

SECTION '2' – Applications meriting special consideration

Application No : 17/00112/TELCOM

Ward:

**Mottingham And Chislehurst
North**

Address : **Land At East Side Of Mottingham Road
Junction With Highcombe Close
Mottingham London**

OS Grid Ref: **E: 542048 N: 172948**

Applicant : **Damian Hosker**

Objections : YES

Description of Development:

Installation of 10m high telecommunications replica telegraph pole, 1no. equipment cabinet at ground level and associated works
(56 DAY CONSULTATION BY TELEFONICA UK LTD AND VODAFONE LTD REGARDING THE NEED FOR APPROVAL OF SITING AND APPEARANCE)

Key designations:

Biggin Hill Safeguarding Area
Green Chain Walk
London City Airport Safeguarding
Open Space Deficiency
Retail Shopping Frontage
Smoke Control SCA 51

Proposal

The application seeks prior approval for the installation of a 10m high replica telegraph pole and one equipment cabinet at ground level.

The proposed mast would be sited on the pedestrian footway at the junction of Mottingham Road and Highcombe Close.

Consultations

Nearby owners/occupiers were notified of the application and the following representations were received;

- Site is at the centre of a residential area and village centre which is not suitable.
- Prominent siting and out of character in the streetscene.
- Would dominate and detract from the important and attractive War Memorial and Village sign.
- Blight on nearby residential properties.
- Harm the safety of nursery and infant schools.
- May increase phone usage / technological developments.

- Exploratory hole which has been dug is dangerous to pedestrians.
- The site should be designated a no-go area for masts.
- Previous applications have been refused following strong objections from local residents.
- Probability of other companies adding their antenna to the mast could increase visual impact.
- Siting on the corner would be a hazard to pedestrian safety.
- Siting would impair sightlines of traffic turning left into the garage.
- Whilst evidence of harm to humans is inconclusive, studies urge caution on the siting of masts and this is located near to residents and schools which would be constantly exposed.
- Evidence could change and Bromley Planning should consider possible legal action at a later stage if so.
- Would set a precedent for other telecommunications companies to apply for further developments.
- Mobile phone coverage is already reasonable, is it necessary for another mast?
- Blight on nearby residential properties.
- Would bring no value to the community.
- Would damage the cultural and historical character of our village.
- Exploration works could damage underground pipes and cables.
- Works would cause a nuisance to local residents in terms of noise and pollution and traffic impacts.
- Would reduce the value of nearby properties.
- If permitted it may be expanded to the scope of the first proposal.

From a heritage point of view no objections are raised regarding the impact of the proposal on the War Memorial given its siting approximately 40m away. The setting of the War Memorial would not be harmed and the proposed siting is an improved location over that which was previously proposed.

Highways Officers raised no objection to the proposal from the highway point of view.

Environmental Health Officers raised no objection to the proposal.

Planning Considerations

The application falls to be determined in accordance with the following policies of the Unitary Development Plan and the London Plan:

BE1 Design of New Development

Of particular relevance to this application is BE1(ii) which states that "Development should not detract from the existing street scene and/or landscape and should respect important views, skylines, landmarks or landscape features."

BE22 Telecommunications Apparatus

This Policy states that in a development involving telecommunications installation, the developer will be required to demonstrate that there is a need for the development. The equipment should meet the ICNIRP guidelines on the limitation of exposure to electro-magnetic field. The installation shall not adversely affect the character and appearance of the area nor the visual and residential amenities of neighbouring properties and the visual impact of the development should be minimised by the use of screening by trees or other landscaping.

Policy T18 - Road safety

This policy states that in all planning applications the Council will consider the potential impact on road safety.

The Council is preparing a Local Plan and commenced a period of consultation on its proposed submission draft of the Local Plan on November 14th 2016 which closes on December 31st 2016 (under The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 as amended). It is anticipated that submission of the draft Local Plan to the Secretary of State will occur in the early part of 2017. These documents are a material consideration. The weight attached to the draft policies increases as the Local Plan process advances.

Draft Policy 32 Road Safety

Draft Policy 37 General Design of Development

Draft Policy 89 Telecommunications Development

The National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraph 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that "At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking."

Chapter 5 of the National Planning Policy Framework relates to "Supporting High Quality Communications Infrastructure. Paragraph 43 states that local planning authorities should support the expansion of electronic communications networks while aiming to keep the number of masts and sites for such installations to the minimum consistent with the efficient operation of the network. The need for a new site must be justified and where new sites are required the equipment associated with the development "should be sympathetically designed and camouflaged where appropriate."

It is emphasised that the planning system is not the appropriate arena for the determination of health safeguards so long as the installation would comply with International Commission guidelines for public exposure.

With regard to the importance of good design, the National Planning Policy Framework states at Paragraph 56 that the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable

development, is indivisible from good planning and should contribute positively to make places better for people. Paragraph 60 states that it is proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness.

London Plan 2015

Paragraphs 1.38 - 1.41 of the London Plan relate to the need to ensure the infrastructure to support growth within London, referring to the strategic importance of providing adequate infrastructure, including modern communications networks.

Chapter 4 of the London Plan includes the strategic objective in Policy 4.11 of "encouraging a connected economy." The policy itself states that the Mayor, GLA and all other strategic agencies should facilitate the delivery of an ICT network to ensure suitable and adequate network coverage across London which will include "well designed and located street-based apparatus."

Planning History

The site has previously been the subject of the following applications;

- 10/2565/TELCOM - 12.5m high mast with shrouded antennae and two cabinets - Refused

It is further noted that two nearby applications have been refused as detailed below;

- 15/04140/TELCOM - Land Adjacent Mottingham Service Station - 12.5m high mast – Refused
- 15/05647/TELCOM - Land Opposite 1 Grove Park Road - Installation of 12.5m high telecommunications mast - Refused

Conclusions

The main issues relating to the application are the effect that it would have on the character of the area and the impact that it would have on the amenities of the occupants of surrounding residential properties.

The application seeks prior approval for the installation of a 10m high replica telegraph pole and one equipment cabinet at ground level. The proposed mast would be sited on the pedestrian footway at the junction of Mottingham Road and Highcombe Close. The mast would be set in approximately 1m from Highcombe Close. The proposed cabinet would be sited 3m further to the east, adjacent to an existing wall which encloses a grass area adjacent to the petrol station. The proposed equipment would be approximately 40m to the west of the War Memorial statue which is Grade II Listed. The proposed mast would involve the sharing of infrastructure between two telecommunications operators,

The application site has previously been the subject of an application (ref: 10/02565) for a 12.5m high mast at a similar siting to that proposed. This was refused on the grounds that due to its height, siting and design it would be an obtrusive and highly prominent feature in the street scene, out of character and detrimental to the visual and residential amenities of the surrounding area.

Two further applications for 12.5m high masts have been refused nearby on similar grounds, with the application ref: 15/4140 also refused due as it was considered its siting would be detrimental to the setting of the statutory listed war memorial.

The current application seeks to overcome these grounds by reducing the height of the proposed mast to 10m. The proposed mast is to be a replica telegraph pole design and the style proposed is considered to help blend the proposed mast within the streetscene, which already consists of a variety of existing street furniture. The design and height proposed would significantly reduce the impact on the mast compared to the previous application at this siting (ref: 10/02565) The mast would be 10m high which would be similar to the existing streetlight and Victoria Stack within close proximity, and the backdrop of the existing petrol station to the north-east would further mitigate its impact. The height and design of the proposed mast is therefore considered acceptable in principle and would reduce the impact of the mast on the character of the area in comparison to the previous applications.

A number of other sites have been considered and discounted when selecting the site for the proposed mast for a number of reasons, including that they were not suitable for the required height or to provide the needed coverage within the area. Owners of other sites were not interested in accommodating an installation whilst a site at No.31 was considered more exposed than the current proposal. The proposed site was therefore selected to meet the need for new coverage whilst minimising the impact on the area.

The mast is to be sited approximately 40m to the west of the War Memorial statue which is Grade II Listed. Accordingly, it is considered that this would be a sufficient distance to prevent any direct impact on the structure or interrupt particular views of it. It is therefore considered that the setting of the War Memorial would not be harmed.

The mast would be sited a sufficient distance away from the nearby residential properties so as to limit any significant harm to their amenities in terms of loss of outlook or visual amenity.

Highways Officers have raised no objections in relation to the impact of the proposed siting of the mast and cabinet on highway or pedestrian safety.

It is noted that concerns have been raised by residents in respect of health issues, particularly given the proximity of the site to a school. However, the applicant has certified that the proposed development would meet the guidelines of the International Commission on Non-Ionising Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) for public exposure. Government guidance is that in these circumstances it should not be necessary to consider further the health aspects and concerns about them.

As with all telecommunications applications there is a balance between technical need and the amenities of the area. The benefits of the applications are that 2 operators will "mast share" one site. This is in line with central government and local policy, providing that the environment is not unduly harmed by such a development.

The applicants have submitted a technical justification for the need for additional telecommunications equipment in the area. It is considered that the proposal would not have a detrimental impact on highways safety and that the impact on residential and visual amenity would be acceptable.

Background papers referred to during production of this report comprise all correspondence on file refs. DC/17/00122 and other planning history excluding exempt information.

RECOMMENDATION: PRIOR APPROVAL REQUIRED AND GRANTED

- 1 The siting and appearance of the mast and associated cabinet shall be carried out in complete accordance with the submitted drawing(s) unless previously agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.**

Reason: In order to comply with Policies BE22 and BE23 of the Unitary Development Plan and in the interest of the visual amenities of the area.

- 2 Any telecommunications equipment hereby permitted which subsequently becomes redundant shall be removed from the site within a period of 2 months and the land shall be reinstated to its former condition.**

Reason: In order to comply with Policies BE22 and BE23 of the Unitary Development Plan and in the interest of the visual amenities of the area.

- 3 Before the operation of the development hereby permitted the mast and equipment cabinet shall be painted in a colour and finish to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the facility shall be retained in that colour and finish and kept free of graffiti.**

Reason: In order to comply with Policies BE22 and BE23 of the Unitary Development Plan and in the interest of the visual amenities of the area.

- 4 Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted a Construction Management Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Plan shall include measures of how construction traffic can access the site safely and how potential traffic conflicts can be minimised; the route construction traffic shall follow for arriving at and leaving the site and the hours of operation, but shall not be limited to these. The Construction Management Plan shall be implemented in accordance with the agreed timescale and details.**

Reason: In order to comply with Policy T5, T6, T7, T15, T16 & T18 of the Unitary Development Plan and in the interest of the amenities of the adjacent properties.