

**KEY INFORMATION**

**Ward** Whitfield

**Proposal**

Erection of a 15m height streetworks monopole and 2 No equipment cabin and meter cabinet at the foot of the monopole

**Address**

Land to South of Berwick Drive  
Dundee

**Applicant**

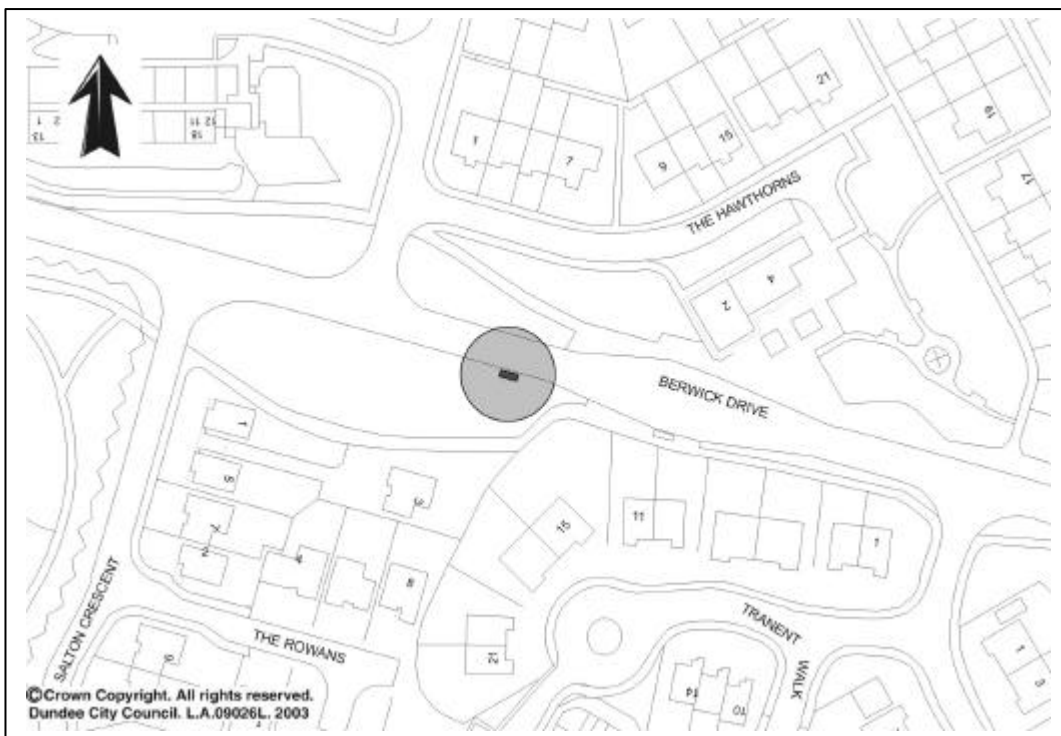
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**Agent**

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**Registered** 11 Apr 2006

**Case Officer** C Walker



## Proposed Phone Mast in Berwick Drive

The erection of a streetworks monopole is **RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS**. Report by Director of Planning and Transportation.

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is concluded that the proposal complies with the relevant policies in the Dundee Local Plan Review 2005 and National Policy. It is considered that the concerns of the objector do not carry sufficient weight to justify refusal of the application.

**SUMMARY OF REPORT**

- Planning permission is sought to erect a telecommunications mast to provide 3G coverage for O2 in the form of a 15 metres high streetworks style pole with 2 equipment cabinets at ground level.
- The site comprises the roadside verge on the south side of Berwick Drive between its junctions with Tranent Grove and Salton Crescent. There is a small area of open space between the road and footway with a small copse of trees just to the south of the site. The nearest house is some 22 metres distant.
- A letter of objection was received from a nearby neighbour who considers that there are better sites for the proposal and that the development would obscure sightlines, would be unsightly, would have an adverse impact on trees and would create noise problems.
- It is concluded that the proposal complies with Policies 1 and 78 of the adopted Dundee Local Plan Review 2005, is of acceptable siting and design and despite the concerns of the objector would not lead to amenity problems.

## DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

Planning permission is sought to erect a telecommunications mast in the form of a 15 metres high streetworks style pole with 2 equipment cabinets at ground level. The pole has an appearance not dissimilar to a street lighting column although it will be higher (nearby columns are 10 metres high) and slightly wider (245mm tapering to 194mm whereas typical street lighting columns are 200mm tapering to 76mm). The 2 cabinets are 1.6 and 1.3 metres high respectively and will have the appearance of metal boxes. The pole is required to provide third generation coverage for O2, covering the Whitfield area running from Longhaugh Road in the west to Dunbar Park/Summerfield Avenue in the east and from Berwick Drive in the north to Drumgeith Park in the south.

The applicants have submitted a supporting statement with plans to justify the proposed development. They state that the design and siting of the mast will blend in with street lighting in the area, and comply with the requirements set out in NPPG19 and PAN 62. They have considered 12 alternative sites but conclude that the proposal is the best possible in the circumstances. The applicants list and comment on these alternative sites as follows:

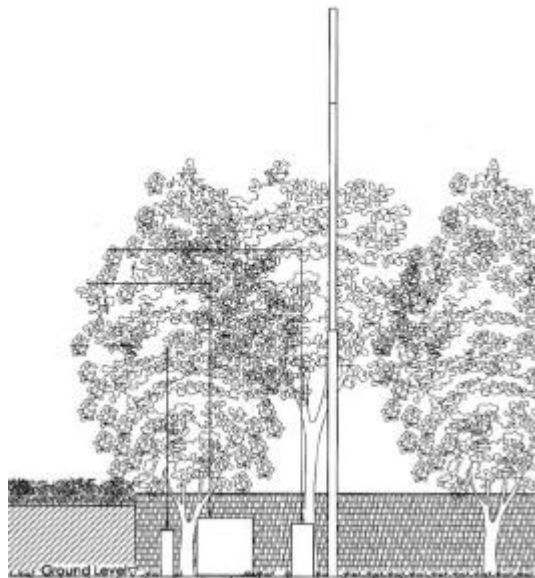
1 and 2 SSE Electricity Pylons (1 of which is close to the proposed site and 1 further to the south): SSE not willing to consider such an option due to proximity to housing and power supply complications.

3 Playing field south east of Haddington Crescent: This site would not give adequate coverage and a further installation would be required within the search area which would be less preferable to the current proposal. In addition the Council as land owner did not respond to the request to consider this site.

4 Council Waste Depot north of Summerfield Avenue: As with 3 above this site on its own would not provide sufficient coverage.

5 Recycling Depot Baldovie Industrial Estate: Would not provide adequate coverage within the target area.

- 6 Whitfield Shopping Centre: No option could be identified that would be acceptable in planning or coverage terms.
- 7 Sommerfield Pitkerro Road: Too close to O2 existing site at Longtown Street and would provide inadequate coverage in the target area.
- 8 Whitfield Labour Club: Inadequate space to provide base station infrastructure.
- 9 Social Work Premises Lothian Crescent: Inadequate space to provide base station infrastructure.
- 10 Middleton Farm: Too far from target area and would not provide adequate coverage.



11 and 12: MM02 Airwave and Vodafone Masts at Longhaugh Quarry: In both cases larger masts would be required in terms of height and girth. However there would be operational difficulties due to the height of the base stations at this location. This would give too great a coverage area, causing interference in the wider network. Unlike 2G technology which could provide significant levels of coverage outwith the target area, 3G technology is required to be restricted within a contained area.

They state that the proposals comply with the relevant Council Local Plan and non statutory policies on telecommunications development and have submitted coverage plans demonstrating that the mast will serve a gap in 3G coverage in the Whitfield area. They have also submitted an

ICNIRP Certificate indicating that the proposed equipment is in full compliance.

## SITE DESCRIPTION

The site comprises the roadside verge on the south side of Berwick Drive between its junctions with Tranent Grove and Salton Crescent. There are street lighting columns on this side of the road some 10 metres high on either side of the application site. The footpath is remote from the road at this location, running alongside the high garden walls of dwellings at Salton Crescent. A small area of open space is enclosed between Berwick Drive and the footway and there is a small copse of trees just to the south of the site. These trees would partially screen the proposed mast from the houses to the south.

The nearest house to the proposed mast is the dwelling at 3 Salton Crescent some 22 metres distant. It presents a side gable elevation to the site with a single small window at the upper level.

## POLICY BACKGROUND

### Dundee and Angus Structure Plan 2001-2016

There are no policies relevant to the determination of this application.

### Dundee Local Plan Review 2005

The following policies are of relevance:

Policy 1: Vibrant and Sustainable Communities. New development should seek to minimise any affect on the environmental quality enjoyed by local residents by virtue of a number of factors including design.

Policy 78: Location of Telecommunications Equipment. In general, operators are encouraged to share existing masts in order to minimise the environmental impact on the city.

Policy 78 also states that the Council's supplementary policies ("Non Statutory Planning Policies in Relation to Telecommunications and Other Apparatus") will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications for telecommunications developments.

These policies are referred to below in the section on "Non Statutory Statements of Council Policy".

## Scottish Planning Policies, Planning Advice Notes and Circulars

The following are of relevance:

### **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. It states that health issues are covered by other legislation. It gives advice on the siting and design of masts, referring to PAN62.

### **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.

## Non Statutory Statements of Council Policy

"Non Statutory Planning Policies in Relation to Telecommunications and Other Apparatus".

The following are of particular relevance:

Policy 1: there should be an operational justification for the location and design of the proposal including an assessment of the cumulative impact of individual proposals where other telecommunications developments are present nearby.

Policy 2: There will be a general presumption against free standing masts and ground based apparatus within or immediately adjacent to residential areas. However exceptions to the general presumption may be made where the proposal is sensitively sited and designed and where the operator has demonstrated that it is the most appropriate location.

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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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There is no relevant planning history.

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## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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Statutory neighbour notification was carried out and a letter of objection was received from a nearby neighbour. The objector states that there are lots of sites in the Whitfield area more remote from housing and that the proposed mast will obscure sightlines for cars emerging from Salton Crescent, will be unsightly, will have an adverse impact on trees and will create noise problems.

Copies of this letter are available for inspection in the Members Lounges and the concerns raised are considered in the Observations section of this Report.

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## CONSULTATIONS

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The Head of Environmental Health and Trading Standards was consulted in connection with the noise issue referred to in the letter of objection. He notes that whilst Berwick Drive can be a fairly busy thoroughfare, there is sufficient gap in vehicle movements along the road which would lower any background noise levels in between. However, he has not had any complaints concerning noise from equipment cabinets servicing mobile phone masts and doesn't feel that this application would be any different. However as a safeguard he suggests that a planning condition should be attached limiting noise from any plant or equipment.

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## OBSERVATIONS

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In accordance with the provisions of Section 25 of the Act the Committee is required to consider:

- a whether the proposals are consistent with the provisions of the development plan; and if not
- b whether an exception to the provisions of the development plan is justified by other material considerations.

## The Development Plan

The provisions of the development plan relevant to the determination of this application are specified in the Policy background section above.

Policy 78 encourages mast sharing but accepts that alternative sites can be considered if this is not feasible. In this case the nearest masts are some distance away at Longhough Quarry and the applicants have explained that they cannot get adequate coverage at this location.

This policy also says that alternative locations and design should be investigated. The applicant considered 12 other locations as discussed in the "Description of Proposal" section of this Report and these were ruled out either for technical reasons or because they would be more obtrusive than the current proposals.

The proposal was assessed in terms of the Council's Non Statutory Policies, which are a material consideration in terms of Policy 78. The proposal complies with Policy 1 as the applicant has provided a justification for the location and design of the proposal, alternative sites were assessed and the visual impact is acceptable.

Policy 2 contains a presumption against free standing mast or ground based apparatus within or immediately adjacent to residential areas. However it goes on to state that an exception may be made where the proposal is considered to be sensitively located and where the operator has demonstrated that the proposal is the most appropriate from the other options investigated. It is considered that the design of the proposed structure is satisfactory, its siting is appropriate alongside a busy road with lighting columns, partially screened by trees and a reasonable distance from the nearest house.

Policy 1 specifies that developments will be permitted where they do not adversely affect the environmental quality enjoyed by local residents by reason of design. The proposed mast is designed to appear not unlike a street lighting column, and contains no visible antennae or dishes. It is also in line with existing lighting columns along Berwick Drive and partially screened by trees. It is therefore considered that the proposed structure will not be visually dominant.

It is concluded that the proposal complies with Policies 1 and 78 of the adopted Dundee Local Plan Review 2005.

### Other Material Considerations

The other material considerations to be taken into account are as follows:

NPPG 19 and PAN 62

These documents give good general advice on the siting and design of masts and the Council's own Non Statutory Policies have similar themes. The documents advise that the siting and design of telecommunications development are the key issues to be addressed through the planning system. The proposal completely conceals the function of the mast (there are no visible antennae or dishes) and is located on the side of a busy road where similar (albeit lower) structures in the form of lighting columns are found.

### Objections

The objector considers that there are more appropriate sites in the Whitfield area for the proposed mast but the applicants have considered 12 alternative sites but have been unable to come up with a more suitable proposal that gives acceptable coverage.

The concerns about visual matters have already been considered in assessing the proposed development against Local Plan policies and it has been concluded that the siting and design of the mast are satisfactory.

The proposed mast and cabinets will not obstruct sightlines from Salton Crescent since they will be set back some 1.5 metres from the side of the road.

Concerns about noise and from the proposed equipment cabins have not been backed up by any factual evidence. The applicants were contacted on this issue and have provided information on noise levels. Taking into account this information and the views of the Head of Environmental Health and Trading Standards, it is not considered that the proposal will lead to noise levels that would adversely impact on residential amenity and the imposition of a planning condition can adequately cover this matter.

Finally the proposed mast will be sited at a sufficient distance from the trees to ensure that they are not adversely affected.

It is concluded from the foregoing that insufficient weight can be accorded to the grounds of objection such as to justify the refusal of planning permission contrary to the provisions of the development plan. It is therefore recommended that planning permission be granted with conditions.

### Design

The proposed mast is designed to appear not unlike a street lighting column, and contains no visible antennae or dishes. It is also close to existing lighting columns on this side of Berwick Drive and partially screened by existing trees. It is therefore considered that the proposed structure is the most visually acceptable solution for this location.

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### CONCLUSION

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It is concluded that the proposal complies with the relevant policies in the Dundee Local Plan Review 2005 and National Policy. It is considered that the concerns of the objector do not carry sufficient weight to justify refusal of the application.

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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 it must be removed to the satisfaction of the planning authority within 6 months.
- 3 Details of the colour of the proposed mast shall be submitted to the Council for approval before any development is commenced and if approved the development shall be carried out only in full accordance with such approved details.
- 4 Noise from any plant or equipment shall not exceed NR35, as measured 1metre from the facade of any residential property.

### Reasons

- 1 To comply with Section 58 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997
- 2 To reinstate the site to a satisfactory condition in the interests of visual amenity.
- 3 To ensure that the proposed mast blends in with the nearby street lighting columns in the interests of visual amenity.
- 4 In the interests of residential amenity.