

KEY INFORMATION

Ward Whitfield

Proposal

Installation of 20 metre high monopole supporting 11no. antenna, 2 No. equipment cabins and all ancillary development.

Address

Claverhouse Telephone Exchange
Longhaugh Road
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Applicant

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Agent

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Registered

28 November 2001

Case Officer Julie Finlay



Installation of 20 metre high Monopole at Claverhouse Exchange

Installation of 20 metre high monopole supporting 11no. antenna, 2no. equipment cabins and all ancillary development. is **RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS**. Report by Director of Planning and Transportation.

RECOMMENDATION

The proposed mast is located to the south of BT Exchange building on the east side of Longhaugh Road. The nearest housing is 60m to the west. The proposal complies with National Policy and Council Non -Statutory Policy and is recommended for APPROVAL subject to conditions as outlined at the end of the report.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

- Planning permission is sought for the installation of a 20m telecommunications monopole supporting 11no. antennae, 2no. equipment cabins and all ancillary development at a BT Exchange site at Longhaugh Road, Dundee. A 4m wide strip of landscaping is proposed along the west side of the proposal site.
- The proposal is to mast share between Hutchison 3G and BT Cellnet. Statutory policy and guidance and Council non-statutory guidelines encourage mast sharing.
- Neighbouring residents did not require to be notified as they lie outwith the notification area and no objections were received.
- The application has been referred to the Development Quality Committee for determination at the request of the Local Member and the Member of the adjacent Ward.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

Planning permission is sought for the installation of a 20m slimline monopole, supporting 5no. antennae for Hutchison 3G UK Limited, 6no. antennae for BT Cellnet, 2no. equipment cabins and all other ancillary development at Claverhouse Telephone Exchange. There will be a Hutchison Nokia Outdoor Optima Cabinet measuring 2070mm x 790mm x 1300mm high on a 3450mm x 1690mm foundation to the west of the mast. A BT Cellnet cabin measuring 3725mm x 2525mm x 2805mm on a 4200mm x 3000mm foundation will be located to the south of the mast. The mast will be installed on a 5.8m x 5.8m foundation and there will be a 2m high chainlink fence in line with the exchange building with a 3m access gate to the east. The antennae will range from 2m in length to 3m in length and the dishes will be 0.6m in diameter. An access track will be formed along the east side of the exchange building to the mast and its equipment. A landscaping screen is proposed to the west of the compound.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is located on the east side of Longhaugh Road and on open land to the south of a BT telephone exchange building. The nearest residential properties are to the west and are approximately 60m from the site of the proposed telecom mast. There are various mature trees between 10 and 20m high adjacent to the site which is currently a grassy area with steep slope to the west towards Longhaugh Road. There are trees along the west boundary immediately adjacent to Longhaugh Road with an open area to the south west.

POLICY BACKGROUND

National Planning Policy Guidance 19: Radio Telecommunications.

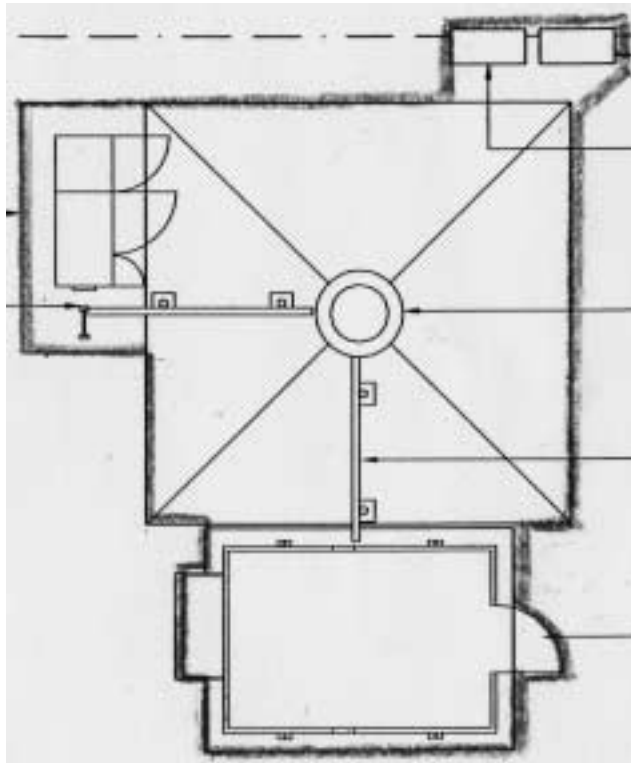
This national guidance emphasises the importance of establishing good communication and trust between operators and planning authorities and encourages pre-application discussions to determine the most appropriate siting and design approaches. It

acknowledges the benefits of modern telecommunications and seeks to encourage such development as being essential to a modern economy and contributing to sustainable objectives.

Planning Advice Note 62: Radio Telecommunications.

This provides best practice advice on the process of site selection and design and illustrates how the equipment can be sensitively installed. It also explains why additional mast stations are needed to serve the growth in customer demand and in response to changing technical requirements, including the third generation of mobile phones.

Dundee Local Plan 1998 Policy BE31: Proposals for telecommunications



developments will be assessed against the following criteria:

- a Proposals will be assumed to carry an operational justification, but in cases where there is good reason to anticipate a general proliferation and resultant clutter in the local landscape, the planning authority retains discretion to explore this justification.
- b There are no satisfactory alternative sites available.
- c There is no reasonable prospect of sharing existing facilities.

- d The development should avoid conflict with other policies or proposals of the Local Plan, Structure Plan etc.

Non-statutory planning policies in relation to telecommunications masts and other apparatus was approved as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications by the Development Quality Committee on 29th October 2001. The policies relevant to this application are discussed within the "Observations" below.

LOCAL AGENDA 21

Key Theme 7 requires access to facilities, services, goods and people is not achieved at the expense of the environment and are accessible to all.

SITE HISTORY

There is no planning history of relevance to this application.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Statutory neighbour notification was carried out which did not include any neighbouring residents and no objections were received.

CONSULTATIONS

There were no adverse comments from statutory consultees. The Director of Environmental and Consumer Protection Department requires that the equipment is installed, operated and maintained in accordance with current NRPB guidelines.

OBSERVATIONS

The determining issues for the Committee in this instance are:

- 1 Whether the development is in accordance with National and Local Planning Guidance.
- 2 Whether the development is in accordance with the Council's recently approved non-statutory policies as a material consideration.

Background

Hutchison 3G and BT Cellnet are licensed telecommunications code systems operators. Under the terms of their licences, they are required to establish and improve, whichever the case may be, a network over the UK to provide second and third generation telecommunications services. A key obligation is to provide coverage over an area embracing 80% of the UK population by 2007.

The third generation networks use digital technology in an enhanced form, which will give far greater capacity to carry high volumes of data and for the first time visual media. This will bring into reality videophones, proper Internet access and a whole range of other services incorporating moving images.

BT Cellnet has an existing network, where they are currently reviewing service provided to subscribers. The installation at the BT Exchange has been identified as an area which requires improved coverage.

National and Local Planning Guidance

The application is on behalf of two telecommunications code systems operators who are seeking, under the terms of their license, to provide a minimum network coverage. The proposal is considered to be in line with the requirements of NPPG 19 and PAN 62.

In terms of the advice in NPPG 19 and PAN 62, the proposal addressed the main issues as follows:

- **The Use of Small Scale Equipment**
The proposed multi-user monopole is at the minimum height to provide for both operators. The antennae and equipment cabinets are relatively small scale
- **The Use of Concealment and Disguising**
The proposal has been designed to minimise its effect on the surrounding area. It makes best use of existing features, having regard to operational constraints and aims to blend in with other vertical structures in the area. The equipment can be coloured to

match existing finishes and this can be attached as a condition.

- **Mast Sharing and Site Sharing**

The proposal is for two operators to share and the mast has capacity to accommodate further antennae and could be promoted for further mast sharing subject to any necessary planning permission. No existing masts were identified within the search area that could accommodate the proposals. A map showing the coverage area was provided and it is evident that it is a mainly residential area with no industrial areas allocated within the Local Plan.

- **Installations on Buildings**

The Exchange building has a pitched roof which cannot accommodate either installation.

- **Ground Based Masts**

The BT Exchange site provides a high capacity fibre optic network which is readily available and other sites cannot provide quite so easily. This provision will reduce the number of masts required elsewhere.

Paragraph 66 of NPPG 19 states that:

"Planning decisions must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise".

Policy BE31 of the Dundee Local Plan 1998 contains criteria for the assessment of such applications and these criteria are repeated and reinforced in the recent Non-Statutory Policies which have been drawn up to reflect the most recent national guidance. An operational justification has been provided and this is site is part of the rollout programme by Hutchison 3G. Extensive site research was carried out by the applicants for site selection. Alternative sites were ruled out as a result of trying to achieve an equal balance between planning and environmental requirements whilst taking account of technical and operational constraints. A quarry to the east of Claverhouse BT Exchange was identified as a potential location for development. It was found that the quarry was slightly outwith the cell area and could not provide the required coverage given the undulating topography of the area.

This was further compounded by the existence of mature trees that obstructed communications to the target area. The application site was considered suitable as it is currently used for telecommunications use.

Criteria c and d encourage operators to share on existing facilities. It has been established that there are no existing facilities or structures within this area that would provide for the needs of both operators. Subsequently they propose to site share on a ground based mast which negates the need for two stand-alone facilities. It is considered that the proposal does not conflict with other policies within the local plan, and on that basis should be determined against the criteria within Policy BE31.

Non-Statutory Planning Policies

The following are of relevance to this application.

Non-Statutory Policy 1 requires that every application provides:

- An operational justification.
- A justification for the proposal against alternative sites and prospects for mast sharing.
- An assessment of the cumulative impact of individual proposals where there are others nearby.
- An assessment of the visual impact of the proposal.
- An analysis of the proposal's environmental impact.

An operational justification for the location and design has been provided. It was considered that there were no more appropriate locations that would meet with H3G and BT Cellnet's technical and operational requirements. Whilst the proposal relates to a free standing mast, it is not considered that it will have an adverse impact on the environment. It is considered it will blend in with existing features such as mature trees within the area. A landscaping screen is proposed along the west boundary of the compound which will screen the associated cabins and equipment and partially screen the bottom section of the mast. There are no other masts within the vicinity and there is potential for further operators to share these facilities in the future.

The proposal complies with Non-Statutory Policy 1.

Non-Statutory Policy 2 contains a general presumption against the siting of free standing masts within or immediately adjacent to existing or proposed residential areas. Exceptions may be made where the proposal is considered to be sensitively located and designed and where the operator has demonstrated that the proposal is the most appropriate from other options investigated.

The application site is 60m from residential properties to the west and 180m from housing to the north. The proposed mast is not considered to be immediately adjacent to housing. Other sites were investigated but found to be unsuitable as they did not provide the required coverage due to the topography of the land and trees obstructing communications to the target area. Therefore the proposal is considered to be in accordance with Policy 2.

Non-Statutory Policy 15 encourages a partnership approach between the Council and operators to the forward planning of roll-out programmes of proposed works. In particular, opportunities for mast sharing will be maximised subject to satisfactory location and design controls.

This proposal involves mast sharing between H3G and BT Cellnet. Pre application discussions have taken place between the Planning and Transportation Department and the operators with comments taken on board and reflected in the mast design and scale of the proposal. The Italian Calzovara monopole is a slimline design in comparison to the standard utilitarian lattice type mast structure which is evident within various areas of Dundee. This standard design was previously proposed for the site and would have benefited from permitted development rights, but the development was not implemented. It is a method of providing a multi-users structure with minimal visual impact on the immediate and surrounding environment. It is considered that if the mast and its associated equipment were coloured to reflect surrounding structures it will blend in better with the environment.

DESIGN

The telecommunications mast is slimline in design compared with the

standard lattice type mast structure evident within various parts of Dundee. The agent has indicated that it can be coloured to blend in better with existing structures and the surrounding environment. A landscape screen will be planted to the west of the compound and this will disguise much of the associated equipment.

CONCLUSION

The proposal complies with advice provided in NPPG19 and PAN 62 and Policy BE31 of the Dundee Local Plan 1998 as a justification has been provided for the location and design of the proposal and it involves mast sharing. The proposal is also in accordance with the Council's Non-Statutory policies regarding telecommunication masts and other apparatus. There are no allocated industrial areas within the coverage area which is predominantly covered by residential developments. The BT Exchange provides an existing connection which can be utilised and prevent the cumulating of further masts within close proximity. There are no material considerations to justify refusal of the application and therefore it is recommended for APPROVAL subject to conditions.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that planning permission be GRANTED subject to the following conditions:-

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be commenced within five years from the date of this permission.
- 2 The detailed specification of all the elements including the support structure, associated equipment housing cabinets, antennas and cabling shall be approved by the planning authority prior to their construction and shall not be altered thereafter unless agreed in writing.
- 3 In the event that equipment becomes obsolete or redundant it must be removed and the site reinstated to the satisfaction of the planning authority within 6 months.

Reason

- 1 To comply with Section 58 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.
- 2 To minimise the level of visual intrusion and protect the quality and character of the area as far as practicable.
- 3 To minimise the level of visual intrusion, and ensure the reinstatement of the site to a satisfactory standard.