

Planning Committee

20 March 2014

Reference:
ANT/14/00193

Area Team:
North Team

Case Officer:
Miss A McDougall

Ward:
Hoyleake and Meols

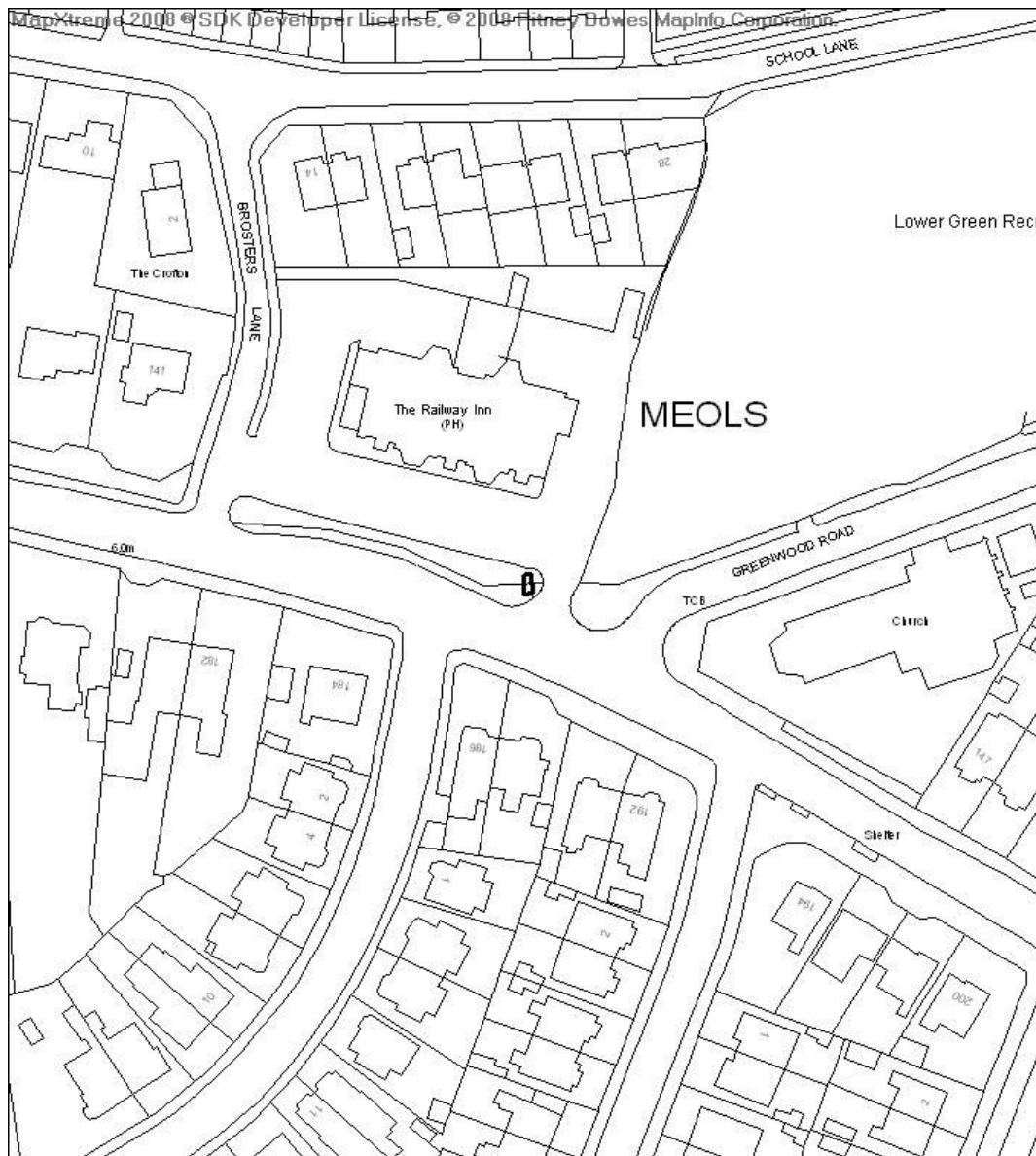
Location: Land outside of The Railway, Corner of BIRKENHEAD ROAD & GREENWOOD ROAD, MEOLS, CH47 6AA

Proposal: Replacement of existing 14.8m monopole for a 17.5m dual user monopole and ancillary works.

Applicant: Vodafone Ltd

Agent : Mono Consultants Ltd

Site Plan:



Development Plan Designation:

Primarily Residential Area

Planning History:

Location: Footpath outside, The Railway, Birkenhead Road, Meols, Wirral, CH47 6AA
Application Type: Prior Approval of Telecommunications PD
Proposal: Erection of a 12.5m Ultra slim-line streetworks pole incorporating 3no. antenna and development ancillary thereto
Application No: ANT/06/07005
Decision Date: 17/11/2006
Decision Type: Refuse

Location: Pavement junction of Greenwood Road and Birkenhead Road, Meols, Wirral, CH47 6AB
Application Type: Prior Approval of Telecommunications PD
Proposal: The replacement of the existing 15m high monopole with a new dual use 14.8m high monopole and installation of a ground based O2 cabinet. Existing Vodafone cabinet to remain.
Application No: ANT/10/00888
Decision Date: 24/08/2010
Decision Type: Approve

Location: Pavement fronting, The Railway, Birkenhead Road, Meols, Wirral, CH47 6AA
Application Type: Prior Approval of Telecommunications PD
Proposal: Installation of 14.3m high telecommunications mast with associated equipment cabinet
Application No: ANT/08/06503
Decision Date: 10/10/2008
Decision Type: Approve

Summary Of Representations and Consultations Received:**REPRESENTATIONS**

Having regard to the Council Guidance on Publicity for Applications, 63 notifications were sent to adjoining properties within a 100m radius. A site notice was also displayed. At the time of writing this report 1 objection and a qualifying petition of objection has been received, listing the following grounds:

1. Health concerns
2. Visual amenity
3. Impact onto schools, residential areas and hospitals
4. The existing mast should be removed

CONSULTATIONS

Head of Environment & Regulation (Traffic & Transportation Division) - No Objections

Head of Environment & Regulation (Pollution Control Division) - No Objections

Director's Comments:**REASON FOR REFERRAL TO PLANNING COMMITTEE**

Councillor Ellis has requested the application be taken out of delegation as it is considered that the height of the mast would be obtrusive, the ancillary boxes would be obstructive and the location is within close proximity to a primary school, a park and residential amenity.

INTRODUCTION

The application is for a prior approval of a replacement telecommunications mast and the conversion of kit located within the existing equipment cabinets, the cabinets are to remain in situ. The proposed replacement mast is to have a height of 17.5m and will provide for Vodafone and Telefonica (O2) as

well as supporting the 4G network.

The existing telecommunications mast which was approved under reference ANT/10/00888 has a height of 14.8m.

PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

The application is a prior approval notification of the applicant's intention to erect a mast and seeks the Local Planning Authority's approval for its siting and appearance only. The principle of the mast is permitted under Part 24 of the General Permitted Development Order, and as such the local planning authority cannot object to the principle of a mast.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The siting of the proposed mast is on the existing public footway, the site is located adjacent to a grass verge and a vehicle access into the Railway Public House. The equipment boxes, of which there are two and a meter pillar, are already in situ and support the existing mast that was approved under ANT/10/00888, these cabinets are to be retained with internal works in order to support the new technology and telecommunications mast.

The proposed mast is to be located to the east of the existing mast, the existing mast will be removed from site, the replacement mast will be larger in width and in height. The mast will have a diameter of 0.3m and a height of 17.5m, the existing mast is 0.2m in diameter and has a height of 14.8m.

The siting of the replacement mast is on a wide public footway in front of a public house, to the west of a Church and to the north of residential properties on the opposite site on Birkenhead Road. The siting of the equipment is near to Lower Green Recreation Ground, and Great Meols Primary School is located approximately 345m to the north east of the proposed site.

POLICY CONTEXT

The National Planning Policy Framework gives national guidance on planning for telecommunications development including radio masts and towers, antennas of all kinds, radio equipment housing, public call boxes, cabinets, poles and overhead wires.

It should be noted that the Government's policy is to facilitate the growth of new and existing telecommunications systems whilst keeping the environmental impact to a minimum. The aim of telecommunications policy is to ensure that people have a choice as to who provides their telecommunications service, a wider range of services from which to choose and equitable access to the latest technologies as they become available.

Paragraph 43 states; In preparing Local Plans, local planning authorities should support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including telecommunications and high speed broadband. They should aim to keep the numbers of radio and telecommunications masts and the sites for such installations to a minimum consistent with the efficient operation of the network. Existing masts, buildings and other structures should be used, unless the need for a new site has been justified. Where new sites are required, equipment should be sympathetically designed and camouflaged where appropriate.

Policies TEL1 (Principles for Telecommunication) and TE1 (Criteria for Telecommunications Development) of the Wirral Unitary Development Plan, and Supplementary Planning Document 1 (Designing for Development By Mobile Phone Operators) are relevant.

The criteria outlined by the policies and associated guidance document require proposals such as this to be assessed based on the impact of the proposal on residential amenity through siting and external appearance, and require that it has been demonstrated the apparatus cannot be located on an existing building or that an existing mast cannot be shared. In this case, the proposal will be a mast shared between Vodafone and Telefonica UK (O2).

APPEARANCE AND AMENITY ISSUES

This proposed development will be a mast share by both Vodafone and Telefonica UK (O2), thus removing the requirement for an additional mast within the area. The enhancement of this mast will also help prepare for the roll out of the 4G network.

The applicant intends to utilise the existing radio base station and install a replacement telecommunications mast that will be greater in diameter and height, but will have a similar appearance. The replacement mast and utilisation of the existing base station reduces the number of base stations required to meet the operational needs of the two operators as well as reducing the number of additional radio base stations required to facilitate growth within the search area. The replacement of an existing mast and the proposed mast sharing meets the guidance set out in the NPPF in order to minimise additional sites.

The applicant states that the larger mast will facilitate two operators, thus allowing both operators to utilise the same apparatus and enable 4G technology. It is considered that due to the existing structures within the street scene, the replacement of the mast will have a minimal impact on the street scene in terms of appearance and volume of equipment. It is not considered that the development will harm the character or appearance of the area. The the increased height of the mast will not be visually detrimental. Overall, it is considered that the proposal complies with Policies TEL1 and TE1 of Wirral's Unitary Development Plan, Supplementary Planning Document 1 (Designing for Development by Mobile Phone Operators) and the National Planning Policy Framework.

SEPARATION DISTANCES

Separation distances do not apply in this instance.

HIGHWAY/TRAFFIC IMPLICATIONS

There are no highway implications relating to this proposal.

ENVIRONMENTAL/SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES

There are no environmental/sustainability issues relating to these proposals.

HEALTH ISSUES

The Government recognises that health considerations and public concern can, in principle, be material considerations when determining applications for planning permission or prior approval. National planning policy in the National Planning Policy Framework, however, indicates that if base stations meet ICNIRP guidelines it should not be necessary for the Local Planning Authority to consider further the health aspects or concerns about them. The Local Planning Authority expects all applications for mobile telephone equipment to be accompanied by a certificate confirming that all proposed apparatus would be compliant with ICNIRP guidelines. The applicant has confirmed by the necessary certification that the emission levels from the proposed antennae will be in full compliance with the ICNIRP guidelines. Consequently a refusal on health grounds could not be reasonably and robustly sustained.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, having regard to the applicant's operational requirements, together with all relevant national, regional and local planning policies and all other material planning considerations, the local planning authority considers that the siting of the proposed replacement mast represents the least obtrusive option in the locality and having regard to its overall design and appearance, would have the least impact on the streetscene. It is therefore considered that the proposal satisfies the criteria set out in policies TEL1 and TE1 and SPD1 – Designing for Development by Mobile Phone Operators and the NPPF.

Summary of Decision:

Having regards to the individual merits of this application the decision that prior approval is not required has been taken having regards to the relevant Policies and Proposals in the Wirral Unitary Development Plan (Adopted February 2000) and all relevant material considerations including national and regional policy advice. In reaching this decision the Local Planning Authority has considered the following:-

Having regard to the applicant's operational requirements, together with all relevant national, regional and local planning policies and all other material planning considerations, the local planning authority considers that the siting of the proposed replacement mast represents the least obtrusive option in the locality and having regard to its overall design and appearance, would have the least impact on the streetscene. It is therefore considered that the proposal satisfies the criteria set out in policies

TEL1 and TE1 and SPD1 – Designing for Development by Mobile Phone Operators and the NPPF.

Recommended Decision: **Prior approval is not required**

Last Comments By: 13/03/2014 16:13:19
Expiry Date: 09/04/2014