

DELEGATED REPORT / CASE OFFICER'S ASSESSMENT

Ref No: ST/0963/18/TFUL
Proposal: Replace the existing 17.5m high monopole for a new 17.5m monopole and headframe supporting 6no. antennas and 3no. 300mm dishes on the existing base. Install 12no. new remote radio units and relocate 3no. existing remote radio units onto the new headframe with associated ancillary development.
Location: Telecommunications Mast
Shields Road
Cleaton

Site Visit Made: 11/12/18

Relevant policies/SPDs

- 1 DM1 - Management of Development (A, B & G)
- 2 LDF CS EA1 - Local Character and Distinctiveness

Description of the site and of the proposals

The application site is a small hard surfaced area situated to the south-west of the A1018, situated close to the road, within a field, and accessed directly from the A1018. The site is situated within the South Tyneside Green Belt.

This application seeks planning permission for telecommunications development, consisting of the removal of an existing 17.5 metre high monopole and attached infrastructure and its replacement with a new 17.5 metre high monopole with attached infrastructure. The existing and proposed monopoles are 15 metres in height, with the headframe at the top taking the total height to 17.5 metres. The existing monopole gained planning consent through the prior approval regime in 1998 (application reference ST/0861/98//DM).

The proposed site plan indicates that the proposed monopole would be located approximately 2.5 metres to the north-west of where the existing monopole is situated. It would be of the same height as the existing one, but would be thicker in terms of its width than the existing, and with a wider headframe at the top.

The application proposes to install the following telecommunications apparatus on the proposed monopole:

- Six antennas, (three new antennas, plus the relocation of the three antennas currently situated on the existing monopole), six combiners and one GPS module on the headframe;
- Twelve new remote radio units stacked and fixed to the antenna poles; (currently there are only three remote radio units on a smaller ground based support pole, which would remain);
- Three transmission dishes on support poles before the headframe; (there are currently three of these on the existing).

The plans and supporting documents indicate that ancillary equipment within the existing equipment cabin would be upgraded as part of these proposals. As this is located within an existing building, it does not require planning consent.

An ICNIRP certificate and additional background and supplementary documents have been submitted with the application. The supporting information indicates that the replacement equipment and monopole is required to improve both the speed and the capacity of the network and to allow Vodafone/Telefonica to enhance the 2G, 3G and 4G speed and capacity to the surrounding area.

Publicity / Consultations (Expiry date – Publicity 04/01/19; Consultees 01/01/19)

1) Responses to Publicity

None

2) Consultation Responses

STC Traffic & Road Safety: No objection

Ministry of Defence (Safeguarding): No objection

Assessment

The main issues in the consideration of this application are:

- Principle of development;
- Green Belt impacts;
- Impact on visual amenity;

Other relevant considerations are also addressed in the 'other matters' section of this assessment.

Principle of development

The development is required as part of a continued network improvement program and will provide service to customers of Telefonica/Vodafone. On the basis of the supporting information provided, it is accepted that this development is reasonably required for these purposes.

The site appears to have been chosen as it is a site which already accommodates telecommunications infrastructure in the form of an existing monopole of the same height, which would be replaced by the proposed monopole.

The proposed development would not conflict with any of the Council's strategic planning policies, and is considered to be acceptable in principle, subject to consideration of other material planning considerations, including impacts on the Green Belt and visual amenity.

Green Belt

LDF Policy EA1 seeks to conserve the best qualities of South Tyneside's built and natural environment with Criterion B stating the need for the Council to protect and enhance the openness of the Green Belt.

Paragraph 133 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential

characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence. Paragraph 134 of NPPF states that Green Belt serves five purposes:

- to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

Paragraph 143 of the NPPF states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Paragraph 144 states that when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

The existing and proposed monopoles are both considered to fall within the definition of a building, which is defined in section 336 of the Town and Country Planning Act, which includes *"any structure or erection"*. Paragraph 145 of NPPF states that a Local Planning Authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in Green Belt, subject to certain exceptions.

The exceptions include (d) *"the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces"*. It is considered that the replacement of an existing telecommunications monopole with a new telecommunications monopole of the same height in almost exactly the same location, albeit with minor increases to the width of the pole and headframe, would meet with this exception. The monopole would be approximately 2.5 metres to the north-west of where the existing monopole is sited, with the site compound area remaining the same as existing, with the equipment within the existing cabin being upgraded.

Exception (g), which includes the *"redevelopment of previously developed land...which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development"* is also considered to be applicable in this case, as it is considered that the replacement of an existing telecommunications monopole and headframe with a new telecommunications monopole and headframe, of the same height in the location proposed would not result in a materially greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

The proposed development would therefore not constitute inappropriate development within the Green Belt, nor is it considered that this development would materially impact upon the openness or permanence of the Green Belt. The proposal would accord with the relevant requirements of LDF Policy EA1 of the Core Strategy and the relevant NPPF policies relating to development within the Green Belt.

Visual amenity

The proposed monopole would be of the same height and located adjacent to the existing monopole that it would replace. While the pole and headframe hosting the ancillary equipment would be wider than the existing monopole, it is not considered that this would have any more than a negligible effect on the visual appearance of the area. The supporting statements explain that the increase in the width of the pole and headframe are required as the existing ones do not have the structural capacity to support the antennas and equipment required to achieve the required network improvements.

The replacement equipment is to be housed within the existing equipment cabin and would have no effect on the external appearance.

It is considered that the development would accord with LDF Policy DM1 (A) in respect of its visual appearance.

Other Matters

The site is not located close to any neighbouring residential properties, with the closest residential dwellings situated 250 metres north of the site of the proposed replacement mast. The development would therefore not impact upon neighbouring residential amenity. The development is also more than 200 metres from the nearest school, which is situated to the west. The development would therefore be in accordance with LDF Policy DM1(B).

As the site is adjacent to an 'A' road and the scheme could theoretically have highways implications during the construction stage, the highway authority was consulted on the proposals. No objections were raised by the highway authority, and it is therefore considered that the application would accord with LDF Policy DM1(G).

The ICNIRP certificate submitted as part of the application documentation confirms compliance with all relevant legislation including the guidelines for emissions from base stations.

Summary

For the reasons outlined in the above assessment, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable and in accordance with Local Development Framework Core Strategy Policy EA1 and DM Policies Policy DM1.

In assessing this application due regard has been had to the requirement of section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

Recommendation

Grant Permission with Conditions

Conditions

- 1 The development to which this permission relates must be commenced not later than 3 years from the date of this permission.

As required by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and to ensure that the development is carried out within a reasonable time.

- 2 The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plan(s) as detailed below

Drawing Number 201 Rev B received 27/11/18

Drawing Number 301 Rev B received 27/11/18

Any minor material changes to the approved plans will require a formal planning application under S73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to vary this condition and substitute alternative plans.

In order to provide a procedure to seek approval of proposed minor material change

which is not substantially different from that which has been approved.

Informatives

- 1 In dealing with this application the Council has implemented the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework to seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.
- 2 The proposed development lies within a coal mining area which may contain unrecorded coal mining related hazards. If any coal mining feature is encountered during development, this should be reported immediately to the Coal Authority on 0345 762 6848.

Further information is also available on the Coal Authority website at:
www.gov.uk/government/organisations/the-coal-authority

Case officer: Chris Stanworth

Signed:

Date: 17/01/19

Authorised Signatory:

Date:

«END»