

Report

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Report to:	Cambuslang/ Rutherglen Committee
Date of Meeting:	24 May 2011
Report by:	Executive Director (Enterprise Resources)

Application No	CR/10/0254
Planning Proposal:	Erection of 15m High Telecommunications Street Furniture and Associated Equipment Cabinets

1 Summary Application Information

- Application Type : Detailed Planning Application
- Applicant : O2/Vodafone
- Location : Northbank Street/Westburn Road Junction
Westburn Road
Cambuslang

2 Recommendation(s)

2.1 The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) Refuse Detailed Planning Permission (for the reasons stated).

2.2 Other Actions/Notes

The Cambuslang and Rutherglen Area Committee has delegated powers to determine this application.

3 Other Information

- ◆ Applicant's Agent: WFS Telecom
- ◆ Council Area/Ward: 14 Cambuslang East
- ◆ Policy Reference(s): **South Lanarkshire Local Plan (adopted 2009)**
RES 6 - Residential Land Use Policy
DM 1 - Development Management Policy
DM 12 - Telecommunications Development Policy

- ◆ Representation(s):

- ▶ 2 Objection Letters
- ▶ 1 Petition (with 19 signatures)

- ◆ Consultation(s):

Environmental Services

Roads and Transportation Services (Cambuslang/Rutherglen Area)

Enterprise Resources - Estates

Planning Application Report

1 Application Site

- 1.1 The application site relates to an area of ground forming part of the public footway to the west of the junction between Westburn Road and Northbank Street, located within the Westburn area of Cambuslang. The site is bounded to the west by commercial properties, by an area of overgrown land and residential properties beyond to the south, residential properties to the east and residential properties to the north beyond Westburn Road.

2 Proposal

- 2.1 The applicant seeks detailed planning permission for the erection of a 15m high telecommunications street furniture monopole and associated equipment cabinets.

3 Background

3.1 Local Plan Status

- 3.1.1 The South Lanarkshire Local Plan (adopted) provides the development plan context for this application. The application site lies within an area covered by Policy RES6 – Residential Land Use which states that the Council will resist any development that will be detrimental to the amenity of residential areas and that the development must relate satisfactorily to the surrounding environment.

- 3.1.2 Policy DM1 – Development Management states that all planning applications should take account of the local context and built form and that all development should be compatible with adjacent buildings and surrounding streetscape in terms of scale, massing, design, external materials and impact on amenity.

- 3.1.3 Policy DM12 – Telecommunications Development is of particular importance in relation to this application. This policy states that in assessing telecommunications proposals the Council will require to take account of the impact on visual amenity, character and appearance of the surrounding area and minimise environmental and visual impact through the exploration of a range of options including concealment/disguise, the use of small scale antennas/equipment and the use of innovative design.

3.2 Relevant Government Advice/Policy

- 3.2.1 The Scottish Government supports the expansion and diversification of the telecommunications industry, but recognises that this must be done sensitively to safeguard our natural and built environment. Government guidance with regards the siting and design of telecommunication apparatus is set out within Scottish Planning Policy (February 2010) which supersedes National Planning Policy Guidance Note 19 (NPPG 19) – Radio telecommunications and Planning Advice Note 62 (PAN62) – Radio telecommunications.

- 3.2.2 In terms of the current SPP, this policy guidance advises that all new development should be sited and designed to minimise visual impact. It is advised that this may be achieved by following the series of options below: -

- Installation of smallest suitable equipment,
- Concealing and disguising masts, antennas, equipment housing and cable runs, using design and camouflage techniques,
- Mast or site sharing,
- Installations on buildings and existing structures, and
- Installation of ground based masts.

3.3 Planning History

3.3.1 There are no records of any applications at this site within the last ten years.

4 **Consultation(s)**

4.1 **Roads and Transportation Services** – no objections subject to the applicant providing suitable temporary traffic management plans for the standard maintenance work likely to be undertaken on the equipment. No adverse comments in relation to pedestrian and vehicular visibility.

Response: Noted. It is further noted that no objections were raised in relation to pedestrian and vehicular visibility.

4.2 **Environmental Services** – no objections subject to advice notes relating to noise and contamination being attached to any consent.

Response: Noted.

4.3 **Enterprise Resources – Estates** – the application site land is not in full Council ownership. A small area of the eastern footpath is in Council ownership, however none of the development will encroach into this area.

Response: Noted.

5 **Representation(s)**

5.1 Following statutory neighbour notification and advertisement in the Rutherglen Reformer for non-notification of neighbours, 2 letters of objection and a petition with 19 signatures were received. The main grounds of objection are summarised below:

a) **There is concern about the potential health risks to people in the surrounding residential area from the proposed mast.**

Response: Government advice is that there is no evidence to support these concerns. Subject to compliance with ICNIRP Public Exposure Guidelines, the government has further advised that this is not a material planning consideration.

b) **The proposal will have an adverse impact on the visual amenity of the surrounding residential area. It will introduce a dominant feature into the streetscene due to its size and will 'stick out like a sore thumb'.**

Response: It is agreed that the mast would have an unacceptable impact on the visual and residential amenity of the area.

c) **It is regarded that the proposal could lead to parking problems as many people park on the pavement when using the adjacent shop. If people are unable to park at the shop then it could lead to congestion at the corner of the road.**

Response: This is not a material planning consideration. Parking on the pavement is unlawful and is a matter for the police.

d) **What would happen if the pole was to be hit by a vehicle? This is likely to happen if the pole is sited in such an exposed place. A 15m pole would hit the house at 1 Northbank Street if it were to fall.**

Response: Roads and Transportation Services raised no concerns in relation to vehicular or pedestrian visibility in relation to the proposal. The property at 1 Northbank Street is located more than 20m from the application site.

e) **There is currently an ongoing problem with local young people who congregate at the shop and surrounding area, especially the bus shelter. The erection of this equipment will become another focal point for them to gather and will provide them somewhere to sit and even vandalise. Noise at the**

moment from banging the perspex of the bus shelter is a problem and this would escalate it.

Response: This is not a material planning consideration.

f) **The proposed mast would adversely impact on the value of residential properties in the surrounding area.**

Response: The impact on property values as a result of any proposed development does not constitute a material planning consideration in the assessment of this planning application.

g) **It is not understood why there is a need for another mast in the centre of the village when there is already a telecommunications mast in Westburn. Surely the volume of communications in Westburn does not require two masts, certainly not one 15m high in such a location.**

Response: The applicant has justified the requirement for the installation through the submission of a network plan. The demand for mobile communication/data exchange is increasing due to the greater use of mobile phones for internet connection or laptops with 'dongles'.

These letters have been copied and are available for inspection in the usual manner and on the Planning Portal.

6 Assessment and Conclusions

- 6.1 The applicant seeks detailed planning permission for the erection of a 15m high telecommunications street furniture monopole and associated equipment cabinets. The main considerations in determining this application are its compliance with local plan policy, government guidance on telecommunications equipment, its impact on road/pedestrian safety and its impact on the amenity of the surrounding area.
- 6.2 Government guidance is set out within Scottish Planning Policy (February 2010) and Planning Advice Note 62 (PAN62) – Radio Telecommunications. Paragraphs 250 – 254 of Scottish Planning Policy and paragraphs 37-76 of PAN 62 relate to the siting and design of Telecommunication Equipment. They both advise that in selecting the site and design both operators and planning authorities should consider a series of options. The options are:
- installing small scale equipment
 - concealment or disguising equipment
 - mast sharing
 - site sharing
 - installing on existing buildings or other structures; and
 - erecting new ground based mast.
- 6.3 In considering the options there must be regard to the cumulative effects of telecommunications masts. There is a need to think beyond individual proposals and consider how future telecommunications equipment will be integrated into the landscape.
- 6.4 It further advises that whilst antennas and other equipment can be disguised as street furniture, such as street lighting, such installations have to respect the townscape qualities of the area. I am of the opinion that the proposal does not respect the existing street scene as the mast is considerably higher than existing lampposts and nearby residential dwellings and would appear isolated in appearance as there are no trees or buildings immediately to the rear which would provide a background in which the proposal could blend.

- 6.5 Paragraph 44 of PAN 62 – relative to mast sharing, advises that conditions in the code systems operators’ licences requires that the possibility of sharing an existing radio site be explored and that evidence of this should accompany planning applications. The supporting information lists seven alternative sites that have been considered. All of these were discounted due to their unsuitability, ranging from being outside the central search area, narrow width of pavements, impact on visual amenity and presence of overhead and underground services. With regards to the provision of a ground based mast, whilst this is the last option in the series, government guidance advises that this does not mean that it will not be the best solution. The current proposal is part of the strategic partnership between Vodafone and O2 to share mobile assets in the U.K. However, although other sites have been discounted, it is regarded that the application site is not appropriate for the development proposed as the mast would break the skyline in all directions and form an obtrusive element in the streetscape. The mast is considerably higher than existing lampposts and is also markedly higher than adjacent buildings. The mast would appear isolated in the streetscape due to having no immediate backdrop.
- 6.6 In terms of the South Lanarkshire Local Plan (adopted), Policies RES6 – Residential Land Use, DM1 – Development Management and DM12 – Telecommunications Development are applicable. Policy RES6 states that the Council will resist any development that will be detrimental to the amenity of residential areas and that the development must relate satisfactorily to the surrounding environment. Policy DM1 states that all planning applications should take account of the local context and built form and that all development should be compatible with adjacent buildings and surrounding streetscape in terms of scale, massing, design, external materials and impact on amenity. The proposal is located within an area designated for Residential Land Use and it is regarded that the development would be detrimental to the amenity of the surrounding area due to the height of the mast. It is further regarded that the proposed mast is not compatible with the surrounding streetscape for the same reason. Although there is a wall immediately to the rear of the site, it is of such a small height that it would not aid concealment of the mast as there is an open area of overgrown land immediately to the rear. The mast and equipment cabinets will therefore appear isolated from its surroundings. In addition, the mast will be significantly higher than nearby housing and lampposts – to the detriment of the visual amenity of the area. In this regard, the proposal is not deemed to be in accordance with the aforementioned policies.
- 6.7 With regards to the Council’s telecommunication policy, Policy DM12 of the South Lanarkshire Local Plan states that the Council should have regard to government policy and to local plan policies which seek to safeguard amenity and the environment. It is regarded that, for the reasons outlined above, the proposed mast would be detrimental to the amenity of the area. The proposed location for the mast is within a ‘sensitive site’ due to it being within a residential area and due to its prominence in the streetscape, it is regarded that it would have an unacceptable impact on amenity of the nearby residential properties.
- 6.8 Two letters of representation and a petition with 19 signatures have been received and it is regarded that some of the points raised merit the refusal of the application. No objections have been received from statutory consultees.
- 6.9 The proposal does not accord with the criteria set out within Council approved policies and the Government’s guidance on telecommunications development and I therefore recommend that planning permission be refused.

7 Reasons for Decision

- 7.1 The proposal is not in accordance with government guidance on the siting and design of telecommunications apparatus as detailed within Scottish Planning Policy and Planning Advice Guidance Note 62 – Radio Telecommunications. In addition, the proposal is not deemed to be in accordance with Policies RES6, DM1 and DM12 of the South Lanarkshire Local Plan (adopted) and the guidance notes contained therein.

Colin McDowall
Executive Director (Enterprise Resources)

10 May 2011

Previous References

- ◆ None

List of Background Papers

- ▶ Application Form
- ▶ Application Plans

- ▶ Consultations

Environmental Services 11/11/2010

Roads and Transportation Services 17/01/2011

Enterprise Resources - Estates 17/02/2011

- ▶ Representations

Representation from : Michelle Scott, 1 Northbank Street, Westburn, Cambuslang
, G72 7TE, DATED 23/11/2010

Representation from : Robert Dennistoun, 4 Mclver Street, Cambuslang G72
7TA, DATED 23/11/2010

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

Alastair McGibbon, Planning Officer, Civic Centre, East Kilbride
Ext 6386, (Tel :01355 806386)
E-mail: Enterprise.ek@southlanarkshire.gov.uk

REASONS FOR REFUSAL

- 1 The proposal is contrary to Policy DM12 - Telecommunications Development of the adopted South Lanarkshire Local Plan in that it relates to a site within a residential area where, by virtue of its scale and size, would form an obtrusive and over dominant feature which would have an adverse impact on visual and residential amenity.
- 2 The proposal is contrary to Policy DM1 - Development Management and Policy RES6 - Residential Land Use of the adopted South Lanarkshire Local Plan in that it relates to a site within a residential area where, by virtue of its scale and size, would form an obtrusive and over dominant feature which would have an adverse impact on visual and residential amenity.
- 3 If approved, the proposal would set an undesirable precedent which could encourage further similar applications for proposals which would be to the detriment of the appearance and amenity of the area in general.
- 4 This refusal relates to drawing numbers: 100 Issue: 1, 200 Issue: 1, 300 Issue: 1 and 400 Issue: 1

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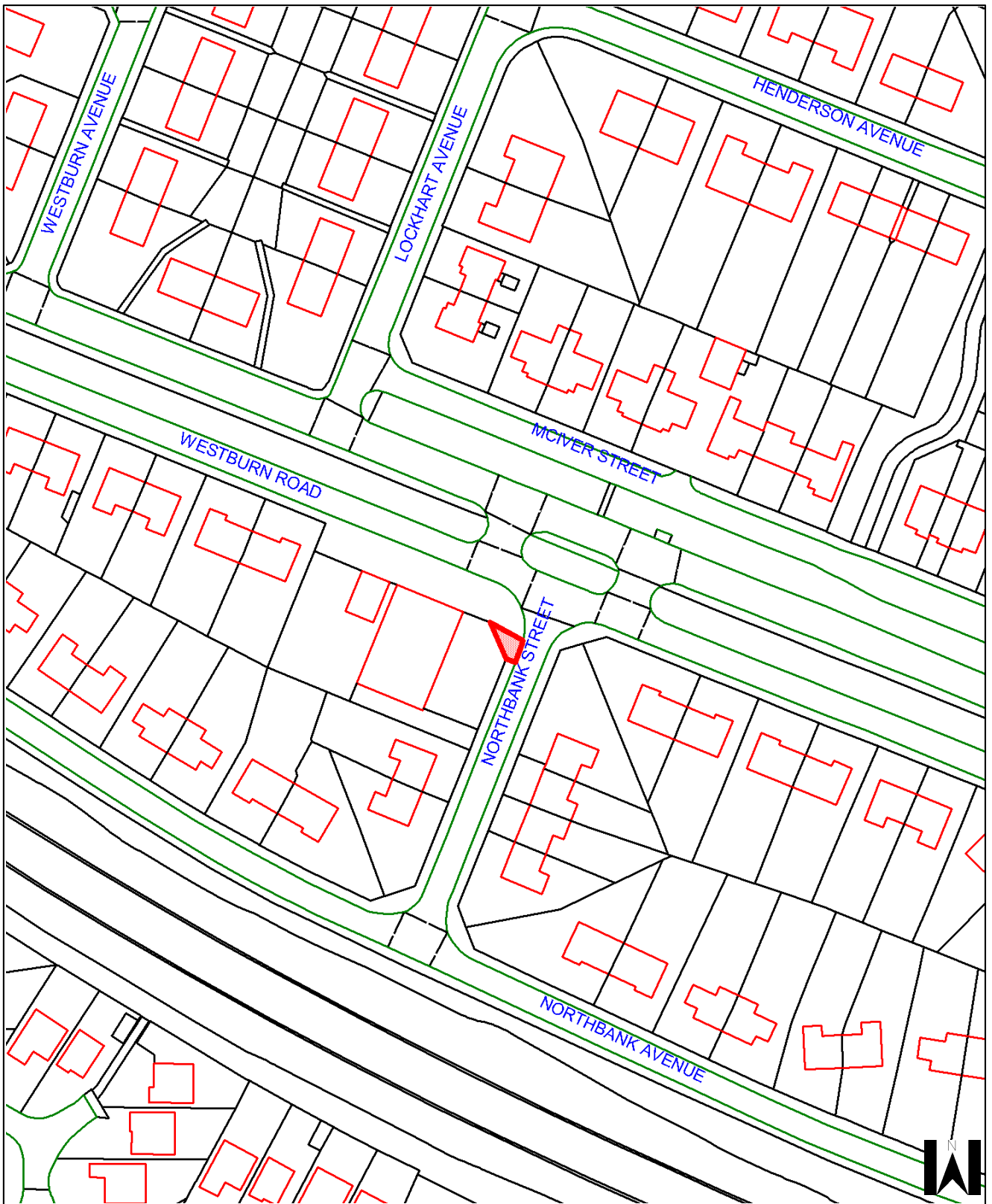
Planning and Building Standards Services

Northbank Street, Westburn Road junction Westburn Road,
Cambuslang

Scale: 1: 1250

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