

PLANNING DEVELOPMENT CONTROL (TELECOMMUNICATIONS) SUB-COMMITTEE

28 October 2008

Councillors:

Huxstep (Chairman) (P)

Barratt (P)
Baxter (P)
Huxstep (P)

Johnston (P)
Ruffell (P)

Deputy Members:

Councillor Berry (Standing Deputy for Councillor Lipscomb)

Others in attendance who addressed the meeting:

Councillor Spender

Officers in attendance:

Ms L Hutchings - Principal Planner
Mr S Dunbar-Dempsey - Open Space Project Officer
Mr B Lynds - Planning and Projects Barrister

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1. **PRIOR APPROVAL NOTIFICATION FROM VODAFONE – ERECTION OF 8 METRE MOCK TELEGRAPH POLE SUPPORTING SHROUD ANTENNAS AND ASSOCIATED EQUIPMENT CABINET – LAND ADJACENT TO ST ANNE’S CLOSE, RIDGEWAY, BADGER FARM, WINCHESTER.**
(Report [PDC772](#) refers)

The Sub-Committee met at the application site. The Chairman welcomed to the meeting Mr Hugill from the applicant’s agent, Needham Haddrell Chartered Surveyors and also approximately 18 members of the public.

Ms Hutchings explained that prior approval notification had been submitted by Vodafone, to erect an 8 metre high mock telegraph pole supporting shroud antennas. An associated equipment cabinet was also proposed to be located adjacent to the mast. Ms Hutchings indicated the exact positing of the structure between two 6 metre high lampposts and adjacent trees, on a grassed area on highways land opposite the entrance to St Anne’s Close. The proposed mast would be set against a good backdrop of trees (which were approximately 10 metres high) and that would provide some screening from distant views. The land sloped steeply to the rear, overlooking the residential area of Stanmore. Ms Hutchings advised that the applicant had indicated that the proposal was required to improve third generation telecommunications coverage to the immediate area.

At the conclusion of her presentation, Ms Hutchings recommended that no objection be raised to the prior approval notification, as she considered that the mock telegraph pole would not be out of keeping in an urban area, with all its associated street furniture. Finally, Ms Hutchings drew attention to an error in the Report. On page 3, under Highways Consultations – the first sentence should be amended to read ‘...satisfied that the location of the proposed mast and equipment will not cause an obstruction to visibility for cars.’ (the rest of that sentence thereafter deleted).

Two members of the public (both local residents) addressed the meeting. They asked the Sub-Committee to consider whether the applicant had sufficiently investigated the possibility of sharing existing equipment (or sites) within the locality. Attention was drawn to an existing installation at Badger Farm Road, east of the proposed site. Concern was also raised about the proximity of the proposed mast to homes, especially as the top of the mast would be approximately level with bedroom windows. With regard to the height of the new mast (8 metres), the addition of the antennae would make the total height closer to 10 metres. Finally, it was stated that as mobile telephone coverage was adequate within the Badger Farm area, there would be no benefit to local people from the siting of the proposed equipment.

Councillor Spender addressed the meeting as a Ward Member. He asked questions regarding possible mast sharing with the existing installation at Badger Farm Road. He suggested that the reasons given by the applicant in rejecting that site (poor vehicular access and recent adjacent residential development) were unsubstantiated. Councillor Spender also reiterated residents’ concerns regarding the full height of the structure (including its antennae) and that it would be an intrusion in this tree lined, residential area. Finally, he drew attention to a previous proposal at this location in 2000 that had been rejected.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr Hugill addressed the meeting and answered questions from Members. He explained that the need to improve coverage within the locality was the main reason for his client’s preferred siting of the equipment at this location. With regard to the potential for sharing the existing installation at Badger Farm Road, a significant increase in its size would be required. It had therefore been concluded that the proposed site was preferable as the mock telegraph pole was, aesthetically, less intrusive in its design. However, should the Sub-Committee be minded, this could be changed to a mock lamppost design. Mr Hugill also advised that, unfortunately, a demonstration mast had not been available to provide the Sub-Committee with an indication of the height and approximate positioning of the structure.

During questions, Mr Hugill acknowledged that the drawings as submitted with the application may not show the correct actual height of the adjacent lampposts. He clarified that the proposal would measure a total of 9.8 metres, inclusive of 1.8 metres for the antennae. It would not be based on a plinth. He also explained that information regarding the beam of greatest intensity to be omitted from mast could be provided to Members outside of the meeting. However, he reiterated that an ICNIRP certificate had been submitted in accordance with PPG8 and, therefore, there were no health and safety issues to be considered from the proposals.

At the conclusion of the meeting, whilst Members regretted that the applicant had been unable to provide a demonstration to assist them in their deliberations, they agreed to raise no objection to the proposals, as it was considered that the mast would not have any significant visual impact in the area.

RESOLVED:

That no objection be raised.

The meeting commenced at 9.30am and concluded at 10.10am

Chairman