

**At a meeting of the DEVELOPMENT CONTROL (NORTH SUNDERLAND)
SUB-COMMITTEE held in the CIVIC CENTRE on WEDNESDAY, 2nd NOVEMBER,
2011 at 4.45 p.m.**

Present:-

Councillor Copeland in the Chair

Councillors Curran, Fletcher, T. Foster, Francis and E. Gibson

Declarations of Interest

11/02920/TEX – Installation of a 12m high light weight lattice telecommunications tower supporting 3x Vodafone antennas and 3x O2 antennas (Overall height 15m) with ground based equipment cabinet and ancillary development

Councillor Curran declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the application.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Charlton, D. Richardson and L. Walton

Applications made under the Town and Country Planning Acts and Regulations made thereunder

The Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) relating to the North Sunderland area, copies of which had also been forwarded to each Member of the Council upon applications made thereunder.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

11/01796/FUL – Erection of (70) 2, 3 and 4 bedroom dwellings with associated highways, landscaping and car parking

1. RESOLVED that the decision be delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive to either:-
 - a. Grant permission for the reasons set out in the report and supplement and subject to the 20 conditions set out therein, subject to the completion of a Section 106 agreement in respect of off site play

- provision and improvements to the footpath connecting Maplewood Avenue with the playing fields; or
- b. Refuse permission should the Section 106 agreement not be completed on the grounds that the development does not provide adequate play provision.

11/02775/VAR – Variation of Condition 2 (approved Plans) of previously approved application 10/01995/FUL to install photovoltaic panels to the roof

2. RESOLVED that the application be approved for the reasons set out in the report and subject to the 12 conditions set out therein.

11/02920/TEX – Installation of a 12m high light weight lattice telecommunications tower supporting 3x Vodafone antennas and 3x O2 antennas (overall height 15m) with ground based equipment cabinet and ancillary development

The representative of the Deputy Chief Executive, Mr Mike Mattok, presented the report and advised Members that this application was for prior notification of proposed development and the only aspects the Committee were able to look at were siting and design issues. There had been a number of objections relating to health risks associated with the installation however the Government guidance was that as the applicant had advised that the antennas were compliant with the International Commission on Non-Ionising Radiation Protection guidelines for public exposure the planning authority could not use health risks as a reason for refusing permission to install the antennas. There had been a site considered at the Marriott Hotel however this had been discounted by the applicant due to the high rent demanded by the hotel owners; economic forces such as this were not material planning considerations.

The Chairman welcomed to the Committee Mr Alan Osborne who was in attendance to speak in support of the application on behalf of the applicant. Mr Osborne advised that:-

- The network operators had been seeking a site in this area for the last 2 years; there was the requirement for this installation to improve coverage in the area to meet users needs.
- There had been other sites in the area considered and it was felt that this would be the most appropriate site in terms of increased network coverage and minimal visual impact. The site at the Marriott Hotel was at an advanced stage however the proposal had been withdrawn as the agent wanted rent of 15 percent more than the expected guideline amount Vodafone would normally pay for such a location and the installation would not be commercially viable as a result.
- There would only be 8 houses which would have direct views of the installation and this would be from the rear of the houses so it was not considered that the installation would have any detrimental impact on residential or visual amenity.
- Should this application be refused it was likely that the operators would look for other sites within the T.A. centre as this was felt to be the most appropriate location.

Councillor Francis queried whether tests had been carried out on the signal reception in the area. Mr Osborne advised that the existing coverage had been looked at as had the anticipated future coverage. Currently there was restricted coverage in the area with users experiencing an outdoor signal but limited signal when indoors. As demands on the network increased the level of coverage would decrease if there were no additional base stations installed.

Councillor Francis then stated that the health implications of these masts were still unknown given that it was relatively new technology.

The Chairman then introduced Mr Paul Tullock who would be speaking against the application on behalf of himself and the other local residents.

Mr Tullock advised that he lived on Kingarth Avenue which was the street which would be most affected by the installation. He objected to the size and type of tower proposed as these lattice towers were more commonly seen in industrial estates rather than residential areas where masts were normally hidden or sympathetically designed. The tower would be an eyesore and would disrupt the skyline, an issue compounded by various factors including:-

- The choice of site resulting in a higher pole than usual being required
- The location of the installation within an open area of the TA Centre leaving it unscreened and clearly visible from surrounding properties.

He also advised that there was a petition against this installation which had 300 signatures on it from local residents.

Mr Tullock concluded by stating that the tower would be visually obtrusive and an eyesore and that it would be out of character with the area.

Councillor Fletcher agreed with the concerns raised by the objectors, she felt that this installation was not in an appropriate location or of an appropriate design.

Councillor Francis stated that he supported the views of the objectors; this was not an appropriate site. He also commented that the site was in a hollow and as such it would be difficult for any type of signals to be transmitted from this site.

3. RESOLVED that the application be refused for the reason set out in the supplementary report.

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 – Appeals

The Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) concerning the appeals received for the period 1st September, 2011 to 30th September, 2011.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

4. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

(Signed) R. COPELAND,
Chairman.