

Comment for planning application 23/00750/TEL56

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| Application Number | 23/00750/TEL56 |
| Location | Street Record Station Road Kirtlington |
| Proposal | Proposed telecommunications installation: Proposed 15.0m Phase 9 slimline Monopole and associated ancillary works |
| Case Officer | Gemma Magnuson |

Organisation Name

ANDREW RUSSELL

Address

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Type of Comment

Objection

Type

neighbour

Comments

Planning Application - 23/00750/TEL56

The latest application for the erection of a 3G mast by Hutchinson/Three - now with a company name change to Signal Infrastructure UK Limited - is effectively the same as the previous application, first rejected by the council and subsequently rejected by central government planning. The only material difference is that the applicant claims that the mast will be a little slimmer and will be painted green. How much slimmer it's hard to say (please see below) and, arguably, being green, it will stand out with greater contrast against the skyline.

I and other residents are aghast that the applicant has submitted this plan following the two previous rejections. Both previous attempts caused much distress amongst residents living in the immediate vicinity, who celebrated following the second rejection: they felt a great weight had been lifted, but no, like a recurrent nightmare, the applicant is back with - to all intents and purposes - the same proposal.

More generally, Kirtlington residents are feeling wearied and fatigued by the whole process, asking why they should write yet again, when they have done so at least once already. We ask, when will this saga end? I suspect you will receive fewer objections this time around as fewer people have been made aware of the renewed application and others, quite understandably, say they've already made their views clear.

I am providing below the previous comments I made, which apply equally to this barely revised application (the original application being made in two parts for some reason, one for the pole, the other for the equipment).

I would however like to make some additional comments (prefixed '2023', to distinguish from the existing points):

20223-1 - Anxieties

The council should know that those residents living closest to the proposed site - several of them elderly and quite frail - have already suffered considerable anxiety as a result of the previous proposals. I have referred to this above. Please be aware that there is a strong feeling that this arm of a multinational company, with tremendously deep pockets, will simply not take no for an answer. Their persistence feels abusive. There is a sense that if this application is rejected, they will appeal once more. If that appeal is again rejected, they will simply choose another site in the village and so it will go on. I feel, as do any others, that they should be told no: this tower is simply inappropriate for Kirtlington.

2023-2 - Exact dimensions / profile of the mast

The applicant claims that the revised design of the mast will be less intrusive. It is curious though that they do not submit a photograph of the revised, 'phase 9' pole'. Surely, they could have very easily done so if there was nothing to hide? Rather, they present a drawing which is very much unlike any other masts recently erected following successful planning applications by the applicant elsewhere in the country. More generally, Signal/Hutchinson/Three don't appear to have posts on the internet showing such masts. One would expect them to have made such posts, openly, transparently, and with easy

Google access. This is not the case.

However, there are numerous articles on the web which may provide a clue. The following article is an example of a 15m phase 9 'slimline' monopole which I understand has been erected in Ledbury (I have not visited the site). Please note how the profile of the mast shown in this article is radically different from the drawing provided in the proposal.

<https://www.herefordtimes.com/news/23225826.new-5g-pole-beside-herefordshire-towns-retirement-flats/>

I would suggest the council asks the applicant for an actual photograph of a phase 9 slimline monopole. If the profile is not as per the proposal, - ie. the photograph shows a considerable broadening at the top where the transmitter sits - the application should be rejected immediately and any further applications from the same applicant (even with a company name change) should be rejected outright. In any event, a photograph should be submitted as part of this current application and posted at the Cherwell planning site for the avoidance of any doubt.

2023-3 - Energy consumption

As we all know, there is an acute energy crisis. There's a simple question that remains unanswered from the original application: how much energy will this mast and ancillary equipment consume? In the absence of on-line information from the applicant, I made an estimate, based on figures made available by another mast supplier, Huawei, for its own monopole 5G transmitter (please see below: the equivalent energy usage of 27 average UK homes). In the absence of transparent data from the applicant, it's hard to say how close this estimate is the energy consumption of the proposed device. We all need to be properly informed.

I provide a link below to the Council's own web page declaring the climate emergency:

<https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/info/7/environment/752/tackling-climate-change>

Below, Climate Action Oxfordshire:

<https://www.climateactionoxfordshire.org.uk>

How is it possible to square these worthy aspirations with the provision of 5G to a small community, that doesn't need it, has 4G and fibre-optic broadband available to every home - a residential community with next to no requirement for 5G mobile business?

2023-4 - Government directives on 5G

The applicant makes a great deal about the government's plans for the roll out of 5G. However, there have been numerous articles in the media recently about the slow uptake of 5G across Europe in response to both a lack of perceived benefit as well as the impact of the energy crisis.

This is not a good platform to debate such matters, but please take it as read that when discussing the proposed mast with local residents, the one topic that consistently results in a welcome dose of levity is the idea that central government knows what's best for us! In all seriousness, if such masts are required with an operating radius of only 250m in settlements across the length and breadth of the land, has anyone in the government given a moment's thought to the visual impact? (let alone the elusive energy consumption). Is it any wonder that faith in government is at an all time low? I do hope that common sense will at least prevail in the case of this particular application.

5G in cities and other built up areas of high density living and commerce, there is sense in that. A rollout across the nation as a whole: a white elephant in the making, is both my personal view and one held more generally in the village.

2023-5 - Health worries

The official line on the health risks of 5G masts is that they pose no risks to health. That may well be the case and this website not a suitable forum for such discussion.

However, the point I would like to make is that irrespective of the official line (supported by the WHO etc.) people nevertheless are deeply worried. It is a considerable component in the mix of anxieties born of these applications. Authorities have been proven wrong on health issues in the past.

Of course, 5G health concerns are dismissed as conspiracy theories. I provide below a link to an article at the website of the British Medical Journal, not the sort of organisation prone to conspiracy theories. The article is headed: Stop global roll out of 5G networks until safety is confirmed, urges expert:

<https://www.bmj.com/company/newsroom/stop-global-roll-out-of-5g-networks-until-safety-is-confirmed-urges-expert/>

To be clear, I am no expert and do not know who is right, the government or Professor Frank of the University of Edinburgh, the expert whose opinion is platformed by the BMJ. All I am saying is that anxieties are real and founded on solid science. Please understand how concerned and upset people are. Residents living close to the proposed mast include the elderly and frail, as well as young families with babies and small children.

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To conclude, I urge the council to question the applicant on the issues raised above, in writing; to tell the applicant, if they continue to persist, to consider only a solution away from the village itself, so we can continue to enjoy our cherished skyline. Please ask them to leave us in peace, free from the anxieties they have brought to bear upon us.

Sincerely,

Andrew Russell

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PREVIOUS COMMENTS

I am one of many villagers deeply dismayed that, despite the overwhelming opposition throughout the village to the erection of the 5G tower - this view being supported by the Council - Hutchinson/Three have taken the matter to appeal. Our opinion and feelings clearly mean very little to them and I can assure you that the appeal is currently the cause of a great deal of anxiety and upset.

It is abundantly clear that the local community does not want the tower; particularly as the proposed site is within a residential conservation area and - irrespective of the status of the plot within the conservation area - it could not be more prominently positioned, being at the entrance to this beautiful, historic village. This opinion is held unanimously, as evidenced through the many written responses to the original proposal.

Numerous further reasons for objection were noted in the responses to the original application including the misleading visuals contained in the application, the unstated and vast energy consumption etc. I would, however, like to highlight a few which have been discussed locally since the news broke of the appeal.

1 - Kirtlington: Low Priority for 5G

We all understand that the government is committed to delivering high-bandwidth internet to rural areas. However, you may not be aware that in recent years all the streets, and lanes of the village were dug up - at some considerable cost and inconvenience - such that every household in the village now has access to super-fast broadband both through Gigaclear and BT. By means of wi-fi, all households in the village now have all the data they could possibly need for their phones and other devices.

It could be argued that this does not apply to the relatively small number of non-residents who visit the area. However, other than work-from-home and the two public houses (both of which provide wi-fi), there are no businesses in Kirtlington. There's absolutely nothing to buy, nowhere to shop. Walkers and other visitors to the village are served either through 4G or shared wi-fi access.

It is hard to imagine anywhere in the country with a lesser need for 5G.

2 - Choice of site

The applicant claims to have explored all other options for the tower (which, clearly, nobody in the village either wants or needs) and their only option is the particular location they have chosen. If you take the time to speak to villagers familiar with the local area and its topography they will disagree. What is clear though is that Hutchinson/Three have selected a location with:

- the most straightforward possible physical access for construction and maintenance purposes
- the most ready access to mains electricity

The site is also public land and therefore not a location for which they would have to negotiate with local landowners/farmers.

In other words, they have gone for a cheap and easy option. We are not fools.

3 - Upcoming changes to rules for 5G masts

I refer to the BBC article of April 20th 2021

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-56805844>

We are not sure of the current situation, but it seems that at least a year ago the government was aiming to allow taller, wider masts with broader coverage; the aim being to minimise visual impact, presumably, by positioning these larger masts less obtrusively: certainly not in the sort of manifestly unsuitable location proposed by the applicant.

It is also noted in the article that: Stricter rules will apply in protected areas, including national parks, conservation areas and areas of outstanding natural beauty.

I do hope that the government is doing all it can in 2022 to both ensure conservation areas are not blighted by towering eyesores such as this one proposed for Kirtlington; and that suitable sites are selected for the larger, taller masts with broader reach, which can be positioned outside of residential communities.

I do hope that this proposal is thrown out once and for good, sparing us from the ongoing angst we continue to experience. This is a community which takes great care and pride in its local amenities. We accept how in the case of applications for house extensions etc. it is terribly difficult to get permissions, particularly within the conservation area - and rightly so! Buildings which would be in clear eyeshot of the tower date back many centuries; the cherished church - until now the distinctive, tallest building in the village - has its origins in Saxon times.

Please take our objections seriously.

Sincerely

Andrew Russell

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It is disappointing to see that two separate planning applications have been made, one for the tower and one for the base unit. The community was not made aware of EITHER application and, of course, having discovered the tower application, most remain unaware of this, the base unit application. Residents who have made one objection are therefore, by and large, unaware of the possible need to comment twice.

I therefore urge you to ensure that objections made to the tower are applied equally to this application and vice versa as, clearly, the planning applications amount to different elements of the same technological construction. Otherwise, the number of objections to either plan will have effectively been diluted.

Please see my objection to the tower, provided on the principle grounds that it is entirely unsuitable to position this dominant structure within the Kirtlington conservation area. I should add that this bulky apparatus will be positioned in front of an attractive, traditionally constructed and recently repaired dry stone wall. NOT a brick wall as indicated in the proposal. The apparatus is entirely unsympathetic to the surroundings and should not be built.

The applicant claims to have considered alternative locations for the tower and equipment. Their preferred site just happens to be a location where construction costs will be minimised: a roadside location with straightforward access for construction vehicles and existing power infrastructure. No doubt these were key factors in selecting this particular location. If a 5G tower is deemed to be needed - which is highly questionable in a village with excellent, fibre-optic broadband / wi-fi - then alternative, potentially more costly locations must be considered. The enjoyment of our surroundings must be prioritised.

I do find it astounding that the planners have not provided photographs such that residents can see what it all would actually look like. This is not like a plan for a house where only an artist's impressions is available. The applicants must have a full specification for the apparatus including photographs. One can only assume - viewing other Three mobile 5G apparatus constructed elsewhere - that they realise that upon seeing such photographs residents would be horrified.

Furthermore, a full technical specification for the equipment surely exists and yet the energy consumption of the apparatus has not been shared. Searches on the internet do not reveal the energy consumption for Three mobile 5G installations. However, there is information

about other, comparable 5G masts, such as one by an alternative supplier, which is quoted as consuming: 11,577 W = 11.6KW (Note: this feels about right: something like 4 x 3 bar electric heaters).

Running 24/7 365 that equates to: $24 \times 365 \times 11.6 = 101,616$ kWh

The average UK house consumes 3,760 kWh per year (generally electricity plus gas). So, the example 5G base station and mast consumes the equivalent of: $101,616 / 3,760 = 27.03$ average UK homes.

Or, put another way, if villagers take measures in line with government initiatives to reduce their household carbon footprint by 10% (not an easy task) the mast will offset the efforts of about 270 Kirtlington dwellings.

Now these figures could be way off because we have not been informed of the energy consumption of the proposed equipment. Can you please ensure that any proposals for 5G equipment include manufacturer's data on energy consumption?

Thank you.

Received Date

31/03/2023 15:39:42

Attachments