Development Management – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/1193/15 Recommendation – APPROVE

Site: 20 Kings Walk, Shoreham-By-Sea, West Sussex

Proposal: Erection of 5.7 metres high radio antenna attached to garage in rear garden.

Date of site visit: 22.09.15

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Site and Surroundings

The application property is a 2-storey semi-detached house fronting onto the sea on the south side of Shoreham Beach. There is parking and a front garden to the property frontage and a relatively large rear garden to the north. As existing there is a detached, flat roof garage within the rear garden. Permission is sought under AWDM/1194/15 for an additional detached garage adjacent to the existing garage within the rear garden.

Proposal

This current application seeks consent for an antenna radio mast which is to be attached to the existing garage on the south western side. The mast is to have a maximum height of 5.7 metres with 3.3 metres extending beyond the height of the existing garage. A scaffold pole is used to attach the antenna to the garage. In addition two horizontal radials are proposed just under 1.7 metres wide. The mast is required for the applicant for amateur radio as a hobby.

Relevant Planning History:

AWDM/1194/15 – Pending: Application for a detached garage to rear of property.

Consultations: none

Representations: none received

Relevant Planning Policies

Adur District Council Local Plan saved policies AH7, AG1
National Planning Policy Framework (CLG 2012)
National Planning Practice Guidance

Planning Assessment

The applicant is an amateur radio enthusiast and the proposed antenna mast would be used in connection with a hobby. The antenna mast can be supported in principle, as being consistent with the domestic use and enjoyment of the property as a single dwelling house. The key considerations are the effects on the residential and visual amenities of the locality.

Visual Amenity

The proposed radio mast would have a maximum height of 5.7metres and will be attached to the existing garage. The most visible and prominent part of the mast will be that part which extends beyond the roof of the garage, this also has horizontal radials. The mast is in the rear garden and is therefore not visible within the street scene, from the front of the property in Kings Walk. It will however be visible from the rear of adjacent dwellings and from the rear of dwellings sited to the north. Despite this due to the length of the garden and the position towards the rear boundary of the garden it is not considered to be a significant feature that would be seriously harmful to the residential character or visual amenities of the locality.

At the time of the case officer's site visit a 'mock up' mast had been erected to represent how the pole will look, this is shown in the photographs taken on site.

Residential Amenity

The proposed mast would be positioned to the rear of the rear garden. Although the mast in view of its height and array will be clearly apparent in views from the upper floor windows and gardens of the nearest residential properties it will not be such a visually dominant or intrusive feature as to be considered unacceptable on this basis. It is considered to be located in the most appropriate position to be as subtle as possible in the light of the height of the mast.

Other Issues

Current national planning policy on telecommunications is set out in paragraphs 42-46 of the NPPF which acknowledges the essential need for high quality communications infrastructure to support economic growth. It states that LPAs should ensure that they have evidence to demonstrate that telecommunications infrastructure will not cause significant and irremediable interference with other electrical equipment.

Amateur radio is licenced by Ofcom and enthusiasts must operate within the terms of their licence so as not to cause interference

More detailed guidance on this issue can be found in former PPG8 which pre-ceded the NPPF and stated that while significant and irremediable interference with other electrical equipment of any kind can be a material planning consideration, in most situations questions of potential interference are of no relevance to the determination of planning applications as other regulations are in place that deal with this issue [now enforced by Ofcom under the Wireless Telegraphy Act 2006]. The guidance made it clear that interference is rarely the fault of the amateur radio operator but more often

due to other electrical equipment having inadequate immunity. Appendix II of PPG8 stated that if the development is yet to take place but potential interference is causing genuine local concern one or other of the parties may wish to seek the help of experts to assess the likelihood and degree of interference but authorities should not seek out such problems for critical examination unnecessarily.

In this case, there is no evidence that the proposed mast will cause interference adversely affecting neighbours or local businesses. Should interference occur it is considered sufficient safeguards are in place to enable it to be appropriately investigated and addressed though other legislation operating outside of planning controls.

Recommendation APPROVE subject to Conditions:-

1. 3-yr time limit
2. Approved plans
3. Mast – hobby use only

Informative

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

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

Case Officer: Hannah Barker Date: 29th September 2015

Authorised by: Jo Morin Date: 30.09.2015