
TELECOMMUNICATIONS INSTALLATION IN FREIGHT HOUSE CAR PARK, ROCHFORD

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 Members to consider the siting of a Telecommunications Mast in Freight House car park, Rochford.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 At its meeting on 9 December 2003 this Committee considered an application for the siting of a Telecommunication Mast in Castle Road car park and Members agreed that the same process should be adopted for consideration of this application and any future applications for the siting of telecommunications masts on Council property.
- 2.2 A request has been received from agents acting on behalf of Orange to site a telecommunications mast in Freight House car park, Rochford. A site plan and visuals are on display in the Members' Lounge and a copy of the site map is appended to the report.
- 2.3 Whilst Members generally support the installation of masts, they like to ensure that particular consideration is given to:-

The actual site location

Health and Safety concerns

Consultation with local residents

Distances from residential properties.

3 THE SITE

- 3.1 Freight House car park is within the Council's Off Street Parking Places Order and therefore falls under the control of the Head of Revenue & Housing Management. Control of this car park is for a limited period only, early in the morning to prohibit casual commuter car parking. Generally speaking, Freight House car park is used as a staff car park for Council employees, a visitor car park for patrons of the Freight House Community Centre and for those motorists visiting the Rochford Reservoir Public Open Space.
- 3.2 The Agents advised that Orange have a number of sites in the Rochford District and now wish to upgrade coverage for Rochford by the installation of a microcell telecommunications mast concealed within a lamp standard close to

the entrance of this car park. The proposed mast is very much smaller in terms of size and output than the 'pitchfork' type mast located at the south-eastern corner of the car park (on railway land).

- 3.3 The mast would stand no more than 5 metres in height and would have a very small box unit supporting it unlike the larger installation recently agreed at Castle Road car park, Rayleigh. In fact, to all intents and purposes the mast looks exactly like a lamp column protected by bollards.

4 HEALTH AND SAFETY ISSUES

- 4.1 Emission levels from radio base stations depend upon a number of factors, including the geographical area the unit is designed to cover and the number of simultaneous telephone calls it is designed to carry. Depending on the base station itself, power levels will range between 2 and 150 watts.
- 4.2 Radio frequency field exposure levels or emissions are measured in watts per metre squared (w/m^2). Research has demonstrated that emissions from randomly chosen base stations show maximum radio wave intensity at ground level at $0.01w/m^2$. This figure is 500 times below the guideline levels.
- 4.3 Radio waves from base stations fall off rapidly with distance in the same way as sound waves. Although the base stations operate at greater power output than mobile phone handsets, exposure from a handset will inevitably be higher because users are much nearer to it.
- 4.4 The Independent Expert Group on Mobile Phones (IEGMP) states:
- “Exposure from mobile phones is just one component of the exposure that people receive. Indeed, the exposure received by people living near to television or radio broadcast transmitters is likely to be appreciably greater than that received by people living near to mobile phone base stations, although less than that from a mobile phone near to the body”.
- 4.5 A technical analysis related to UK radio base stations entitled “The Facts about Health” has been placed in the Members’ Library, along with a Department of Health leaflet “Mobile Phone Base Stations and Health”. This is supplemented by a document on “Electromagnetic Fields” produced and circulated by the World Health Organisation Regional Office for Europe. These were placed in the Members’ Library for consideration of the earlier telecommunications mast report and remain there.
- 4.6 In mid December, the Head of Service wrote to 17 of the closest residential properties in West Street, Rochford setting out the proposals under consideration and enclosing a “Frequently Asked Questions” fact sheet about mobile phone base stations. At the time of drafting this report none of the

replies had been received so the Head of Service will report verbally at the meeting.

5 DISTANCES FROM RESIDENTIAL AREAS

- 5.1 The Head of Service took advice from colleagues in the Planning Department who used a large scale plan to establish the following distances.

Location	Distance to proposed mast in Freight House Car Park
41 West Street	145 m
77 West Street	57m
100 West Street	119m
Freight House	57m
Rochford Station	79m

6 FINANCE AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Agent advised that Orange is prepared to offer the Council an annual rental of a minimum of £1,750 per annum. The Head of Service might also be able to negotiate for a one-off premium, for Orange to meet the Council's reasonable legal fees incurred in connection with this proposal and for Orange to meet the cost of lighting the column.
- 6.2 Orange have provided a copy of their standard terms and conditions and these have been considered by the Head of Legal Services who advises that no adverse conditions are contained in the Agreement.

7 CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 The Agents advise that the installation of the new mast will provide a much improved service for Orange users in the Rochford area. Any income generated by this initiative would go some way in helping the Council maintaining a balanced budget in line with the Council's first corporate objective:-

"To provide quality cost effective services".

8 RECOMMENDATION

8.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RECOMMENDS**

That consideration be given to leasing a small parcel of land in Freight House car park for the installation of this telecommunications equipment.

S J Clarkson

Head of Revenue & Housing Management

Background Papers:

Various Letters from Barnes-Rennison

Various letters from agents acting on behalf of Orange Telecommunications.

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