

Unrestricted Report

ITEM NO: 15

Application No.
14/00213/RTD
Site Address:

Ward:
Crown Wood

Date Registered:
27 February 2014

Target Decision Date:
23 April 2014

Telecommunications Mast Opladen Way Bracknell Berkshire

Proposal:

Replacement of existing 16.5M high monopole telecommunications mast and cabinets with 17.5M Hutchinson 'S' type monopole with 4 no. associated equipment cabinets and ancillary development.

Applicant:

CTIL and Vodafone Ltd

Agent:

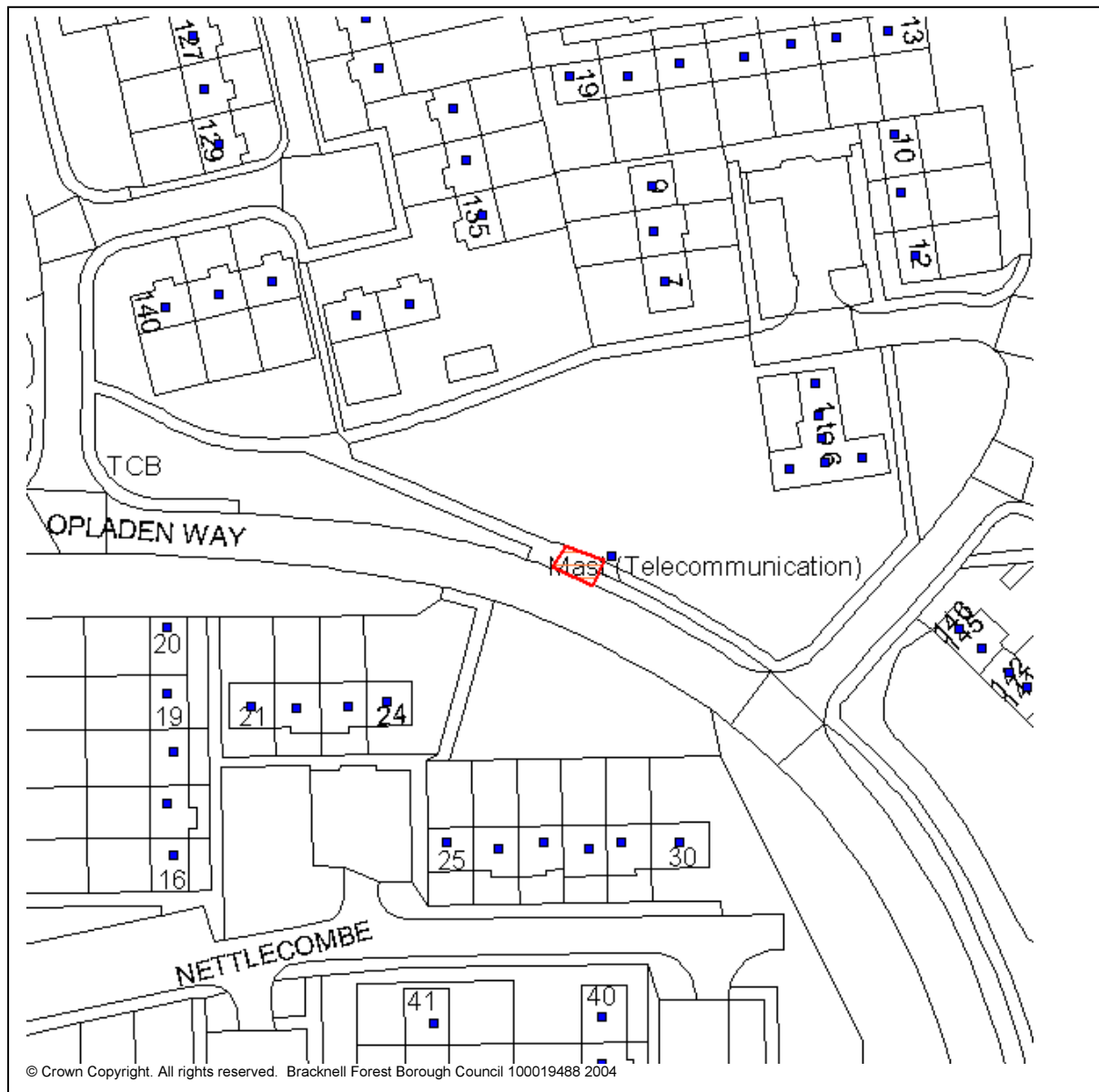
CAIP Ltd

Case Officer:

Sarah Horwood, 01344 352000

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 (as amended) (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 a height of 20 metres 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 replacement mast would not exceed 20m 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 additional cabinets would be under this size criteria. However as the proposal is in close proximity to the highway, the replacement mast and proposed cabinets would be relocated to revised positions and the proposed mast would be increased in height by 1m 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 visual appearance and as such Prior Approval is therefore required.

3. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is located to the north of the highway on Opladen Way close to an existing bus stop. The surrounding area is residential. There is a large area of open amenity land to the north of the application which is grassed with a band of mature trees.

4. RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

05/01033/RTD refused for siting and appearance for the erection of 12m. monopole telecommunications mast, 3no. antennae with associated equipment cabins. Allowed at appeal.

09/00691/FUL - replacement monopole telecommunications mast with a 16.5m mast, 6no. antennae with associated equipment cabins. Approved 22.12.2009.

5. THE PROPOSAL

This application seeks prior approval to erect a 17.5m high dual stack Jupiter Type S monopole with 3no. antennas within a GRP shroud. The proposed replacement mast would be sited approximately 4.5m away from the existing mast. 4no. new cabinets are proposed and 1no. existing metre pillar would be retained. 2no. cabinets are proposed which would be 1.3m x 0.7m x 1.45m, 1no cabinet would be 0.6m x 0.6m x 1.45m and 1no. cabinet would be 0.65m x 0.265m x 1.01m. 2no. existing cabinets would be removed.

The existing 16.5m high monopole would be removed following the completion of the upgrade.

As part of the proposed re-siting of the replacement mast and cabinets, this would require the proposed widening of the existing footpath fronting the development. These works can be undertaken by licence/highway agreement with the Council's Highways Authority. Amended plans are to be submitted by the agent showing the proposed alterations to the footpath. These amended plans have yet to be received. Once received, the Highways Officer will be consulted.

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 replacement mast is required to accommodate the new antennas proposed to provide coverage demands.

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.

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 period expires on 31 March 2014.

7. SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Highways officer: no comments were received at the time of printing of this report. Comments will be reported in the supplementary report.

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 of the area 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 an upgrade to an existing mast and would also constitute a mast share between Vodafone and Telefonica (commonly known as O2).

The replacement mast would be 1.0m higher than the existing mast on site. The height increase of the replacement mast of 1.0m from 16.5m to 17.5m would not be considered to appear so visually intrusive within the street scene as to be detrimental. It is recommended that the replacement mast be painted green to assimilate with the backdrop of trees that exist on the area of amenity land to the north of where the proposed mast would be sited.

The replacement mast would be located 4.5m away from the siting of the existing mast. However, this relocation of the replacement mast would not be considered to increase its visual prominence within the street scene so significantly given a 16.5m high mast has existed within this area since 2009. A planning condition would be required in the event of prior approval being granted for the replacement mast that the existing mast is removed once the new mast is operational and the existing mast has been decommissioned.

A total of four new cabinets are proposed, two are to be removed and 1 metre cabinet retained. 3no. proposed cabinets would be sited close to the proposed siting of the relocated mast and 1no. proposed cabinet sited 2m away from the 3no. cabinets. The 4no. proposed cabinets and retained metre cabinet would not be considered to appear so visually cluttered within the street scene as to appear detrimental to the visual amenities of the surrounding area.

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 nearest residential properties at Nuthurst and Nettlecombe are approximately 25m-27m away from the proposed site of the replacement mast. Due to this separation distance, it is

not considered that the proposed replacement mast at a height increase of 1m from 16.5m to 17.5m would have a detrimental impact on the residential amenities of these dwellings.

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.

In respect of the original plans, the Highway Authority objected to the proposals as the cabinets would have reduced the width of the footpath to an unacceptable level forcing pedestrians onto a grass verge. The Highways Officer commented that the objection would be overcome if the applicant agreed to meet the costs of widening the footpath fronting the proposed location of the equipment.

The applicant has now submitted amended plans taking on board the comments of the Highway Authority. The revised plans now show the footpath is to be widened as recommended by the Highway Authority, although no construction details have been submitted. The footpath widening will need to be undertaken to the Highway Authority's specification and it is therefore recommended that the widening of the footpath is secured by condition.

As such, subject to a condition requiring the submission of construction details, 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 carries limited weight.

14. CONCLUSION

It is considered that the proposed replacement telecommunications mast at a height of 17.5m, 4no. proposed equipment cabinets and retention of an existing metre cabinet would not adversely impact upon the residential amenities of adjoining properties or appear so visually intrusive to be detrimental to the surrounding area. Further, subject to no highway safety implications, 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 recommend that prior approval be granted for the development subject to no highway safety implications.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Head of Development Management be authorised to **APPROVE** the application following the end of the consultation period subject to no further additional material representations raising issues not addressed in this report being received and in accordance with the plans as stated below .

Drawing entitled Site Location Maps no. 100 received by Local Planning Authority on 27 February 2014

Drawing entitled Proposed site plan no. 201 received by Local Planning Authority on 27 February 2014

Drawing entitled Proposed Site Elevation no. 301 received by Local Planning Authority on 27 February 2014

Drawing no. SDD2023 received by Local Planning Authority on 27 February 2014

Drawing no. SDD2035 received by Local Planning Authority on 27 February 2014

01. The existing 16.5m high mast approved and implemented under application 09/00691/FUL shall immediately be removed following the installation of the replacement mast hereby permitted once it is operational and the existing mast has been decommissioned.

REASON: In the interests of the visual amenities of the area.

[Relevant Policies: BFBLP EN20, Core Strategy DPD CS7]

02. The 17.5m high mast and associated cabinets hereby approved shall be painted Fir Green RAL 6009.

REASON: In the interests of the visual amenities of the area.

[Relevant Plans and Policies: BFBLP EN20, CSDPD CS7]

03. Development shall not commence until a footway has been constructed on Opladen Way in accordance with a scheme to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: In the interests of accessibility of the development to pedestrians.
[Relevant Policy: BFBLP M6]

Informative(s):

01. 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