

PLANNING COMMITTEE – 13 OCTOBER, 2004

Report of the Development Control Manager

MISCELLENEOUS ITEM

NOTIFICATION OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS APPARATUS TEL/04/2004 PROPOSED VODAFONE INSTALLATION AT ROOFING SUPPLIES OF TAUNTON, CORNISHWAY NORTH, GALMINGTON TRADING ESTATE, TAUNTON

PROPOSAL

The proposal comprises the installation of a 15 m high monopole mast with 6 No. aerials, 2 No. dish antenna up to 600 mm in diameter, radio equipment housing and ancillary development. The latter are proposed to be located between the west elevation of the Roofing Supplies of Taunton building and the adjacent highway, Cornishway East.

CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

PARISH COUNCIL no comments received at time of writing.

6 LETTERS OF OBJECTION have been received objecting on the following grounds:- health grounds; interference with TV, radio and phone reception; detrimental visual impact; difficulties in selling properties in the future due to the close proximity of a mast; loss of views.

POLICY CONTEXT

Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review 1991 – 2011

Policy 62 Telecommunications

Provision should be made for the establishment of telecommunications facilities in new development and the development of existing and new systems. Priority should be given to the protection of nationally designated areas.

Taunton Deane Local Plan Revised Deposit Policy

S1 (General Requirements)

Proposals for development, taking account of any mitigation measures proposed, will be required to meet the following criteria, in addition to any other Development Plan policies which apply in a particular case:

- (A) additional road traffic arising, taking account of any road improvements involved, would not lead to overloading of access roads, road safety problems or environmental degradation by fumes, noise, vibrations or visual impact;

- (B) the accessibility of the development by public transport, cycling and pedestrian networks would be consistent with its likely trip generation and minimising the need to use the car;
- (C) the proposal will not lead to harm to protected wildlife species or their habitats;
- (D) the appearance and character of any affected landscape, settlement, building or street scene would not be harmed as a result of the development;
- (E) potential air pollution, water pollution, noise, dust, glare, heat, vibration and other forms of pollution or nuisance which could arise as a result of the development will not harm public health or safety, the amenity of individual dwellings or residential areas or other elements of the local or wider environment;
- (F) the health, safety or amenity of any occupants or users of the development will not be harmed by any pollution or nuisance arising from an existing or committed use;
- (G) the safety of any occupants or users will not be at risk from ground instability; and
- (H) the site will be served by utility services necessary for the development proposed.

C13 Telecommunications

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.

ASSESSMENT

Government advice contained within Planning Policy Guidance Note 8 states that it is Government's policy to facilitate the growth of new and existing telecommunications systems whilst keeping the environmental impact to a minimum. Furthermore Local Planning Authorities are encouraged to respond positively to telecommunications development (whilst taking account of the rural and urban policy framework). This notification, contains evidence that there is a requirement to provide additional coverage in the area of the application site. Vodafone have an existing permission for a mast on the estate at the British Benzol building. However whilst the proposed lease agreement between British Benzol and Vodafone was in negotiation, the freeholder of the site refused British Benzol consent to underlet to Vodafone and therefore this permission may no longer be utilised or developed. Other alternative sites at Unit 13E, Cornishway South, Musgrove Park Hospital Chimney, Berrys Coaches have been discounted for various reasons (i.e. legal surrenders of car parking areas, outside required coverage area and associated maintenance difficulties, on the outskirts of the industrial estate and nearer residential accommodation respectively). A mast share with the existing 02 monopole mast was also ruled out as it would require a lattice tower, an

increased height of the existing structure by 5 m and the land to locate equipment cabins is too small. The current site is considered the next best possible position to site an installation since it is still near the centre of the industrial estate at the junction of Cornishway North and Cornishway East with some available screening by units and trees. The nearest dwelling is located 66 m to the east that forms part of a row of properties running north to south along the eastern side of Galmington Road. Although the mast will be visible from that curtilage I do not consider this to warrant the refusal of the notification. The mast would conform to the International Commission for Non-Ionising Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) and in such circumstances there would be no objection based on concerns for health. The associated equipment and cabin at base level are considered modest in size and would have little visual impact, as they would be well screened by existing vegetation.

RECOMMENDATION

Notification be APPROVED.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION:- The proposed mast is required to facilitate the growth of new and existing telecommunications systems and the impact on the visual amenity of the surrounding area is not considered to be detrimental, in accordance with Policy 62 of the Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review 1991 – 2011 and Policies S1 and C13 of the Taunton Deane Local Plan Revised Deposit.

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

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