

38/14/0147/TEN

VODAFONE LTD

**NOTIFICATION FOR PRIOR APPROVAL FOR THE REPLACEMENT OF ANTENNA, CABINETS AND ANCILLARY EQUIPMENT AND INCREASE OF HEIGHT OF POLE TO 17.5M TO THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS MAST AT SHOREDITCH ROAD, TAUNTON**

Location: COMMUNICATIONS MAST, SHOREDITCH ROAD, SHOREDITCH, TAUNTON

Grid Reference: 323880.122805

Notification - Telecommunication

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**RECOMMENDATION AND REASON(S)**

Recommended Decision: Conditional Approval

**RECOMMENDED CONDITION(S) (if applicable)**

1. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

- (A3) DrNo 100 Location Plan
- (A3) DrNo 200 Site Plan as Existing
- (A3) DrNo 201 Site Plan as Proposed
- (A3) DrNo 300 Elevation 'A' as Existing
- (A3) DrNo 301 Elevation 'A' as Proposed
- (A3) DrNo 400 Antenna and Equipment Plan
- (A3) DrNo 500 Antenna Schedules
- (A3) DrNo 501 Antenna Schematic
- (A3) DrNo 502 Equipment Schedules

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

Notes to Applicant

**PROPOSAL**

The proposal is to modify the existing telecommunications mast to allow for a shared use and upgrade to 4G. This entails an increase in height from 15 to 17.5m which is normally permitted development that is subject to a prior notification procedure and the alteration of the antennae and dishes on the mast together with 3 cabinets at the base. This is a reduction in cabinets from 5 to the 3.

## **SITE DESCRIPTION AND HISTORY**

The site of this mast was controversial originally as it was erected under the previous permitted development rights despite adverse neighbour comments that it should be refused. An unauthorised mast was then erected that differed from the notification and an enforcement appeal in respect of that was dismissed before the applicant erected the current mast.

## **CONSULTATION AND REPRESENTATION RESPONSES**

### **Representations**

1 letter of NO OBSERVATIONS

4 letters of OBJECTION on grounds of:

- Visual impact on Bilberry Grove and that it is an eyesore and has ruined pleasure in the garden.
- The original siting was unacceptable and increasing the height is less desirable than the original application.
- It is an unacceptable alien and obtrusive feature only 12m from a residential property which is not shown on the submitted drawings.
- Alternative site options have not been investigated.
- If the site is being cleared the cost of relocating would be reduced and this would be an opportunity to relocate the eyesore once and for all.
- There are new houses fronting Shoreditch Road which are closer to the existing mast.
- The mast has a poor location to existing dwellings with overbearing impact detrimental to their amenity contrary to policy and the visual impact of a higher mast would represent an even further intrusion to residents in the immediate area.
- Health concerns for children.

## **PLANNING POLICIES**

NPPF - National Planning Policy Framework,  
DM1 - TD CORE STRATEGY - GENERAL REQUIREMENTS,

## **LOCAL FINANCE CONSIDERATIONS**

The development of this site would not result in payment to the Council of the New Homes Bonus or CIL.

## **DETERMINING ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS**

The main consideration under the notification procedure is the impact of the siting and appearance of the proposed mast and antennae. In this instance the mast is not changing its location from that existing and the main change is the increase in height from 15m to 17.5m. The existing antennae are designed into the monopole and this will be the same for the new mast, although the number will increase to 5 and a

300mm dish is also proposed at a height of 11m. The latter dish in itself would be permitted development. The width of the pole will alter from 250mm to 300mm and the equipment cabinets at the base will be reduced from 5 to 3.

The applicant has advised that the NPPF encourages site sharing and that is what is intended in the current proposal. Alternative sites have been considered including the previously proposed Council site adjacent to the motorway, which the applicant deems unsuitable. Another mast at Haygrove House does not provide the required site coverage and other alternative sites were discounted as this would necessitate development of a virgin site close to the existing site to provide the optimum network coverage for customers in the area. The site complies with the guidance in the Health Protection Agency's independent Advisory Group on Non-ionising Radiation (AGNIR) and a certificate of compliance has been submitted.

A number of objections to the alterations have been received on visual impact and amenity grounds. The alterations to the appearance of the installation as described are considered minor and will enable the sharing of the mast and avoidance of a new mast elsewhere. The changes in height of 2.5m will not in my view cause any significant harm to the character of the street scene. The main issue is the visual impact over and above the existing installation. The comments quoted in objection from an Inspector related to a different mast to the current one. The changes to the appearance in terms of increased height will be visible to local residents. However the height increase is relatively minor and the issue is whether the impact on the gardens of the nearest Bilberry Grove properties is so severe to warrant refusal. It is not considered the height increase of 2.5m is such an adverse impact and so detrimental to amenity over the current situation that it should be resisted and consequently the proposal is considered to be acceptable and in line with Core Strategy policy DM1.

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

**CONTACT OFFICER: Mr G Clifford Tel: 01823 356398**