

KEY INFORMATION

Ward Claverhouse

Proposal

Installation of 12m high timber telegraph pole 3,3G Antennas within GRP shroud, 1 transmission dish, 1 equipment cabin, 1 electricity cabin and ancillary development

Address

Land to the West of A90
Forfar Road
Dundee

Applicant

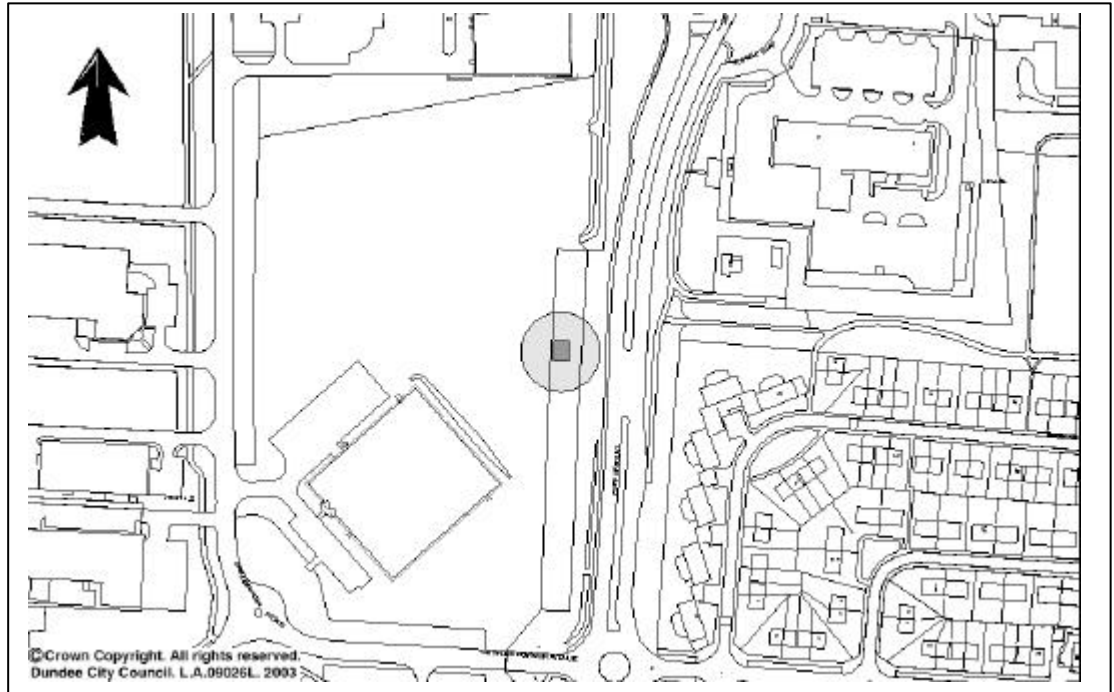
Vodafone
c/o Stappard Howes
122 Dundyvan Road
Coatbridge ML5 1DE

Agent

Stappard Howes
122 Dundyvan Road
Coatbridge

Registered 23 June 2005

Case Officer J Young



Proposed Telephone Mast in Forfar Road

The installation of a timber telegraph pole and three antennas is **RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL** subject to conditions. Report by Director of Planning and Transportation

RECOMMENDATION

The proposed development complies with the relevant policies in the Finalised Local Plan Review 2005 and National Policy. Although objections were received, it is considered that they do not carry sufficient weight to justify refusal of the application. The application is therefore recommended for **APPROVAL**.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

- Planning permission is sought to erect a 12m timber telegraph pole telecommunications mast with 3no 3G antennas within a GRP shroud and ancillary development on land to the west of the A90, Forfar Road. The proposed mast is over 300m to the east of Mill O'Mains School and approximately 53m to the south of an existing telecom mast.
- Policy 78 in the Dundee Local Plan Review 2005 on telecommunications developments is relevant and Government advice in NPPG19 and PAN62.
- One letter of petition with 116 signatures was received from Mill O'Mains Residents Association with concerns relating to visual impact and clutter, contrary to Dundee North East Community Plan, impact on ambassador route and health issues.
- The proposal has an operational justification and 8 alternative sites have been considered by the applicants but these have had to be rejected because they were less visually acceptable, for technical reasons and inability to acquire the site.
- It is considered that the proposed structure will not be visually dominant and complies with policy.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

Planning permission is sought to erect a telecommunications mast in the form of a 12 metres high timber telegraph pole topped with 1.5 metres of antennae enclosed within a GRP shroud, giving a total height of 13.5 metres. It is also proposed to site an equipment cabinet and electrical cabinet at ground level. The appearance of the structure will resemble a standard telegraph pole. A 2m high palisade fence will surround the site of all the apparatus. The applicant proposes landscaping in front of the fenced area.

The cabinet is 1.35 metres high and will be located on a concrete plinth and be coloured green. The pole is required to provide third generation coverage for Vodafone and will enclose 3 antennae.

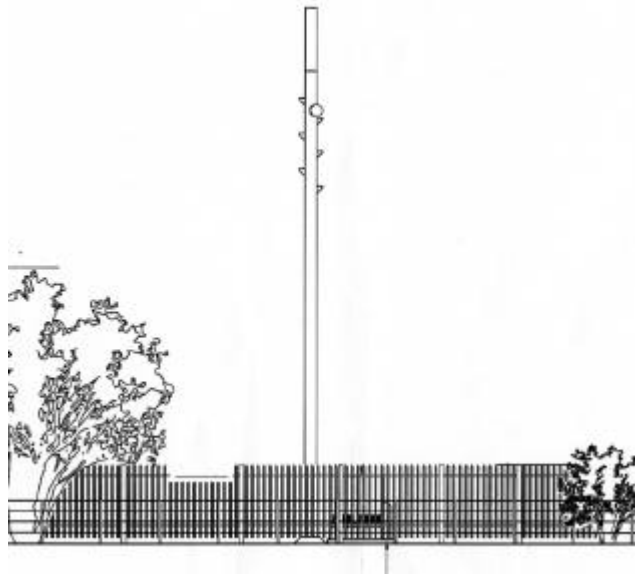
The applicants have submitted a supporting statement with plans to justify the proposed development. They state that the design and siting of the mast will blend in with the surrounding area, given the characteristics of the area to the west and the presence and design of existing telecommunications apparatus.

They have considered 8 alternative sites but conclude that the proposal is the best possible in the circumstances. The applicants list and comment on these alternative sites as follows:

- 1 Existing 12m high telegraph pole mast by "3" adjacent to Claverhouse West Industrial Estate - Given the aesthetical appearance to the apparatus and load bearing capacity of the existing 3 telegraph pole structure a redevelopment scheme would be required to support the additional equipment for Vodafone. Due to the vertical separation required, this would mean a higher mast with a larger girth. They consider a second less obtrusive slimline telegraph pole to be a more appropriate solution than a larger multi-operator structure.
- 2 Existing 13m high streetworks mast by O2 adjacent to Claverhouse West Industrial Estate - a redevelopment scheme would be required to support the

additional equipment for Vodafone. Due to the vertical separation required, this would mean a higher mast with a larger girth. They consider a second less obtrusive slimline telegraph pole to be a more appropriate solution than a larger multi-operator structure.

- 3 New ground based mast at Jack Martin Way - this was considered due to the mixed land use of the area, however it would prevent the provision of a satisfactory level of coverage to southern sections of the target cell area.



- 4 New ground based mast at Struan Motors, Emmock Rd - A flagpole solution was considered but the landowner was unwilling to cooperate.
- 5 New ground based mast on land to north west at model village - The visual impact would be adverse, given the setting of the area and any street lighting would only be 6m high.
- 6 Existing Transco Tower at Claverhouse - the applicant has been informed by Transco that the tower is to be decommissioned and removed within the near future. Therefore mast sharing could not be progressed.
- 7 New ground based mast at alternative sites within Claverhouse - discussions took place with Economic Development Department, who preferred peripheral sites to avoid

hindrance of any future development within Claverhouse.

- 8 New ground based mast on land to the south east - the area is mainly residential in nature and it was considered a less appropriate area due to the potential impact on residential amenity.

The applicants state that the proposals comply with Policy BE31 of the adopted Local Plan and non statutory policies on telecommunications development (now Policy 78 of the Dundee Local Plan Review 2005) and have submitted coverage plans demonstrating that the mast will serve a gap in 3G coverage within a radius of approximately 300m from the proposal site. Finally they have submitted an ICNIRP certificate indicating that the proposed equipment is in full compliance.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The site is located adjacent and to the east of Claverhouse West Industrial Estate and to the west of Forfar Road(A90 dual carriageway). The industrial estate is developed along Charles Bowman Avenue and Highland Chief Way and there are a number of grassed plots currently awaiting development. The eastern edge of the industrial estate has a landscaped barrier and it extends to some 16m in width and 200m in length and comprises a mixture of mature/semi mature trees and bushes. The proposed apparatus will be sited within an overgrown grassed area in this landscaping.

There is a slimline telegraph pole mast located approximately 34m to the north. A further streetworks type mast is located further to the north.

POLICY BACKGROUND

Dundee and Angus Structure Plan 2001-2016

There are no policies relevant to the determination of this application.

Finalised Dundee Local Plan Review 2005

The following policies are of relevance:

Policy 78: Location of Telecommunications Equipment. In general, operators are encouraged to share existing masts in order to minimise the environmental impact on the city. This development is for site sharing as the antennas are to be located on an existing site for telecommunications equipment.

Scottish Planning Policies, Planning Advice Notes and Circulars

The following are of relevance:

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. It states that health issues are covered by other legislation. It gives advice on the siting and design of masts, referring to PAN62.

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.

Non Statutory Statements of Council Policy

"Non Statutory Planning Policies in Relation to Telecommunications and Other Apparatus".

The following are of particular relevance:

Policy 1: There should be an operational justification for the location and design of the proposal including an assessment of the cumulative impact of individual proposals where other telecommunications developments are present nearby.

Policy 13: Subject to the policies of the Dundee Local Plan and these guidelines, ground based masts and structures adjacent to the City's ambassador routes and "gateways" may be acceptable provided these do not adversely impact on proposals for environmental improvement works, are slimline, innovative in their design and not capable of mast sharing.

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 relevant history of planning applications relating to this particular site but planning permission was granted for a 12m high monopole mast with 3 antennae, a microwave dish and associated equipment cabinets on 22.4.2003 approximately 30m to the north of the proposal site, which has been erected on site.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Statutory neighbour notification was carried out and one petition was received with 116 signatures. The primary concerns of the objectors relate to visual impact of the proposed mast, the cumulative impact of the proposed mast and the other two masts to the north, contrary to commitment in Dundee North East Local Community Plan regarding environmental improvements, adverse impact on ambassador route and health risks due to the proximity to a primary school.

Copies of the petition are available for inspection in the Members Lounges and the concerns raised are considered in the Observations section of this Report.

CONSULTATIONS

No comments on the development were received from Statutory Consultees.

OBSERVATIONS

In accordance with the provisions of Section 25 of the Act the Committee is required to consider:

- a whether the proposals are consistent with the provisions of the development plan; and if not
- b whether an exception to the provisions of the development plan is justified by other material considerations.

The Development Plan

The provisions of the development plan relevant to the determination of this application are specified in the Policy background section above.

The criteria set out in Policy 78 of the Dundee Local Plan Review 2005 focus on visual amenity matters and in particular promote mast sharing and masts on buildings. Difficulties are increased by the fact that Third Generation coverage is based on much smaller cells involving more masts much closer to each other. In this case there are two slimline masts located to the north. However if mast sharing was to be considered, a replacement mast would be required which would be much higher and larger in girth. This would be unacceptable visually on this main ambassador route into and out of the City. The design and appearance of the mast will be similar to two existing masts to the north, which are also on the periphery of the industrial estate. The adjacent landscaped barrier of trees and shrubs, together with additional planting proposed by the applicant will further screen the proposed mast.

In terms of the details of Policy 78, the proposal has an operational justification and 8 alternative sites have been considered by the applicants but these have had to be rejected because they were less visually acceptable.

The proposal was assessed in terms of the Council's Non Statutory Policies, which are a material consideration in terms of Policy 78. The proposal complies with Policy 1 as the applicant has provided an operational justification for the location and design of the proposal, alternative sites were assessed and the visual impact is acceptable.

Policy 13 specifies that ground based masts may be acceptable on ambassador routes, subject to being suitably designed. The proposed mast will be slimline in appearance and resemble a telegraph pole and cannot

be shared by other operators. This is in accordance with the Policy.

It is concluded from the foregoing that the proposal complies with Policy 78 of the Dundee Local Plan Review.

Other Material Considerations

The other material considerations to be taken into account are as follows:

NPPG 19 and PAN 62

These documents give good general advice on the siting and design of masts and the Council's own Non Statutory Policies have similar themes. The documents advise that the siting and design of telecommunications development are the key issues to be addressed through the planning system. The proposal completely conceals the function of the mast (there are no visible antennae) and is located in an area where there are a number of telegraph poles and two slimline masts nearby.

Objections

There has been one petition letter with 116 signatures received to the proposal, which focus on concerns about visual impact of the proposed mast and health issues. The visual impact of the proposal has already been discussed in detail and it is considered visually acceptable due to its slimline nature resembling a telegraph pole, low height and potential to screen it further with trees and shrubbery.

The Scottish Executive published a report in early July 2004 entitled "Evaluation of Revised Planning Controls over Telecommunications Development". The report acknowledges that the issue of health concerns would inevitably arise, but specified that the research should not be directed into an extensive discussion of health issues. Whilst the Scottish Executive supports research into the subject of health impacts of mobile telecommunications and recognises the need for more research into the matter, the current position is that there is insufficient evidence that mobile telecommunication development causes a health risk.

It is for this reason that NPPG 19 clearly advises that it is not necessary for planning authorities to treat radio frequency emissions as a material consideration. To demonstrate to planning authorities that the known

health effects have been properly addressed, applications for planning permission involving antennas must be accompanied by a declaration that the equipment and installation is designed to be in full compliance with the appropriate ICNIRP guidelines for public exposure to radio frequency radiation. The applicant has submitted the appropriate certificate in these circumstances and an operational justification for their proposed mast. Therefore insufficient weight can be placed on the concerns about health matters in this case.

It is concluded from the foregoing that insufficient weight can be accorded to the grounds of objection such as to justify the refusal of planning permission contrary to the provisions of the development plan. It is therefore recommended that planning permission be granted with conditions.

Design

The proposed mast is designed to appear like a standard telegraph pole and contains no visible antennae. It is therefore considered that the proposed structure is the most visually acceptable solution for this location.

CONCLUSION

It is concluded that the proposal complies with the relevant policies in the Dundee Local Plan Review 2005 and National Policy. Although objections were received, it is considered that they do not carry sufficient weight to justify refusal of the application.

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 the development hereby permitted ceases to be used for the purposes for which it was designed, it shall be removed from the site within 2 months of the date it ceased to be used, and the site shall be reinstated to its state prior to implementation of the proposal or such other state as may be agreed in writing with the Council.

- 3 Details of 2m high fencing, which shall not be palisade as indicated on the submitted drawings, shall be submitted to the Council for approval before any development is commenced and if approved the development shall be carried out only in full accordance with such approved details.
- 4 No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved by the planning authority a scheme of landscaping along the east boundary, which shall include details of species and size of planting. The approved landscaping shall be planted on site prior to the development commencing.

Reasons

- 1 To comply with Section 58 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.
- 2 To ensure that redundant telecommunications installations do not contribute to roadside clutter and to ensure satisfactory reinstatement of the site.
- 3 To ensure that the proposed development has a satisfactory external appearance in the interests of the visual amenities of the area.
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