



Planning Development Management Committee

Report by Development Management Manager

Committee Date: 21 March 2019

Site Address:	Land to South of Stoneyhill Terrace, Cove Bay, Aberdeen,
Application Description:	Installation of 12.3 metre high steelwork pole with 2 no. antennas and associated works
Application Ref:	190059/DPP
Application Type	Detailed Planning Permission
Application Date:	10 January 2019
Applicant:	Arqiva Ltd and Telefonica
Ward:	Kincorth/Nigg/Cove
Community Council:	Cove And Altens
Case Officer:	Sepideh Hajisoltani



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RECOMMENDATION

Approve Conditionally

APPLICATION BACKGROUND

Site Description

The application site is situated adjacent to the eastern side of a shed unit at Jamieson's Fruit and Veg yard on the Southern Side of Stoneyhill Terrace and within Cove Bay Conservation Area.

Relevant Planning History

120485- Agricultural notification was submitted in April 2012- Prior Approval not required.

APPLICATION DESCRIPTION

Description of Proposal

Detailed planning permission is sought for installation of a 12m high, slim-line radio mast supporting 3 no. small scale antennas above, the largest of which has a centre line height of 12.775m and a small equipment cabinet at ground level.

Supporting Documents

All drawings and supporting documents listed below can be viewed on the Council's website at:

<https://publicaccess.aberdeencity.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=PL48V1BZ01700>

- Statement in Support
- ICNIRP Declaration
- Product Info: The Smart Metering Network

Reason for Referral to Committee

The application has been referred to the Planning Development Management Committee because The Cove and Altens Community Council has formally objected to the proposal. Accordingly, the application falls outwith the scope of the Council's Scheme of Delegation.

CONSULTATIONS

ACC - Roads Development Management Team – No Objection.

ACC - Environmental Health – No comments received.

Cove and Altens Community Council – Object to the proposal on the basis that the proposed mast is in a Conservation Area and that the erection of the mast would set a precedent.

REPRESENTATIONS

None.

MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Legislative Requirements

Sections 25 and 37(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 require that where, in making any determination under the planning acts, regard is to be had to the provisions of the Development Plan and that determination shall be made in accordance with the plan, so far as material to the application unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

National Planning Policy and Guidance

- Scottish Planning Policy (SPP)
- Historic Environment Scotland Policy Statement (HESPS)
- Planning Advice Note PAN 62 (Radio Telecommunications)

Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2017

- Policy D1: Quality Placemaking by Design
- Policy D4: Historic Environment
- Policy H1: Residential Areas
- Policy CI2: Telecommunications Infrastructure
- Policy NE2: Green Belt

EVALUATION

Visual impact on the Development on the Conservation Area

Scottish Planning Policy (2014) (SPP) highlights the importance of digital infrastructure and states that the planning system should support:

- development which helps deliver the Scottish Government's commitment to world class digital connectivity;
- the need for networks to evolve and respond to technology improvements and new services;
- inclusion of digital infrastructure in new homes and business premises; and
- infrastructure provision which is sited and designed to keep environmental impacts to a minimum.

Accordingly, the planning system has an important role to play in strengthening digital communications capacity and coverage across Scotland. However, all components of equipment should be considered together and designed and positioned as sensitively as possible, with cumulative visual effects of equipment being taken into account as part of the decision-making process.

It is acknowledged that the proposed mast installation is part of a wider Government's 'Smart Metering Network' project that will provide smart electricity and gas meters to homes and small businesses across Great Britain. A key feature of Smart Meters is that they are continuously connected to data centres to provide and manage the constant flow of data and functionality. Smart Meters must therefore be linked to an electronic communications network. In this instance the proposed smart metering radio mast would provide coverage to the settlement of Cove Bay.

The proposed mast would be partially visible when on Seaview Terrace, and from the footpath to the west of the application site. The scale and form of the slim-line mast and antenna is similar in appearance to other forms of utility poles in the vicinity and it is considered that the primary visual impact of the proposed equipment is not significant enough to warrant refusal on visual amenity grounds.

Policy D1: Quality Placemaking by Design

SPP and PAN 62 seek to ensure that telecommunications equipment is designed and sited to minimise visual impact or intrusion, particularly in sensitive locations. PAN 62 elaborates on this position stating that developments should be concealed and disguised where possible, however, it recognises that technical requirements and constraints may limit opportunities for sensitive design and siting.

In this instance the application site is located within a location with a variety of street furniture including light and utility poles nearby. With this in mind, whilst the proposed mast would increase the extent of these features, it would not be isolated or incongruous when considered in the context of the existing visual impacts and appearance of other similar structures nearby. As such it is considered that the level of this impact would not have a significant detrimental impact on the characteristics of the surrounding area. It is considered that the proposal sufficiently complies with the provisions of Policy D1.

Policy D4: Historic Environment

The Council seek to protect preserve and enhance the historic environment in line with Scottish Planning Policy, Historic Environment Scotland Policy Statement and its own Supplementary Guidance and Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Plan. It is considered that the proposal would not have a significant detrimental impact on the character and visual amenity of Cove Bay conservation area, and sufficiently complies with policy D4.

Policy H1: Residential Areas

The area to the north of the application site is in residential use. The proposal fully accords with Policy H1 in that no new or extended use is proposed on site and that the mast would contribute to towards a technologically advanced city which is one of the objectives of the Aberdeen Masterplan. It is also noted that the siting of the equipment would allow for routine maintenance and other relevant operator work without resulting in detrimental impact on residential amenity of nearby dwellings in terms of noise, privacy and overlooking.

Policy CI2: Telecommunications Infrastructure

It is considered that the proposal is generally acceptable in terms of policy CI2 in that the siting and appearance of the proposed equipment, close to an existing commercial building and not prominently visible from any public vantage point, would not have a significant detrimental impact on visual amenity, character or appearance of the surrounding area. It is also considered that the proposal is in full compliance with the long-term vision of Aberdeen as a Smart City.

Policy NE2: Green Belt

Policy NE2 states that essential infrastructure will only be permitted if it cannot be accommodated anywhere other than the Green Belt. The agent has submitted supporting information demonstrating that a sequential approach to site selection has been adopted. Site sharing, utilisation of existing buildings and structures have been explored to best meet the operational need whilst minimising environmental impact. Five other sites had been investigated but were found to be either unsuitable and/or unavailable or comparably no better than the chosen site.

It is considered that the proposal sufficiently complies with provisions of policy NE2.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve Conditionally

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

The proposed equipment would sufficiently comply with the relevant policies of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan, namely Policies D1 (Quality Placemaking by Design), D4 (Historic Environment), H1 (Residential Areas), CI2 (Telecommunications Infrastructure) and NE2 (Green Belt) in that the proposal would not have a significant detrimental impact on the visual amenity and character of the surrounding area and is line with the principles set out in Scottish Planning Policy. On the basis of the above and following on from the evaluation under policy and associated guidance, it is considered that there are no material planning considerations that would warrant refusal of the application.

CONDITIONS

- 1- In the event that the hereby approved equipment become obsolete or redundant, it must be removed within 6 months of such event and shall not remain on site thereafter. Once removed, the site shall be made good in accordance with a scheme to be submitted and approved in writing by the Planning Authority, within 1 month of such removal.

Reason – to minimise the level of visual intrusion and ensure the reinstatement of the site to a satisfactory condition.