

Report for Resolution

Report to Planning Applications Committee
Date 30 June 2011
Report of Head of Planning Services
Subject 11/00860/T Proposed Telecommunications Mast Opposite
161B Bowers Avenue Norwich

Item
6 (3)

SUMMARY

Description:	Installation of radio base station consisting of a 14.8m slim-line column, 1 No. equipment cabinet and ancillary development thereto.
Reason for consideration at Committee:	Objection
Recommendation:	Approve
Ward:	Mile Cross
Contact Officer:	Mrs Joy Brown 01603 212542
Valid Date:	12th May 2011
Applicant:	Vodafone Ltd
Agent:	Mrs Jennie Hann

INTRODUCTION

The Site

Location and Context

1. The site is located on the north side of Lefroy Road at its junction with Bowers Avenue. To the south and west are residential properties and to the north is a car park to serve the shops to the north and east. Entrance to the car park is immediately to the east.
2. To the east are items of street furniture with a telephone box and a row of trees to the north. Surrounding buildings are predominately 3 storeys high, although the houses to the west are 2 storeys.

Constraints

3. The site does not lie within a Conservation Area and there are no Tree Preservation Orders on trees.

Planning History

There is no previous planning history.

Equality and Diversity Issues

There are no significant equality or diversity issues.

The Proposal

- The proposal is for a 14.8m high slimline column supporting 3no 3G antennas, with 1no equipment cabinet 1.58m long, 0.38m wide and 1.35m high, painted green, and ancillary development for one operator. The column will be left in its natural galvanised state and its position will be 1.8m from the roadside edge.

Representations Received

- Adjacent and neighbouring properties have been notified in writing. Seven letters of representation, including one from County Councillor Richard Edwards, have been received citing the issues as summarised in the table below.

6.

Issues Raised	Response
Unacceptable visual impact. The location is unsuitable as it will be visible for many residents. The structure is unsightly and not attractive. Do not want to look at it.	See paragraph 13.
Placing it in the centre of the community area will lead to further separation of the community.	See paragraph 13.
The structure should be on the top of a building. There is no security around the structure and it is only a matter of time until it is vandalised.	See paragraph 14
The mast may cause problems when selling property in the future.	'The planning system operates in the public interest to ensure the development and use of land results in better places for people to live, the delivery of development where communities need it, as well as the protection and enhancement of the natural and historic environment and the countryside.' (PPS1) The potential impact of a proposal on the value of individual properties or land is not normally considered to be a material planning consideration.
Concerned regarding health impacts. The proposed location is extremely close to a large number of occupied homes and flats and studies on the effects of such masts are still inconclusive.	See paragraph 15.
Need –There are enough masts on the flats nearby and mobile phone reception is sufficient so do not understand the need for another mast. More remote areas in Norfolk have no signal so it would be better to put	PPG8 states that local planning authorities should not question the need for the telecommunications system. The operators have provided details which states that the site is required to fill a gap in coverage and to

them there.	prevent the 'dropping of calls' at the periphery of the cell area.
The proposal may have a negative impact on the businesses which use the proposed area for deliveries and car parking for customers as well as some of the nearby residents.	The mast and associated equipment is proposed to be situated on the pavement, 1.8m from the roadside edge and adjacent to existing furniture and a car park.
Mobile phone masts should be located in industrial estates and not near homes/schools/ playing fields/ parks/ pubs and shops.	There is no requirement in planning policy terms to locate masts exclusively in industrial estates. Some masts do not require permission and in these cases consideration is limited to an assessment of siting and design, rather than matters of principle. See paragraphs 10-15.
If mast is erected then this may have a negative effect on local businesses as some people may avoid using them due to the proximity of the mast.	See above.
Loss of privacy/ overlooking	The proposed mast is considered unlikely to result in any loss of privacy or overlooking.
Lack of security around the proposed structures is likely to lead to vandalism	The design of the structures proposed is similar to other such structures. The potential for vandalism is not considered to be a matter which should be given a significant amount of weight, as there are other mechanisms and legislation available to address this issue should it arise.

Norwich Society: The column and its associated cabinet are very prominent and therefore also vulnerable. Could they not be moved behind the trees?

Consultation Responses

7. **Transportation:** No objection. The location would not have any adverse effect on road safety and servicing can be done from the parking area to the rear.
8. **Tree protection officer:** No significant arboricultural implications
9. **Safeguarding Officer, Norwich Airport:** No objection

ASSESSMENT OF PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Relevant Planning Policies

Relevant National Planning Policies

PPG8 - Telecommunications

Relevant policies of the adopted Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk 2011

Policy 2 – Promoting good design

Relevant saved policies of the adopted City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan 2004
HBE20 - Telecommunications

Written Ministerial Statement: 23 March 2011: Planning for Growth
Support of enterprise and sustainable development.

Principle of Development

Policy Considerations

10. Policy HBE20 seeks that the visual impact of telecommunications development shall be minimised as much as possible and that the amenity of adjoining uses and their sensitivity are taken into account.

Other Material Considerations

11. This application is for the prior approval of the mast as it has the benefit of permitted development due to its height being less than 15metres, and therefore consideration can only be made in respect of its siting and appearance.
12. In the immediate surrounding area there is an abundance of street furniture including an 8m high street light and 8m -10m high trees. Although the height of this column would be somewhat higher than the trees and the street light, it would not be out of keeping with basic profile of the street furniture surrounding the site. The existing trees and surrounding 3 storey buildings will provide a backdrop and it is considered that the visual amenities of the area will be reduced as much as possible by the design proposed. As such it is not considered that the proposal will form an obtrusive feature within the streetscape.
13. The applicant's agent has considered alternative sites and considered the sharing of the existing structure located on Aylmer Tower to the south east and has discounted them because of ownership reasons and, for one site, because it is at a much lower level, requiring a 30m structure to provide any coverage.
14. An ICNIRP compliance certificate has been submitted with the application, and it is the government's firm view that the planning system is not the place for determining health safeguards. It remains central Government's responsibility to decide what measures are necessary to protect public health. In the Government's view, if a proposed mobile phone base station meets the ICNIRP guidelines for public exposure it should not be necessary for a local planning authority, in processing an application for prior approval, to consider further the health aspects and concerns about them.

Conclusions

15. The siting and design for the telecommunications column and associated development has been minimised as much as possible and will not have an impact on the nearby trees. Its position within the area is in keeping with the commercial interface of buildings to the north and east, whilst generally retaining the profile of street furniture would not look out of place within the street scene.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation to grant Prior Approval without conditions.



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Planning Application No 11/00860/T
 Site Address Mast opposite 161b Bowers Avenue
 Scale 1:750



NORWICH
City Council

PLANNING SERVICES





PROPOSED SITE PLAN
(1:100)

The drawings comply with O2 & Vodafone Standard ICNIRP guidelines.
Designed in accordance with Cornerstone document: CORN/09/006

ALL DIMENSIONS ARE IN mm UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE

N.G.R E: 621269 N: 311057

CONCESSION REQUIRED NO

NOTES:

CORPORATE RESOURCES

13 MAY 2011

POST ROOM

REV	MODIFICATION	BY	CH	DATE
A	Issued for Approval	DA	SF	31.03.11

CLARKE TELCOM

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O2 **vodafone**

Cornerstone Project

Cell Name	Opt.
NORWICH	-

Cell ID No		
Cornerstone	Host	Sharer
(ID)019817	(VF)79519	(02)N/A

Site Address / Contact Details

BOWERS AVENUE SW
ADOPTED HIGHWAYS OFF BOWERS AVENUE
NORWICH
NORFOLK
NR3 2NX

Drawing Title: PROPOSED SITE PLAN

Purpose of issue: PLANNING

Drawing Number: 200

Surveyed By: SF	Original Sheet Size: A3	Issue: A
Drawn: DA	Date: 28.03.11	Checked: SF
		Date: 31.03.11