

REFERENCE NO - 15/509861/FULL & 15/509862/LBC		
APPLICATION PROPOSAL Installation of a 200mm diameter dish antenna and a 300mm diameter dish antenna and ancillary works.		
ADDRESS Radio Transmitter Courtenay Road Dunkirk Kent ME13 9LH		
RECOMMENDATION – Approve		
REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE Parish Council objection		
WARD Boughton & Courtenay	PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL Dunkirk	APPLICANT Arqiva Ltd AGENT Ms Jenny Bye
DECISION DUE DATE 18/02/2016	PUBLICITY EXPIRY DATE 20/01/2016	

THIS REPORT RELATES TO TWO SEPARATE APPLICATIONS BUT THEY ARE REPORTED TOGETHER AS THE SAME ISSUES ARISE. EACH APPLICATION SHOULD BE DETERMINED ON ITS OWN MERITS.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY (including appeals and relevant history on adjoining sites):

SW/10/1128 - erection of offices and storage building - refused.

SW/11/1370 - Erection of a data storage facility (B8) and permanent historical exhibition (D1) - refused. Appeal dismissed by the Planning Inspectorate.

SW/13/0880 & 0885 - installation of 2 x 1.8 microwave dishes at a height of 40 metres - approved. Not proceeded with due to the two dishes now proposed having been installed at that height – leading to SW/13/1340 and 1341.

SW/13/1273 and 1274 - installation of two 1.8m microwave dishes at a height of 58m on the existing 110m tower, associated cabling and the installation of a small equipment cabin at ground level - approved.

SW/13/1340 and 1341 - listed building consent and planning permission for the placement of one x 2.4m and one x 1.2 dishes at a height of 47 metres - approved.

SW/13/1462 & 1463 - planning permission and listed building consent for two 1.2m microwave dishes installed at a height of 40m on the existing 110 tower, and associated cabling and the installation of a small equipment cabin at ground floor – approved January 2014.

SW/14/0003 and 0004 – installation of two 1.2m microwave dishes at 40m - approved

14/500065/FULL - Erection of a data storage facility (B8) and permanent historical exhibition (D1) - refused. Appeal dismissed by the Planning Inspectorate.

14/506050/FULL and 14/506051/LBC - Installation of new steel bracing - approved March 2015

14/500285/FULL and 14/500286/LBC - Installation of 4no. dipole antennas at a mean height of 90.5m and related strengthening of mast, a 1.8m diameter ground mounted satellite dish and development ancillary thereto including 2no. GPS antennas on existing building – approved November 2015

1.0 DESCRIPTION OF SITE

- 1.01 This former RAF mast is grade II listed and lies within the designated countryside directly adjacent to the built-up area boundary of Dunkirk. The existing mast has a height of 94.5 metres and is already host to a number of items of telecommunications equipment, please see planning history above for more details. The site is located within the designated countryside and within a Special Landscape Area.
- 1.02 To the northwest of the site, beyond the fenced compound, is a larger area of land that once formed the weapons store and surface air raid shelter of RAF Dunkirk Chain Home Radar Station, and which is now protected as a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

2.0 PROPOSAL

- 2.01 It is proposed to use the existing mast for Digital Audio Broadcasting (DAB) network expansion consisting of the installation of a 200mm dish antenna and a 300mm dish antenna at 50m, with ancillary works. These dishes are far smaller than the majority of the microwave dishes currently evident on the mast.
- 2.02 Planning permission and listed building consent are sought for the following proposals:
- Installation of a 200mm and 300mm diameter dish antenna at 50m on the mast
 - Ancillary works including bracing on the mast located between 65m and 69m levels – this includes bolting additional steel work to the existing bracings to strengthen rather than replace.

NOTE: The bracing works are the same works approved by the Council in November 20-15 under applications 14/500285/FULL and 14/500286/LBC

- 2.03 A full structural report and heritage statement have been provided with the application. The applicants explain that the two dishes are necessary in order to connect the site to the Sound Digital network, which provides public digital radio (DAB) and related interactive services.

3.0 PLANNING CONSTRAINTS

Potential Archaeological Importance

Dunkirk Airfield Multiple

Potential Archaeological Importance

Listed Buildings MBC and SBC Ref Number: 1378/SW

4.0 POLICY AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Swale Borough Local Plan 2008

- 4.01 Saved policies E1 (General Development Criteria), E6 (Countryside), E14 (Proposals affecting Listed Buildings), E16 (Proposals affecting Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites), E19 (Achieving High Quality Design & Distinctiveness) are the most relevant to these applications,

National Planning Policy Framework

- 4.02 The National Planning Policy Framework is also a material consideration in determining this application. Of particular relevance are the following paragraphs;

Paragraph 42 states that *“Advanced, high quality communications infrastructure is essential for sustainable economic growth. The development of high speed broadband technology and other communications networks also plays a vital role in enhancing the provision of local community facilities and services.”*

Paragraphs 131 & 132 state that *“In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:*

- *the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- *the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*
- *the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness*

When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.”

5.0 LOCAL REPRESENTATIONS

- 5.01 One letter of objection has been received which makes the following summarised comments:

- The mast is at full capacity and now needs bracing. How much more bracing will be added?
- There seems to be no control over who puts what on the mast
- Nobody seems to know who is responsible for what in relation to safety
- Concerned about safety issues - structural integrity
- The Council should be responsible for any damage caused
- The Parish Council should be able to identify what is going on but there are so many applications

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

- 6.01 Dunkirk Parish Council objects to the application. They state this application was lodged a few days after the last committee meeting where it was stated that there would be no more dishes and it must be remembered that Dunkirk is one of the last remaining towers from WWII.
- 6.02 The Parish Council states that they believe the application is contrary to policies within the Swale Borough Local Plan 2008, the National Planning Policy Framework and the Bearing Fruits emerging Local Plan, which amongst other aims seek to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance. Policies mentioned within the Swale Borough Local Plan 2008 are E1, E14 and E19. References were also made to the Bearing Fruits emerging Local Plan policies CP8, DM14, DM30, DM32 and DM34 which relate to General Development Criteria, Landscape and Biodiversity, Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments and Archaeological Sites.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS AND PLANS

- 7.01 Application papers for 15/509862/LBC and 15/506861/FULL

8.0 APPRAISAL

- 8.01 The main considerations in the determination of these applications is the impact on the historic character of the listed former RAF mast, and the visual impact on the surrounding area. I will also be taking into consideration the concerns in relation to the structural integrity of the mast. Finally, I consider the impact of the proposals on the heritage value of the listed building.
- 8.02 The NPPF provides clear guidance on the location of telecommunications infrastructure stating that where possible existing structures should be used. The proposals are very small scale in nature and will not in my view have any significant impact on the special historic character and appearance of the grade II listed former RAF Mast.
- 8.03 The mast has a complex planning history which includes various permissions for installation of telecommunication equipment, a number of which have been approved in the past few years. It appears a logical approach to locate new telecommunications infrastructure on existing structures/sites as they appear in keeping with the character and nature of the existing structure.
- 8.04 The applicants have stated the dishes would be painted white but would be willing to follow advice of the Council as to colour. I consider that it would be better if the dishes were painted grey in keeping with the colour of the mast itself and I have recommended suitable conditions below.
- 8.05 I note the comments received by the Parish Council and a local resident who have raised concerns in relation to the structural integrity of the mast and the impact on the character of the mast. Additional bracing will be placed on the mast between 65m and 69m levels to address the marginal overloading of around 12%. This strengthening work is at a high level and will not have a significantly adverse impact on the appearance or interest of the mast. The bracing is the same as that already approved in relation to the recently approved dipole antennae.
- 8.06 The Council has a statutory duty to give special weight to the impact of development on heritage assets. In this case Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the Council to have special regard to the

desirability of preserving or enhancing the listed building or its setting or any features that are of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. I am satisfied that the works proposed will not detract from the historic or architectural importance of the listed building as they will be small in scale and will not entail removal of any original features or fabric.

9.0 CONCLUSION

9.01 In my opinion the proposals will appear in keeping with the existing character of the mast and will not have any significant impact on the surrounding amenity of the area. A full structural survey has been carried out and sent with the application showing the amount of extra bracing needed. Taking the above into account I recommend that planning permission and listed building consent are granted.

10.0 RECOMMENDATION – GRANT Subject to the following conditions:

CONDITIONS

15/509861/FULL Planning application

1. The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date on which the permission is granted.

Reasons: In pursuance of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following plans:

DRG No. 57220-91-150-MD028 Rev 28 and 57220-91-100-MD028 Rev 28.

Reasons: In the interests of certainty and proper planning

3. The telecommunications apparatus hereby permitted shall be removed from the site as soon as reasonably practical after it is no longer required for telecommunication purposes.

Reasons: In the interest of visual amenity.

4. The telecommunications dishes hereby permitted shall be painted grey.

Reasons: In the interest of visual amenity.

The Council's approach to this application:

In accordance with paragraphs 186 and 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the Council takes a positive and proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions. We work with applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner by:

- Offering pre-application advice.
- Where possible, suggesting solutions to secure a successful outcome.

- As appropriate, updating applicants/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application.

In this instance the application was considered by the Planning Committee where the applicant/agent had the opportunity to speak to the Committee and promote the application.

15/509862/LBC Listed building consent application

1. The works to which this consent relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date on which this consent is granted.

Reasons: In pursuance of Section 18 of the Listed Building Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The telecommunications dishes hereby permitted shall be painted grey.

Reasons: In the interest of visual amenity.

NB For full details of all papers submitted with this application please refer to the relevant Public Access pages on the council's website.
The conditions set out in the report may be subject to such reasonable change as is necessary to ensure accuracy and enforceability.