

42/2006/005TEN

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ERECTION OF 15 M MAST ASSOCIATED ANTENNAE GROUND BASED CABINETS AND ANCILLARY EQUIPMENT AT TRULL GREEN FARM, LAND OFF CLAREMONT LANE, TRULL

21451/23031

NOTIFICATION - TELECOMMUNICATION

PROPOSAL

The proposal comprises the installation of a 15 m high telecommunication mast with 6 antennas and 4 equipment cabins on agricultural land adjacent to Claremont Lane, poorly surfaced, unadopted public right of way. Claremont Lane links Trull Road, to the south east, with College Way to the north west.

It should be noted that the proposed mast would be sited some 25 m south east of an existing T-Mobile mast that is also 15 m in height and a large electricity sub station some 30 m beyond the existing mast adjacent to College Way.

CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

LANDSCAPE OFFICER the proposed mast, although close to the existing mast is further into the area of open space (agricultural/sports field) and will in my opinion have a detrimental impact on the landscape character of this area. There may be scope to move the mast further to the north west? It is understood that by mast sharing with the nearby T-mobile mast a lattice tower would be needed and the height increased by an additional 5 m. Mast sharing in this instance would therefore be unacceptable as the increased height would take the mast above the skyline and its bulk would be detrimental to the visual amenity of the area. If approval is given I recommend moving it one metre further into the field so that the concrete apron does not damage the existing hedgerow. Planting to soften the impact of the enclosure should also be required.

TRULL PARISH COUNCIL supports the application and would like to take this opportunity to request that consideration be given to improving the surfacing of the access lane (Claremont Lane) via the installation works.

COMEYTROWE PARISH COUNCIL none received.

4 LETTERS OF OBJECTION have been received raising the following issues:- an additional mast would be unacceptable; health grounds due to the radiation they emit combined with the existing mast and large electricity sub station cannot conform to ICNIRP guidelines; no irrefutable evidence that telecommunications masts cause health problems; the proposal will affect the saleability of out property; there is a low frequency buzzing from the existing mast which will be doubled; the mast will be substantially higher than the 3 storey ridges of the properties on College Way when viewed from the Trull Road end and is therefore visually intrusive; is it not possible

for the additional equipment to be incorporated or attached to the existing mast; the mast is located near a school.

POLICY CONTEXT

S1 General requirements, S2 Design, C14 large telecommunications masts - will be permitted provided that their siting and appearance would minimise harm to the landscape, there are not alternative sites, and no other structures or masts that could 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.

The ideal scenario would be to mast share with the existing T-mobile mast located some 25 m to the north west. The agents have looked into the latter possibility and have concluded that in order to mast share the existing mast would have to be converted to a lattice tower with an increase in height of 5 m, taking the overall height to 20 m. In this instance the resulting lattice tower would raise the structure above the sky line and its bulk would be detrimental to the visual amenity of the area.

The proposed site is well screened from College Way by an abundance of trees along the Queens School playing field boundary. The cabin would be well screened by high hedges each side of Claremont lane. It is considered that any other site in the search area would be likely to be located in a more prominent position, with a greater impact in visual terms from residential properties. Although the concerns of the Landscape Officer are noted the current site is considered the best possible position to site an installation since it is still near the edge of this undeveloped agricultural/playing field area. On balance therefore the proposal is considered acceptable in visual impact terms. Amended plans will however be sought to move the concrete apron enclosure 1 m into the field to protect the adjacent hedgerow. A condition requiring further planting on the field side is proposed.

The mast would be located some 120 m to the nearest dwelling in the south east direction and some 120 m to the nearest dwelling to the north west. The mast would conform to the International Commission for Non-Ionising Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) that takes into account existing telecommunication apparatus in the vicinity and in such circumstances there would be no objection based on concerns for health. The associated equipment cabin at base level is considered modest in size and would have little visual impact in comparison to the existing electricity sub-station.

The Parish Council have requested that consideration be given to improving the surfacing of Claremont Lane. In this instance improvements to the lanes surface are

considered an unreasonable condition as the development is considered suitable without the surfacing improvement. Only in circumstances where the proposal were not considered acceptable otherwise could this form of condition be imposed.

RECOMMENDATION

1. Subject to the receipt of satisfactory amended plans by 3rd April, 2006 the Development Control Manager in consultation with the Chair/Vice Chair be authorised to determine and permission be GRANTED subject to conditions of time, limit 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.

2. Should satisfactory amended plans not be submitted by 3rd April, 2006 the Development Control Manager in consultation with the Chair/Vice Chair be authorised to REFUSE permission as contrary to Taunton Deane Local Plan Policy EN6.

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

CONTACT OFFICER: 356469 MR R UPTON

NOTES: