



Rochford District Council

**SCHEDULE OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS TO BE CONSIDERED BY
PLANNING COMMITTEE 26th September 2002**

All planning applications are considered against the background of current Town and Country Planning legislation, rules, orders and circulars, and any development, structure and locals plans issued or made thereunder. In addition, account is taken of any guidance notes, advice and relevant policies issued by statutory authorities.

Each planning application included in this Schedule is filed with representations received and consultation replies as a single case file.

The above documents can be made available for inspection as Committee background papers at the office of Planning Services, Acacia House, East Street, Rochford.

If you require a copy of this document in larger print, please contact the Planning Administration Section on 01702 – 318191.

PLANNING COMMITTEE 26th September 2002

DEFERRED ITEM

D1	02/00532/OUT Outline Application to Erect One Dwelling Land R/o 65 Great Wheatley Road Rayleigh	Christopher Board	PAGE 4
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SCHEDULE ITEMS

2	02/00378/COU Change Of Use Of Land To Open Air Driving Range and Erection Of 5m High Catch Fencing Hanover Golf Club Hullbridge Road Rayleigh	Mr Lee Walton	PAGE 8
3	02/00417/FUL Replace 17m Floodlight Tower with 20m Monopole Mounting Floodlights and Telecommunications Equipment, Namely: 3 x OPCS Antennae and 4 x 600mm Dish Antennae, Ancillary Ground Equipment and Compound Great Waking Rovers Football Club Little Waking Hall Lane Great Waking	Mr David Beighton	PAGE 13
4	02/00173/FUL Install Telecommunications Radio Base Station, Comprising 20m Lattice Tower 3 Dipole Antennae 2 Dish Antennae, Equipment Cabin and Ancillary Development Land North Of Devenish Ltd Hambro Hill Rayleigh	Mr Kevin Steptoe	PAGE 18

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FOULNESS AND GREAT WAKERING

Cllr T E Goodwin

Cllr C G Seagers

Cllr B J Wilkins

HULLBRIDGE

Cllr Mrs R Brown

Cllr D F L Flack

Cllr C R Morgan

TRINITY

Cllr K A Gibbs

Cllr J E Grey

WHEATLEY

Cllr J M Pullen

Cllr Mrs M J Webster

**TITLE : 02/00532/OUT
OUTLINE APPLICATION TO ERECT ONE DWELLING
LAND REAR OF 65 GREAT WHEATLEY ROAD RAYLEIGH**

APPLICANT: MR L FREEMAN

ZONING: RESIDENTIAL

PARISH: RAYLEIGH TOWN COUNCIL

WARD: WHEATLEY

This application was deferred for a Member site visit.

In response to a Member's question Officers outlined at the Committee the position concerning the three main issues raised by local residents. These are in summary:

- Smaller plot, dominance, overlooking and the suitability of a smaller dwelling with a road of much larger properties.

This is correctly within the purview of the Local Planning Authority. Officers judge the plot can accommodate a modest dwelling in an acceptable manner, it also meets the normal technical criteria of garden size etc.

- Foul Drainage

There is no public sewer immediately available. Indeed, adjacent existing properties are serviced via cess pit or septic tank. Planning condition No. 91 is included on this within the recommendation. Also Building Regulations approval will only be forthcoming when satisfied that an appropriate means of Foul Drainage is available.

- West View Drive - a private road

Rights of access on a private road are not a matter for the Local Planning Authority, but clearly, if the applicant does not already enjoy such a right it will have to be secured to implement any consent which may be granted.

The original referred item and recommendation as presented to the last Committee is set out below.

This application was included in Weekly List no. 637 requiring notification of referrals to the Head of Planning Services by 1.00pm on Tuesday 20th August 2002, with any applications being referred to this Meeting of the Committee. The item was referred by Cllr Mrs M J Webster.

The item which was referred is appended as it appeared in the Weekly List together with a plan.

- 1.1 **Rayleigh Town Council** raise no objections or observations on this application.

NOTES

- 1.2 This application is in outline form and seeks to determine the principle of development for the erection of a dwelling on land to the rear of 65 Great Wheatley Road, Rayleigh.
- 1.3 The land proposed currently forms the rear most area of an established residential garden to number 65 Great Wheatley Road, the garden running parallel with West View Drive. The south boundary of the site borders a large established house with the rear elevation of 65 Great Wheatley Road 15 metres to the north.
- 1.4 Within the adopted Local Plan, the land proposed for development maintains a residential designation; thus the appropriate land use in policy terms is residential. The current application seeks a decision in terms of principles of development, no details are included as to the intended construction or layout. On this matter caution is expressed as to any resultant building design, with any proposal will need to respect the existing site levels and relationship to neighbouring properties: a modest building in terms of scale and design is likely to be required.
- 1.5 Access to and from the site is highlighted as a cause for concern from local residents: this is not a matter for consideration at outline stage, though the applicant will require a suitable access from West View Drive to gain Local Planning Authority support in any reserved matter/full application.
- 1.6 Overall, it is considered that the site is acceptable in principle for the provision of a new dwelling though design and scale will need to be carefully considered at reserved matter/full application stage.
- 1.7 **Buildings & Technical Support (Engineering)** advise that there is no public foul sewer immediately available. In addition they presume that access will be taken via West View Drive which is an unadopted road.
- 1.8 **Housing, Health & Community Care** has no adverse comments in respect of this application subject to the attachment of Standard Informative SI16.
- 1.9 **Essex County Council (Highways)** advise that this application is De-minimis in highway terms.

- 1.10 **Rayleigh Civic Society** make no comment on the basis that the application seeks purely to establish the principle of development.
- 1.11 **Environment Agency** provide advisory comments on the application.
- 1.12 **Anglian Water** make no comment on this application.
- 1.13 Neighbour Objections have been received from 6 local residents. Objections are raised predominantly on the basis of impact from the proposed scheme in terms of overlooking, dominance to adjoining properties, and the suitability of a smaller dwelling within a road/area of much larger properties. In addition the legal right to pass over West View Drive is questioned – given the private nature of the road, the residents are keen to resist any further intensification. The method of sewerage is also questioned as there is no foul provision and a new property may not be given permission to join onto the system of West View Drive.

APPROVE

- 1 SC1 Reserved Matters – Standard
- 2 SC3 Time Limits Outline – Standard
- 3 SC14 Materials to be Used (Externally)
- 4 SC75 Parking & Turning Space
- 5 SC83 Site Levels
- 6 SC84 Slab Levels Specified
- 7 SC90 Surface Water Drainage
- 8 SC91 Foul Water Drainage

Relevant Development Plan Policies and Proposals:

H11, TP15, of the Rochford District Local Plan First Review



Shaun Scrutton
Head of Planning Services

For further information please contact Kevin Steptoe on (01702) 546366.



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NTS



TITLE : 02/0378/COU
HANOVER GOLF CLUB, HULLBRIDGE ROAD, HULLBRIDGE
CHANGE OF USE OF LAND TO OPEN AIR DRIVING RANGE
AND ERECTION OF 5 METRES HIGH CATCH FENCING
APPLICANT : HANOVER GOLF AND COUNTRY CLUB LIMITED
ZONING : METROPOLITAN GREEN BELT, LANDSCAPE
IMPROVEMENT AREA
PARISH: HULLBRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL
WARD: HULLBRIDGE

PLANNING APPLICATION DETAILS

- 2.1 The proposal was originally for the change of use of land to open air driving range.
- 2.2 The revised application for which there was a re-consultation seeks the change of use of land to an open air driving range *and the erection of 5 metres high catch fencing*.
- 2.3 Hullbridge Road runs alongside the site's western boundary with the proposed range to the north of the clubhouse and associated range of buildings and six residential properties along the eastern boundary within the plot land area off Kingsway.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.4 Various planning permissions have been granted for the land within the boundaries of the Hanover Golf Club. The most recent for change of use of land to enlarge the existing golf course (01/0480/COU).

CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

- 2.5 The following consultation responses are for the **first round** consultations.
- 2.6 **Hullbridge Parish Council** - No objections subject to the considerations of the neighbours.
- 2.7 **County Surveyor (Highways)** - No objection, subject to there being a condition regarding any flood lighting: that it should be suitably positioned and shielded so as to avoid any unnecessary glare and dazzle to drivers on the main road.
- 2.8 **Woodlands and Environmental Specialist** - Is content with the proposed scheme in principle, but recommend the retention of one oak tree.

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- 2.9 Householder Letters - There have been four letters of consultation objecting to the proposal based on, in the main, concerns that golf balls are an existing threat to neighbour's quiet enjoyment of their properties; flood lighting would be intrusive; there are more suitable locations such as to the south of the club house; loss of privacy; will the netting be high enough to offer protection from stray balls; will the nets be maintained?; Metropolitan Green Belt areas - harmful to the openness and character of the area!
- 2.10 A petition from 24 properties in the immediate vicinity has been received objecting to the proposal on the grounds of intrusive floodlighting, extending hours of activity at the site, danger from stray golf balls, alternative site should be used, insufficient space and disturbance.
- 2.11 Second round of consultations following inclusion in the application of 5m catch fencing.

MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 2.12 The applicant seeks change of use of land to open air driving range and the erection of 5 metres high catch fencing beyond which there are several short holes for teaching and practising short game and course etiquette that form part of the site outlined in red. A further planning application would be required to deal with matters such as flood lighting and teeing off structures if required, etc.
- 2.13 The area subject of this application forms part of the existing golf course and includes an area presently occupied by the first and fourth holes' that are to be repositioned elsewhere within the golf course. Planning permission 01/0480/COU granted consent that saw the enlargement of the golf course's area. Hole number 1 measures 308 yards in length with the teeing off position facing the middle of the northern boundary of the site, with hole number 4 measuring 269 yards in length hit from the north eastern corner towards the club house. The driving range will measure approximately 290 yards (250 metres) with a further 70 metres beyond.

Policy Considerations

- 2.14 Policies GB1 (Development within the Green Belt), RC8 (Landscape Improvement Areas) and LT7 (Golf Course Provision) are applicable to the consideration of this application.
- 2.15 The site's existing use has already been referred to; that is it forms part of the Hanover Golf Course including holes' 1 to 5. The site meets the criteria set out in policy LT7 in terms of not being unduly prominent, with good road communications with the rest of the district, etc.
- 2.16 The site is also designated a Landscape Improvement Area (RC8). This seeks planting and landscaping to contribute to the enhancement of the landscape. The application proposes to improve on the existing planting of the site, which is already quite extensive.

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- 2.17 The site is part of the Green Belt within which out door participatory sports are an acceptable activity. Having accepted the 'principle' the next consideration must be the proposal's 'impact' on the openness of the Green Belt. The black nylon catch fencing has potential to reduce the openness of the Green Belt although its colour and form is not considered to have any great impact on its surroundings. Its visual impact in this location is reduced by the presence of existing extensive screen planting alongside Hullbridge Road by virtue of the existing use. Landscaping can further help reduce any perceived threat. It is not considered that the netting will have a harmful effect on its surroundings.

Neighbour Concerns

- 2.18 The single most important matter raised by the local residents in respect of this application is the threat posed to adjacent properties from stray golf balls being hit beyond the boundaries of Hanover Golf Club. The overall dimensions of the proposed driving range from north to south is 250 metres with up to a further 70 metres beyond the netting that represents the overall site. The gardens of properties adjacent to the course and towards the southern end of the range (including, Jeffcott, Friday Woods, May Cottage, The Bush - Wellington Ave) come within 20m to 45m on the driving range boundary and the garden of Maypat towards the end of the range is again approx. 20m from the range boundary. There is scope for further planting, which is one of the conditions to be attached to the permission - if approved by Members - which will enhance the site and act in addition to the catch fencing.
- 2.19 The applicant has provided a letter from their consultant golf course architect and consultant that contend that there is a need for any golf club to provide the best facilities available. To quote from this letter:

' From a safety point of view, playing in the direction of the current first hole, it will be less likely for balls to land in neighbouring properties on the eastern flank, than the existing situation. The relatively few shots that travel far enough to scale the proposed fencing will be falling at the end of their flight with very little momentum. As an added safety factor, the tees on the right of the practice area will be constructed aiming at the far left corner of the practice range.'

- 2.20 It should also be borne in mind that the operator of the driving range has an obligation to operate in a legally responsible manner.

CONCLUSION

- 2.21 The proposal is located within the existing golf course. The application includes reference to measures that will help reduce the threat posed by stray golf balls. An opportunity to landscape the site will address local plan policies. A further planning application will be necessary that covers the details of infrastructure on site such as booths, and flood lighting.

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RECOMMENDATION

2.22 It is proposed that this Committee **RESOLVES** to **APPROVE** this application subject to the conditions listed below:

- 1 SC4 Time Limit Full -Standard
- 2 SC59 Landscape Design - Details (Full)
- 3 The high impact netting hereby permitted shall be erected and retained before beneficial use of the driving range to the satisfaction of the local planning authority as per plan edged red and Mr Edwards letter of 7th August 2002. Thereafter the fencing shall be retained in this form.
- 4 The tees on the right (eastern) side of the practice area shall be constructed aiming at the far left (west) corner of the practice way; as stated in Reg Plumbridge's letter of the 9th August 2002, offered in support of the planning application. That is away from the dwellings alongside the eastern boundary in accordance with details to be submitted to an agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter they shall be retained in the approved form.

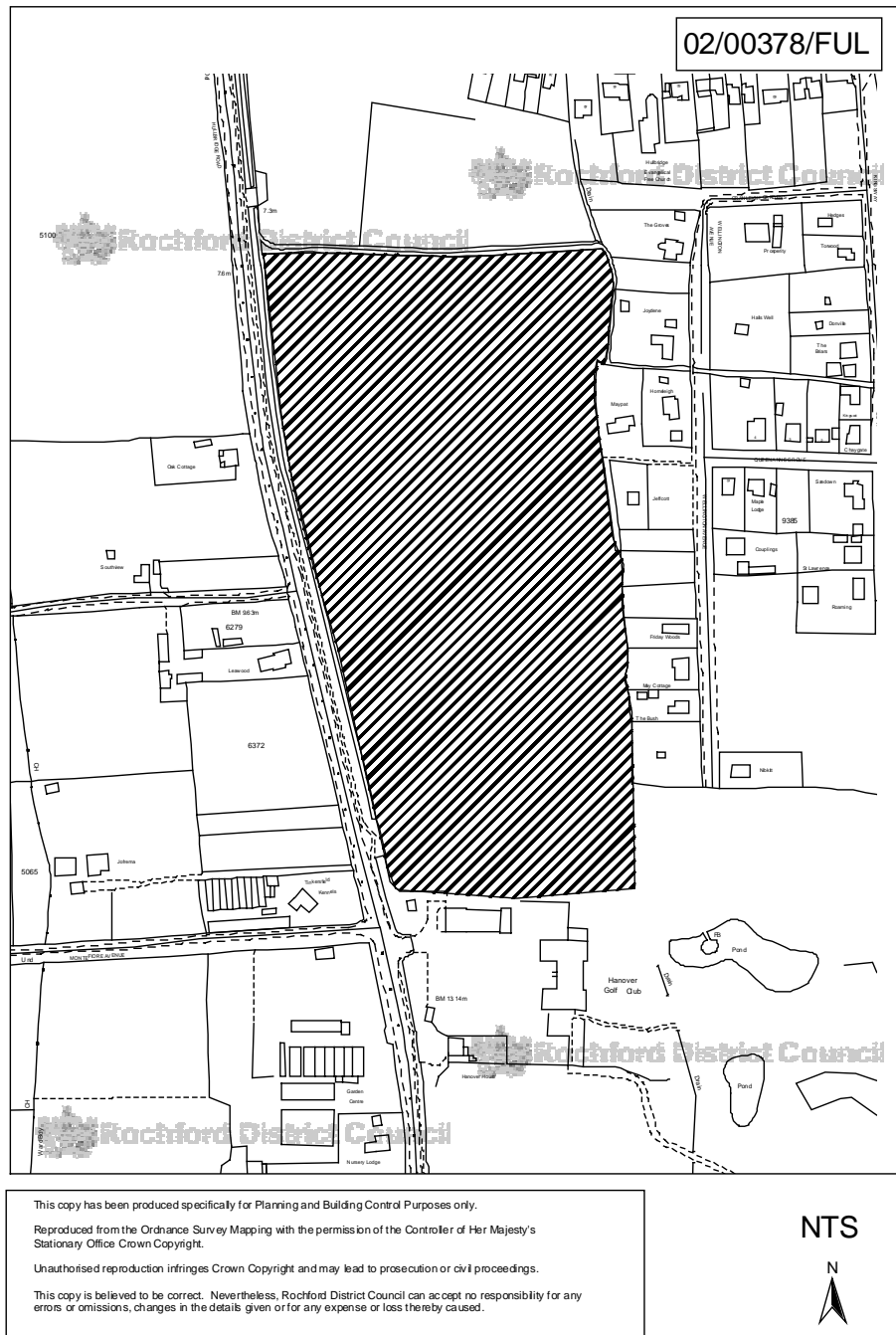
Relevant Development Plan Policies and Proposals:

GB1, UC8, LT7 of the Rochford District Local Plan First Review



Shaun Scrutton
Head of Planning Services

For further information please contact Lee Walton on (01702) 546366.



TITLE : **02/00417/FUL
REPLACE 17m FLOODLIGHT TOWER WITH 20m
MONOPOLE MOUNTING FLOODLIGHTS AND
TELECOMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT, NAMELY 3 x OPCS
ANTENNAE AND 4 x 600mm DISH ANTENNAE, ANCILLARY
GROUND EQUIPMENT AND COMPOUND
GREAT WAKERING ROVERS FOOTBALL CLUB,
WAKERING HALL LANE, GREAT WAKERING.**

APPLICANT : **ORANGE PCS LIMITED**

ZONING : **ALLOTMENT**

PARISH: **GREAT WAKERING PARISH COUNCIL**

WARD: **FOULNESS & GREAT WAKERING**

PLANNING APPLICATION DETAILS

- 3.1 This application is for the replacement of an existing floodlight tower with a 20 metre monopole containing the original floodlights set at a height of 17 metres, with telecommunications equipment above.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.2 There is no planning history relevant to telecommunications installations at this site.
- 3.3 The current application follows a refused application for a mast share between Vodafone and Orange on land rear of the Service Garage, Southend Road, Great Wakering. This proposal for a 21 metre lattice tower was refused on the grounds that it would appear intrusive and unsympathetic, and would be visible from a significant number of residential properties along High Street and other nearby streets. Furthermore, it was felt that a further two sites, identified by the applicant, could potentially subject to acceptable design, provide more suitable locations for increased telecommunications coverage without being intrusive to residential amenity. One of these sites was the football ground at Great Wakering Football Club and the other was the BT exchange at Star Lane.

CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

- 3.4 This is subject to re-consultation, the responses received to the **first round** of consultation are outlined below;
- 3.5 Housing, Health & Community Care recommend that the following condition be applied to any planning permission granted -

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- A suitable scheme of insulation shall be installed and maintained such that any noise emitted from the approved installation shall be inaudible at the boundary of the site.

3.6 They also recommend including Standard Telecommunications Informative (SI 28)

3.7 **Essex County Council Highways** – De-minimus

3.8 Neighbour objections have been received from eight local residents. Each objection highlights the potential health fear of the mast installation, in addition to the detrimental visual impact the mast will create. Alternative locations are suggested, such as siting the proposed masts to open and barren land such as Foulness Island.

3.9 Following the revised plans a **second round** of consultation was undertaken and a further three objections have been received from nearby residents. Two of these further respondents also wrote in during the first round of consultations and all three cite health concerns as their main objection to the siting of this equipment. One raises concerns over the visual intrusion caused by this proposal whilst another accepts that, visually, the proposal is acceptable.

3.10 Again, Highways took the view that the application was de-minimus.

MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

3.11 **Revised Plans**

The planning application has been subject to recent revisions, with the applied design initially containing a much larger headgear to the top of the mast. The revision was at the request of the Local Planning Authority questioning the operators need for such large physical development and the installation of 6 antennae. The question over the need for 6 antennae results from the refused application to the west of the football club at land rear of Great Wakering Garage (see history above), which included only 3 antennae. This was intended to provide coverage for a similar area to that of the current application, thus the larger headframe certainly had a much greater impact and was potentially visually damaging. The applicants have submitted the revised headset proposal, noting that it reduces performance.

3.12 **Visual Impact**

There is justification for such a revised installation in this area as the mast in question will provide coverage for the north of Great Wakering itself as well as the villages of Little Wakering and Barling, both of which have inadequate coverage.

3.13 The applicants considered two alternative locations before deciding on the application site. The first one of these was the one at Great Wakering Garage, as mentioned in the history section above. This was disregarded due to the refusal of a previous application here. The second option considered was on Green Belt land north of the village of Great Wakering, although this was disregarded due to the exposed nature of the site and the potential adverse environmental impact.

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- 3.14 Planning Policy Guidance Note 8 (PPG), re-issued in 2001 represents the most up to date national policy on the subject. This guidance reiterates the Governments policy of facilitating the growth of new and existing telecommunications equipment whilst also keeping the environmental impact to a minimum.
- 3.15 Policy PU1 of the Rochford District Local Plan relates specifically to telecommunications proposals. It states that regard will be had, when considering proposals, to the minimisation of unsightliness or intrusion.
- 3.16 The provision of telecommunications equipment on land such as this within the Rochford District is acceptable in principle subject to the physical and visual impact the development creates for the location. In this instance the major impact arises from the headset since the mast itself is a replacement for an existing one. Furthermore, the appearance that the new mast presents will be considerably alleviated by the presence of the three remaining floodlighting masts and a further two approved ones yet to be erected. The visual intrusion created by this equipment has also been reduced significantly following the revised plans and the opportunity to replace an existing tower with one of similar height (the proposal is only three metres higher than the existing tower) reduces the need for further, telecommunications specific, towers elsewhere in the vicinity.
- 3.17 Furthermore, the impact that the compound and equipment will have on the openness of the area will also be softened by its location adjacent to and within the exiting football ground. The view of the compound from nearby residential and open rural areas will be both obscured and dominated by the existing football club buildings and spectator accommodation currently within the site, depending from which angle it is viewed.
- 3.18 The site itself is visible from a number of residential properties along Little Wakering Road, Coronation Close, High Street, Brougham Close, Rushley Close, Lee Lotts and Twyford Avenue, and it is therefore paramount that the visual intrusion created by this proposal is kept to an absolute minimum. It is felt that the proposal in its revised form complies with the requirements of Local Plan policy PU6 and that the unsightliness of the development has been minimised acceptably. Furthermore, there is also broad compliance with PPG8 guidance regarding the use of existing structures. Whilst it is accepted that the development technically incorporates a new tower, it is a near like for like replacement, height wise, of an existing tower meaning the additional impact of the increased height is negligible.
- 3.19 **Health and Public Concern**
PPG 8 does not say that the health concerns of residents are not material considerations. It is apparent that any health concerns, whether real or perceived, can in principle be material considerations and that genuine public fears must be properly listened to.

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- 3.20 To this end the developers have submitted, with their application, a signed Declaration of Conformity with ICNIRP Public Exposure Guidelines. The presence of this document, commonly known as an "ICNIRP Document" confirms that the proposed equipment is designed to be in full compliance with the requirements of the radio frequency public exposure guidelines of the International Commission on Non-Ionising
- 3.21 Radiation Protection (ICNIRP). It also confirms that the level of exposure to electromagnetic fields that the general public will experience as a result of this proposal falls within acceptable levels.
- 3.22 Government advice is that where a proposed installation meets the ICNIRP guidelines then the Local Planning Authority should not need to explore the issue any further.

CONCLUSION

- 3.23 Whilst it is acknowledged that the mast is within open countryside it is felt that the revised design of this scheme is acceptable in visual terms. The compound is shielded effectively by the existing buildings and structures on site and the appearance of the mast, given the presence of the other towers already on site, will not appear visually intrusive.

RECOMMENDATION

- 3.24 It is proposed that this Committee **RESOLVES** to **APPROVE** this application subject to the following conditions:-

- 1 SC4 – Time Limits Full – Standard

Informatives

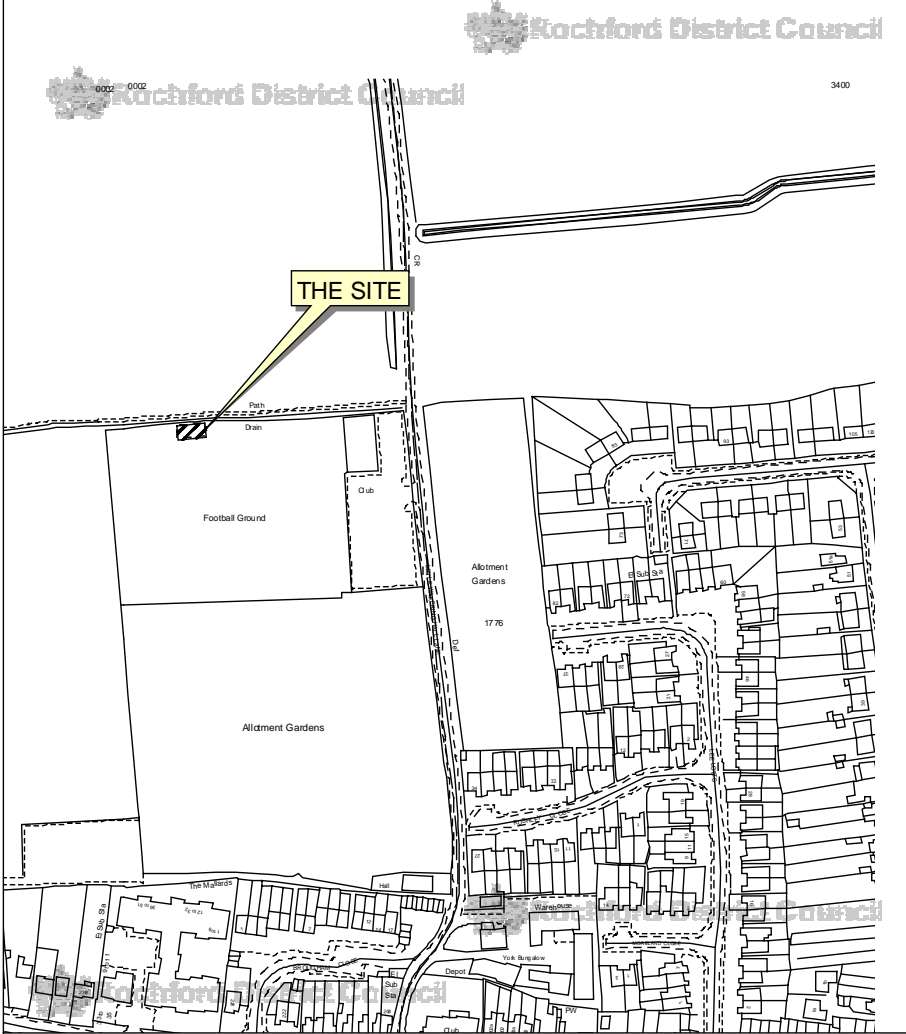
- 1 A suitable scheme of insulation shall be installed and maintained such that any noise emitted from the approved installation shall be inaudible at the boundary of the site
- 2 SI28 – Standard Telecommunications Informative



Shaun Scrutton
Head of Planning Services

For further information please contact Dave Beighton on (01702) 318097.

02/00417/FUL



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NTS



TITLE : 02/00173/FUL
INSTALL TELECOMMUNICATIONS RADIO BASE STATION,
COMPRISING 20M LATTICE TOWER, 3 DIPOLE ANTENNAE,
2 DISH ANTENNAE, EQUIPMENT CABIN AND ANCILLARY
DEVELOPMENT
LAND TO NORTH EAST OF HAMBRO HILL AND DEVENISH
LTD, RAYLEIGH

APPLICANT : MMO2 AIRWAVE

ZONING : METROPOLITAN GREEN BELT

PARISH: RAYLEIGH TOWN COUNCIL AREA

WARD: TRINITY

PLANNING APPLICATION DETAILS

- 4.1 The applicant is contracted to supply a digital, secure and reliable communications system for the emergency services. This system is to cover 100% of the land area of the country (being greater than the obligation on mobile phone operators, to provide coverage of 90% of the population). The initial users of the system are proposed to be the Police Force. The system is to replace outdated technology and ultimately, allow greater communication between the emergency services and the services in different areas.
- 4.2 The installation proposed then is to consist of a lattice tower of 20m in height. The three dipole antennae consist of slim structures extending a further 2.5m in height. The dishes are shown to be mounted on the lattice tower about 1m below its highest point.
- 4.3 The remaining equipment will be at ground level. This consists of a cabin approx 2.8m square and to a height of 3m, ducting, meter cabinets and standby generator all within a security compound of 12m by 6m. This will be fenced by 1.5m high security fence topped with barbed wire.
- 4.4 This submission constitutes a planning application rather than a request for a determination for prior approval. The criteria that generally triggers this approach in this case is the fact that the tower is greater than 15m in height.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.5 None for this site. Other consents which have a bearing on the determination are those which relate to the installation of a telecommunications mast for the operator Orange to the north east of Sandy Lodge, Hambro Hill (01/00617/DPDP24) and to the installation of telecommunications equipment at the Rayleigh Police Station site (02/00411/DPDP24).

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CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

- 4.6 Essex County Council **Highway Authority** has no objections but suggests a condition requiring signage to the public footpath where it crosses the access road during construction.
- 4.7 The **Environment Agency** has no objections
- 4.8 The **Head of Housing, Health and Community Care** has no adverse comments
- 4.9 **Rayleigh Town Council** has no objections or observations
- 4.10 Rayleigh Civic Society consider that the fencing around the installation should be robust to avoid inappropriate access to the site. This comment is made on the basis of the emergency service use of the site and its remote location.
- 4.11 In response to notification to occupiers of property in the vicinity of the site, responses have been received from 57 occupiers. They raise, in the main, the following issues:
- Installation will be visibly invasive and intrusive in a Green Belt location with the landscape and skyline compromised;
 - has an unacceptable collective impact when other installations are taken into account, is not necessary, will lead to further installations and alternatives are insufficiently investigated;
 - health concerns, exacerbated by the former landfill use of surrounding land and the potential for landfill gas given the heating effect of radio waves. Also in relation to children in the area, those with pacemakers and because there are two schools within 0.5 miles. Will lead to inability to gain household insurance;
 - noise impact due to 'buzzing' of equipment;
 - reduction in house values;
 - will exacerbate the impact of other former uses of the land in the vicinity.

MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.12 It is relevant to consider the visual impact of the proposed development, the need and possible alternatives, given the Green Belt location, and the concerns that have been raised with regard to health issues.

Visual Impact

- 4.13 The proposed development is clearly located at a high point in terms of land levels, to maximise its potential. Very careful consideration needs to be given to the character of the area however to be clear with regard to the visual impact of the proposal.

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- 4.14 To the west of the site there is no residential development within the line formed by Hambro Hill and the rail line save for the Sandy Lodge dwelling. Much of this area to the west of the site is set with established woodland. Consideration has been given to the potential for views of the site from Norman Crescent, Mortimer Road and Fairland Close, all on the far side of the rail line. Given the presence of the woodland it is considered that there will be few opportunities for householders to have sight of the mast and in those circumstances where they do, it is unlikely to be of the whole of the structure. The closest dwelling in this area is some 250m from the site.
- 4.15 Properties which are adjacent to Hambro Hill do not always face towards it. The development on Kembles and nos. 39 to 51 Hambro Hill are examples of dwellings which face away from, rather than towards the road. The properties are generally set back from the road and, certainly on the steepest part of the hill, there is significant planting between the properties and the Hambro Hill carriageway.
- 4.16 On the side of Hambro Hill closest to the mast there is further quite significant established tree growth. This existing does much to ensure that there will also be few views if any from any location on Hambro Hill to the south west of the site and from either of Upper or Lower Lambricks. In this area the closest dwelling is probably Sandy Lodge at some 150m from the site.
- 4.17 To the south of the site is Hambro Close. This development is to the north of (or behind) nos 16 to 54 Hambro Hill and effectively blocks views from those properties towards the site. Of the dwellings on the Close, nos 7 to 12 are enclosed by large conifers which do much to reduce the potential for views from these properties. There will be some views from nos 1 to 6 and 14 to 18. In all cases apart from no 18 however the view will not fall within the main field of vision from the front or rear of the properties. The closest dwelling here is some 150m distant.
- 4.18 To the south east of the mast is the remainder of the development on Hambro Hill (nos 2 to 14) and the Hockley Road properties. The land between the mast and these properties is generally open being in agricultural use. The curvature of the slope of the land between the site and the properties is significant. It is such that, when viewing from Hockley Road, the base of any installation here is likely to be 'lost' behind the brow of the hill. It is likely that there will be views of the site from this location. Closest property is, however, some 300m distant.
- 4.19 Further to the south east are the dwellings on The Gattens. Again significant existing tree planting is to be found to the rear of these properties. They are a minimum distance of some 390m from the proposed site. Given that and the intervening tree planting it is not considered that there will be any significant views in this direction.
- 4.20 There is a public footpath route running from Hambro Hill, adjacent to no 56, in a north easterly direction passing close to the site and then falling down through the wooded area referred to earlier to connect with Ferndale Road via a rail line crossing. It is self evident that, where the route is in close proximity of the mast, there will be clear views of it.

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- 4.21 When considering the issue of visual intrusion, it must be kept in mind that the proposed installation could not be described as bulky. The headframe to the mast will carry only three 'slimline' antennae, the total width of the headframe being some 4.5m and the height of the antennae being 2.5m. This must be considered in the context of the distance at which views may be possible, as set out above. Below the head frame are two dish antennae of only 0.3m diameter.

Need and Alternatives

- 4.22 As set out in the introduction above, the installation is proposed to enable the upgrading of the communications networks used by the emergency services. The overall aim is to improve their effectiveness, efficiency and co-operative working.
- 4.23 This submission was made in March of this year and information supplied with the submission shows that the site will provide coverage to most of Rayleigh, Rawreth, Hullbridge, Battlesbridge and the western parts of Hockley. It was made clear that, at this time, despite the installation being for the purposes of the emergency services, locations on police station sites were not available.
- 4.24 Subsequent to this a submission was made by the same operator, under the prior approval procedures, for an installation at the Rayleigh Police Station. The previous moratorium on the use of this site had been lifted and the installation was for the same purposes as that proposed at Hambro Hill, that is for the emergency services. Whilst no coverage plots were provided for the installation, it seems unlikely that it can differ significantly. The applicants have not been willing to provide any further explanation with regard to the need, if any, for the two installations now proposed.
- 4.25 Previous to this submission an installation has been implemented at land to the north east of Sandy Lodge on Hambro Hill. Given this, if this latest proposal were to receive permission, there would be two installations in close proximity. The applicants have been requested to assess the possibility of any sharing of facilities to avoid this duplication. They have not indicated that such a sharing arrangement could not take place and have not been willing to further explore this matter. Given that this location is in the Green Belt, it is considered that the justification for it should be made clear.

Health Issues

- 4.26 Many of those who have responded to consultations on this application have raised a concern at the perceived health risk of the installation. Whilst it has been acknowledged that the fear of a risk to health (rather than any demonstrated actual risk) is a consideration that can be taken into account, the government have been quite clear that the weight that can be attached to this matter should be limited.

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- 4.27 In appeal situations with regard to installations for the emergency services it has been held that the weight that can be attached to the professional views of those who have examined the health risks should be greater. Authorities have been held to have acted unreasonably where they have refused such installations on the basis of this perceived concern. It is considered that the same applies in this case and that, whilst there is a general and widely held concern that these installations pose a health risk, there is no evidence to corroborate this.

CONCLUSION

- 4.28 In terms of the visual impact, whilst the installation will be seen from some properties it is at a sufficient distance and reduced by intervening landform or established woodland, that it is not unacceptable. Perceived health risks are not a solid foundation on which to resist proposals of this nature.
- 4.29 With regard to the need for the proposal and alternative installations that could be (or are being) used, insufficient information or justification has been provided to the Authority for this proposal.

RECOMMENDATION

- 4.30 It is proposed that this Committee **RESOLVES** to **REFUSE** planning permission for this application for the following reason:
- 1 The proposed development is required for the purpose of providing a telecommunications system for the emergency services, this installation to provide the necessary coverage for the Rayleigh area. Subsequent to this submission alternative proposals have been made to, and approved by the Local Planning Authority, for an installation for emergency services use under the 'prior approval' procedures to be located at Rayleigh Police Station. It is the view of the Local Planning Authority that these alternative proposals, now approved, will largely duplicate the coverage to be provided by this proposal at Hambro Hill. Insufficient justification has therefore been provided for the requirement for the proposed installation given what now appears to be a duplication in coverage. This is particularly the case given the location of the installation in the Metropolitan Green Belt.

In close proximity to the proposed site, to the north east of Sandy Lodge, Hambro Hill is an existing installation for the telecommunications operator, Orange. It is the view of the Local Planning Authority that insufficient response has been provided to its request that, the possibility of a shared installation between the operator now proposed and Orange be investigated. This is particularly the case given the location of the installation in the Metropolitan Green Belt.

Relevant Development Plan Policies and Proposals:

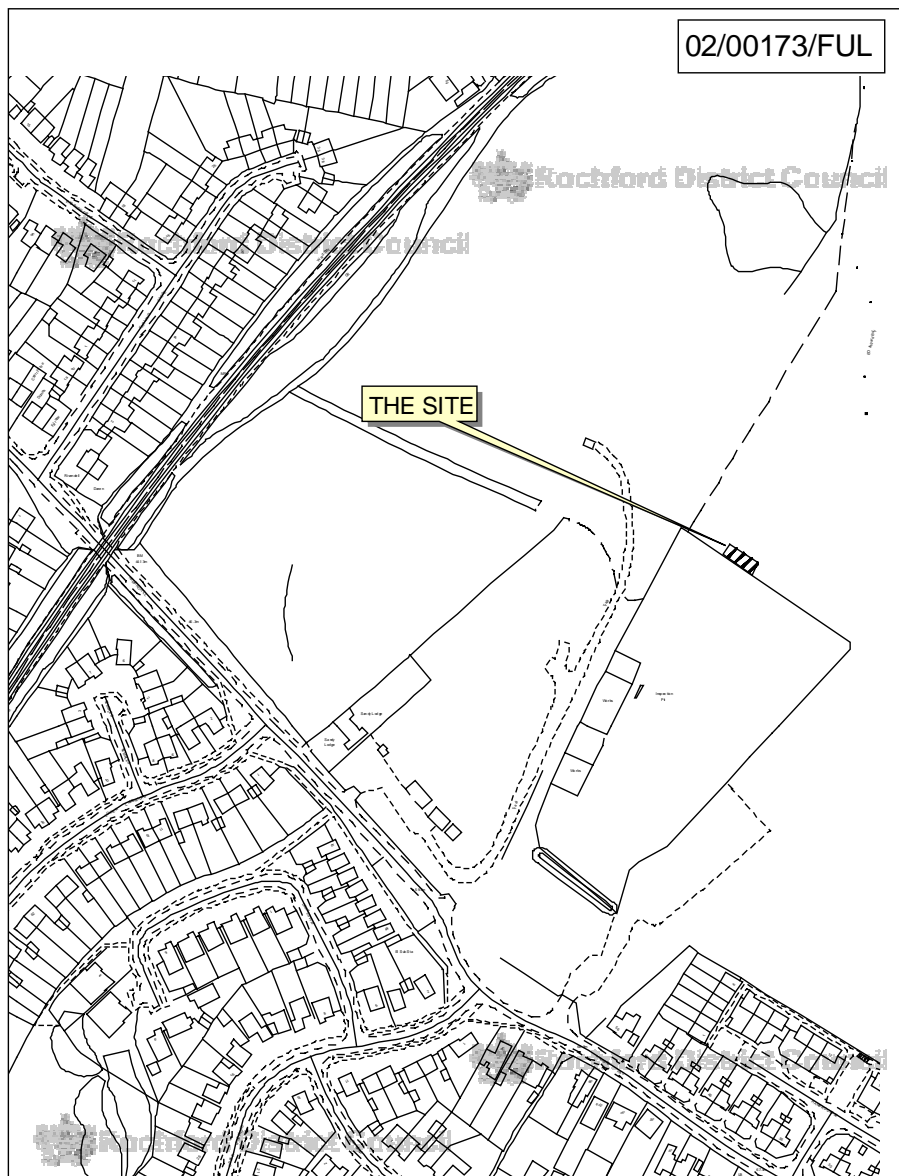
GB1, PU1 of the Rochford District Local Plan First Review

CS2, C2 of the Essex and Southend-on-Sea Replacement Structure Plan



Shaun Scrutton
Head of Planning Services

For further information please contact Kevin Steptoe on (01702) 546366.



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