

14/2005/014

VODAPHONE LTD

ERECTION OF 18.7 M HIGH MONOPOLE MAST WITH 4 ANTENNAE PROJECTING TO 20 M, TWO TRANSMISSION DISHES ASSOCIATED EQUIPMENT CABINETS AND FENCING AT CREECH MILLS INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, MILL LANE, CREECH ST MICHAEL.

26734/25412

FULL PERMISSION

PROPOSAL

Permission is sought for the installation of a telecommunications mast and 3 associated base units. The proposed mast is a 18.7 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

COUNTY HIGHWAY AUTHORITY no objection.

LANDSCAPE OFFICER does not object to the proposal and feels that the reduced height should help to significantly reduce the landscape impact . Landscape planting will be needed to screen fencing.

PARISH COUNCIL support application.

9 LETTERS OF OBJECTION have been received raising the following issues:- obstructing view of countryside; potential health risk and radiation risks; impact on landscape; height exceeding height of industrial buildings; devalue properties in Crufts Meadow.

POLICY CONTEXT

C14 Applications for the installation of telecommunications masts will be permitted provided that: (A) their siting and appearance would minimise harm to the landscape; (B) there are no alternative sites or solutions with less environmental impact which could be used; (C) there is satisfactory evidence that existing masts or other structures cannot be used. 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; EN12 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. EN25 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.

PPS5 The Countryside - Environmental Quality and Economic and social Development.

ASSESSMENT

The application follows a recent refusal for a 20 m high monopole mast at the same site. The grounds of refusal were the adverse impact the mast would have upon the landscape and the visual amenities of the area.

The applicant has reduced the height of the proposed mast by 1.3 m to reduce the impact upon the landscape. If the mast was further reduced in height, the applicant would be unable to obtain the desired coverage for the railway.

It is accepted that there would be some impact upon the landscape from the proposals. However, the proximity of the mast to the industrial building and the nearby existing trees will help to reduce this impact. The use of a grey monopole instead of a lattice tower also helps to minimise the impact upon the environment.

The supporting information submitted with the application shows that the applicant has considered alternative sites but that these were unsuitable for various reasons. For example the land to the north of the railway would be closer to residential dwellings, applicants unable to gain landowners permission to accommodate equipment on existing industrial buildings, land adjacent to Mill Lane Car Park would result in greater impact upon environment.

In summary it is considered that the proposal is in accordance with Taunton Deane Local Plan Policy C14 in that the reduced height minimises harm to the landscape and there are no alternative sites with less environmental impact.

RECOMMENDATION

Permission be GRANTED subject to conditions of time limit, materials and landscaping.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION:- The siting and design of the mast minimises harm to the landscape and there are no alternative sites or solutions with less environmental impact. As such the proposal is in accordance with Taunton Deane Local Plan Policies S1, S2 and C14.

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

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NOTES: