Development Management – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/0441/21 Recommendation: APPROVE

Site: O2 Telecommunication Site, Grazing Land To North, Manor Hall Road, Southwick

Proposal: Replacement of 15m lattice mast with 20m high 5G monopole mast with headframe, 12no. antennas, 2no. 300mm dish and ancillary development.

Date of Site Visit: 22 March

Neighbours Checked: Y

Additional neighbour notification: N

Proposal, Site and Surroundings:

This prior approval seeks replacement of an existing 15 metre high lattice mast with 20 metre high 5G mast with associated equipment. The existing mast is to the edge of the allotments which are to the north of Manor Hall Road and to the south of Old Shoreham Road.

Planning History:

The mast was originally granted permission in 1997.

Consultations:

Environmental Health: No objection

WSCC Highways: No objection

Representations:

3 letters of objection have been received on adverse impact on visual amenity and that the health impacts of mast installations are unproven

Relevant Planning Policies:

Adur Local Plan (2017):

Policy 15: Quality of the Built Environment and Public Realm

Policy 37: Telecommunications

National Planning Policy Framework (CLG 2019)

Planning Practice Guidance (CLG 2014)

Planning Assessment

The relevant ICNIRP declaration has been submitted with the application as required by policy 37 of the Local Plan and in accordance with central government guidance, there is no reason to resist the proposal on health grounds.

The application site consists of an existing mast, which would be replaced by the new structure which is 5 metres higher. While the Local Plan policy encourages mast sharing where possible, the use of an existing site is considered acceptable in principle.

The mast is not screened and stands in a relatively open location. While not particularly visible from Manor Hall Road, it can be clearly seen from the Old Shoreham Road to the north, a major east-west route across the District. However, the mast is viewed in the context of the much higher and substantial electricity pylons that cross the site and Manor Hall Road as well as the electricity distribution site close to the north west which has structures of a similar size to the existing mast. Given such context, therefore, even the increased height of the mast will still be a subsidiary structure to those around it and it is not considered a refusal could therefore be justified on appearance grounds.

The principle of siting the mast at a long established telecommunications site has been accepted as stated above and it is all noted that the site is over 80 metres from the nearest residential properties and, again, while the mast will be visible from properties in Manor Hall Road as well as Hadrian Avenue to the west, it will be in the context of the much larger structures around it. The distance from residential properties is unlikely to be achieved anywhere else in a more suitable location and accordingly the siting and appearance of the mast is considered to be acceptable.

Recommendation

GRANT Prior Approval

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

Case Officer: Gary Peck Date: 29 April 2021

Authorised by: Date: