

**KEY INFORMATION**

**Ward** Broughty Ferry

**Proposal**

Proposed installation of 3 antennae, 1 equipment cabin and ancillary development

**Address**

Telephone Exchange  
Queen Street  
Broughty Ferry  
Dundee DD5 1AD

**Applicant**

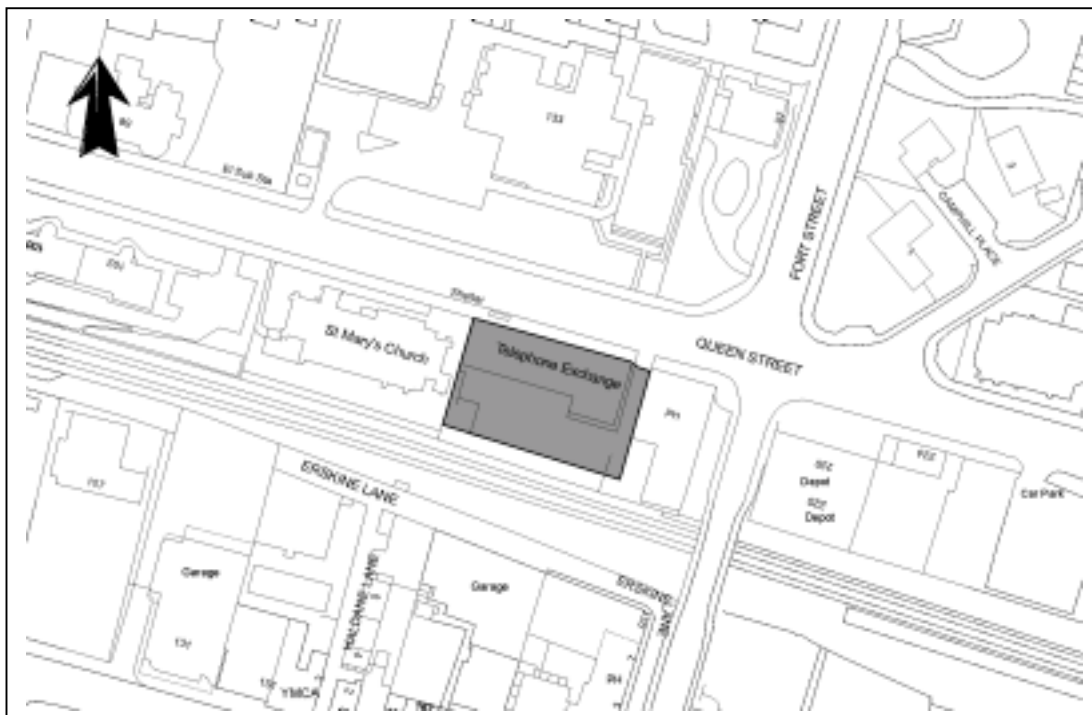
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**Agent**

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**Registered** 22 May 2002

**Case Officer** C Walker



## Antennae Proposed on Broughty Ferry Telephone Exchange

The proposed installation of 3 antennae, 1 equipment cabin and ancillary development is **RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL** subject to conditions. Report by Director of Planning and Transportation.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**In principle this rooftop location is one of the few sites in the Broughty Ferry Area that is appropriate for telecommunications equipment and the design of these particular proposals will not detract from the appearance of the conservation area nor the setting of the adjoining listed buildings. The application is recommended for APPROVAL with conditions.**

**SUMMARY OF REPORT**

- Planning permission is sought to erect telecommunications equipment on the building. It is proposed to erect 3 poles on the building, each approximately 2 metres high, 1 at the western end to the rear of the building and 2 over the stair tower area. It is proposed to conceal the poles as small chimneys. It is also proposed to erect ground based equipment to the rear of the building.
- The site comprises Broughty Ferry Telephone Exchange, a modern building with existing roofplant and telecommunications equipment on the building in the form of 3 antennae strapped to the chimney. It is within a conservation area and there are listed buildings to the east and west.
- There are National Policy Guidelines, Policy BE31 of Dundee Local Plan 1998 and the Council's non-statutory policies relating to telecommunications developments. Policy BE11 of the Local Plan requires development proposals in a conservation area to complement and enhance the character of the surrounding area.
- A letter of objection was received from St Mary's Church who are concerned that the development will detract from the listed church and the conservation area.
- It is considered that the development complies with National and Local Plan policy and that the actual design of the proposals and the disguising of the antennae as small chimneys will ensure that the development will not be visually intrusive. It will not detract from the visual amenity of the conservation area nor detract from the setting of the adjoining listed buildings.

## DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

Planning permission is sought to erect telecommunications equipment on the building. It is proposed to erect 3 poles on the building, each approximately 2 metres high, 1 at the western end to the rear of the building and 2 over the stair tower area. It is proposed to conceal the poles as small chimneys. It is also proposed to erect ground based equipment to the rear of the building.

The applicants have issued a number of letters in support of their proposals. These letters state:

- 1 The proposal will not be visually obtrusive. There already is existing telecommunications equipment on the building. The telephone exchange is not overlooked by other properties, has a relatively flat roof with existing plant and chimney and the equipment cabin will be concealed at ground level to the rear of the building.
- 2 There are no suitable alternative sites in Broughty Ferry. Mast sharing at Woolworth's would lead to even more visual clutter and would be visually more obtrusive than the application site and the Gullistan restaurant building is not available.
- 3 The site is needed to provide coverage for the local area.
- 4 The proposal complies with NPPG 19 because it uses small scale equipment which will be concealed on the roof of a building where there is existing telecommunications equipment.
- 5 The proposal complies with Policy BE31 of the Local Plan because there is an operational justification, there are no suitable alternative sites, it shares with an existing facility and complies with the other policies of the Plan.
- 6 The proposal complies with the Councils non statutory policies on telecommunications masts adopted in October 2001 because there is an operational justification, there are no suitable alternative sites, it is not a ground based mast, although close to a

residential area is an appropriate site, although it is in a conservation area it is of appropriate siting and design and finally full consultation with the planning authority has taken place.

## SITE DESCRIPTION

The site comprises Broughty Ferry Telephone Exchange including a rear service yard. The telephone exchange is a modern building with a flat roof and appears as a 2 storey building on a plinth from Queen Street and a 3 storey building from the rear. There is a split in level with the stair tower sitting at a half level below the main building. The principal finishing material is a white smooth render.

There is a chimney and some roof plant on the roof above the stair tower. There is telecommunications



equipment on the building in the form of 3 antennae strapped to the chimney.

To the east of the site is the Post Office Bar, a 2 storey stone and slate building which is Category C listed. To the west is the Category B listed St Mary's Church. To the north, on the opposite side of Queen Street, is a dwelling at 97 Fort Street, some 55 metres from the site. Also on this side of the road is the former Limb Fitting Centre. Planning permission was recently granted for a housing development on this site. To the south of the site is the Dundee to Aberdeen railway and then commercial premises on Erskine Lane.

## POLICY BACKGROUND

National Planning Policy Guidance 19: Radio Telecommunications

This national guidance emphasises the importance of establishing good communication and trust between operators and planning authorities and encourages pre-application discussions to determine the most appropriate siting and design approaches. It acknowledges the benefits of modern telecommunications and seeks to encourage such development as being essential to a modern economy and contributing to sustainable objectives.

Planning Advice Note 62: Radio Telecommunications

This provides best practice advice on the process of site selection and design and illustrates how the equipment can be sensitively installed. It also explains why additional mast stations are needed to serve the growth in customer demand and in response to changing technical requirements, including the third generation of mobile phones.

Dundee Local Plan 1998 Policy BE31

Proposals for telecommunications developments will be assessed against the following criteria:

A Proposals will be assumed to carry an operational justification, but in cases where there is good reason to anticipate a general proliferation and resultant clutter in the local landscape, the planning authority retains discretion to explore this justification.

- B There are no satisfactory alternative sites available.
- C There is no reasonable prospect of sharing existing facilities.
- D The development should avoid conflict with other policies or proposals of the Local Plan, Structure Plan etc.

The site is in a conservation area and Policy BE11 of the Local Plan requires development proposals to complement and enhance the character of the surrounding area.

Non-statutory planning policies in relation to telecommunications masts and other apparatus was approved as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications

by the Development Quality Committee on 29th October 2001.

The following are of relevance to this application.

Non-Statutory Policy 1 requires that every application provides:

- An operational justification.
- A justification for the proposal against alternative sites and prospects for mast sharing.
- An assessment of the cumulative impact of individual proposals where there are others nearby.
- An assessment of the visual impact of the proposal.
- An analysis of the proposal's environmental impact.

Non-Statutory Policy 2 contains a general presumption against the siting of free standing masts within or immediately adjacent to existing or proposed residential areas. Exceptions may be made where the proposal is considered to be sensitively located and designed and where the operator has demonstrated that the proposal is the most appropriate from other options investigated.

Non-Statutory Policy 9 contains a general presumption against proposals that affect the setting of listed buildings.

Non-Statutory Policy 12 favours rooftop facilities on unlisted buildings within conservation areas provided that the character of the building and surrounding area is complemented and enhanced.

Non-Statutory Policy 15 encourages a partnership approach between the Council and operators to the forward planning of roll-out programmes of proposed works. In particular, opportunities for mast sharing will be maximised subject to satisfactory location and design controls.

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## LOCAL AGENDA 21

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Key Theme 7 requires access to facilities, services, goods and people is not achieved at the expense of the environment and are accessible to all.

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## SITE HISTORY

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Planning permission was granted for the 3 BT Cellnet antennae on the

chimney in February 2000 - application ref. no D24320 refers.

In November 2001 an application was made to erect telecommunications equipment on this building - application ref. no 01/30469/FUL refers. That application was similar to the current proposals although it was proposed to erect the masts closer to the edge of the building and to conceal the 2 eastmost masts under a large grp box. That application was withdrawn by the applicants in April 2002.

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## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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Statutory neighbour notification was carried out and the proposal was advertised as affecting the setting of listed buildings and the conservation area. A letter of objection was received from St Mary's Church to the west of the site (copy available for inspection in the Members Lounge). The letter states concerns that the antennae would adversely affect the listed church and the conservation area contrary to the Council's non statutory policies. These concerns are considered in the Observations section of this Report.

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## CONSULTATIONS

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No adverse comments were received from Statutory Consultees.

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## OBSERVATIONS

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The determining issues for the Committee in this instance are:

- 1 Whether the development is in accordance with National, Local Plan and the Council's recently approved non-statutory policies on telecommunications equipment; and
- 2 Whether the development complies with Policy BE11 of the Local Plan.

It is accepted that it is extremely difficult to find suitable sites for telecommunications equipment in the Broughty Ferry area. The area is almost entirely residential in character and the commercial areas are on lower ground less suitable for coverage. In addition there are extensive conservation areas and a large number of listed buildings in Broughty Ferry.

The application site is a building of little visual merit. Although in a

conservation area and close to listed buildings, it could be possible to install facilities on the roof of this building without detriment to the visual amenity of the area. It is considered that the existing BT facility on the chimney of the building does not have a significant adverse impact.

It is considered that the applicants have taken into account both national and Local Plan policies as well as the Council's non statutory guidelines on the location of telecommunications equipment. It is considered that there is an operational justification for this facility, that there are no obvious suitable alternative sites and that a roof based mast on a building where there is already a telecommunications facility is the best possible location in the Broughty Ferry area.

In terms of the grounds of objection from the adjoining church, it is considered that the design of the proposals and the disguising of the antennae as small chimneys will ensure that the development will not be visually intrusive. Taking into account the scale and bulk of the existing building and the presence of various plant on the roof, it is considered that the proposed antennae will barely be visible. The antennae will not detract from the visual amenity of the conservation area nor detract from the setting of the adjoining listed buildings. It these circumstances the development does not contravene Policy BE11 of the Local Plan or the non statutory policies 9 and 12 adopted by the Council in October 2001.

## Design

The design of the proposed development and the disguising of the antennae as small chimneys will not have an adverse impact on the visual appearance of the conservation area and the setting of the adjoining listed buildings.

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## CONCLUSION

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In principle this rooftop location is one of the few sites in the Broughty Ferry area that is appropriate for telecommunications equipment and the design of these particular proposals will not detract from the appearance of the conservation area nor the setting of the adjoining listed buildings.

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## RECOMMENDATION

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It is recommended that planning permission be GRANTED subject to the following conditions:

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be commenced within five years from the date of this permission.
- 2 In the event that equipment becomes obsolete or redundant, then that equipment along with all cabling, fixing and ancillary items shall be removed to the satisfaction of the Council within 3 months of that date.

## Reason

- 1 To comply with Section 58 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.
- 2 In the interests of visual amenity.