Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: ADC/0300/10 **Recommendation – Approval not required**

Site: **O2 telecommunications site, verge at junction of Steepdown Road/ Halewick Lane, Sompting BN15 0LH**

Proposal: **Removal of existing 15m monopole and replacement with new 15m telecommunications shared monopole with shrouded antennae and additional equipment cabinet (application for determination as to whether prior approval of details of siting and design required)**

The Application

The proposal is submitted on behalf of O2 and is for a prior determination as to whether approval of siting and design details is required. It does not require planning permission (because the site lies just outside the National Park boundary and the mast does not exceed 15m high). Under the relevant procedure, the details are deemed approved unless the LPA determines otherwise within 56 days.

The proposal is to replace the existing 15m high monopole (agreed under S/25/05/TP) on the grass verge on the west side of this forked road junction. It lies on the verge in front of the boundary fence of a large field, south west of the Abbot of Sompting public house. An additional equipment cabinet is proposed 1m north of the existing O2 cabinet. The development will allow O2 and Vodafone to share the site.

The proposed mast would be a metal monopole (0.324m diameter), with a galvanised steel finish. The 6 antennae would be sheathed to give the appearance of a single one (0.48m diameter). At ground level the proposed cabinet would be green coloured, 1.58m long, 0.38m wide and 1.35m high.

Consultations and Representations

West Sussex County Council: No objection but points out that the applicant needs a license and contact details should be displayed on the site.

Adur District Council: The Environmental Health Officer has no objection.

Sompting Parish Council: No comments received.

Third Parties: No comments received.

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

Adopted Adur District Local Plan (ADC 1996): AG1, AB29

PPG8 "Telecommunications" (DTLR 2001)

Planning Assessment

Policies

Local Plan policy AB29 states that permission will be granted for telecommunications development where it can be demonstrated that there is no reasonable possibility of sharing existing facilities or using existing buildings or structures but it expects apparatus to be sited and designed to minimise its visual impact.

PPG8 (Telecommunications) states that "The Government's policy is to facilitate the growth of new and existing telecommunications systems whilst keeping the environmental impact to a minimum – the Government also has the responsibility for protecting public health." It encourages Local Planning Authorities to respond positively to telecommunications development proposals, working with operators to find optimum solutions and taking account of advice about mast sharing and siting/design as well as advice in other PPGs on the protection of urban and rural area. Modern telecommunications are an essential and beneficial element in local community life and the national economy, meeting the growing demand for improved communication at work and home and can assist in attracting industry to an area and contribute to sustainable development by avoiding the need to travel. Operators are obliged by license to expand networks to accommodate customer requirements of service and quality. The size of each cell is determined by the number of subscribers expected to require access to the system. Many antennae have special siting needs because they have a limited range or require line of sight.

Visual amenity

The design of the proposed mast itself, being a relatively slimline monopole, loosely imitates a lamp post, of which there is one (13m high) in the vicinity. The mast will be replacing an existing mast of same height and it is not considered that the proposal will have a significant impact in terms of visual amenity. The proposal will result in two operators sharing a mast which accords with policy AB29 and PPG8 and which will reduce the likelihood of further masts being required in this location.

The proposed additional ground cabinet will add some clutter to the streetscene but, because of its modest size, it will not be unduly harmful.

Recommendation

That a determination be issued that approval of details is not required.

Case Officer: Keith Morgan Date: 22 September 2010