

PLANNING COMMITTEE

1st February 2012

APPLICATION NUMBER 2012/011/GDO

15M MONOPOLE, EQUIPMENT CABINET AND ANCILLARY APPARATUS

VERGE EAST OF CLAYBROOK DRIVE, REDDITCH

APPLICANT: VODAFONE (UK) LTD & TELEFONICA 02 (UK) LTD

EXPIRY DATE: 1ST MARCH 2012

WARD: MATCHBOROUGH

The author of this report is Steven Edden, Planning Officer (DM) who can be contacted on extension 3206 (e-mail: steve.edden@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk) for more information.

(See additional papers for Site Plan)

Site Description

Wide grass highway verge adjacent to distributor road with trees set back and residential development to western side of road between verge and boundary planting. Residential properties lie to the west of Claybrook Drive, with gardens between the homes and the road, a verge and some buffer planting.

Proposal Description

New monopole 15m in height, along with associated cabinet and development. This would serve two mobile phone operators. The monopole is proposed to be painted a dark green colour.

Relevant Key Policies:

All planning applications must be considered in terms of the planning policy framework and all other relevant material considerations (as set out in the legislative framework). The planning policies noted below can be found on the following websites:

www.communities.gov.uk

www.worcestershire.gov.uk

www.redditchbc.gov.uk

National Planning Policy

PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development

PPG8 Telecommunications

Worcestershire County Structure Plan

D44 Telecommunications

Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3

B(BE).13 Qualities of good design

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Relevant Site Planning History

<i>Application No.</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Decision</i>	<i>Date</i>
2011/030/GDO	15m monopole, equipment cabinet and ancillary apparatus	Prior approval refused	31.3.2011
		Appeal allowed	5.9.2011

Public Consultation Responses

Responses in favour

None

Responses against

One objection received raising the following concerns:

- Pole would have a detrimental impact on outlook from residential properties
- Impact on health of local residents

Consultee Responses

County Highway Network Control

No objection subject to informative

Worcestershire Regulatory Services (Environmental Health)

No objection

General Background

A very similar application under the prior notification procedure was made under application 2011/030/GDO. Despite the officer's recommendation that prior approval should be granted, members resolved to refuse prior approval for the following reason:

The siting of the proposed installation would be in close proximity to a significant number of residential properties such that it would be likely to have an adverse effect on their amenity and outlook, as well as having the potential to give rise to the fear of negative health effects. As such, the proposal is considered to be contrary to PPG8 and Policy B(BE)13 of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3.

The applicant appealed against the decision to refuse and the Planning Inspectorate allowed the appeal. The decision letter dated 5th September 2011 is set out in full as an appendix to this report.

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The applicant has been unable to agree terms with the landowner for the proposed installation allowed under application 2011/030/GDO. As such, the applicant intends to re-locate the proposed monopole to a position 7.5 metres to the north-west of the location allowed under the appeal. The revised location would be 2.2 metres in from the highway (to the eastern side) and directly opposite existing lamp post number 6773. (For information, the Inspector refers to lamp post number 6673 under Paragraph 2, Page 1 of the decision letter. This is an error and should read number 6773.)

Assessment of Proposal

Need and alternative sites

The applicant has demonstrated that there is a need for an installation in this area, through the submission of coverage plots, and these are considered to be acceptable. They have also noted that an existing consent cannot be implemented.

Policy states that to redevelop existing sites in preference to developing new sites is to be encouraged. However, the applicant has demonstrated that in this case there are no possible suitable existing sites, hence the proposed new site. It is also a shared operator proposal, which is encouraged through local and national policy.

Siting and design

New installations should not result in an increase in visual impact to such an extent that it becomes detrimental to the amenity of the site and its surroundings.

In this case it is not considered that the proposal would result in any significant harm to visual amenity and is considered not to cause significant detrimental impact due to the location being at a distance of 25 metres from the corner of the nearest residential property. Natural screening exists between that property and the proposed mast. Whilst being 7.5 metres nearer to dwellings than the position allowed under appeal, the visual impact on the streetscene would be appropriate in this location taking into consideration of existing street furniture similarly located at a distance 2 metres in from the highway.

Health considerations

Although health can be a material planning consideration, current government advice states that there is no proven health risk from masts and that they expect all future masts to fall within the ICNIRP guidelines (as referred to in the Stewart Report). The applicants have stated that their proposal would be well within these guidelines, when considered cumulatively in relation to the existing equipment in the area. In the circumstances it would therefore not be considered reasonable to refuse this application on health grounds. Officers would refer members to Paragraph 11, Page 3 of the Inspectors decision

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letter which comments that little objective evidence to support local fears over health had been advanced. This remains the case.

Conclusion

The proposal is therefore considered to be compliant with policy and unlikely to cause harm to amenities in the area due to its siting and appearance.

Recommendation

That subject to the expiry of the consultation period and to all other material considerations, authority be delegated to the Head of Planning and Regeneration to determine that PRIOR APPROVAL of the Local Planning Authority IS NOT REQUIRED for the siting and appearance of the proposal and that planning permission not be required for the proposed development.

Informatives

- 1) Reason for approval
- 2) Informative as requested by Highways

Procedural Matters

This is an application under the prior notification procedure under Part 24 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended). The Local Planning Authority has 56 days in which to decide whether to grant prior approval for the siting and appearance of the mast. (A failure to determine the application within this time period would result in default consent for the proposed development.)

This application is reported to Planning Committee at the request of Cllr Brunner due to local interest in the application.

The consultation period does not expire until 6th February, however the application could not wait to be reported to the next meeting of the Planning Committee. Any representations received between this meeting and 6th February will be considered by Planning Officers on behalf of Committee, bearing in mind the discussion and resolution of Members, and the decision issued accordingly.