

**17 DCCE2007/0565/T - INSTALLATION OF A 15M MONOPOLE, 6 NO. RADIO ANTENNAS, 2 NO. TRANSMISSION DISHES, 2 NO. EQUIPMENT CABINETS AND ANCILLARY DEVELOPMENT THERETO. HEREFORD MOTOR SERVICES, UNIT 14B, ROCKFIELD ROAD, HEREFORD, HEREFORDSHIRE, HR1 2UA**

**For: Vodafone Ltd, Needham Haddrell Chartered Surveyors, The Power House, Feeder Road, Bristol, BS2 0TH**

**Date Received: 21st February, 2007    Ward: Aylestone    Grid Ref: 51813, 40195**

**Expiry Date: 17th April, 2007**

Local Member: Councillors D.B. Wilcox and A.L. Williams

## **1. Site Description and Proposal**

- 1.1 The site is located in the south western corner of Rockfield Road Industrial Estate adjacent to the railway line, to the rear of an existing industrial unit known as Hereford Motor Services. To the west of the railway line is Hereford County Hospital, north are existing industrial units and east and south of the site is predominantly residential. Immediately south of the site is an existing 12.5 metre monopole mast (operated by O2). The site and its immediate surroundings is safeguarded for employment purposes within the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan 2007.
- 1.2 Prior approval is sought for the installation of a 15 metre monopole housing 2 number transmission dishes and 6 number radio antennas and 2 number equipment cabinets enclosed within the fenced compound. The proposed monopole is to be coloured olive green and rises to a total height of 17.5 metres with the antennas. The mast is required to provide 2G and 3G coverage for the eastern half of the city centre and outlying estates beyond to replace the existing telecommunications antennas at Herefordshire College of Technology which is proposed to be removed as part of the ongoing re-development.

## **2. Policies**

2.1 Planning Policy Guidance Note 8 – Telecommunications

2.2 Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan 2007:

S2	-	Development requirements
DR1	-	Design
CF3	-	Telecommunications

### **3. Planning History**

3.1 None for the application site but of relevance is:

CE2002/02008/T - Erection of 15 metre monopole, 3 telecommunications antennas, 3 transmission dishes, cabinet equipment and landscaping. Prior Approval Not Required 21st March, 2002.

### **4. Consultation Summary**

#### Statutory Consultations

4.1 Network Rail: No comments received.

4.2 Defence Estates: No comments received.

#### Internal Council Advice

4.3 Traffic Manager: No objection.

4.4 Environmental Health and Trading Standards Manager: No objection.

### **5. Representations**

5.1 Hereford City Council: No objection.

5.2 Ten letters of objection have been received, the main points raised are:

1. There are other sites that are more appropriate such as Brook Retail Park.
2. If the proposal is approved we will be forced to relocate our business.
3. Development will be detrimental to the value of businesses and properties in the locality and would discourage further investment to upgrade the standard of the Business Park.
4. We are concerned with the emissions and cumulative impact of having two masts within such close proximity to one another.
5. The proposed emissions from the mast will interfere with the computerised engine management systems located in local business units which are susceptible to outside interference.
6. If additional coverage is required, the existing O2 mast should be shared.
7. The orientation of some of the antennae and dishes is directly towards residential properties.
8. Existing trees in the locality have recently been removed which exposes the existing mast and proposed application site.
9. The development will lead to a loss of revenue for existing businesses as a result of customers moving elsewhere.

5.4 The full text of these letters can be inspected at Central Planning Services, Garrick House, Widemarsh Street, Hereford and prior to the Sub-Committee meeting.

### **6. Officers Appraisal**

6.1 The proposed mast, although described as a 15 metre monopole would effectively rise to a total height of 17.5 metres due to the installation of antennas on top of the

monopole. This would be higher than any other built development in the immediate locality but a number of other taller buildings in a wider context exist including Hereford Hospital and other three storey properties. Furthermore, an existing monopole mast lies 25 metres south east of the site. Whilst this existing monopole could not be shared, a new shared structure could be installed to house the proposed antennae. This being the preferable option identified by both Planning Policy Guidance Note 8 and Policy CF3 of the Unitary Development Plan. Further information and evidence has been requested as to why a mast share, albeit with a new and taller structure is not a viable or technical option in this instance.

- 6.2 If satisfactory responses are not received to this particular issue, the proposal is considered unacceptable. However, if there are valid technical or visual amenity reasons why a mast share is not possible, the proposed second mast is considered acceptable in principle. There may also be scope for the height to be reduced a little but it is acknowledged that as proposed the height will be somewhat shielded by existing trees and from further afield, a slim line monopole mast will largely assimilate into the built environment and consequently will not be unduly visible or prominent. The equipment cabinets and fenced enclosure will largely be screened by existing industrial buildings. The mast, will nevertheless be within close proximity to a number of residential properties but on balance, it is not considered their residential amenity will be materially harmed so as to warrant refusal of the application.
- 6.3 The applicants have demonstrated a need for the additional coverage but only on the basis that the existing telecommunications antennae at Herefordshire College of Technology are removed. A number of other sites have also been investigated which either do not provide the necessary coverage or landowners have been unwilling to cooperate. Further information has nevertheless been requested on some of the other sites to establish the circumstances surrounding why they have been discounted. Ultimately, the proposed site is likely to be the most appropriate of the options considered based upon the information available at the time of writing.
- 6.4 The majority of the objectors have raised concerns regarding the health risk from the electromagnetic emissions emanating from masts and particularly the cumulative impact of having two masts in close proximity to one another. The applicants have provided a statement to demonstrate that the emissions from the mast meet the current International Commission for Non Ionizing Radiation (ICNIRP) standard for public exposure to radio frequencies. The ICNIRP standard is five times more restrictive than the National Radiological Protection Board standard. Furthermore, the ICNIRP Certificate also certifies that the cumulative emissions from existing and proposed mast meets the required electromagnetic emission standards. Therefore, based on the current information available, and notwithstanding the relatively close proximity of existing residents, the emissions from the mast are considered acceptable.
- 6.5 Para. 98 of PPG8 states that:
- 'In the Government's view, if a proposed mobile phone base emissions meets the ICNIRP guidelines for public exposure it should not be necessary for the local planning authority in processing an application for prior approval to consider further the health aspects and concerns about them'.*
- 6.6 Possible interference with other electrical equipment can be a material planning consideration and further information has been requested on this matter with regard to the impact of the mast on the operation of computerised car management systems in

local business units. However, this is unlikely to present a problem particularly given the systems operate satisfactory with the existing mast within close proximity. Furthermore, Par 102 of PPG8 advises that only where there is clear evidence that significant electromagnetic interference will arise, or will probably arise, and that no practicable remedy is available, will there be any justification for taking this issue into account when determining an application.

- 6.7 Preference for all telecommunications development including this site is for a single mast accommodating more than one user subject to the visual impact of any new, higher masts. In this regard further information is awaited as to why this is not a viable option. If satisfactory information is provided to demonstrate that the proposal is the only practical, technical and visual option and subject to the further information being provided relating to the other matters considered in this report, the proposed installation is considered acceptable in accordance with policy CF5 of the Unitary Development Plan.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Subject to the receipt of satisfactory further information the officers named in the Scheme of Delegation to Officers be authorised to issue a decision that Prior Approval Not Required subject to the following conditions and any additional conditions considered necessary by officers:**

- 1 No work shall commence on the development hereby permitted until a detailed timetable for the permanent removal of the existing rooftop antennae located at Herefordshire College of Technology has been provided verified by information in accordance with the up to date build programme for the redevelopment of the college. Development shall proceed in accordance with the agreed timetable.**

**Reason: The proposed mast is only considered acceptable on the basis that it is required to provide and enhance 2G and 3G coverage. This requirement will only materialise if the existing telecommunications equipment is not reinstated at Herefordshire College of Technology.**

**Informatives:**

- 1 N19 - Avoidance of doubt**
- 2 N15 - Reason(s) for the Grant of PP/LBC/CAC**

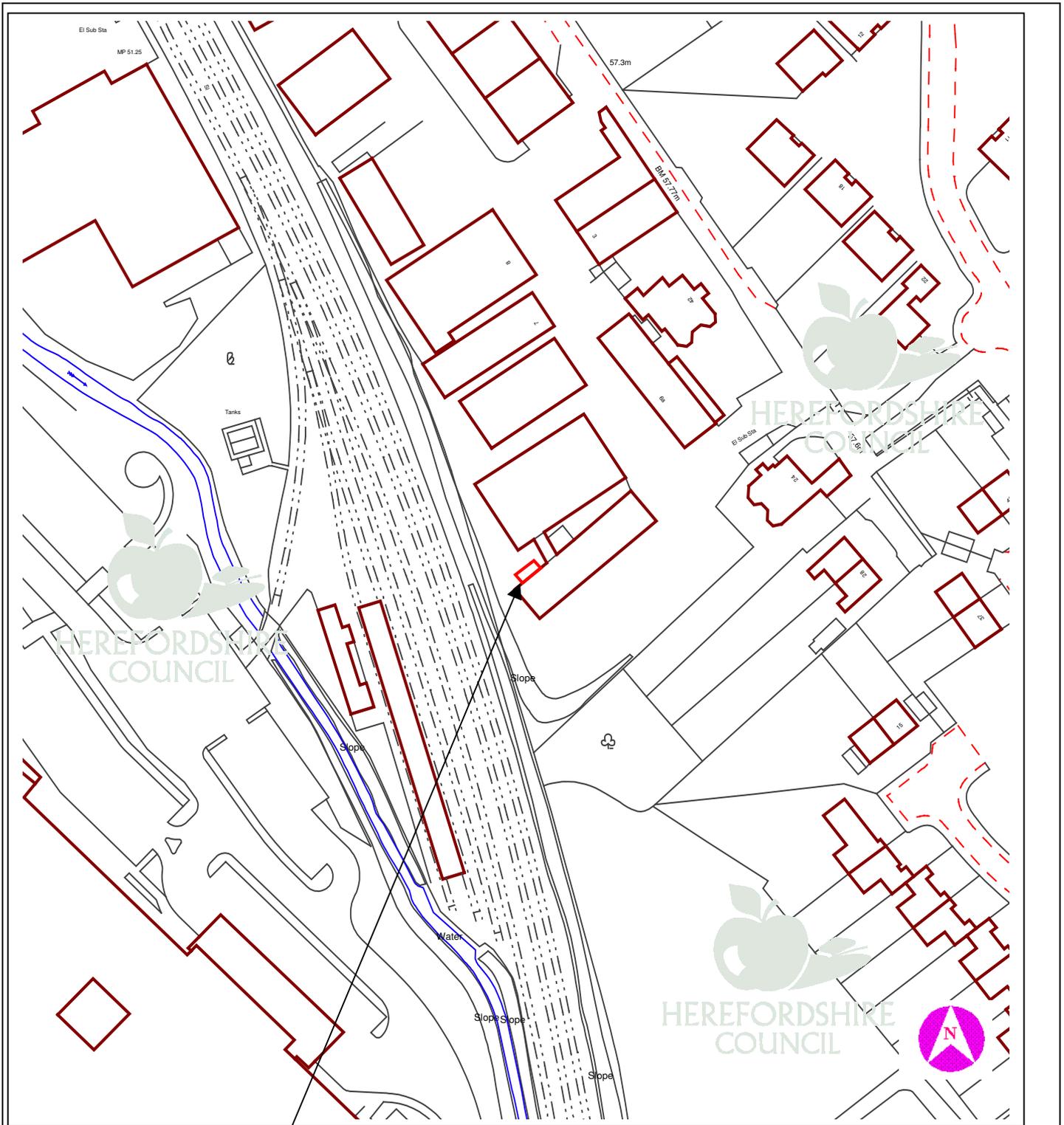
Decision: .....

Notes: .....

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**Background Papers**

Internal departmental consultation replies.



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**APPLICATION NO:** DCCE2007/0565/T

**SCALE :** 1 : 1250

**SITE ADDRESS :** Hereford Motor Services, Unit 14b, Rockfield Road, Hereford, Herefordshire, HR1 2UA

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