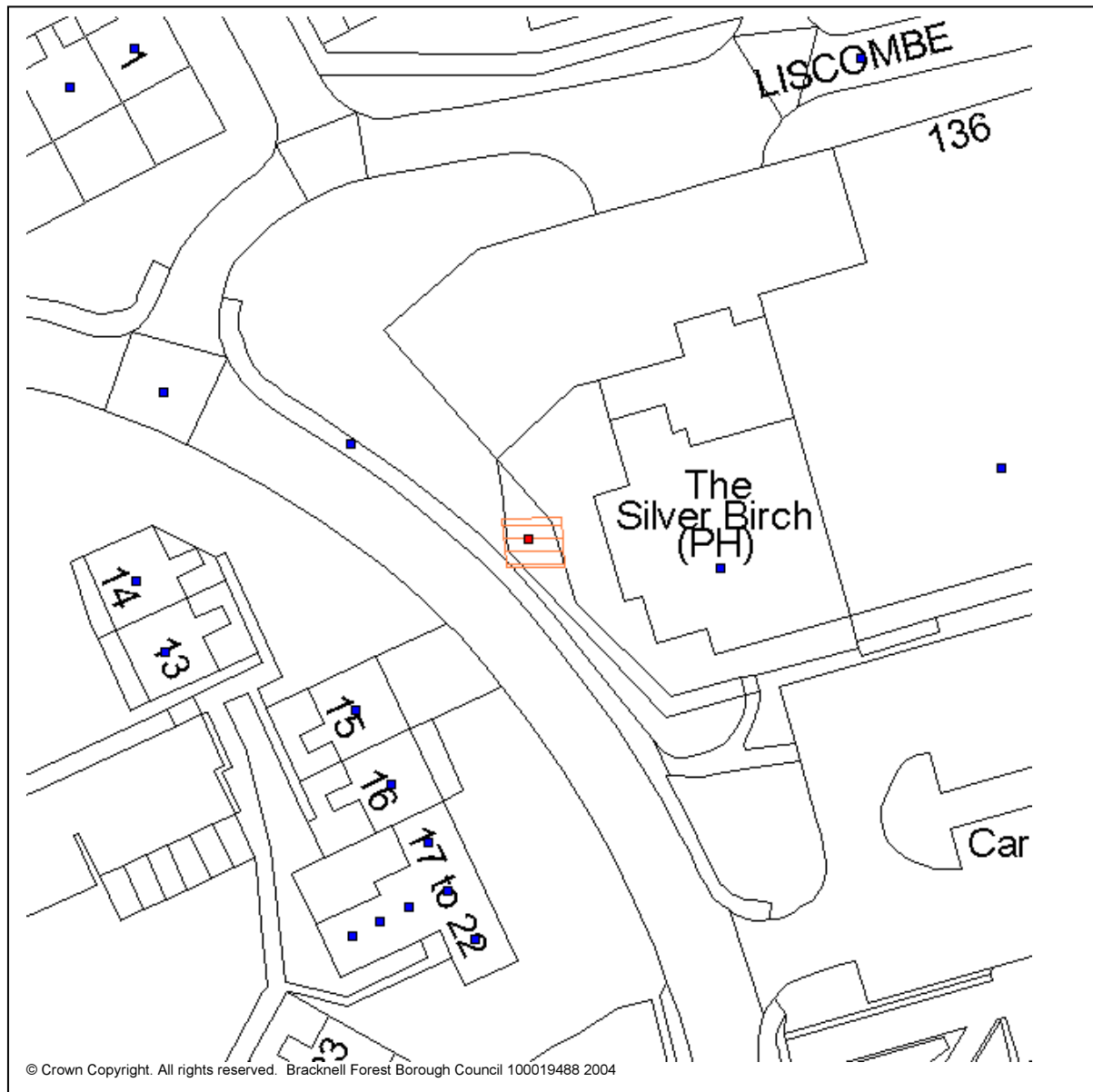
CAIP Ltd

Case Officer:

Michael Ruddock, 01344 352000

[Development.control@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:Development.control@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 (GPDO) 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-

(ba) in the case of the alteration or replacement of apparatus already installed (other than on a building or other structure, on article 1(5) land or on any land which is, or is within, a site of special scientific interest) -

(i) the mast, excluding any antenna, would when altered or replaced -

(aa) exceed the height of the existing apparatus or a height of 20m above ground level;

(bb) at any given height exceed the width of the existing mast at the same height by more than one third.

The proposed mast would not exceed 20m and would not exceed the width of the existing mast by more than one third 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 cabinets would be under this size criteria. However as the proposal is in close proximity to the highway and the replacement mast would be increased in height by 2.5m over and above that of the existing mast subject to this upgrade, it is necessary to assess the siting of the mast and associated cabinets in terms of highway safety and its visual appearance and as such Prior Approval is therefore required.

### **3. SITE DESCRIPTION**

The site for the proposed replacement mast lies on the eastern side of Birch Hill Road and is primarily a residential area. The proposed mast would be sited within an existing footway to the side of the Silver Birch public house. There are street light columns in close proximity to the site.

### **4. RELEVANT SITE HISTORY**

Application 00/00724/RTD for an original mast at the site was determined as not requiring Prior Approval in August 2000.

Applications 08/00724/RTD and 10/00039/RTD both proposed a 12.5m high mast in this location and were both approved in September 2009 and March 2010.

### **5. THE PROPOSAL**

This application seeks prior approval to erect a 15m high dual stack monopole telecommunications mast with 6no. internally shrouded antennas. The mast would be grey coloured.

Two new cabinets and one replacement cabinet are also proposed. Two of the cabinets would have a width of 1.3m with a depth of 0.7m and a height of 1.7m. The third cabinet would have a width of 0.6m with a depth of 0.6m and a height of 1.4m. These would also be grey.

The proposed mast would replace an existing 12.5m high mast and would be sited in the same location as that of the existing mast. One existing cabinet already in situ would be retained.

The proposed mast would be upgraded to maintain continued coverage and capacity of the existing networks for Vodafone and Telefonica (formally O2) but to also cater for future 4G coverage demands. For information, 4G services are intended to improve mobile broadband, allowing greater capacities of data to be shared with faster speeds.

The mast and associated antennas are 'permitted development', but the developer must apply to the Local Planning Authority (LPA) 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.

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

The proposed mast would be located some 160m from the nearest primary school - Birch Hill Primary School to the south-east.

## **6. REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED**

No representations have been received at the time of the printing of this report at the time the agenda was published. The 21 day consultation period expires on 14 March 2014.

## **7. SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES**

Highways officer: No adverse impact would result to highway safety as a result of the proposal.

## **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 applications the Council must only consider the impacts in terms of the character and appearance and highway safety. As such the principle of the development is not required to be assessed.

## **10. IMPACT ON CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF AREA**

Policy CS7 of the CSDPD and 'saved' Policy EN20 of the BFBLP relate to design considerations in new proposals and are relevant considerations. These policies seek to

ensure that developments are sympathetic to the character of the area. This is consistent with the NPPF.

'Saved' Policy SC4 of the BFBLP 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 principle of mast sharing is also reinforced in the NPPF - Section 5 which relates to supporting high quality communications infrastructure.

The proposal would be for a upgrade to an existing mast and would also constitute a mast share between Vodafone and Telefonica (commonly known as O2).

The surrounding area is residential in character, and Birch Hill Road contains many street lights, highway signs and trees along the length of the road. The height increase of the replacement mast of 2.5m, from 12.5m to 15m, would not be considered to appear so visually intrusive within the street scene as to warrant refusal of the application. The mast would remain slimline in appearance.

Given the existing mast would be removed and the upgraded mast located in the same position, along with the addition of the new cabinets, the proposal would not be considered to appear visually cluttered in the street scene. The colour of the mast would be the same as the existing mast and street furniture and as such it is considered that it would be in keeping with the streetscene.

As such, the proposal would not adversely affect the character and appearance of the surrounding area and would be in accordance with Policy CS7 of CSDPD, 'saved' Policy EN20 and parts of 'saved' policy SC4 of the BFBLP which is consistent with the NPPF.

'Saved' Policy EN20 of the BFBLP states that developments should not adversely affect the amenity of surrounding properties. This is consistent with the NPPF.

The proposed replacement mast would be located in the same position as that of the existing 12.5m high mast, approximately 19m from the nearest neighbouring property on Lochinver to the west.

The existing mast is 12.5m high and the replacement mast would be 15m high - an additional 2.5m higher than the existing mast. However due to the set off from the nearest residential property it is not considered that this height increase would appear so unduly overbearing or visually intrusive to the neighbouring properties that it would warrant refusal of the development.

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 BFBLP and the NPPF.

## **11. HIGHWAY SAFETY**

CSDPD Policy CS23 states that the LPA will seek to increase highway safety.

The Highways Officer is satisfied that the equipment would not be located within a sight line and it is not considered that the equipment would unacceptably narrow the footway.

In summary, no highway safety issues would result from the proposal and it would be in accordance with CS23 of the CSDPD and the NPPF.

## 12. HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

Section 5 of the NPPF relates to supporting high quality communications infrastructure. Para 46 states "Local planning authorities must determine applications on planning grounds. They should not...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.

## 13. NEED

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

Para 46 of the NPPF also relates to need of telecommunications infrastructure. "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".

As such, the issue of need is not a planning consideration and therefore in this respect 'saved' policy SC4 of BFBLP is inconsistent with national policy.

## 14. CONCLUSION

It is considered that the proposed replacement telecommunications mast at a height of 15m and additional cabinets would not adversely impact upon the residential amenities of adjoining properties or appear so visually intrusive to be detrimental to the surrounding area. Further, no highway safety implications would result from the proposal. 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.

Therefore it is recommended that prior approval be granted for the development.

## RECOMMENDATION

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

Drawing entitled Proposed Location Maps no. 100 received by Local Planning Authority on 11 February 2014

Drawing entitled Proposed Site Location no. 200 received by Local Planning Authority on 11 February 2014

Drawing entitled Proposed Elevation no. 300 received by Local Planning Authority on 11 February 2014

Drawing no. SDD2023 (Rev G) received by Local Planning Authority on 11 February 2014

Drawing no. SDD2035 (Rev A) received by Local Planning Authority on 11 February 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.

02. The applicant is advised that consideration should be given to the use of anti-graffiti paint on the proposed cabinets.

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](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk)