

## Unrestricted Report

### ITEM NO: 15

Application No.  
**15/00542/RTD**

Site Address:

Ward:  
Binfield With Warfield

Date Registered:  
10 June 2015

Target Decision Date:  
4 August 2015

### **Telecommunications Mast Waterside House Longshot Lane Bracknell Berkshire**

Proposal:

**Removal of existing 14.7 metre high Phase 3 monopole mast and the installation of a 15 metre high Phase 5 monopole and Samoa cabinet.**

Applicant:

H3G UK Limited

Agent:

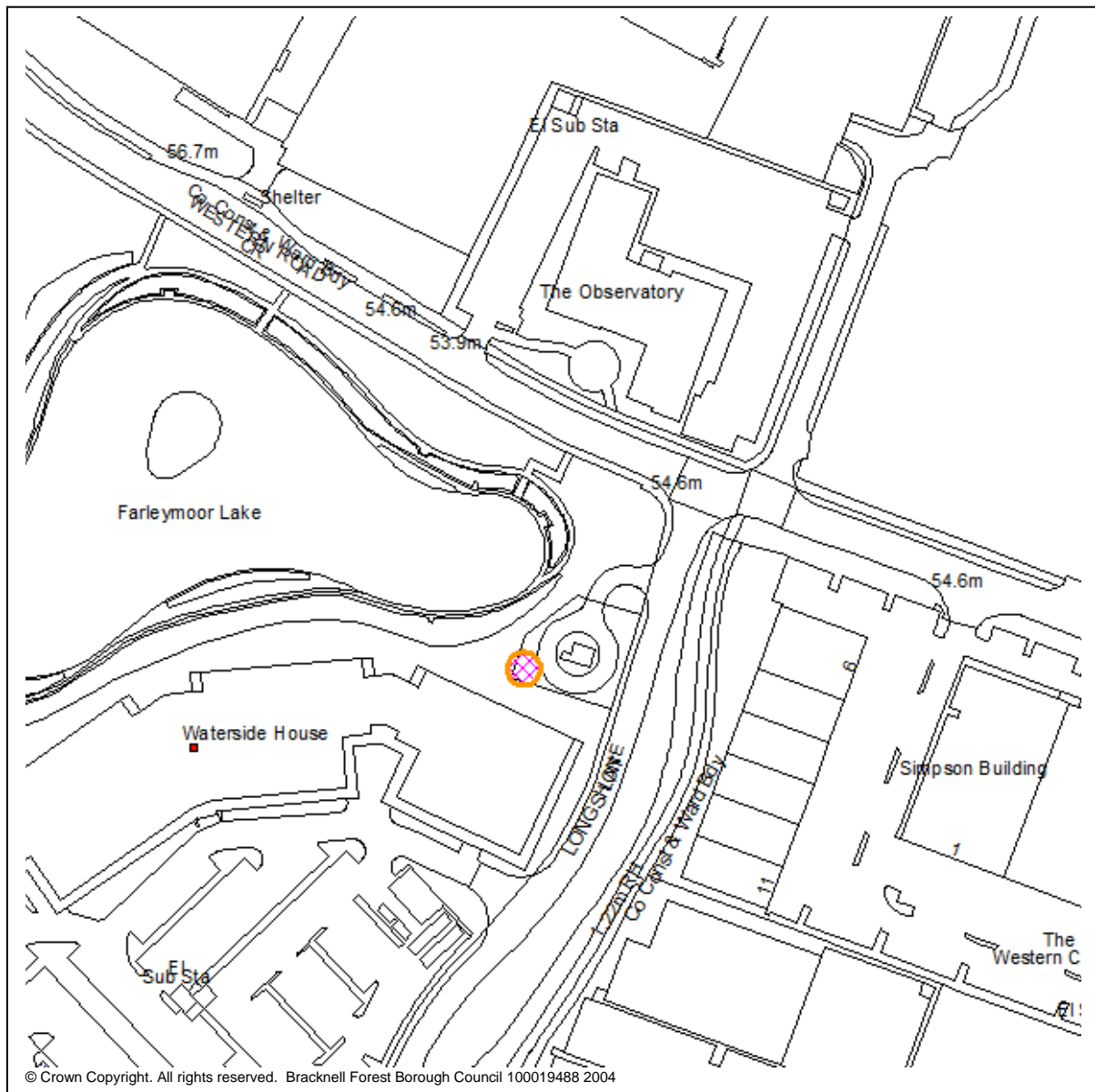
Miss Victoria Parsons

Case Officer:

Sarah Horwood, 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 16, Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 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-

(c) in the case of the alteration or replacement of an existing mast (other than on a building or other structure, on article 2(3) 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 cabinet would be under this size criteria.

However as the replacement mast would be relocated to a revised position and would be increased in height by 0.3m over and above that of the existing mast subject to this upgrade, along with the installation of an additional cabinet, it is necessary to assess the siting of the mast and associated cabinet 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 west of Longshot Lane, accessed from the highway by a gravel access road with off-road parking to serve a nearby pumping station owned by Thames Water (TW). The existing mast and associated equipment are located within an existing compound. The compound is itself located in a larger compound for the TW pumping station, enclosed by brick walls and fencing. The compound is accessed through double gates.

To the south of the mast is Waterside House, a B1 office building. To the west is Farley Moor Lake, to the north further office buildings and to the east are industrial units at the Western Centre.

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

00/01115/RTD42 approved for siting and design for 1no. monopole mast, three cross polar antennas, one dish antenna and a radio equipment cabin (December 2000).

## **5. THE PROPOSAL**

This application seeks prior approval to erect a 15m high Phase 5 monopole with 3no. antennas. The proposed replacement mast would be sited approximately 2.5m away from the existing mast. 1no. additional Samo cabinet is proposed which would be 0.75m x 0.6m x height of 1.98m. The replacement mast and additional cabinet would match the colour of the existing equipment (being grey in colour). The development would be located within an existing compound where the existing mast is.

The existing 14.7m high monopole would be removed following the completion of the upgrade.

The proposed antenna would be located on the same bearings as the existing antenna. The nearest school or nursery is located some 400m away - the Dolphin Nursery on Wokingham Road.

The proposed mast would be upgraded to maintain continued coverage and capacity of the exiting network for Hutchison 3G UK Limited but to also allow faster downloading and a reduction in call drop outs.

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**

Binfield Parish Council –  
no objection.

No further representations have been received at the time of the printing of this report. The 21 day consultation period expires 10 July 2015. Any representations received will be reported in the Supplementary Report.

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

Highways Officer:  
No objection.

## **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."

Section 5 of the NPPF refers to supporting high quality communications infrastructure. Para 43 states that local planning authorities should "aim to keep the number of radio and telecommunication masts and the sites for such installations to a minimum consistent with the efficient operation of the network. Existing masts, buildings and other structures should be used".

The replacement mast would be 0.3m higher than the existing mast on site. The replacement mast would also be increased in width from 0.2m to 0.3m (+0.1m) at the bottom of the pole and the antenna shroud increased in width from 0.35m to 0.6m (+0.25m). The increase in width and height of the replacement mast would nominally increase its visual prominence in the street scene when viewed from Longshot Lane and Western Road; however the increases are modest which would not appear so unduly prominent in the street scene. The surrounding area is industrial/commercial in character and the replacement mast would not detract from the visual amenities of the area.

The visual prominence of the replacement mast would be further mitigated by the set back of the mast from Longshot Lane - a set back of some 25m from the highway at the closest point. Further, the replacement mast would be relocated 2.5m westwards from its current location, further away from the highway.

Given the relocation of the replacement mast in an alternative location to that of the existing mast, 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.

1no. additional cabinet is proposed. The proposed cabinet and retained existing equipment would not appear visually prominent in the street scene, due to the siting of the cabinet within an existing compound set away from the highway some 25m.

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 site is located within an industrial/commercial area with no residential dwellings in close proximity. As such, the proposed replacement mast would not impact upon any residential dwellings.

The nearest building to the replacement mast would be Waterside House to the south, some 10m away. The rear elevation of the building faces onto the application site, however there is a band of trees between the building and the mast which are some 10-12m high which would mitigate views of the replacement mast and given it would retain its slimline design, albeit modestly wider and higher than the existing mast it would replace, it would not appear visually intrusive when viewed from Waterside House.

To the west are the units at the Western Centre, some 60m away. In view of this separation distance, the replacement mast would not appear visually intrusive viewed from these units.

To the north is an office building some 80m away. In view of this separation distance, the replacement mast would not appear visually intrusive viewed from this building.

## **11. HIGHWAY SAFETY**

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

The replacement mast would be located some 25m from Longshot Lane, sited within an existing compound. Given its siting within a compound and its set back from the highway, it would not result in any highway safety implications.

The existing mast and associated equipment are accessed for maintenance purposes through the double gates which provide access into the TW pumping station compound. The compound contains an area of hardstanding surrounding the pumping station which allows for parking and turning. Access for maintenance of the replacement mast would remain the same as existing, with the ability for any maintenance vehicle to access the TW compound and park within the compound. As such, no maintenance vehicles would have to park on Longshot Lane given the access arrangements. As such, 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 15m and 1no. additional equipment cabinet would not have significant increased impact to the visual amenities of 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 as stated earlier in this report.

Therefore recommend that prior approval be granted.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

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

01. Drawing entitled site location received by Local Planning Authority on 10 June 2015  
Drawing entitled site layout received by Local Planning Authority on 10 June 2015  
Drawing entitled equipment layout received by Local Planning Authority on 10 June 2015  
Drawing entitled site elevation received by Local Planning Authority on 10 June 2015  
Drawing entitled antenna details received by Local Planning Authority on 10 June 2015
02. The existing 14.7m high mast shall immediately be removed following the installation of the replacement mast hereby permitted once it is operational.  
REASON: In the interests of the visual amenities of the area.  
[Relevant Policies: BFBLP EN20, Core Strategy DPD CS7]

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)