

**DCNE2005/2182/T - 14.7M HIGH SLIMLINE
TELECOMMUNICATIONS MONOPOLE, 2 NO.
ANTENNAE, CABINETS AND ANCILLARY
DEVELOPMENT AT THE OLD ROAD ADJACENT TO
A449, CHANCES PITCH, COLWALL, MALVERN, WR13
6EJ**

**For: T-Mobile UK Ltd. AWA Ltd Efford Park Milford
Road Lymington Hampshire SO41 0JD**

**Date Received:
29th June 2005
Expiry Date:
23rd August 2005**

Ward: Hope End

**Grid Ref:
74589, 40259**

Local Members: Councillor R Mills and Councillor R Stockton

1. Site Description and Proposal

- 1.1 The application seeks planning permission for the erection of a 14.7m high telecommunications monopole with ancillary development to the northern edge of the old road at Chances Pitch, Colwall, which runs parallel to the A449. The road, equivalent to a single lane highway, is now closed to vehicular traffic although it is still surfaced and passable.
- 1.2 The proposed site lies within the Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and is elevated above the main road, although well screened by a mixture of mature trees that line either side of the old road. The old road and application site are not easily distinguished from either the A449 or B4218 Colwall Road, from which access to the application site is obtained. The nearest dwelling is Chances Pitch Cottage, situated approximately 110m to the west at its nearest point, closer to the junction of the old road with the B4218.
- 1.3 The development proposed involves the installation of the monopole structure and 2 cabinets at ground level. The absolute height of the monopole (including antennas) is 15m although it is set 300mm into the ground on a 0.6m x 2.3m deep root foundation. The height above ground is therefore 14.7m. The antennas occupy the top 2m of the pole and have a fixed circumference of approximately 300mm. The monopole is set 1.3m from the edge of the road.
- 1.4 The cabinets are located 1.5m to the west of the monopole, slightly further from the road. They have a combined width of 1.8m, depth of 0.6m and overall height of 1.5m.

2. Policies

2.1 Malvern Hills District Local Plan

CON18 – Telecommunications Equipment
LAN2 – Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

2.2 Hereford and Worcester County Structure Plan

CTC1 – Development in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

2.3 Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan (Revised Deposit Draft)

LA1 – Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
CF3 – Telecommunications

2.4 PPG8 – Telecommunications

3. Planning History

Four telecommunications applications within the vicinity of the current application site have been identified. They are summarised below, together with an explanation as to the physical relationship with the proposal site.

3.1 **MH98/0215** – Erection of 15m monopole with 2 no. dual polar antennae and integrated equipment cabinet on land adjacent to Chances Pitch, Colwall: **Approved** 1st September 1998. This site is operational and located approximately 50m to the northeast of the application site. (It is noted that the height indicated at 15m does not include the antennae, which add a further 3m to the overall height).

3.2 **NE00/0666/F** – Erection of a 15m monopole mast, equipment cabinet and development ancillary thereto, A449, Ledbury: **Refused** 13th April 2000. The site of this development was 0.5km to the east of the current application site, in a lay by adjacent to the A449 and was refused on landscape impact grounds and the failure to demonstrate that mast-sharing had been properly examined.

3.3 **NE00/1760/F** – Demolish existing 15m tall solid pole mast, replace with 20m lightweight lattice multi-user mast and antennae with equipment cabins and ancillary development within a timber-fenced landscaped security compound at Chances Pitch, Colwall: **Refused** 12th September 2000. This application sought redevelopment of the mast approved under reference MH98/0215 with a more substantial 20m tall lattice tower to enable multi-operator use and was refused on landscape impact grounds.

3.4 **NE03/3259/F** – Installation of 18m high monopole with panel antennas and 2 dish antennas with two equipment cabinets and ancillary development within a fenced compound at Chances Pitch, Colwall: **Withdrawn** 17th February 2004. This application proposed a second mast adjacent to the existing approved under MH98/0215 and was withdrawn following consultation with the case officer.

4. Consultation Summary

Statutory Consultations

4.1 None required

Internal Council Consultations

- 4.2 Transportation Manager – No objection
- 4.3 Conservation Manager (Landscapes) – No objections
- 4.4 Environmental Health – No comment

5. Representations

- 5.1 The response of Colwall Parish Council is reproduced in full:

“Council objects to this current application: The proposed mast is within 100m of a residential dwelling. Do not believe that the trees will screen the monopole particularly, during the winter months. The monopole will be visible from Public Rights of Way throughout the winter months. It does seem co-incidental that the heights of the trees are slightly higher than the monopole and antennae. The overall appearance will be detrimental to the Malvern Hills AONB. Council suggests that the proposed site is in the wrong place and serious consideration should be given to:

- 1) Use of the large agricultural buildings at Langlands Farm;
- 2) Use of the Pylon lines running East to West across Massington Farm, map reference 744396 to 733394.”

- 5.2 Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Planning Group:
Also ask that consideration be given to the use of pylons or the agricultural buildings at Langlands Farm.

- 5.3 One letter of objection has been received from Mrs C. Vale, Tan House, Colwall Green, Malvern WR13 6ED. The points raised are summarised as follows:

- The existing pole is high enough and easily seen on the outline of the Malvern Hills;
- The AONB designation should prevent the erection of these poles;
- Very serious consideration should be given to the erection of another pole on or near to the site of the existing.

- 5.4 The agent has submitted an application in response to the concerns expressed by the Parish Council. This is summarised as follows:

- The presence of a dwelling within 100m is not a material planning consideration. The worse case scenario would be that emissions at the dwelling would be 4363 times less than ICNIRP levels;
- The monopole would be painted green and so merge in with the background and foreground of trees;
- The trees to the north of the pole will be significantly higher than the top of the antennae;
- It is considered that this location would have the least visual impact upon the AONB when compared to all alternative sites;
- Consideration has already been given to Langlands Farm and the electricity pylons. The latter has been discounted, as the landowner will not countenance the installation of cables over arable land. It is also considered that the extent of the required coverage would be much less than the preferred site.

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

6. Officer's Appraisal

6.1 It is considered that the key issues in the determination of this application are as follows:

- The visual impact of the proposed development having regard to the AONB designation and consideration of all viable alternatives;
- Considerations of public health.

Visual Impact and Consideration of Alternative Sites

6.2 The proposed site for the erection of the monopole and ancillary equipment is adjacent to the Old Road, Chances Pitch on land elevated above the adjacent A449. There is a requirement for enhanced coverage along the A449 in both directions of the highway; thus two antennas are required, one focused in an easterly direction, the other westerly.

6.3 A variety of coniferous and deciduous trees are present on either side of the road and the required height of the mast is inextricably linked to the height of the adjacent trees, which act as a screen. Owing to the presence of the road, which is still passable, maintenance of the mast could be undertaken by stationing a cherry picker immediately adjacent and as such the need for a bulky mast capable of taking the weight of personnel is overcome.

6.4 The diameter of the monopole at approximately 300mm is not dissimilar to the telegraph poles also present in the vicinity, whilst painting the pole an appropriate colour can further mitigate any visual impact.

6.5 Members will note from the Planning History that applications have explored the option of sharing the existing mast to the northeast. This is prescribed as good practice in PPG8 and Conservation Policy 18 of the adopted Local Plan. However this option, along with the option of stationing a further mast adjacent to the existing has been discounted. Sharing the existing mast would necessitate the "bulking-up" of the existing monopole to facilitate further antennae and allow maintenance. Full consideration was given to these sites in the determination of the historic applications outlined at section 3 of this report and it was concluded that sharing was unviable owing to the adverse visual and landscape impact.

6.6 The applicant has explored a number of alternative sites in the locale (including two other sites along the old road), each of which has been discounted owing to inadequate screening. In order to achieve the required coverage, lower lying sites would require a substantially higher monopole and on this basis the potato stores at Langlands Farm have been discounted.

6.7 A site at Upper Mitchell Farm (approximately 2km west of the application site) was also considered. This is an elevated position, where a shorter mast may be viable. However, the site is more exposed relative to the application site, with less natural screening and therefore not considered acceptable.

- 6.8 Members will note that the Landscapes Officer has raised no objection to the application on visual impact and landscape grounds and it is concluded that the site is the most suitable of those considered.

Public Health

- 6.9 The fact that a dwelling is situated 100m from the application site is not a material ground for objection to the proposal. Paragraph 98 of PPG8 'Telecommunications' advises that if a proposed mobile phone base station meets the ICNIRP guidelines for public exposure to radio waves it should not be necessary for a planning authority to consider further the health aspects of the proposal. In this instance it has been demonstrated that emissions fall well within the defined parameters.
- 6.10 Members may be aware of the recent appeal decision relating to land adjacent to Unit 2 Wyese Eign, Eign Road, Hereford (ref: DCCE04/3827/T), where the development proposed involved the erection of a 15m flexi-cell pole. The Inspector is unequivocal, in allowing the appeal, that should the ICNIRP test be satisfied, objections cannot be sustained on health grounds.
- 6.11 Having regard to the guidance contained within PPG8, Local Plan policy and all other material considerations, it is considered that the application should be recommended for approval.

RECOMMENDATION

That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:

- 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.

- 3 - Prior to the commencement of development the exact colour of the monopole and ancillary equipment hereby approved shall be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans.**

Reason: In order to ensure that the development harmonises with the surroundings.

- 4 - G19 (Existing trees which are to be retained)**

Reason: In order to preserve the character and amenity of the area.

- 5 - As soon as it is no longer required for telecommunication purposes, the development approved under the terms of this application shall be removed from the land and the land restored to its condition before the development took place.**

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity.

Informative:

1 - N15 - Reason(s) for the Grant of PP/LBC/CAC

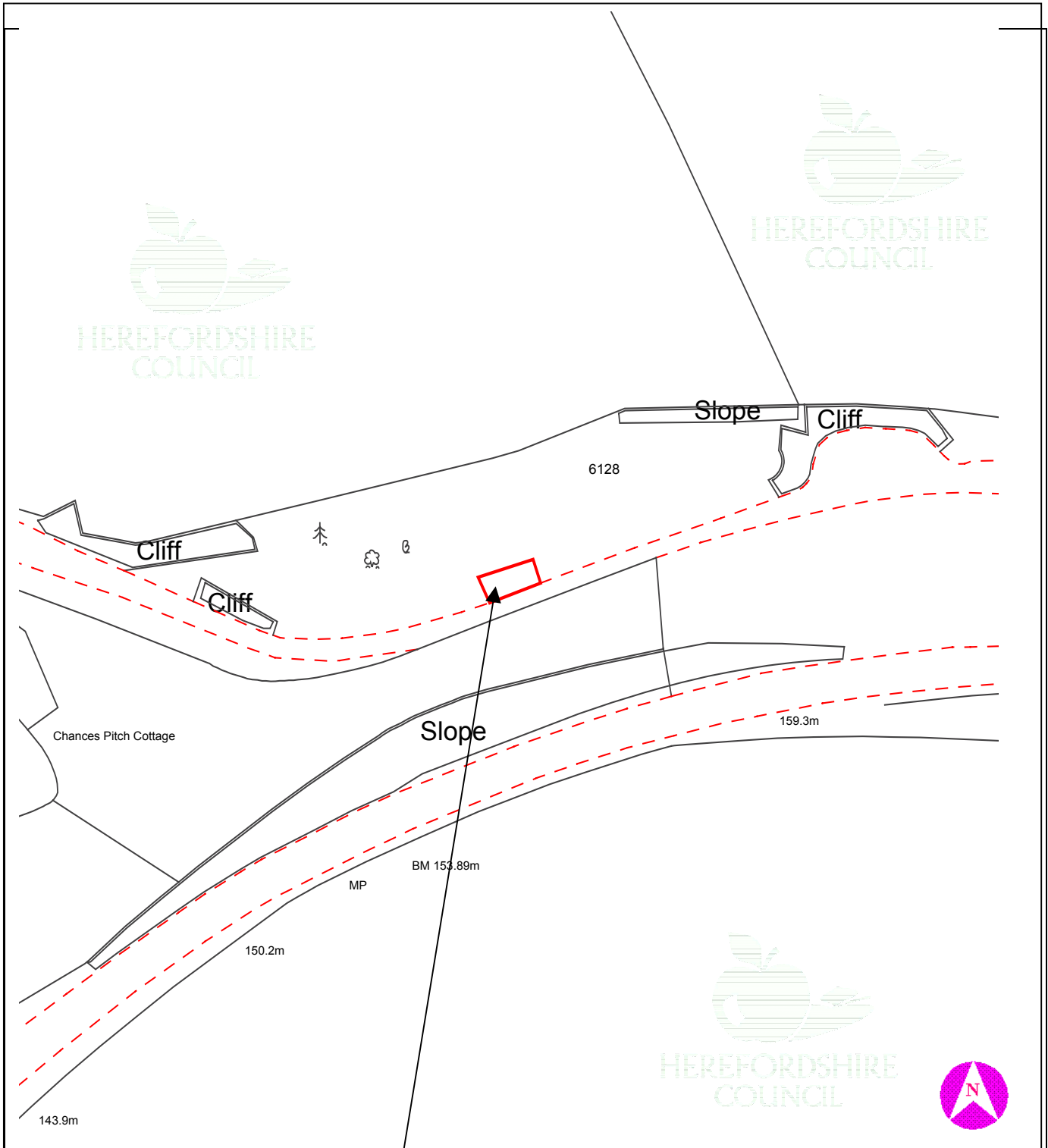
Decision:

Notes:

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Background Papers

Internal departmental consultation replies.



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APPLICATION NO: DCNE2005/2182/T

SCALE : 1 : 1250

SITE ADDRESS : The Old Road adjacent to A449, Chances Pitch, Colwall, Malvern, WR13 6EJ

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