

**Application Number**

P/2017/0030

**Site Address**Telephone Exchange  
Goshen Road  
Torquay  
TQ2 6AZ**Case Officer**

Verity Clark

**Ward**

Cockington With Chelston

**Description**

Proposed 15m mast and associated cabinets (the proposed development to which the application relates is situated within 10 metres of relevant railway land).

**Executive Summary/Key Outcomes**

The proposal is for the erection of a 15m monopole with 2 microwave dishes, three additional cabinets and ancillary development.

The siting of the proposed monopole and equipment constitutes permitted development and does not require planning permission. This submission is for determination as to whether the prior approval of the Local Planning Authority is required as to the siting and appearance of the development.

The siting and design of the proposal is considered to be acceptable in this location and without serious detriment to residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers or the character or appearance of the locality.

The application is deemed to be acceptable for prior approval on the grounds of siting and design.

**Recommendation**

Committee Site Visit; Prior Approval granted.

**Statutory Determination Period**

8 weeks, expires 17.03.17. The application must be determined within 56 days of the validation of the application. If a decision is not issued within this time period the development is granted automatic approval.

**Site Details**

The application site is an area of hardstanding and grass to the south east of the telephone exchange building. The site is located within the Chelston Conservation Area.

### **Detailed Proposals**

The proposal is for the erection of a 15m monopole with 2 microwave dishes, three additional cabinets and ancillary development.

### **Summary Of Consultation Responses**

Conservation: On balance the proposal is acceptable.

Highways: Awaiting comment.

Network Rail: Awaiting comment.

Arboriculture: Awaiting comment.

### **Summary Of Representations**

The consultation period for the application expires on the 15th February and at the time of writing 3 letters of objection have been received. The neighbour consultation period for this application is due to expire on the 15/02/17, after the date of the February Development Management Committee meeting. Therefore, no decision shall be issued until after the neighbour consultation period has finished.

Issues raised by representations:

- Ability to sell properties
- Previous planning decision
- Proximity to residential housing
- Impact on Conservation Area
- Visual impact
- Health issues
- Not in-keeping
- Future proliferation of equipment
- Impact on views
- Property values.

### **Relevant Planning History**

P/2002/1289 Installation Of Telecommunications Apparatus Of A 20m Monopole (With 3-4 Stack Directional Dipoles At 17.4) And Equipment Cabin For Airwave Mm02. Withdrawn 03/10/02

### **Key Issues/Material Considerations**

This application is for determination as to whether the prior approval of the Local Planning Authority is required as to the siting and appearance of the development.

In terms of siting, the 15m monopole would be located on an existing area of hardstanding 8.2m to the south east of the telephone exchange building. The site is screened by a large level of vegetation and the typography of the area results

in the ground level of the proposed equipment being significantly lower than the properties on Rousdown Road. The location of the site is significantly set back from the street scene along Goshen Road, with the telephone exchange building and vegetation obscuring the majority of the proposed pole. The proposal will be visible from the rear of the properties along Rousdown Road however the separation distance and difference in levels mitigates the impact and height of the proposal, reducing the detrimental impacts on neighbour amenity of the closest properties. The proposed pole is not considered to impact upon light levels, or to be of a visually obtrusive or overbearing in nature. The location is considered to be well screened and will provide limited views from the street scene thereby reducing the impact on the Conservation Area and preserving its character and quality. As such the siting is considered to be acceptable.

Whilst it is acknowledged that the telecommunications equipment is located within the Conservation Area the design of the pole with associated antenna and dishes is of a fairly streamline design that is considered to be appropriate within the context of the locality. The colour of the mast would be dark green which is considered to be acceptable in this location and will blend in with the surrounding tree cover. This element of the proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable in terms of design and visual appearance.

The three additional cabinets would be located to the south east of the proposed pole on an area of grass and will not be visible from the street scene. The siting and design of the proposed cabinets are considered to be acceptable.

Consultation from the Council's Senior Historic Environment Officer has not raised an objection. The levels in the application are given as GL & AGL - Ground Level and Above Ground Level. GIS notes that there is a spot height of 10.7m AOD near the entrance to the telephone exchange off Goshen Road; it is largely level with the GL of the exchange. Thus any 15m high pole will have a top height of c. 26m AOD. This is screened immediately on the east by the railway embankment, to the north by 5m height of the exchange itself and some tree cover; similarly there is tree cover to the south and west. The spot height near the Junction of Old Mill and Rousdown Road is 30.5m AOD so the roof and ridge heights of the 2-storey Crowndale and the listed Ambrook are likely to be about 35-37m AOD, obscuring most of the length of the pole, though its upper 2.5m clears the tree canopy

It should be noted that the existing telecommunications equipment provides coverage for the 2G network in the area. With the release of 4G the area requires additional equipment to allow for 3G and 4G coverage. The proposal is part of a joint venture by O2 and Vodaphone and is intended in the long term to reduce the number of base stations nationally by consolidating single use base stations. The proposal includes information detailing the site selection process and confirms that the current site provides the most suitable location to provide improvements to the existing network coverage and capacity as well as catering

for future demands.

Guidance from the NPPF on determining planning applications for communications infrastructure states that "Local planning authorities must determine applications on planning grounds. They should not seek to prevent competition between different operators, question the need for telecommunications system, or determine health safeguards if the proposal meets International Commission guidelines for public exposure." As such this prior approval application cannot consider issues such as the need for the equipment, the potential health implications of the equipment or more general non planning issues such as impacts on property values.

The siting and design of the proposal is considered to minimise the impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area and has utilised existing landscape features to reduce the impact on visual amenity in accordance with Policy IF1 of the Torbay Local Plan 2012-2030.

### **Conclusions**

The siting and design of the proposal is considered to be acceptable in this location and without serious detriment to residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers or the character or appearance of the locality.

Prior approval of the Local Planning Authority for the siting and design of the 15m monopole with 2 microwave dishes, three additional cabinets and ancillary development is not required.

### **Informative(s)**

01. In accordance with the requirements of Article 35(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order, 2015, in determining this application, Torbay Council has worked positively with the applicant to ensure that all relevant planning concerns have been appropriately resolved. The Council has concluded that this application is acceptable for planning approval.

### **Relevant Policies**

DE1 - Design

DE3 - Development Amenity

SS10 - Conservation and Historic Environment

IF1 - Information and communications tech