Development Management - Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: **Recommendation – Refuse**
AWDM/0885/20

Site: **Vodafone Telecommunication Site, Grass Verge, Kingston Broadway, Shoreham-By-Sea**

Proposal: **Application for prior approval for proposed installation of a 20m high monopole to support 6no. antennae and 2 no. equipment cabinets and an electrical metre cabinet; along with ancillary development works.**

Site Visit: 30 January 2020

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Proposal, Site and Surroundings

The application details that Vodafone Ltd intends to install a 20 metre high monopole supporting 6no. antennas, with 2no. equipment cabinets and an electrical meter cabinet on the grass verge adjacent to the Holmbush roundabout. The proposed equipment is required to provide 5G phone coverage.

Vodafone currently shares a 14.7m high monopole with Telefonica to the north of this site. The upgrade requires Vodafone to have its own, separate installation rather than continue to share with Telefonica.

The application explains that:

"*The 5G antennas are some 3 times as heavy as previous antennas, while the associated Remote Radio Units also now need to be placed at the top of the pole, thus many streetworks designs are no longer structurally capable of hosting all the equipment of 2 operators……In simple terms, the 5G Vodafone antennas, and associated equipment to be utilised, cannot be accommodated on a traditional shared Streetworks pole design and so separate poles must be provided.*"

The colour has not been confirmed but the existing pole is grey.

Consultations

West Sussex County Council: The **Highways** Officer has no objection. The proposed column and equipment cabinets are to be located within highway boundary approximately 5.3m from the back edge of the carriageway. They are not anticipated to obstruct visibility for vehicles travelling along Kingston Broadway. The LHA does not anticipate that this proposal would result in an

obstruction to any pedestrians who may be utilising or seeking refuge within the highway boundary.

Adur&Worthing Councils: The **Environmental Health** Officer has no adverse comments

Representations

Letter of objection received from the occupier of 20 Kingston Way:

- Cancer risk, unsightly

Relevant Legislation

Part 16 Schedule 2 of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) permits the installation, alteration or replacement of any electronic communications apparatus. In the case of the installation of a mast, it must not exceed a height of 20 metres above ground level on highway land. Such development is subject to a prior approval procedure where the siting and appearance of the development can be considered by the LPA.

Relevant Planning Policies

Adur Local Plan 2017 Policy 37
National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019)

Planning Assessment

The proposal comprises upgrading the existing telecommunications stock located within the built up area and can be supported in principle subject to consideration of Policy 37 of the Adur Local Plan. It supports the expansion of electronic communication networks but proposals should demonstrate that:

- All opportunities for mast sharing, or the use of existing buildings or structures have been thoroughly assessed; and
- There are no satisfactory alternative sites available.

All proposals for telecommunications development should ensure that siting and design of the equipment results in acceptable visual impact. Conditions or planning obligations may be used to secure landscaping as well as restoration of the site once operation has ceased.

The NPPF also supports the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next generation mobile technology (such as 5G). Para 113 states that:

"*The number of radio and electronic communications masts, and the sites for such installations, should be kept to a minimum consistent with the needs of consumers, the efficient operation of the network and providing reasonable capacity for future expansion. Use of existing masts, buildings and other structures for new electronic communications capability (including wireless)*

should be encouraged. Where new sites are required (such as for new 5G networks, or for connected transport and smart city applications), equipment should be sympathetically designed and camouflaged where appropriate."

Visual amenity

This proposal will not be replacing the existing smaller mast but will result in the installation of an additional larger one. The site is an established telecommunications site, with another 14.7m mast located to the north, which is to be replaced soon by a 20m mast, shared between two operators (AWDM/0082/20). However, this proposal will result in an additional mast on the site, contrary to the national and local policy requirements for minimising the number of installations.

It will be significantly taller (over 5m taller) and will have a greater visual presence than the existing mast. In the context of the number of lamp columns and other mast equipment in the locality, including the 20m mast recently approved to the north, the new monopole is not considered to result in serious visual harm in itself. However, the installation of an additional mast, rather than the replacement of the existing mast, is a concern as it will lead to a proliferation of masts, contrary to advice in the NPPF. It is not clear whether the existing mast to be retained will need to be enlarged too in the future, further increasing the visual impact.

For this reason, it is considered that Prior Approval is required and should be refused on the grounds that it will result in an unacceptable proliferation of masts to the detriment of the visual amenities of the locality.

Residential amenity

The site is sufficiently removed from residential properties to not cause harm to amenities. The application is accompanied by an ICNIRP declaration that the equipment is in full compliance with the requirements of radio frequency public exposure guidelines.

Recommendation

Prior Approval Required and Refused for the following reason:

The proposal will result in an unacceptable proliferation of masts to the detriment of the visual amenities of the locality, contrary to policy 37 of the Adur Local Plan and paragraph 113 of the NPPF

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

Case Officer: Peter Barnett Date: 10 March 2020

Authorised by: Gary Peck Date: 12 March 2020