



Parish: Chichester	Ward: Chichester West
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CC/21/00841/FUL

Proposal	Removal of existing telecommunications mast and installation of new 20 metre mast including transfer of existing apparatus to new mast and installation of 3 no. additional antennas and associated apparatus and ancillary works.		
Site	Telecommunications Site 1498802, Whitehouse Farm, Old Broyle Farm, Chichester, West Broyle PO19 3PH		
Map Ref	(E) 484645 (N) 105843		
Applicant	Cellnex And EE Ltd and Hutchison 3G UK Ltd	Agent	Mr Michael Doyle

RECOMMENDATION TO PERMIT



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1.0 Reason for Committee Referral

1.1 Parish Objection – Officer recommends permit.

2.0 The Site and Surroundings

- 2.1 The site is an existing telecommunications site located on Whitehouse Farm, West Broyle, approximately 650m to the west of the settlement boundary of Chichester and 200m to the north of Newlands Lane / Salthill Lane. It sits within an area of the farm that is laid with hardstanding and which accommodates two agricultural storage buildings. It is also set against and is enclosed within a mature tree line, which is made up of specimens that measure approximately 5-7m in height.
- 2.2 The site comprises of a telecommunications mast that is made up of a 15.1m tall monopole and 3 antennas that project up to 17.2m, an equipment cabinet, and associated apparatus and ancillary infrastructure, all of which is enclosed within a 2.1m high chain-link fence that spans 10.3m by 6.7m.

3.0 The Proposal

- 3.1 The application seeks planning permission for the removal of the existing telecommunications mast and to construct a replacement 20m mast that would include the apparatus currently fixed to the existing mast and the installation of 3 no. additional antennas and associated apparatus, and ancillary works.
- 3.2 The proposed mast would measure 20.2m in total (inclusive of antennas) and would include a support ladder that would run the length of the monopole. The antenna equipment at the top of the antenna would measure 5.1m in height and would create an installation that would have a diameter of 2.65m.
- 3.3 No changes are proposed to the appearance or dimensions of the equipment cabinet or to the compound security fencing.

4.0 History

None relevant

5.0 Constraints

Listed Building	NO
Conservation Area	NO
Rural Area	YES
AONB	NO
Tree Preservation Order	NO
EA Flood Zone	NO
- Flood Zone 2	NO
- Flood Zone 3	NO
Historic Parks and Gardens	NO

6.0 Representations and Consultations

6.1 Parish Council

The site is inappropriate for a mast of 20m (plus antennae). The site is within what will soon be a residential area and the proposed substantial mast, together with its numerous antennae atop, would tower over the surrounding dwellings, its incongruous, overly industrial appearance and scale having a significant impact upon residents and the character and amenity of the area.

Consideration should be given to the masterplan for the area and the local constraints and opportunities. An alternative to the significant height increase in this location should be sought. Replacing the mast with antennae on the taller buildings within the Whitehouse Farm development would cause significantly less visual harm and this possibility should be pursued in the first instance. If this is not possible, the operator should seek to relocate the mast closer to the industrial area of the Whitehouse Farm development and/or to the vicinity of a taller tree line, where the impact of such a substantial structure would not be so harmful to residential amenity.

6.2 Aerodrome Safeguarding Officer

The proposed development has been examined from an aerodrome safeguarding perspective and does not conflict with safeguarding criteria. We therefore have no objection to this proposal.

6.3 Third party comments

1 comment has been received, which is summarised as follows;

- a) A representative from Goodwood Airfield has confirmed that there are no objections to the proposed development from an Aerodrome safeguarding perspective.

7.0 Planning Policy

The Development Plan

7.1 The Development Plan for the area comprises the Chichester Local Plan: Key Policies 2014-2029, the CDC Site Allocation Development Plan Document and all made neighbourhood plans. There is no made neighbourhood plan for Chichester at this time.

7.2 The principal planning policies relevant to the consideration of this application are as follows:

Chichester Local Plan: Key Policies 2014-2029

- Policy 1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- Policy 2: Development Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy
- Policy 9: Development and Infrastructure Provisions
- Policy 15: West of Chichester Strategic Development Location
- Policy 45: Development in the countryside
- Policy 47: Heritage and Design
- Policy 48: Natural Environment

Chichester Local Plan Review Preferred Approach 2016 - 2035

- 7.3 Work on the review of the adopted Local Plan to consider the development needs of the Chichester Plan Area through to 2036 is now well underway. Consultation on a Preferred Approach Local Plan has taken place and following detailed consideration of all responses to the consultation, it is intended that the Council will publish a Submission Local Plan under Regulation 19 in March 2022. Following consultation, the Submission Local Plan will be submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination. In accordance with the Local Development Scheme, it is anticipated that the new Plan will be adopted by the Council in 2023. However, at this stage, it is considered that very limited weight can be attached to the policies contained within the Local Plan Review.

National Policy and Guidance

- 7.4 Government planning policy now comprises the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2021). Paragraph 11 of the revised Framework states that plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development, and for decision-taking this means:

c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development

plan without delay; or

d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas of assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or

ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

- 7.5 Consideration should also be given to the following paragraph and sections: Sections, 4 (Decision-making), 10 (Supporting high quality communications) and 12 (Achieving well-designed places). The relevant paragraphs of the National Planning Practice Guidance have also been taken into account.

7.6 The aims and objectives of the Chichester in Partnership Community Strategy 2016-2029 which are relevant and material to the determination of this planning application are:

- Support local businesses to grow and become engaged with local communities
- Support and promote initiatives that encourage alternative forms of transport and encourage the use of online services

8.0 **Planning Comments**

8.1 The main issues arising from this proposal are:

- i. Principle of development
- ii. Design and impact upon character of the surrounding rural area
- iii. Impact upon the amenity of nearby properties
- iii. Highways impact
- iii. Other considerations

Assessment

i. Principle of development

8.2 The application site is located outside any Settlement Boundary and therefore the proposal is considered to be development in the countryside under policies 2 and 45 of The Chichester Local Plan (CLP). Policy 2 of the CLP states that development in the rural area, outside of settlement boundaries shall be restricted to that which requires a countryside location or meets an essential local rural need or supports rural diversification, whilst Policy 45 requires development proposals in the countryside to be: well related to existing rural buildings or establishes settlements, complementary to and not prejudicial to viable agricultural operations or other existing uses, and appropriate in terms of their scale, design use of materials and general appearance for their countryside setting, ensuring that they would have minimal impact on the landscape and rural character of the area.

8.3 In addition to the above, Policy 9 of the CLP relates to Development and infrastructure provision and establishes that the Council will support proposals that will safeguard the requirements of infrastructure providers, including but not limited to telecommunications equipment (particularly high-speed broadband).

8.4 Although the site to which this application relates lies in the rural area, regard must be had to the fact that it is currently in use as a telecommunications installation and the proposal would not require the further development of countryside / rural land. As the proposal would not affect the permitted use of the site, it can be considered acceptable in principle in land use terms, subject to being of an acceptable scale, siting and design, respecting the above sensitive areas, and complying with development plan policies and any other material considerations. These further relevant considerations are discussed in detail below.

ii. Design and impact upon character of the surrounding area

- 8.5 Policy 45 of the Chichester Local Plan sets out that development in the countryside should be of an appropriate scale, design, siting and use of materials so as to have minimal impact upon the landscape and rural character of the area whilst Policy 48 also states that development proposals must recognise and respect the distinctive local landscape character of the surrounding area and have no adverse impact of the tranquil and rural character of countryside areas. Furthermore, Policy 15 relates to the West of Chichester Strategic Development Location and states that development within the allocated site should be well integrated with its surroundings, and Policy 47 requires proposals to respect local character and existing designed or natural landscapes.
- 8.6 The application seeks permission to replace the existing 15m tall telecommunications mast with a 20m tall mast, inclusive of 3 additional antennae. Chichester City Council has objected to the proposed development, stating that the site is inappropriate for a 20m high mast as it is located on the Whitehouse Farm / West of Chichester Strategic Development Location allocated site, which has been granted planning permission under applications 14/04301/OUT and 20/01046/REM for a large housing led development scheme. As such, concerns have been raised that the proposal would conflict with the agreed masterplan as it would tower over the approved surrounding buildings and would appear incongruous within and visually harmful to the context of a residential setting.
- 8.7 Whilst the site is currently located within a countryside setting and has the potential to be located within a predominantly residential development site, it must be recognised that a telecommunications mast is already in situ. As such, the material consideration in terms of the design and appearance of the structure is whether the additional 5m of masting and associated equipment would result in significantly more landscape or townscape harm than the existing mast and antennae.
- 8.8 In terms of general appearance, the proposed mast tower and associated installations would be similar to the existing structure as its monopole would be of a similar diameter and would remain matt grey colour, whilst the surrounding compound and infrastructure cabinet would remain unaltered aside from some minor ancillary installations. However, the proposed grouping of antenna's would represent a significant increase as it would measure 5.1m in height and 2.65m in diameter, which would be substantially larger than the existing group of 3 antennas at 2.2m in height and 1.1m in diameter. Notwithstanding this and the fact that the upper part of the proposed installation would be somewhat bulkier, it is noted that the increase in height would be restricted to 3m due to the antenna's being located closer to the top of the proposed monopole, rather than above it (as is existing), and that there would be significant spacings between each part of apparatus which would enable light to filter through the installation. These characteristics would help to ensure that the massing of the upper part of the installation would appear visually broken up and that it would not create a solid structure that would interfere with long range views across the surrounding rural landscape or be obtrusive or overbearing upon potential future nearby development.

8.9 With regards to the potential impact of the proposal on the future development of the Whitehouse Farm development, it is of relevance that the outline masterplan approved under application 14/04301/OUT and the phase 1 and 2 Framework Plan approved under application 20/01046/REM both make provision for the retention of the adjacent tree line and an area of landscaping around the site, which would help to provide separation between the telecommunications tower and surrounding dwellings.

8.10 Overall, it is therefore considered that the proposed development, whilst representing an increase in size and massing when compared to the existing telecommunications mast, would be appropriate in terms of its siting, scale and design and would not result in significant harm to the existing rural character of the surrounding area, or to the quality and townscape character of any future development of the Whitehouse Farm development scheme. It is therefore deemed to be in accordance with Policies 15, 45, 47 and 48 of the Chichester Local Plan.

iii. Impact upon the amenity of neighbouring properties

8.11 The National Planning Policy Framework in paragraph 130 states that planning decisions should create places that offer a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

8.12 Chichester City Council has raised concerns that the proposal would be detrimental to the general levels of amenity that would be enjoyed by potential future occupiers of the Whitehouse Farm development; however, the area surrounding the mast is not proposed for development within the Master Plan and Phasing Framework Plan that have been agreed with the Local Planning Authority. As such, it would not be directly overbearing upon any nearby future dwellings and would not be a prominent feature within any future street-scene. This coupled with the fact that the proposal would be of a lightweight construction and would not be viewed as a solid structure, would help to ensure that it would not significantly compromise the living environment of any potential future residents of surrounding development. It should also be noted that the proposal would improve the local mobile communications network for the surrounding population.

8.13 For the reasons set out above the proposal would not have an adverse impact upon residential amenity and therefore the proposal would be acceptable in this respect.

iv. Highways Impact

8.14 The telecommunications site to which this application relates can be accessed via a farm track from Newlands Lane / Salthill Lane, which lies 280m to the south. Given the distance from these roads which are the nearest public vehicular routes, it is considered that the proposed development would not have a detrimental impact upon highway safety. The applicant has confirmed that the proposed structure would be delivered in parts to the site by medium sized vans. As such, it's construction would not lead to any large vehicles accessing the site or cause significant levels of congestions around the field access or any nearby junctions. The proposal is thus considered to be acceptable in accordance with Policy 39 of the Chichester Local Plan.

v. Other considerations

8.15 Due to the height of the proposed development, the Local Planning Authority has consulted the civil aviation authority in order to establish whether it would be in conflict with any flight paths. Both the Gatwick Airport and Goodwood Aerodrome Safeguarding Officers have confirmed that the proposal would not conflict with any relevant safeguarding criteria and as such there is no objection to the proposal.

Conclusion

8.16 Based on the above it is considered that, subject to compliance with conditions, the proposal is deemed to be acceptable in principle and would not result in harm to the character and appearance with the surrounding rural landscape, or that of any future townscape. In addition, it would not be detrimental to amenity of the occupiers of existing and future dwellings in the surrounding area and would not result in harm to the local highway network. The proposal therefore complies with all relevant development plan policies and therefore the application is recommended for approval.

Human Rights

8.17 In reaching this conclusion the Human Rights of the applicants and nearby occupiers have been taken into account and it is concluded that the recommendation to permit is justified and proportionate.

RECOMMENDATION

PERMIT subject to the following conditions and informatives:-

1) The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the plans listed below under the heading "Decided Plans"

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3) The telecommunications mast, antennas and associated equipment hereby permitted shall be permanently removed within one month of it no longer being required for its purpose.

Reason: To enable the Local Planning Authority to review the need for the equipment with regard to the technology available and in the interests of visual amenity and character.

4) The development hereby permitted shall not be constructed other than in accordance with the materials specified within the application form, plans and Planning Design and Access Statement, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that a harmonious visual relationship is achieved between the new and the existing developments.

Decided Plans

The application has been assessed and the decision is made on the basis of the following plans and documents submitted:

Details	Reference	Version	Date Received	Status
PLAN - Site Plan Existing (A3)	1498802 00 000 MD004	4.A	14.05.2021	Approved
PLAN - Elevation Existing North-East (A3)	1498802 00 002 MD004 ML001	4.A	14.05.2021	Approved
PLAN - Location Plan (A3)	1498802 00 004 ML004	4.A	14.05.2021	Approved
PLAN - Site Plan Proposed (A3)	1498802 02 110 MD004	4.A	14.05.2021	Approved
PLAN - Equipment Plan Proposed (A3)	1498802 02 111 MD004	4.A	14.05.2021	Approved
PLAN - Elevation Proposed (A3)	1498802 02 160 MD004	4.A.1	14.05.2021	Approved
PLAN - Antenna Plan Proposed (A3)	1498802 02 160 MD004	4.A.2	14.05.2021	Approved

INFORMATIVES

1) The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

For further information on this application please contact Luke Simpson on 01243 534734

To view the application use the following link -

<https://publicaccess.chichester.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=QQ69VSEFPV00>