Development Management – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/0520/24 Recommendation: APPROVE

Site: Telecommunications Mast, Guildbourne House, Chatsworth Road, Worthing

Proposal: Replacement of the existing Stub Tower with a new Swann 6m 5G Stub Tower, 3No MAS32 antennas at 30.4m, 1No. GPS at 31.8m, 1No. 6130 Cabinet on proposed cabinet platform, 1No. Meter Cabinet, 9No ERS Units , and associated ancillary equipment relating to the proposal

Date of Site Visit: 14 May

Neighbours Checked: Consultation period extended

Additional neighbour notification: N

Proposal, Site and Surroundings:

This application seeks replacement telecommunications apparatus on the roof of Guildbourne House which has been used for hosting such installations for some time. The application comprises the replacement of an existing 'Stub Tower' with a new Stub Tower and replacement antennae and cabinets.

Guildbourne House is a prominent office building on a north south axis between Chatsworth Road and Ann Street. A multi storey car park to the east is of similar scale and also hosts some telecommunications infrastructure.

The site is not within a Conservation Area.

Planning History:

No recent applications, a permission was granted in 2001 for telecommunications equipment so the site has been in historic use for such purposes.

Consultations:

No comments received

Representations:

16 letters of objection have been received on the following grounds:

- adverse health impact
- adverse visual impact
- can be seen from Conservation Area
- there is already adequate coverage
- alternative sites have not been considered

Relevant Planning Policies:

Worthing Local Plan (2023): SP1, DM5, DM14

National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023)

Planning Practice Guidance

Planning Assessment

The principle of telecommunications equipment being located at this site has been long established and there are also installations to a lesser extent on the car park to the east.

The existing equipment is visible from various viewpoints in the town including, for example, from the end of the pier and it is noted that the supporting information states that the proposed stub tower would be higher and closer to the edge of the building than the existing. The increase in height would be around 0.9 metres and it is not considered from distant views that would be considered to cause material harm sufficient to warrant a refusal of permission. Closer up to the building, it is felt that the increase in height would be even more difficult to define.

Similarly, the existing infrastructure appears quite close to the edge of the building already given the building is narrow in width compared to its length and the equipment is sited on one of the end blocks. It is not considered, again, that the change is material enough to warrant a refusal of permission. In visual terms, the new mast appears to have more equipment sited on it than the existing albeit when viewed from street level looking up to the bottom of the mast, the difference would be less apparent.

A further consideration is that the most obvious alternative location would appear to be the nearby car park but the consequent visual impact would be little different. Beyond that, sites would likely need to be ground based, likely to provide less coverage and possibly sited in the Conservation Area. It is not considered there is a preferable location to that proposed here, therefore, and it is concluded that the application is acceptable.

Recommendation

01 Approved Plans

02 Full Permission

03 When the apparatus hereby permitted is no longer used for the purpose of telecommunications operations, the operator shall notify the Local Planning Authority and, within a period of 3 months from the date of operational requirements ceasing, the mast and all associated apparatus, structures, fences and hard surfaces shall be removed from the site.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity having regard to the National Planning Policy Framework

Is recommendation contrary to letter(s) of representation? Y

Case Officer:	Gary Peck	Date: 2 July 2024
Authorised by:	James Appleton	Date: 2nd July 2024