

LOCATION: Belmont Farm, The Ridgeway, London, NW7 1QT
REFERENCE: H/04579/11 **Received:** 08 November 2011
Accepted: 08 November 2011
WARD(S): Mill Hill **Expiry:** 03 January 2012

Final Revisions:

APPLICANT: Vodafone UK Ltd & Telefonica UK Ltd.
PROPOSAL: Installation of an 11.8m high slimline monopole and 2no. equipment cabinets to replace the existing equipment within the existing Vodafone compound at Belmont Farm.

RECOMMENDATION: Approve Subject to Conditions

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and submitted documentation: Design and Access Statement, Site Specific Supplementary information, Declaration of conformity with ICNIRP guidelines, email on replanting 17.7.2012, Ecological Survey May 2012, Panoramic Photographs 100 Issue 2, 200 issue 2, 201 issue 3 Amended Plans dated 17.7.2012, 300 issue 2, 301 issue 1, 400 issue 1 and email confirmation that the equipment will be dark brown in colour.
Reason:
For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.
- 2 This development must be begun within three years from the date of this permission.
Reason:
To comply with Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004.
- 3 A scheme of hard and soft landscaping, including details of existing trees to be retained, shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority before the development, hereby permitted, is commenced.
Reason:
To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development.
- 4 All work comprised in the approved scheme of landscaping shall be carried out before the end of the first planting and seeding season following occupation of any part of the buildings or completion of the development, whichever is sooner, or commencement of the use.
Reason:
To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development.
- 5 Any existing tree shown to be retained or trees or shrubs to be planted as part of the approved landscaping scheme which are removed, die, become severely damaged or diseased within five years of the completion of development shall be replaced with trees or shrubs of appropriate size and species in the next planting season.
Reason:
To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development.
- 6 The development shall be carried out in accordance with the specifications set out in the Arboricultural Impact Assessment Report and the Ecological Assessment, including the mitigation and enhancements specified.
Reason: To protect existing trees and the ecological value of the site.

INFORMATIVE(S):

- 1 The reasons for this grant of planning permission or other planning related decision are as follows: -

i) The proposed development accords with strategic planning guidance and policies as set out in The Mayor's London Plan: July 2011 and the Adopted Barnet Unitary Development Plan (2006).

In particular the following policies are relevant:

Adopted Barnet Unitary Development Plan (2006):GBEnv1, GBEnv2, D1, D2, D7, D16, HC1, HC5, O1 & O2

Supplementary Planning Documents:

- Sustainable Design and Construction (Adopted)

Mill Hill Conservation Area Character Appraisal

Core Strategy (Adoption version) 2012: CSNPPF CS1 and CS5

Development Management Policies (Adoption version)2012: DM01 & DM02

ii) The proposal is acceptable for the following reason(s): -

The proposed development is considered to have an acceptable impact on the character and appearance of the property, wider locality of the Mill Hill Conservation Area, Area of Special Character, Green Belt and would not harm the visual or residential amenities of any neighbouring occupier.

- 2 The applicant is advised that due consideration shall be given to the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and ensure that works carried out in pursuance of this consent / notice will be subject to the duties, obligations and criminal offences contained in the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Failure to comply with the provisions of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) may result in a criminal prosecution.

1. MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

National Planning Policy Framework

The determination of planning applications is made mindful of Central Government advice and the Local Plan for the area. It is recognised that Local Planning Authorities must determine applications in accordance with the statutory Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise, and that the planning system does not exist to protect the private interests of one person against another.

The 'National Planning Policy Framework' (NPPF) was published on 27 March 2012. This is a key part of the Governments reforms to make the planning system less complex and more accessible, and to promote sustainable growth.

The London Plan is recognised in the NPPF as part of the development plan.

The NPPF states that "good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people."

NPPF retains presumption in favour of sustainable development. This applies unless any adverse impacts of a development would "significantly and demonstrably" outweigh the benefits.

The NPPF says that local planning authorities should, whilst supporting the expansion of the electronic communications network, aim to keep the number of sites for such installations to a minimum. Existing masts, buildings and other structures should be used, unless the need for a new site has been justified.

The NPPF also say that the site should be screened.

The Mayor's London Plan July 2011:

The London Development Plan is the overall strategic plan for London, and it sets out a fully integrated economic, environmental, transport and social framework for the development of the capital to 2031. It forms part of the development plan for Greater London.

The London Plan provides a unified framework for strategies that are designed to ensure that all Londoners benefit from sustainable improvements to their quality of life.

Relevant Unitary Development Plan Policies:

The statutory plan for the Borough is the Barnet UDP. This was adopted on 18 May 2006, replacing the original UDP adopted in 1991.

On 13 May 2009 the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government issued a Direction "saving" 183 of the 234 policies within the UDP.

Relevant policies to this case: GBEnv1, GBEnv2, D1, D2, D7, D16, HC1, HC5, O1 & O2

Policy D16 Telecommunications equipment will normally be permitted provided that:

- i. There is no significant adverse effect on the skyline.
- ii. They do not adversely affect the external appearance of the building on which they are located.
- iii. The possibility of sharing facilities, such as masts and satellite dishes, and erecting antennae on existing buildings or other structures has been considered.
- iv. Technologies to miniaturise and camouflage telecommunications apparatus are employed where practicable.
- v. They are appropriately designed, coloured and landscaped to take account of their setting.

The Council's Supplementary Planning Document "Sustainable Design and Construction" adopted June 2007 provides detailed guidance that supplements policies in the Unitary Development Plan, and sets out how sustainable development will be delivered in Barnet. Part 6 of the SPD relates to generic environmental requirements to ensure that new development within Barnet meets sufficiently high environmental and design standards.

Core Strategy (Adoption version) 2012

Barnet's emerging Local Plan is made up of a suite of documents including the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Development Plan Documents (DPD). Until the Local Plan is complete, 183 policies within the adopted Unitary Development Plan (UDP) remain. The replacement of these 183 policies is set out in both the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD.

The Core Strategy is now capable of adoption following receipt of the Inspector's Report in June 2012. The Inspector endorsed all the Council's modifications at EIP and found it sound and legally compliant. Therefore very significant weight should be given to the 16 policies in the CS. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (para 216) sets out the weight that can be given to emerging policies as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

Relevant Core Strategy Policies (Adoption version) 2012: CS NPPF, CS1, CS5.

The Development Management Policies document provides the borough wide planning policies that implement the Core Strategy. These policies will be used for day-to-day decision making.

Development Management Policies is now capable of adoption following receipt of the Inspector's Report in June 2012. The Inspector endorsed all the Council's modifications at EIP and found it sound and legally compliant. Therefore very significant weight should be given to the 18 policies in the DMP. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (para 216) sets out the weight that can be given to emerging policies as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

Relevant Development Management Policies (Adoption version) 2012: DM01, DM02.

Relevant Planning History:

Site history for current landparcel :

25981 - Belmont Farm, The Ridgeway, London, NW7 1QT

Case Reference: **H/04579/11**

Application:	Planning	Number:	W/00180/BF/02
Validated:	07/03/2002	Type:	PRN
Status:	APD	Date:	26/04/2002
Summary:	DIS	Case Officer:	Martin Cowie
Description:	Erection of 21 metre high lattice mast with 4 antennae in new post and rail fenced compound, in addition to a separate, ancillary single storey equipment cabin.		

Application:	Planning	Number:	W/00180/BL/03
Validated:	23/12/2003	Type:	APF
Status:	DEC	Date:	06/02/2004
Summary:	REF	Case Officer:	Lesley Feldman
Description:	Installation of 27m high telecommunications lattice mast with 6 cross		

polar antennae and 2 relay dishes and associated equipment cabin and 1.8m high chain-link fence.

Application:	Planning	Number:	W/00180/BQ/05
Validated:	22/02/2005	Type:	APF
Status:	APD	Date:	13/04/2005
Summary:	APC	Case Officer:	
Description:	The Installation of a 10m monopole (telecommunications mast) with telegraph pole design, with 3 No. shrouded antennas, radio equipment housings and ancillary development. - appeal allowed 24/3/2006 Para.8 "The proposal comprises a replica telegraph mast, two equipment cabinets and an electricity supply cabinet. The proposal including shrouded antennae, would be 12 metres in height".		

Consultations and Views Expressed:

Neighbours Consulted:	39	Replies:	6
Neighbours Wishing To Speak			0

2 letters of support - no objection

- This development should go ahead as the signal is always bad in the locality.

The objections raised may be summarised as follows:-

- health hazards
- the existing unwanted telecommunication equipment by reason of its siting and its proximity to residential properties is perceived as having an unacceptable health risk notwithstanding PPG8 guidelines
- spoils Green Belt, area features Sheepwash pond. St. Paul's Church built by William Wilberforce, St. Paul's Playgroup and St. Paul's Primary School and a number of popular walks.
- mast is too large and far too close to residential properties
- detrimental to visual amenities
- detrimental to conservation area
- excessive height the equipment will be visible above the trees
- the extra cabinet will be highly visible as some trees are to be removed, impacting on character and appearance of this part of The Ridgeway, which is predominantly rural in character, with the adjacent pond and farm entrance
- previous applications for mast have been refused, the current changes do not warrant approval

Mill Hill Preservation Society

-The proposed monopole of 11.8m height is higher than the existing. This increase in height would be very visible from The Ridgeway, especially as the proposed monopole has a wider diameter at the top.

The mast will project above the tree line and would be highly obtrusive in this sensitive part of the Conservation Area, especially when the leaves are off the trees.

Extra cabinet at ground level will be highly visible as some trees are to be removed and would have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of this part of The Ridgeway, which is predominantly rural in character.

Internal /Other Consultations:

- Traffic & Development - N/A
- Conservation Area Advisory Committee (CAAC) - This application was for a 11.8m high monopole aerial to replace the existing 11.4m one. The proposed mast would have an obtrusive "bulge" at its top end, and the cabinet units on the ground would be significantly bigger. The Committee opposed this application on the grounds of its greater size and visibility, which would be damaging to the Conservation Area at this point.
- Trees and Landscaping – No objection to proposed landscaping, treeworks and ecological report, subject to an informative.
- Conservation and Design Team - Some concern that the amended monopole would be detrimental to the character and appearance of this part of the Mill Hill Conservation Area.

Date of Site Notice: 17 November 2011

2. PLANNING APPRAISAL

Site Description and Surroundings

The proposal site is within a piece of land at Belmont Farm located on the east side of The Ridgeway (within Mill Hill Conservation Area, and Area of Special Character). The site fronts onto The Ridgeway and currently accommodates a "telegraph pole" style mast with total height of 11.4m and equipment cabinet contained within a fenced compound surrounded by tall mature trees. The proposed development covers a small 4m by 7m area of planted woodland and widespread vegetation. Within the immediate vicinity there are telegraph and street lighting columns.

The site area is predominately residential in character however there are a number of schools and similar establishments in the wider area. The land is undulating and there are numerous mature trees along the main roads. The area is designated Green Belt. It should be noted that the existing monopole is 11.4m high.

Proposal

The proposal would comprise of the installation of an 11.8m high slimline monopole and 2 equipment cabinets to replace the existing equipment within the Vodafone compound at Belmont Farm. The proposal would facilitate the sharing of the mast by 2 operators, in accordance with planning policy. The proposed equipment cabinets are as follows

- i) Telefonica 02 Cannon B would have the following dimensions 789mm deep,

height 1650mm and width 1898mm. This cabinet has opening doors within the front and side elevations. This equipment is located adjacent to the proposed planting on the northern boundary.

ii) Proposed Vodafone equipment cabinet "RBS 2016" would be 925mm deep, 1615mm high and 1300mm wide. The cabinet would be located closer to the southern boundary.

The existing Vodafone RBS 3106 Cabinet is to be removed, concrete base to be disc cut and removed to allow installation of telegraph pole leaving the meter cabinet in the existing location. The dimensions of this cabinet are as follows:- 1300mm deep, 750mm wide and 1923mm high. This cabinet is currently located in a central area within the compound.

The existing young hawthorn trees which are planted along the northern boundary of the compound are to be removed and replanted following the installation of replacement equipment. There will be no further removal of trees as part of this development and 2 additional hawthorn trees are to be planted along The Ridgeway boundary which is considered acceptable. Details of these trees will be discharged under the landscaping condition.

Planning considerations

The proposal is for a small scale development which would not harm the established character of the Green Belt. The Planning Inspector when considering the existing development planning ref. W00180BQ/05 allowed on 24th March 2006 considered that "the proposal would be neutral in its effect on the Conservation Area and Area of Special Character".

The site is visible from the road particularly during the period of the year when leaves are off the trees; by those using The Ridgeway and when viewed by occupants of the dwellings surrounding the area. The top of the mast accommodating the aerials needs to be clear of the foliage in order for users to be able to have adequate reception.

The proposed mast in this instance would be 40cm higher than the existing one allowed at appeal. The proposed pole is slimmer than the existing pole by 0.06cm with only the upper antenna section being marginally wider by approximately 0.2m. It is considered that the proposed mast, when compared to the existing, although would be more visible, this is considered to be marginal. Given that the resulting height of the proposed pole would not be significantly greater and the fact that the proposal involves mast-sharing involving a reduction in the total number of masts required for coverage in the area, it is considered that the marginal adverse impact in the Green Belt and on the character and appearance of this part of the Conservation Area and Area of Special Character is acceptable.

The equipment cabinets which replace the existing are of acceptable size and scale, similar appearance to other familiar roadside equipment. The cabinets

would be well screened and would not have an adverse visual impact. Given the similar characteristics of the proposed development compared to the existing allowed on appeal it is considered that there would not be a significant impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Health Impact

Potential health impact was a matter given consideration by the Planning Inspector when considering the existing development and stated in his report paragraph. 24 that the "public concern about health risk arising from the proposal was not a justifiable reason for dismissing the appeal". The application is accompanied by the appropriate ICNIRP certificate.

Ecological, trees and landscaping impact

An ecological survey was carried out and submitted which assessed the trees on site for roosting bat potential, and the development risk that might arise in relation to other protected species. The Planning Inspector in allowing the previous appeal attached a condition regarding the submission of an ecological report.

With regards to potential ecological impact, the details of the tree removal and proposed planting and ecological information are considered adequate. The ecological information suggests that there is only 1 tree with limited potential for use by roosting bats and it is not proposed for removal. The ecological report proposes various ecological enhancements.

A condition has been added in relation to landscaping. Amended plans show the provision of 2 hawthorn trees close to the southern boundary, details of which will be the subject to the application to discharge the landscaping condition. The proposed replanting of the hawthorn trees on the northern boundary is considered to be acceptable.

3. COMMENTS ON GROUNDS OF OBJECTIONS

Covered in body of report.

4. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

The proposals do not conflict with either Barnet Council's Equalities Policy or the commitments set in our Equality Scheme and supports the council in meeting its statutory equality responsibilities.

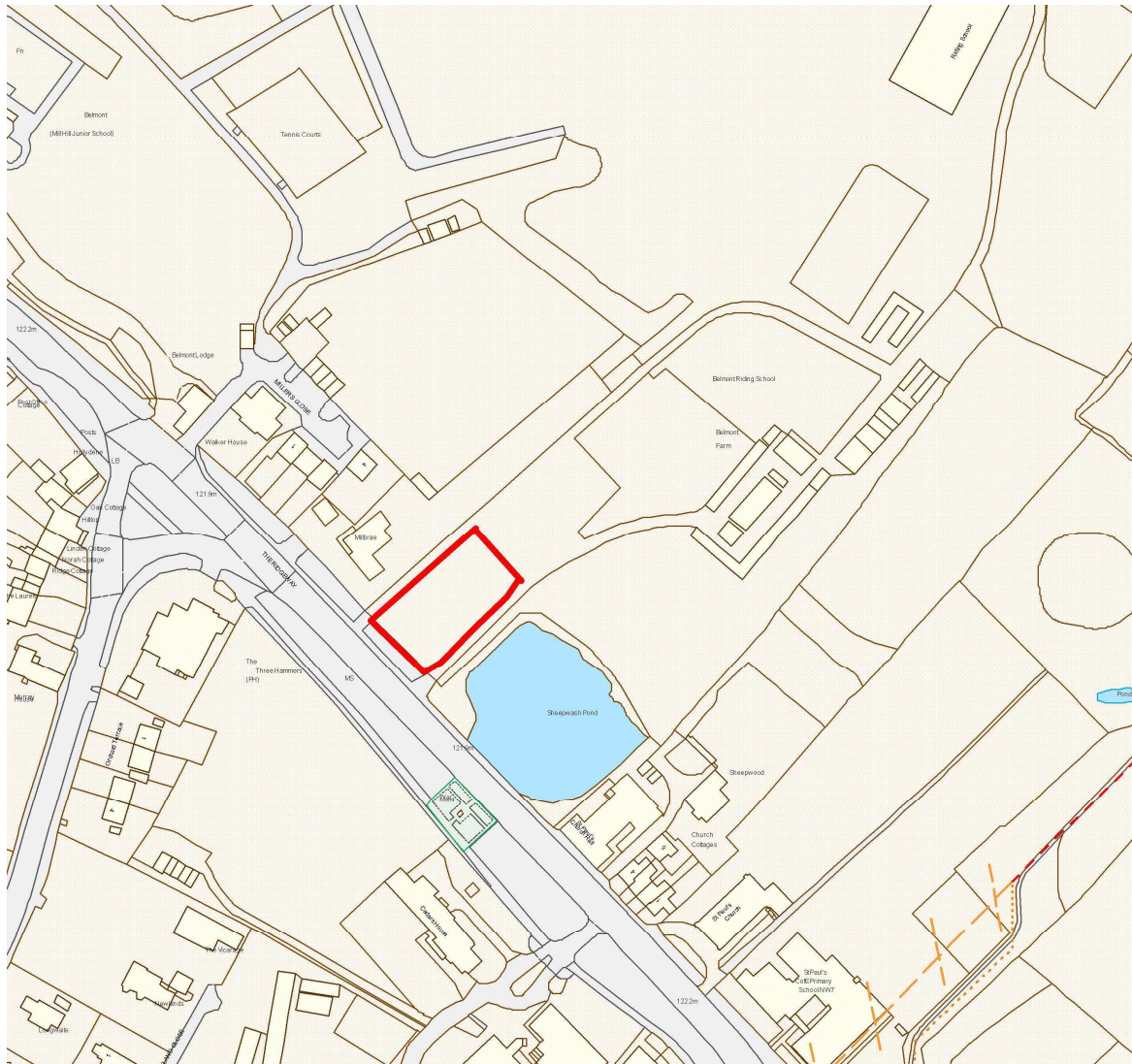
5. CONCLUSION

Having taken all material considerations into account the proposal would comply with Policies D16, GBEnv1, GBEnv2, D1, D2, D7, D16, HC1, HC5, O1 & O2 of the adopted Unitary Development Plan (2006). There would not be a significant detrimental impact on the openness of the Green Belt or character and appearance of the Conservation Area and Area of Special Character and complies with the requirement of sharing facilities, as set out in the NPPF.

This application is therefore recommended for **APPROVAL** subject to conditions.

SITE LOCATION PLAN: Belmont Farm, The Ridgeway, London, NW7 1QT

REFERENCE: H/04579/11



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