

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

13 F 1558

This Design and Access Statement is provided in conjunction with the Supplementary Information Template, drawings and supporting material that was submitted with this planning application.

This statement is submitted pursuant to Article 4C of the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995 (as amended).

In accordance with the Code of Best Practice on Mobile Phone Network Development¹, and published Government guidance, this proposal was drawn up having regard to the need for good design.

In particular:

- Considerations of design and layout are informed by the context, having regard not just to any immediate neighbouring buildings but the townscape and landscape of the wider locality. The local pattern of streets and spaces, building traditions, materials and ecology all help to determine the character and identity of the development.
- The scale, massing and height of proposed development have been considered in relation to that of adjoining buildings; the topography, the general pattern of heights in the area; and views, vistas and landmarks.

The following general design principles have been taken into account in respect of this proposed telecommunications development:

- A proper assessment of the character of the area concerned.
- That the design shows an appreciation of context;

¹ Paragraphs 120-126.

SITE CONDITIONS, TECHNICAL CONSTRAINTS, LANDSCAPE FEATURES AND CAPACITY REQUIREMENTS

Introduction

It needs to be borne in mind that the proposed development is for a mobile telecommunications installation. Hence, access is deliberately restricted, where appropriate, for the security of the installation.

Documentation Submitted with Application

- Plans and elevations
- Any other relevant illustrations or photomontages
- Supporting statement

Design Component

- **Use proposed** - The use of the site will allow Vodafone Limited and Telefónica UK Ltd to jointly operate and manage a single network grid across the UK. Due to the dramatic rise in the use of mobile data, the industry has had to consider new operating models that are efficient at delivering 3G and 4G services to a much larger percentage of the UK population, as well as supporting 2G services. Both companies pledge to close the digital divide between rural and urban areas targeting 98% indoor population coverage across 2G and 3G by 2015. The agreement will also lay the foundations for two competing 4G networks to deliver the capability for a nationwide 4G service faster than could be achieved independently.

The agreement allows both organisations to pool their basic network infrastructure, while running two, independent, nationwide networks allowing consumer choice. By doing this, they will both reach far more of the country far faster than they could achieve on their own. This single network grid will automatically increase each operator's footprint by 40%, adding competition and choice for customers in areas that previously only had one operator's coverage available. Following agreement with the two operators, some ownership of the equipment will change to allow the commissioning of the proposed Multi-Operator Radio Access Network ("MORAN") required to deliver the single network grid. It will also provide enhanced capacity for both operators' customers in the future, which will be especially important with the imminent launch of the 4G networks in 2013. This agreement is about

consolidating infrastructure assets, clearing the way for innovation and the creation of new services that customers really want.

The proposed development relates to the installation of a radio base station consisting of the removal of the existing 12m slim-line streetworks monopole supporting 3 no. antennas above to a top height of 14.4m as well the removal of one no. equipment cabinet. Installation of a replacement 17.5m slim-line streetworks column supporting 6 no. antennas, 1 no. replacement equipment cabinet, 2 no. additional equipment cabinets and development ancillary thereto (amendment to 13PT/0636).

- **Amount** – The proposed design consists of a replacement 17.5m column which will accommodate the operators antennas at the top of the column at a centre line height of 16.6m and 14.75m. The antennas must be located at a centre line height of 16.6m and 14.75m so that the operators can clear the nearby trees, fit their MORAN technologies within the same structure and provide their required coverage to the surrounding area. The latest proposal accommodates both operators antennas in a stacked arrangement so that 3 antennas will be located at an underside height of 15.95m and the other 3 antennas will be located at an underside height of 14.10m. The top height of these antennas will be 17.25m and 15.4m respectively. This means that the shroud at the top of the column is some 1.2m longer than that approved under 13PT/0636. The proposed antennas will continue to be screened from sight behind a shroud at the top of the column, and the overall height of the column will increase to a top height of 17.5m. The diameter of the column will be 324mm throughout the main column and the pronounced shroud at the top of the column will be 540mm. This column diameter and pronounced shroud width has previously been approved under LPA ref: 13PT/0636. Therefore the proposed top height of the antennas at 17.25m is the absolute minimum available to the operator that will allow all criteria to be met.

The proposed equipment cabinets will be located in the same position as that approved under LPA ref: 13PT/0636 to the north west of the existing equipment cabinet. They will have a similar appearance to the existing cabinets and those that were approved under 13PT/0636. However, the dimensions of the two smaller equipment cabinets which were approved are proposed to be altered slightly and will each have the following dimensions 600mmx480mmx1600mm. They will remain on the approved concrete base within the grass verge on the south west side of Long Lane away from highway visibility splays and will not hinder pedestrian movement. Their appearance will be similar to other statutory operators equipment cabinets and the existing equipment cabinets already in situ in the immediate area and therefore will not appear obtrusive in the streetscene.

- **Layout** - The site is located to the south west side of Long Lane on the adopted grass verge and is an established radio base station installation, the siting of which has previously been accepted by the Council in this location. The new equipment cabinets will be positioned on the concrete base on the grass verge to the north west of the existing equipment cabinet. The siting of these equipment cabinets and the column have been accepted by the council under application 13PT/0636. This application does not propose to amend the location of the column or equipment cabinets. The radio base station will continue to be set against the backdrop of mature trees and a recreational ground. There are several linear structures within the immediate area which help the structure blend in with the immediate area including telegraph poles, lighting columns and road signage.
- **Scale** - Following the recent approval for a replacement 15m column supporting 3 no. antennas and three equipment cabinets under LPA ref: 13PT/0636, the operators have carried out further traffic analysis in the area and require 6 no. antennas within the structure in order to provide a further technology which will enable a much greater capacity of traffic to be handled than the original column which was planned for. However, 6 no. antennas would not be able to fit at the same level. Therefore in order to minimise the impact on the visual amenity of the area the antennas are proposed to be stacked so that the shroud retains its width at 540mm. This therefore equates to a longer shroud than that proposed. Furthermore, as the antennas are stacked on top of each other, the lower height antennas would not be able to clear the existing trees at the approved replacement column height of 15m. As a result, the column height proposed is 17.5m in order that both operators can provide all their MORAN technologies within the same structure and clear the surrounding trees.

The additional column height is essential to fit all the MORAN technology into the structure, allowing both operators to utilise the same apparatus. In addition, the longer shroud enables all required feeders and their ports needed for the antennas to be accommodated at the top of the column in a stacked formation. If the approved shroud length and column height of 15m were to be utilised the antennas would not be able to fit in the same structure and the lower antennas would not be able to clear the surrounding tree canopies. Therefore all the multiple MORAN technologies would not be able to fit within the same structure and as such an additional site would be required which would lead to the proliferation of masts, contrary to national and local planning policy.

The design of the replacement column will be as similar as possible to the existing and to that approved under LPA ref: 13PT/0636 in order to

minimise the impact on the surrounding area. The scale of the column is therefore considered to be appropriate.

The proposed equipment cabinets are ancillary to the functionality of the monopole and its antennas, and will have a similar appearance to other equipment cabinets within the immediate area and commonly found in built up areas. Therefore the ground based development is a justified item of equipment and due to its positioning on the adopted grass verge will not appear prominent. Therefore the proposed ground based equipment will not have a detrimental impact on the visual amenity of the area and through appropriate painting will assist in blending effectively with its surroundings. It is therefore considered that the scale of the cabinets is appropriate.

- **Landscaping** - Given the minor nature of the ground based development, and its location adjacent set against the backdrop of a number of mature trees, it is not considered that any additional landscaping is required.
- **Appearance** - The need for additional structures will be kept to a minimum through the removal and replacement of the existing column on the site. However, the operator recognises the need to minimise the visual impact of any new structure on the site. The slim-line column is the thinnest possible in order to house MORAN technology on the same structure, thus allowing both operators to utilise the same apparatus having a similar appearance as the column it replaces as well as the replacement column which was recently granted prior approval under 13PT/0636. The materials and colour of the column will be as similar as possible as the existing column already in situ to minimise the impact on the streetscene.

The use of MORAN technology will allow the operators to increase their national footprint and enable future 4G technology. To achieve this, a new column is necessary which will allow the required MORAN technology solution within a single streetworks pole.

- **Access** - Access to the development is by definition limited to the operator and its authorised agents. The proposals will be located on a small section of grass verge hence there will be no compound enclosure and the development will be accessible within the public realm. Nevertheless the ground based equipment cabinets have an appearance similar to other communications and electrical service boxes found in typical streetscenes in which similar access operations can be likened. It is likely that once built, the site will be visited infrequently for maintenance purposes only. Access to the site will be by foot in which the applicant would gain access to the equipment houses within the cabinets. In the event of the antennas within the

mast needing to be maintained this will be achieved by siting a cherry picker with a hydraulic platform alongside the base station.