

Report

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Report to:	Hamilton Area Committee
Date of Meeting:	21 September 2011
Report by:	Executive Director (Enterprise Resources)

Application No	HM/11/0307
Planning Proposal:	Erection of 14.8 Metres Telecommunications Mast and Associated Equipment at Neilsland Road, Laighstonehall, Hamilton

1 Summary Application Information

- Application Type : Detailed Planning Application
- Applicant : Vodafone/O2
- Location : Neilsland Road
Laighstonehall
Hamilton

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

- (1) Grant Detailed Planning Permission - Subject to Conditions (Based on the Conditions Attached)

2.2 Other Actions/Notes

- (1) The Area Committee has delegated powers to determine this application.

3 Other Information

- ◆ Applicant's Agent: WFS Telecom Ltd
- ◆ Council Area/Ward: 19 Hamilton South
- ◆ Policy Reference(s): **South Lanarkshire Local Plan (adopted 2009)**
DM 1 - Development Management Policy
DM 12 - Telecommunications Development Policy
RES 6 - Residential Land Use Policy

- ◆ Representation(s):
 - ▶ 0 Objection Letters
 - ▶ 0 Support Letters
 - ▶ 0 Comment Letters

- ◆ Consultation(s):
Environmental Services
Roads and Transportation Services (Hamilton Area)

Planning Application Report

1 Application Site

- 1.1 The application site forms part of the public footway along Neilsland Road, Hamilton, close to where the road crosses the Cadzow Burn (Burnhouse Bridge). The apparatus (14.8 metre high telecommunications pole and associated equipment cabinet) will be positioned on the northern pavement close to an existing section of pedestrian guard rail.
- 1.2 The site is located within a predominantly residential area although there are no residential properties immediately opposite, behind or alongside the proposed location. Having said this, there are dwellinghouses located on the periphery of the site (specifically to the north, west and south). A small group of commercial units, including a public house, exist to the east of the site. Park land and the aforementioned Cadzow burn runs immediately behind the application site and on the opposite side of Neilsland Road; this forms part of the Council's "green network". As a result some mature trees and bushes form a 'backdrop' for the site.
- 1.3 In the wider context, Neilsland Road and its continuation of Woodfoot Road are interspaced with commercial units. The properties along Neilsland Road and within the surrounding area are one and two storeys in height. The houses along this part of Neilsland Road are notably set back from the carriageway with their own access road between them and Neilsland road.
- 1.4 Neilsland/Woodfoot Road is a wide, relatively busy route though the neighbourhood with some on-street car parking lay-bys. The streetscape is characterized with road 'furniture' including bus shelters and street lighting columns approximately 9 metres in height. Indeed, the street is visually "busy" in this regard. A telecommunication mast also exists further along on Woodfoot Road adjacent to Lighthall Road.

2 Proposal(s)

- 2.1 The applicants seek planning consent for the erection of a 14.8m high telecoms mast and associated equipment at this location. The associated equipment involves a small cabinet measuring 1898x798x1648mm in dimension. The cabinet box will sit alongside the mast.
- 2.2 The applicant has advised that the proposed base station is required to provide 3G (third generation) coverage within the specific area and forms a collaboration of both O₂ and Vodafone networks to consolidate the number of base stations required.
- 2.3 An ICNIRP compliant declaration and supporting statement has been submitted in respect of the proposal. Coverage plots demonstrating a need for this development in terms of the operators' networks have been submitted. These plots indicate the current lack of 3G coverage within the target area and the predicted improvement with the proposed base station in operation.

3 Background

3.1 Local Plan Status

- 3.1.1 In terms of the South Lanarkshire Local Plan the site is identified as being within a residential area (as defined by Policy RES6). Policy RES6 states that the Council will resist any development which will be detrimental to the amenity of those areas.

3.1.2 Policy DM1 requires all planning applications to take account of the local context and built form. In addition all proposals should be compatible with adjacent buildings and surrounding streetscape in terms of scale, massing, design, external materials and impact upon amenity.

3.1.3 The South Lanarkshire Local Plan also includes a specific policy on Telecommunications Development (Policy DM12). This policy states that the Council in assessing telecommunications proposals will require to minimise any adverse impact on the visual amenity, character and appearance of the surrounding area, minimise environmental and visual impact through exploration of a range of options and sets out the criteria which proposals relating to these sites must comply with. In addition individual proposals shall be sited and designed as sensitively as possible in order to minimise potential adverse cumulative impact.

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 to 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 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:

- (a) Installation of smallest suitable equipment,
- (b) Concealing and disguising masts, antennas, equipment housing and cable runs
- (c) Using design and camouflage techniques,
- (d) Mast or site sharing,
- (e) Installations on buildings and existing structures, and
- (f) Installation of ground based masts.

3.3 Planning Background

3.4 A previous application for the site was submitted in April 2011 (ref: HM/11/0181) but then withdrawn by the applicant due to site engineering reasons. Having investigated this matter further however they have resubmitted the application.

3.5 Normally this application would have been determined under the Councils Scheme of Delegation. As the Council has an interest in the land however the application requires to be referred to Committee.

4 Consultation(s)

4.1 **Roads and Transportation Services** - Have raised no issues with the proposal.
Response: - Noted.

4.2 **Environmental Services** - Have raised no issues with the proposal.
Response: - Noted.

5 Representation(s)

5.1 Statutory neighbour notification was undertaken and the application was advertised in the local newspaper. No third party objections have been received.

6 Assessment and Conclusions

- 6.1 The proposal relates to the erection of a 14.8m high telecoms mast and its associated equipment in the Laihstonhall area of Hamilton. The main determining issues in this case are compliance with government guidance, local plan policy and any impacts on road or pedestrian safety.
- 6.2 In terms of government guidance, this 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:
- (a) Installing small scale equipment
 - (b) Concealment or disguising equipment
 - (c) Mast sharing
 - (d) Site sharing
 - (e) Installing on existing buildings or other structures; and
 - (f) Erecting new ground based mast.
- 6.3 In considering these 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. In this instance the proposal does respect the existing street scene as the street furniture and trees located within the general area, will to a degree absorb the visual presence of the mast. The trees will also provide to some extent, a 'backdrop' to the mast reducing its visual impact when viewed from some directions.
- 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 highlights that other site were considered but were ruled out for a number of reasons. The current proposal is however part of a strategic partnership between Vodaphone and O₂ to share mobile assets in the U.K. Accordingly this proposal will result in mast sharing.
- 6.6 In terms of adopted local plan policy, as outlined in paragraph 3.1 above, I am of the view that the impact of the mast in the area in general and on the residential properties nearest the site would be limited. This is due to the specific characteristics of the area; in particular the road layout, existing street furniture and the orientation/positioning of the nearest houses in relation to the site – none of the nearest houses will directly face the proposed mast.

- 6.7 Although designated as a residential area, Neilsland Road is a wide, main commuter route running through Laighstonehall. It is quite noticeably characterized with various elements of street furniture and interspersed with commercial units. Given the above, the area surrounding the proposed site has a degree of “commercial” character and therefore the mast will not introduce a feature significantly detrimental to the integrity, quality and character of the area. In addition, it is considered that the impact on residential properties nearest the site would be limited as the mast will not be in the direct view of them and the existing trees adjacent to the site will help mitigate its presence on the street. Furthermore, the design of the mast is a slim monopole, which would not appear too incongruous in the context of the existing street lights along Neilsland Road, albeit these are not as high. Collectively therefore the impact of the mast from a residential amenity perspective will be within acceptable limits.
- 6.8 In accordance to DM 12 Telecommunications policy the applicants have identified alternative sites but discounted these for either a) being closer to residential properties and b) not practical for accommodating street furniture. Accordingly this proposal is considered to meet the criteria as no alternative sites of greater suitability are readily available. Furthermore, the applicant has demonstrated the need for the development in accordance with a comprehensive network plan; indeed the demand for mobile communication/data exchange is increasing due to the greater use of mobile phones for internet connection or laptops with ‘dongles’. In view of the above and that the proposal will not be in the direct sight line of any residential properties, the proposal accords with Policy DM 12.
- 6.9 In terms of traffic and pedestrian safety Roads and Transportation Service were consulted and have offered no objection subject to an informative being attached with regards to the parking of vehicles associated in construction and routine maintenance works at the mast.
- 6.10 Overall it is considered that the proposal will have no serious impact on either residential or visual amenity and is acceptable in terms of local plan policy and impact on road and pedestrian safety. Given the above, it is recommended that planning permission be granted.

7 Reasons for Decision

- 7.1 The proposal will have no adverse impact on the amenity of the area and is acceptable with Policies RES 6, DM1 and DM12 of the South Lanarkshire Local Plan. The proposal also raises no issues in terms of traffic or pedestrian safety.

Colin McDowall
Executive Director (Enterprise Resources)

5 September 2011

Previous References

- ◆ HM/11/0181

List of Background Papers

- ▶ Application Form
- ▶ Application Plans
- ▶ South Lanarkshire Local Plan
- ▶ I.C.N.I.R.P declaration and supporting information
- ▶ Neighbour notification letter 21 July 2011
- ▶ Press advert, Hamilton Advertiser, 28 July 2011

- ▶ Consultations
 - Roads and Transportation Services (Hamilton Area) 28/07/2011
 - Environmental Services 02/08/2011

Contact for Further Information

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

Zara Stewart, Planning Officer, Montrose House, Hamilton
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Detailed Planning Application

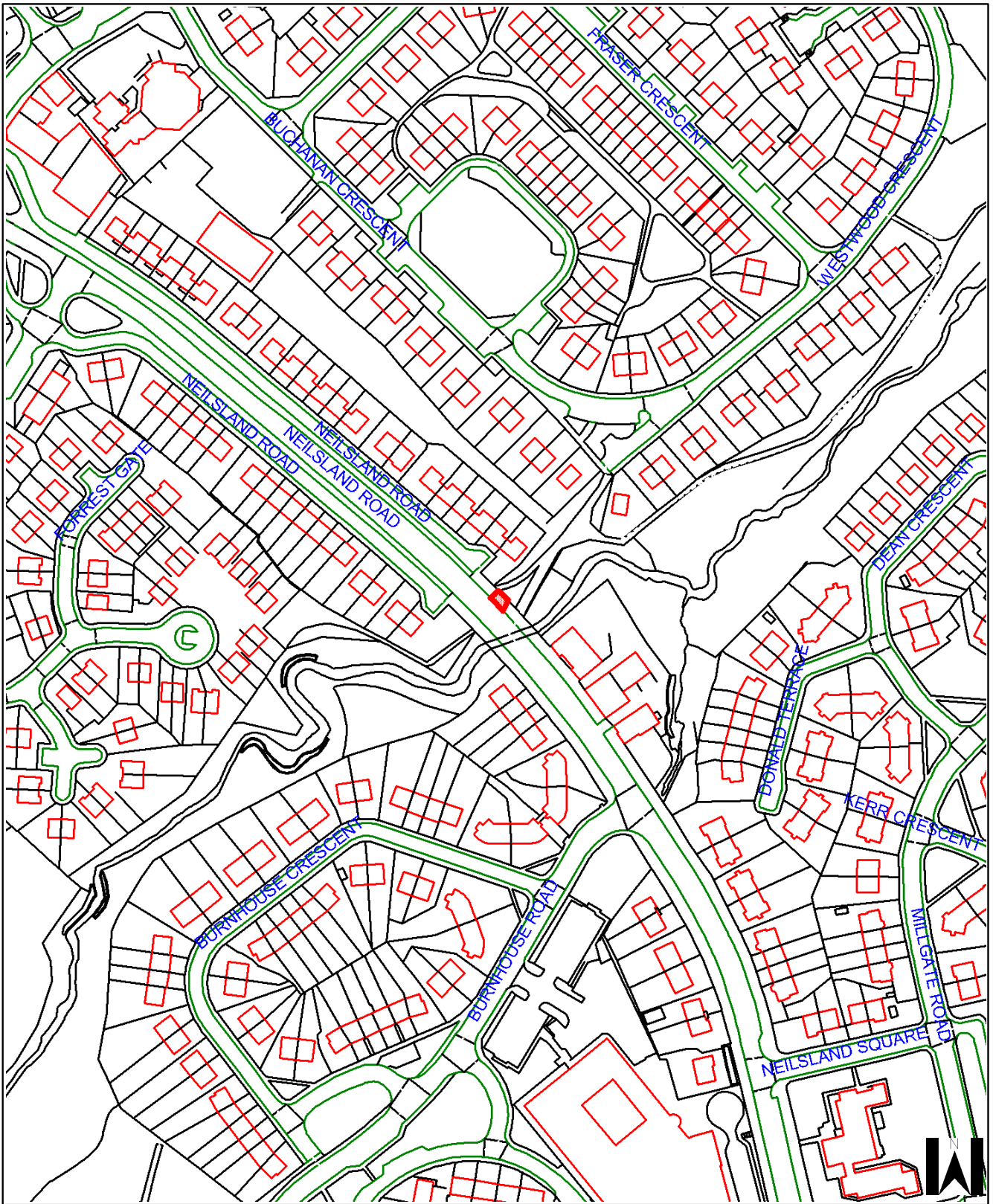
PAPER APART – APPLICATION NUMBER: HM/11/0307

CONDITIONS

- 1 This decision relates to drawing numbers: 100, 200, 300, 400 and 500.
- 2 In the event that equipment becomes obsolete or redundant it must be removed and the site reinstated to the satisfaction of the planning authority within 6 months.

REASONS

- 1 For the avoidance of doubt and to specify the drawings upon which the decision was made.
- 2 To minimise the level of visual intrusion, and ensure the reinstatement of the site to a satisfactory standard.



For information only

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