

TELECOMMUNICATIONS REPORT

DESCRIPTION/ ADDRESS	- Prior notification for 12m monopole designed to reflect a telegraph pole and associated equipment cabinets. Junction of Westergate Street and Meadow Way, Westergate, Aldingbourne.
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THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

DESCRIPTION OF APPLICATION	The application falls to be determined under the provision of Part 24 of the Schedule 1 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development (Amendment) Order 1999 in respect of a development by a telecommunications wide system operator. The principle of the development is not in dispute. The consideration of the notification concerns only the siting and appearance to this location. This Local Planning Authority has 56 days to provide its comments to the applicant's agent or it is deemed they have no objection. This period expires on 16 th July 2007. The proposal includes a 12m monopole designed to reflect a telegraph pole and associated equipment cabinets.
SITE AREA	N/A.
RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT DENSITY (NET)	N/A.
TOPOGRAPHY	Predominately flat.
TREES	None.
BOUNDARY TREATMENT	None.
SITE CHARACTERISTICS	Grass verge, positioned on the corner of Westergate Street and Meadow Way.
CHARACTER OF LOCALITY	Residential area. The application site is located opposite Westergate Street, with some open fields to the opposite side. Neighbouring properties are predominately two storey properties, which are detached, semi-detached and terraced.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

REFERENCE	DESCRIPTION	DECISION
None		

REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

SOURCE	SUMMARY OF CONTENT
Aldingbourne Parish Council	Awaited.
Local Groups	None.
One Letter of Objection	Concerns over highways safety; Do not considered reasons to discount other sites are acceptable.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

CONSULTEE	SUMMARY OF RESPONSE
County Highways	The proposed monopole and equipment cabinets are to be located within the limits of the public highway. The equipment will be located outside of the visibility splay from the junction of Meadow Way and Westergate Street. The siting of the equipment as shown should not have any detrimental impact upon pedestrian movements. Concerns would be raised in respects of the servicing arrangements as the submitted plans indicate the maintenance equipment will be positioned within the A29, which would not be acceptable. The actual position of the maintenance equipment would in any case need to be agreed that the WSCC Streetworks unit, hence the actual position is taken to be merely illustrative. Based on the submitted plans, there would appear to be no highway safety reason to object.

POLICY CONTEXT

DESIGNATION APPLICABLE TO SITE
Within Built-up Area Boundary

DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

West Sussex Structure Plan: DEV1, NE23. Arun District Local Plan: GEN2, GEN7, DEV41.

PLANNING POLICY GUIDANCE

PPS1 - Delivering Sustainable Development PPG8 - Telecommunications.

POLICY COMMENTARY

The current Local Plan policy DEV41, 'Telecommunications' has great weight. Applications must be determined in accordance with its policies unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Plan requires evidence that sharing of sites or tall structures has been considered and that there is no satisfactory alternative. Development within SSSI's, Conservation Areas or AONB's is particularly sensitive, although the current application is not within any of these. Developers are required to demonstrate that attempts have been made to minimise visual impact. Policy GEN7 is a more general environmental policy which requires careful consideration of visual, landscape and amenity considerations. A written statement is required for all new buildings, although structures such as the proposal are not referred to explicitly. The Structure Plan and its policies carry significant weight. Policy NE23 states that telecommunications development should be permitted subject to similar requirements as those listed in Policy DEV41. Developments should not interfere with the reception of existing broadcast and other telecommunications services.

COMMENT ON CONSULTATION RESPONSES

The concerns raised by County Highways are noted, however they have raised no objection to the proposal and therefore their comments could not form the basis of an objection.
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COMMENT ON REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

With regard to highways safety, County Highways have raised no objection to the proposed development.

It is agreed that alternative sites have not been fully explored and it has not been satisfactorily demonstrated that this is the most appropriate location for the installation.

ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSAL**DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND/OR LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND**

The above policies outline the criteria against which the application will be assessed. The only aspects that can be considered with regard to this prior approval application are the siting and appearance of the development. This application falls to be determined under the requirements of Part 24 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995, as amended.

OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

In all applications the Council must take into account other material considerations. This includes Government Advice in PPG8 of 2001, case law and appeal decisions which have emerged over recent years. By analysis of these considerations, the following are also relevant:

- ◆ Health Concerns are material planning considerations. Whilst Government advice is that a planning system is not the place for determining health safeguards, Court cases and planning appeals show that public responses on this issue must be weighted in assessing the merits of a site by comparison with alternatives. This must apply to Prior Notification applications as well as applications for planning permission.
- ◆ The Planning Inspectorate consider zero health risk (or near zero risk) to be an unreasonable expectation or basis for a decision.
- ◆ An ICNIRP Certificate, confirmation compliance with guidelines for the emission of electromagnetic energy is essential. Sites should be secure by fencing with advisory notes attached.
- ◆ Applications must include a thorough examination of alternative sites; this information must be included in the submitted information for public consultation.
- ◆ Government best practice advice to applications expects pre-application consultation with organisations such as schools. The Council can look for evidence that this has happened.

CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVE SITES:

The applicants report received with this application explains that alternative sites have been considered. These include the following:

Site and Address	Reason for not choosing
Power Tools Factories, Fontwell Avenue (A29) PO20 3RR	The site was considered for a ground based option however it was discounted as the landlord was not willing to accommodate telecommunications at the premises. It was also discounted for being far too north of the coverage area.
SRC Recycling, Fontwell Avenue.	The site was considered for a ground based mast however it was too far north of the preferred coverage area, and therefore discounted.
The Wilkshead Public House, Nyton Road, PO20 3UG.	This site was considered for a rooftop installation however the roof was found to be unsuitable for the antenna and there was no space for the equipment cabinets associated with the development at ground level. It was also too far out of the coverage area.
Westergate Community School, Lime Avenue, PO20 3UE.	The school was considered for a rooftop option. The site is in the preferred coverage area, however from our surveys it was determined that a mast of approximately 6m would be needed on the roof of this building to meet the coverage needs. Therefore it was discounted and it felt that this would be visually intrusive. Although not a material planning reason it was also discounted on the basis that it may cause community concerns.
Nyton House Residential Home, Nyton Road, PO20 3UE.	The site was considered for a ground based mast however it was too far north of the preferred coverage area. This site is also surrounded by tall trees which would inhibit the signal.
Lees Yard, Lidsey Road A29, PO20 3SU.	The site was considered for a ground base option however it was too far south of the preferred coverage area and was therefore discounted.
The Prince of Wales Public House, Lidsey Road, Woodgate, PO20 3ST.	The site was considered for a rooftop option; however it was out of the coverage area.
Nyton Road, Eastergate, PO20 3UN.	The road was considered for a street works type installation but it was too far out of the coverage area and was therefore discounted.
Hill View Farm, Fontwell Avenue, Eastergate, PO20 3UW.	The site was considered for a ground based option however it was too far north of the preferred coverage area and was therefore discounted.

CONCLUSIONS

The application in question is for a "Prior Notification" rather than a planning application. The broad principle of planning permission for development of this type, not exceeding 15m in height, is granted an order issued by the central Government in 1995 on a national basis. A Prior Notification is an opportunity for the Local Planning Authority to comment upon matters of siting and design only in each case within a 56-day limit. The Authority must respond before the expiry of that time, otherwise development can proceed.

The proposal includes a 12m replica telegraph pole type mast and associated equipment cabinets. The proposed mast and cabinets would be sited on a grass verge, on the corner of Westergate Street and Meadow Way. Westergate Street is located to the east of the site; Meadow Way would be located to the south side and a 1m wide tarmac pavement runs to the rear north west side of the application site.

It is considered that the proposed equipment would appear prominent and obtrusive in the street scene. Further, it is considered that its position and the associated equipment cabinets would separate the structure from assimilating into the existing vertical lamp post pattern. This corner site is easily seen when approaching from Lidsey to the south or Eastergate to the north and there are no lamp posts on this side of the road on the bend. The equipment would therefore be viewed as an isolated structure without the benefit of any screening to soften its appearance or act as a backdrop.

It is therefore recommended that an objection is raised to the siting and design of the proposed equipment on the grounds that the Local Planning Authority is not satisfied that a sufficient, rigorous or thorough investigation of alternative, less sensitive sites, a greater distance from the nearby school has been fully investigated and the mast proposed would be a prominent and obtrusive feature in the street scene to the detriment of the visual amenities of the surrounding area.

Owing to the statutory publicity period not expiring until 5th July 2007, it is recommended that the decision be delegated to the Head of Planning Services in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee.

ALDINGBOURNE

AL/58/07/TEL

Prior notification for 12m monopole
designed to reflect a telgraph pole and
associated equipment cabinets

Junction of Westergate Street and
Meadow Way, Westergate
Aldingbourne

RECOMMENDATION

Objection

- 1 The proposed siting of the equipment would result in a prominent and obtrusive feature in the street scene which would adversely affect the visual amenities of the locality in conflict with policies GEN7 and DEV41 of Arun District Local Plan and policies DEV1 and NE23 of West Sussex Structure Plan.
- 2 Alternative sites (including those which are a greater distance away from schools) have not been fully explored, and it has not been satisfactorily demonstrated that this is the most appropriate location for the installation. The proposal therefore conflicts with policies NE23 of West Sussex Structure Plan and DEV41 of Arun District Local Plan.

REPORT UPDATE

Application No :	AL/58/07/TEL
Agenda Page No :	182-188
Reason for the Update • Letters of Representation A Letter of Objection was received from Aldingbourne Parish Council, which raised the following points:- - The pole and associated cabinets would not be in keeping with the street scene and would adversely affect the visual amenities of the locality; - Alternative sites have not been fully explored – it is not proven that this is the most suitable site for the pole and other areas have not been sufficiently investigated; - The siting of the pole would conflict with policy NE23 of the West Sussex Structure Plan and DEV41 of the Arun District Local Plan; - Several places on the list supplied with notification are incorrect in their locations. 17 individual Letters of Objection and 22 Standard Letters of Objection were received. The letters of objection raised the following points:- - Out of keeping with the street scene; - Would result in a prominent and obtrusive feature in the area, which would adversely affect the visual amenities of the locality; - There is a public perception that there is a health risk; - Too close to residential properties and the nearby primary school; - Concerns over visibility at the junction; - Do not consider that alternative sites have been fully investigated; - Mast would be far taller than trees and buildings in the area and would therefore be unsightly; - Should consider site sharing; - There are numerous alternative sites in this area which are less populated and far less obtrusive; - More appropriate rural sites; - There has been no public consultation.	
Officer Comment: The majority of the points raised have been addressed within the Officer's report. With reference to health issues, the safety guidelines for telecommunications masts are set by central Government and are based upon the advice it received from the Independent Expert Group on Mobile Phones. After researching a number of health concerns, this Group recommended that a precautionary approach be taken in respect of mobile technologies, which central Government accepted. As a result, central Government requires mobile phone base stations to meet International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) guidelines on limiting public exposure to radio waves. If proposed mobile phone base stations meet these guidelines then it is not considered appropriate for Local Planning Authorities to consider health safety standards	

any further, although health considerations and public concern may be considered during the planning application process. Central Government therefore retains all responsibility for deciding what measures are necessary to protect public health. In this instance the mobile phone operator does have the required ICNIRP certificate in relation to the proposed mast. The emissions from it are therefore in accordance with the guidelines set by central Government.

Note: Changes to recommendations, conditions and/or reasons for approval will always be accompanied by a new replacement recommendation sheet.