

18 DCCW2005/0828/T - 15M HIGH REPLACEMENT TELECOMMUNICATIONS / LAMPOST MONO POLE WITH ANTENNA SHROUD AND 2 SMALL CABINETS WITH LIGHTING ARM ON TIP FLEXICELL OUTSIDE TESCO'S AT LAND ADJACENT TO ROUNDABOUT, A465 BELMONT ROAD, HEREFORD, HR2 7TZ

For: OR UK Ltd. per Stoppard Howes, 8 Windsor Court, Clarence Drive, Harrogate, North Yorkshire, HG1 2PE

Date Received: 15th March, 2005

Ward: Belmont

Grid Ref: 49232, 38412

Expiry Date: 9th May, 2005

Local Members: Councillors P.J. Edwards, J.W. Newman and Ms. G.A. Powell

1. Site Description and Proposal

- 1.1 This site is located on the eastern side of the Tesco's roundabout at Belmont.
- 1.2 The proposal is to remove the existing street lamp and replace it with a 15 metre high telecommunications mast with a lamppost arm together with two small cabinets located at the entrance to the Tesco's car park immediately south of the mini roundabout on Abbotsmead Road.

2. Policies

2.1 Government Guidance:

PPG8 - Telecommunications

2.2 Hereford and Worcester County Structure Plan:

Policy CTC9 - Development Requirements

2.3 South Herefordshire District Local Plan:

Policy GD1 - General Development Criteria
Policy C41 - Telecommunications Development
Policy C42 - Criteria to Guide Telecommunications Development

3. Planning History

- 3.1 There is numerous history relating to the housing development, Tescos, filling station and adjacent telecommunication poles. The telecom history is as follows.

CW1999/3122/B Erection of a free standing lattice mast (overall height 11.5m) with three sector antennas under a shroud and equipment cabinet at the base of the post. Prior Approval Not Required 4/01/00.

- CW2002/3622/T Telecommunications base station comprising 12m 'streetwork' solution monopole, incorporating 3 antennae within a GPR shroud and cabinet equipment. Prior Approval Not Required. 10/02/03.
- DCCW2004/1735/T Installation of 10m high telecommunication parallel column with 3 no. shrouded antennas together with radio equipment housing. Prior Approval Not Required 14/06/04.
- DCCW2004/3675/T 15m high telecommunication monopole, 3 antenna within shroud, 2 no. outdoor cabinets and ancillary development thereto. Prior Approval Refused 03/12/04.

4. Consultation Summary

Statutory Consultations

- 4.1 None.

Internal Council Advice

- 4.2 Traffic Manager – no objection subject to cabinets being moved to enable door to not obstruct footpath.
- 4.3 Head of Environmental Health and Trading Standards - no adverse comment.

5. Representations

- 5.1 Belmont Parish Council - Belmont Rural Parish Council wishes to record a strong opposition to this application on the grounds that the proposed structure will have a detrimental effect on the visual amenity of the area. A recent application for a similar development was refused on these grounds and we see no basis for treating this application differently. The proposed site forms the entrance to this Parish and to the City and the removal of vegetation around the Tesco site has made the existing masts more prominent. We also have concerns over the safety of these structures in such close proximity to a petrol filling station. The Parish Council recommends refusal of this application.

- 5.2 Three letters of objection have been received from:

Kate Read, 24 Brook Farm Court, Belmont.
Mr. I. Parry, 19 Brook Farm Court, Belmont.
K.A. Davies, 33 Chichester Close, Belmont.

In addition a petition has been submitted by A. Davies containing 24 signatures.

- 5.3 The main points raised are:

1. No more masts should be allowed until definitive evidence is available that there is no risk to health.
2. Other sites have been considered and for reasons of nearby schools and housing not considered appropriate, why should we have to have it near us.

3. There are 2 no. lampposts already on the Tesco's site.
4. Maintenance vehicles will park on the grass verges.
5. Do we really need another mast when three are already there.

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

6. Officers Appraisal

- 6.1 The application seeks planning permission for the replacement of an existing lamppost with a telecommunications monopole incorporating a lamppost.
- 6.2 The key issues for consideration in respect of the application are the impact of the development upon the character and appearance of the locality; guidance set out in PPG8 and the policy criteria set out in C41 and C42 of the South Herefordshire District Local Plan.
- 6.3 The site will provide 2G and 3G coverage to Belmont Road; the surrounding residential areas of Newton Farm and Hunderton as well as the railway line to the south. The coverage plots submitted with the application demonstrate that there is a gap in network coverage and as such the technical justification for the equipment is considered acceptable.
- 6.4 The immediate character of this area is one of commercial development defined by the Tesco supermarket and petrol filling station. The streetscape is one characterised by lampposts and three other telecom poles sited on the northern side of the Tesco roundabout on Belmont Road. Outside of this commercial setting of the site the surrounding character is of residential development, the nearest property being 50 metres away.
- 6.5 With regard to the size and design of the monopole with lamppost arm attachment at the top, this will be taller than the existing lamppost but will be relatively inconspicuous given the other lamppost and monopoles in this location. It should be remembered that this is a replacement of an existing structure and will therefore not add to 'street clutter'.
- 6.6 Other sites have been considered by the applicants.
 - 1) Streetworks site on the A465 Belmont Road was refused permission (ref: DCCW2004/3675/T) on 13th December 2004.
 - 2) Streetworks site further west on the A465 was rejected in preference for the refused application above due to proximity to residential housing.
 - 3) Streetworks on Stanberrow Road was rejected in favour of option 1 due to proximity to residential housing and Haywood School and Haywood Upper School.
 - 4) Three Counties Hotel: replacement of existing flagpoles was rejected by the Management of the hotel.

- 5) Home Farm, Belmont Road was rejected in favour of option 1 as it was too far to provide minimum coverage.
- 6.7 In addition your Officers have considered the potential for mast sharing with the existing operators on the Tesco roundabout. However for this to occur a substantial mast of 25/30 metres would have to be erected and this would be an alien feature on the skyline whereas the existing mono poles sit well within the existing street furniture. Accordingly it is considered that the proposal complies with Policies C41 and C42 of the South Herefordshire District Local Plan.
- 6.8 Concerns have been raised regarding the proximity of residential development and health considerations.

It has been determined by the Courts that the public perception of health risks can be a material consideration in determining planning applications. The weight to be attached to this issue has to be determined accordingly in each case by the decision maker. It has been generally held, and widely established at planning appeal, that health concerns are not a sufficient basis alone for withholding planning permission providing it has been demonstrated that the proposed installation will comply with the ICNIRP guidelines.

The most recent government advice regarding telecommunications development and health issues is outlined within PPG8 which states:

Para 98 "...it is the Government's firm view that the planning system is not the appropriate mechanism for determining health safeguards. It remains central government's responsibility to decide what measures are necessary to protect public health. In the Government's view, if a proposed development meets the ICNIRP guidelines for public exposure, it should not be necessary for a local planning authority, in processing an application for planning permission or prior approval, to consider further the health aspects and concerns about them."

The proposed telecommunications apparatus that is subject of this application is designed to be in full compliance with the requirements of the radio frequency (RF) public exposure guidelines of the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP), as expressed in the EU Council recommendation on 12th July 1999 "on the limitation of exposure to the general public to electromagnetic fields (0 Hz to 300 GHz)" and a declaration to that effect is enclosed.

It is not therefore necessary to consider health effects further as recommended by PPG8 and on this basis, it is considered that there is no basis for this application to be refused on health and safety grounds.

- 6.9 The siting of such equipment in close proximity to residential uses remains a sensitive issue but in view of the proven need, the lengthy site search and the existing characteristics of the locality, it is recommended that the application be approved.

RECOMMENDATION

Subject to no objection from the Traffic Manager, the Officers named in the Scheme of Delegation to Officers be authorised to approve the application subject to the following conditions and any further conditions considered necessary by Officers:

1. A01 (Time limit for commencement (full permission)).

Reason: Required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. A06 (Development in accordance with approved plans).

Reason: To ensure adherence to the approved plans in the interests of a satisfactory form of development.

Decision:

Notes:

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Background Papers

Internal departmental consultation replies.