

14/2004/036

VODAFONE LTD

ERECTION OF A 20 M HIGH MONOPOLE MAST, 4 NO. ANTENNAES ENCLOSED WITHIN A SHROUD, 2 NO. TRANSMISSION DISHES, RADIO EQUIPMENT HOUSING AND ANCILLARY DEVELOPMENT, CREECH MILLS INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, MILL LANE, CREECH ST MICHAEL

26746/25414

FULL PERMISSION

PROPOSAL

Permission is sought for the installation of a telecommunications mast and 3 associated base units. The proposed mast is a 20 m high monopole with 4 antennae and 2 dishes. The site lies within Creech Mills Industrial site and is approximately 80 m west of units 19-21. The railway line borders the northern edge of the site. The River Tone is to the south and the Bridgwater/Taunton Canal is to the north.

CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

LANDSCAPE OFFICER object to the proposal on grounds of adverse visual impact. The mast would be unduly prominent from the south east and the Bridgwater/Taunton Canal.

PARISH COUNCIL support application

POLICY CONTEXT

Taunton Deane Local Plan C13 Mast should minimise harm to the landscape; in terms of siting and appearance and there should be no alternative sites or solutions with less environmental impact which could be used, for example; existing masts of other structure

S1 Proposals for development, taking account of any mitigation measures, will be required to meet the following criteria, in addition to any other Plan policies which apply in a particular case: (D) the appearance and character of any affected landscape, settlement, building or street scene would not be harmed as a result of the development;

S2 Development must be of a good design. Its scale, density, height, massing, layout, landscaping, colour, materials and access arrangements will be assessed to ensure that the proposal will, where reasonable and feasible: (A) reinforce the local character and distinctiveness of the area, including the landscape setting of the site and any

settlement, street scene and building involved; (F) minimise adverse impact on the environment, and existing land uses likely to be affected;

S 8 Outside defined settlement limits, new building will not be permitted unless it maintains or enhances the environmental quality and landscape character of the area and (A) is for the purposes of agriculture or forestry; (B) accords with a specific Development Plan policy or proposal; (C) is necessary to meet a requirement of environmental or other legislation; or (D) supports the vitality and viability of the rural economy in a way which cannot be sited within the defined limits of a settlement. New structures or buildings permitted in accordance with this policy should be designed and sited to minimise landscape impact, be compatible with a rural location and meet the following criteria where practicable; (E) avoid breaking the skyline; (F) make maximum use of existing screening; (G) relate well to existing buildings; and (H) use colours and materials which harmonise with the landscape.

EN13 The site is located within the 'River Flood Plain' Landscape Character area. As such development proposals must be sensitively sited and designed to respect the distinct character and appearance of the area.

EN27 Development which would harm the landscape, character, wildlife and recreational potential of the water environment will not be permitted. Development proposals near rivers, canals, still waters and watercourses must respect, enhance and maximise the benefits of a waterside location.

Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review Policy S5 Landscape Character

PPG8 Telecommunications "whilst local planning authorities are encouraged to respond positively to telecommunications development proposals, they should take account of the advice on the protection of urban and rural areas in planning policy notes.

PPG7 The Countryside - Environmental Quality and Economic and social Development.

ASSESSMENT

The site is in a low lying area between the River Tone and the Bridgwater/Taunton Canal. As such the mast would be very prominent from a number of public viewpoints, including local roads, public footpaths, the river and the canal. The mast will be higher than the Creech Mills industrial buildings and although of monopole design will have numerous antennae and dishes at the top of it. These factors will result in the mast being far more obtrusive on the landscape than telegraph poles, street lighting columns and security fencing within the vicinity.

The applicant has indicated that they have enquired into siting the equipment on top of one of the Creech Mills industrial buildings but that the landowner was not interested in the proposals. It is felt that there would be loss of environmental impact if an existing mast or structure could be used and that the applicant should further pursue these possibilities.

RECOMMENDATION

Permission be REFUSED on the grounds that the site lies within an area of high landscape quality where it is the policy of the Local Planning Authority to carefully control all development that might damage those features which give the area its special character. In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority the proposal would constitute an unacceptable visual intrusion which would be detrimental to the visual amenities of the area and therefore be contrary to Taunton Deane Local Plan Policies S1, S2, S8, C13 EN13 and EN27 and Somerset and Exmoor National Parks Joint Structure Plan Policy S5.

In preparing this report the Planning Officer has considered fully the implications and requirements of the Human Rights Act 1998.

CONTACT OFFICER: 356313 MRS F WADSLEY

NOTES: