

KEY INFORMATION

Ward Craigebank

Proposal

Erection of 20m tower and associated telecoms equipment including equipment cabins, extension of existing compound including fence

Address

Substation
Old Craigie Road
Dundee
DD4 7HX

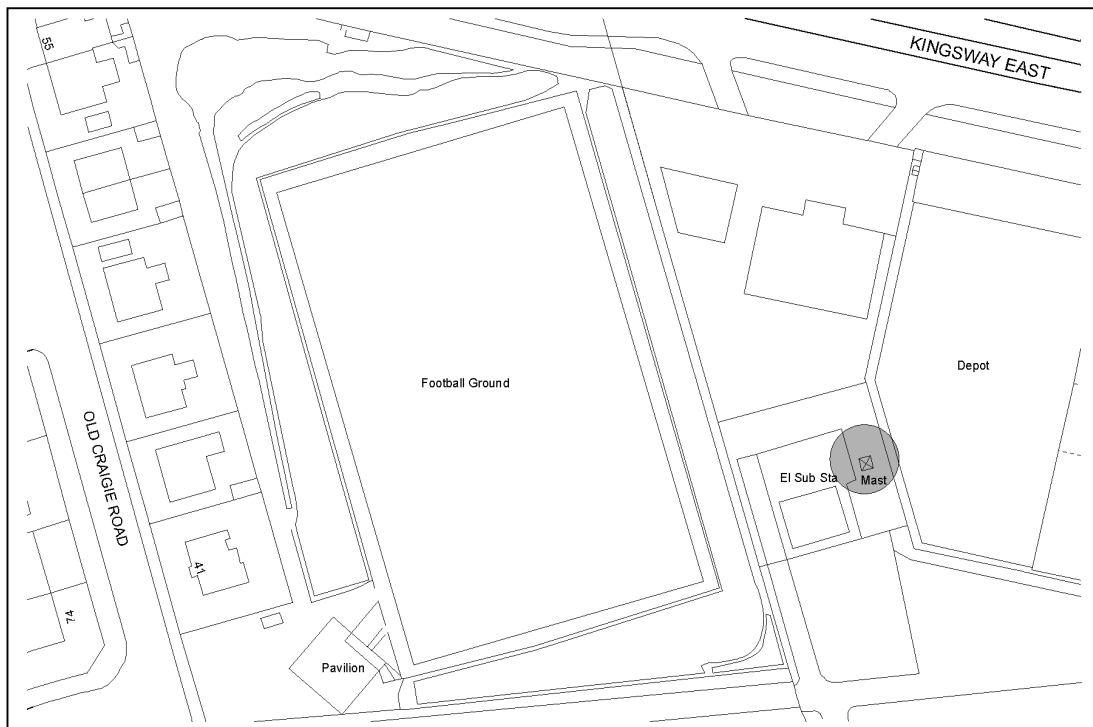
Applicant

Scottish & Southern Energy
Inveralmond House
200 Dunkeld Road
Perth
PH1 3AQ

Agent

Registered 30 April 2002

Case Officer J Finlay



Proposed Telecommunications Mast in Old Craigie Road

The erection of a 20m tower and associated telecoms equipment is **RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL** subject to conditions. Report by Director of Planning and Transportation

RECOMMENDATION

The proposal complies with NPPG 19, PAN 62, Policy BE31 of the Local Plan and the Council's Non-Statutory Policies and therefore the application is recommended for **APPROVAL**. The proposal is to replace an existing tower with a telecommunications mast which is 5m higher.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

- Planning permission is sought for the erection of a 20m high telecommunications mast and associated telecoms equipment including equipment cabins and extension of existing compound on the site of a substation at Old Craigie Road, Dundee. There is currently a 15m high tower on the site which is used by Scottish and Southern Energy, which will be removed and replaced by the proposed mast.
- The proposal is to mast share between Orange and Scottish and Southern Energy. Statutory policy and guidance and the Council's non-statutory guidelines encourage mast sharing.
- Three letters of objection and one petition with 64 signatures were received to the application and they object mainly to the adverse visual impact of the mast on the immediate and surrounding area.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

Planning permission is sought for the erection of a 20 metre high telecommunications mast with 2 microwave dishes, 3 dual polar antennae, 2 third party microwave dishes and 2 cross polar antennae. There will also be associated telecom equipment including equipment cabins and an extension of existing compound including fence. The site area is approximately 126sqm. It is intended to transfer equipment from an existing mast and remove it from the site.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is located on the east side of Old Craigie Road, at the north end of the Eastern Cemetery and to the south side of the Kingsway. There is a football ground to the west of the site and car sales depot to the east. There is an existing 15m high mast on the site which is used by Scottish and Southern Energy and a BT Cellnet mast slightly to the west. The nearest housing is approximately 120m to the west and there are allotments approximately 50m to the south west.

POLICY BACKGROUND

National Planning Policy Guidelines

NPPG19 "Radio Telecommunications" and Planning Advice Note 62 "Radio Telecommunications" both contain Government advice in relation to such developments and both are material considerations in the determination of this application.

There are no policies of direct relevance to this application in the Dundee and Angus Structure Plan 2001 - 2016.

Dundee Local Plan 1998

Policy BE31 sets out the criteria for the assessment of telecommunications applications, including an operational justification and the applicant must demonstrate that there are no satisfactory alternative sites available.

Non-statutory 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 29/10/2001.

LOCAL AGENDA 21

Key theme 7 requires that 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 an existing BT mast within the same site which was erected as permitted development in July 2001. There is an Orange mast within close proximity to the Kingsway, which was also erected as permitted development.



PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Statutory neighbour notification was carried out and 3 letters of objection and a petition with 64 signatures were received to the proposal. The main point of objection is the adverse visual impact of the mast on the immediate and surrounding area and the location of other masts within close proximity.

CONSULTATIONS

There were no adverse comments from statutory consultees. The Director of Leisure and Arts requires suitable replacement planting.

OBSERVATIONS

The determining issues for Committee in this instance are:

- 1 Whether the development is in accordance with National Planning Policy Guidance.

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- 2 Whether the development is in accordance with the policies in the Dundee Local Plan 1998.
- 3 Whether the development is in accordance with the Council's approved non-statutory policies and with any other material considerations.

Background

The application is on behalf of a telecommunications code systems operator who is seeking, under the terms of their license, to provide a minimum network coverage.

The purpose of the proposed installation at Old Craigie Road is to address the Orange 3G-coverage deficiency around Old Craigie Road, Pitkerro Road, Forfar Road and the Kingsway. The site will:

- * Provide quality in-building coverage to residential housing, commercial and business premises in the immediate area;
- * Complement the existing macro-cellular coverage by specifically targeting the 3G coverage deficiency;
- * Provide sufficient mobile channel capacity to meet existing and future demand.

The proposed site will also provide contiguous coverage with other Orange sites within the nearby area. Plans indicating the coverage plots by the proposed mast were submitted by the applicant.

The existing tower is used for data and telephony circuits for internal communication purposes by Scottish and Southern Energy.

National Guidance

In terms of the advice in NPPG19 and PAN 62, the agent provided a justification, which assessed the proposal as follows:

- * The Use of Small Scale Equipment

The proposed mast will be 20m in height and is a round-shaped lattice structure. The applicant has indicated that a tower of this design is required for equipment such as antennae and dishes. Each operators' equipment needs to be at least 1m apart, both

vertically and horizontally to avoid interference and ensure safe working zones. The height of the mast will be 5m higher than the existing mast on the site and this is considered to have minimal visual impact when viewed from the Kingsway, which is an Ambassador Route.

* The Use of Concealment and Disguising

The proposed mast will not be disguised but is only 5m higher than the existing mast on the site. The associated equipment cabins will be screened by existing infrastructure within the compound. An additional security gate and fence will be installed to ensure that the compound is secure.

* Mast Sharing and Site Sharing

The proposal is to share the mast between Orange and Scottish and Southern Energy. The proposal includes two headframes at the top of the mast. Orange will use one headframe and the second headframe will be added, if and when, another operator is obtained to mast share.

* Installation on Buildings

DC Thomson were approached on various occasions to discuss the possibility of locating equipment on their buildings. They do not wish to accommodate telecom equipment on their buildings or within their grounds. There are no other buildings within the cell area, which would be a suitable height to provide the required coverage.

Local Plan Guidance

Paragraph 66 of NPPG19 states that:

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

Policy BE31 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 by the applicant and the site is to infill deficiencies in the network. Alternative sites were considered by the applicant and these were ruled out as the following indicates:

- * Existing O2 mast to rear of garage on Kingsway - the structure would require redevelopment to accommodate Orange and there is limited room available.
- * Rooftop structure on DC Thomson buildings - The site provider is not willing to accommodate telecom equipment on their property.
- * Football field at Old Craigie Road - Too close to housing.
- * Rooftop structure on church of St Vincent de Paul, Kingsway - Too close to housing.
- * Industrial area between Mid Craigie Road and Old Craigie Road - A very tall mast would be required as the DC Thomson Buildings dominate the landscape. The site at Toffolo Jackson was found to be the only suitable option but it does not provide sufficient coverage for the target cell. The industrial area was also rejected due to its proximity to an existing mast.

Criteria c and d of Policy BE31 encourage mast and site sharing, which the proposal is pursuing. Any existing masts in the area do not provide the required coverage for the target cell. The applicant considered a number of alternative sites as discussed above and no other site could be found within the cell area for their requirements. The proposed site is considered to be a considerable distance from housing and utilises a site with an existing mast.

Non-Statutory Planning Policies

The following are directly relevant to this application.

Non-Statutory Policy 1 requires that every application:

- Contains an operational justification.
- Justifies the selected site in relation to alternatives and addresses mast sharing.
- Assesses the cumulative impact of individual proposals where there are others nearby.

- Assesses the opportunities of minimising the visual impact of the proposal.

The applicant provided an operational justification, which is considered adequate. There are no other masts within the vicinity which provide the required coverage for the operator. The mast will be shared by two operators and there is an opportunity for further mast sharing in the future. Alternative sites were considered as discussed above. The mast will not be very prominent from the Kingsway (an Ambassador Route) as the existing mast is visible from the Kingsway and the proposal will result in an extension of 5m in height. It will replace an existing mast on the same site and will not result in an accumulation of further masts along the Kingsway. The proposal complies with Non-Statutory Policy 1.

Non-Statutory Policy 2 - Residential Areas, contains a general presumption against the siting of free-standing masts within or immediately adjacent to existing residential areas. However the policy further advises that 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 the other options investigated.

The application site is 120 metres from housing to the west. The proposed mast is not considered to be located "immediately adjacent" to the residential area. The mast does not differ significantly from the existing mast, with the exception of an additional 5m on top. The operator has demonstrated that the proposal is the most appropriate from all options considered. Therefore the proposal complies with Non-statutory Policy 2.

Non-Statutory Policy 13 - Ambassador Routes states that ground based masts and structures may be acceptable adjacent to the City's ambassador routes, provided they are slimline, innovative in design and not capable of mast sharing. The mast is not slimline but resembles the existing mast on the site and is not considered to have a significant visual impact on the surrounding area, when compared with the current mast. It is a site share proposal and provides an opportunity for future mast sharing.

For the reasons discussed above, the proposal is considered to comply with national, local and the Councils' Non-Statutory Guidance on telecommunication developments.

Design

The design of the mast is only slightly bulkier than the current mast on the site due to its increased height. It has an improved finished appearance due to the addition of headframes at the top and it should not be anymore visible from the Kingsway. It is considered that the design and height of the mast will not have an adverse visual impact on the immediate and surrounding area.

CONCLUSION

The proposal satisfies the requirements of national, local and non-statutory policies and therefore the application 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 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 4 months
- 3 No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved by the planning authority a scheme of landscaping. Details of the scheme shall include the replacement of two Portuguese bushes on a 1:1 basis, with a minimum size of 2m high, rootballed and planted as per BS4043

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 ensure the

reinstatement of the site to a satisfactory standard

- 3 To ensure a satisfactory standard of appearance of the development in the interests of the visual amenities of the area