

EAST BROYLE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

www.eastbroyle.org

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URGENT LETTER TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION

Dear Member,

Planning Application: Proposed Installation of 12.5 metre high mobile phone mast and Base Station at entrance to Norwich Road - Ref. No: CC/11/01446/TEL56

You may have already seen the ominous notice that has appeared attached to the lamppost on the verge at the entrance to Norwich Road. This advertises a planning application for a 12.5 metre (41 feet) high mobile phone mast, with a massive cabinet beside it to house all the electronics and an adjacent electricity meter pillar. The new application has been submitted on behalf of O2 and Vodafone (they intend to share the installation) and is mainly to improve 3G reception in the area (the new technology that allows mobile phones to be used for banking, internet access etc). Details of the application can be found online using the following internet address ...

http://pa.chichester.gov.uk/PublicAccess/tdc/DcApplication/application_searchform.aspx

(you will need to type in 11/01446/TEL56 in the Application Reference box).

Alternatively the paperwork can be inspected at the District Council Offices in East Pallant.

I am sure many of you will recall that another such application was submitted 4 years ago which the District Council refused but was granted on appeal. Having gone to all that trouble, the mobile phone operator decided not to proceed with the installation, although the permission is still valid for another year.

The most significant difference with the new application is the size of the equipment cabinet which is 1.9 m wide x 1.65 m high x 0.8 m deep (roughly 6ft 3in x 5ft 5in x 2ft 7in); the volume is therefore 2.5 cubic metres (88 cu feet). The volume of the cabinet in the previous application was only 1.3 cu m (46 cu ft), so the one now proposed is almost twice the size and likely to be much more prominent. It is proposed to site it all on the highway verge immediately on the left of the entrance to Norwich Road (5 metres (16 ft) from the junction). It will be clearly visible from St Paul's Road, Sherborne Road and to everyone entering and leaving East Broyle. Mike White, our Secretary, placed a full sized mock up of the equipment cabinet in the correct position and used it as the basis of the photographs that can be found on our website (www.eastbroyle.org).

The Committee considers that this structure will be a 'blot on the landscape' in a very visible location and would undermine the hard work that we have been doing to enhance the appearance to the entrance to East Broyle. It is obvious that the proposed site is very exposed, the mast will be over one and a half times the height of the existing lamppost on the verge and will be a simulated (abnormally tall) telegraph pole (there are no real telegraph poles in that vicinity). The equipment cabinet will be unique in the street scene as there is nothing remotely similar in the area. Unbelievably, the application states that...

“ the scheme takes a form which is sympathetic within the context of its immediate street scene”,
“the equipment cabinet has an appearance similar to other communications and electrical service boxes found in the street scene” (there are none in Norwich Road)

“the ground based development will not have any detrimental impact upon the visual amenity of the area”

“ the proposed installation has been sited so it will appear as an unobtrusive feature within the townscape, such structures being not uncommon within such an urban setting”.

If a mast is required in Norwich Road, the obvious solution would be to move the whole installation a few metres west into the hedgerow where the electricity and gas substations are located and where it can be camouflaged by bushes. When I put this option to the Agent acting for O2 and Vodafone, prior to the application being submitted, he refused to countenance such a proposition; one of the reasons given was if they do this they would have to pay a rent (none is payable if highway land is used)! It would appear that they have not looked at any alternative sites at all and are relying on the original planning approval.

We believe the proposed scheme is significantly different from the one granted approval 4 years ago; the equipment cabinet is much larger and a number of trees have been lost from the hedgerow in that time which would make the mast even more visible in the proposed location. Furthermore, the residents have been carrying out a programme of enhancement to the entrance in Norwich Road over the last two years which has increased the visual importance of the area.

Contrary to many of the statements in the application, there is no doubt that the equipment cabinets and mast would be highly visible if constructed on the proposed site. We consider that alternative sites should have been examined including moving the whole installation close to the existing electricity substation where it would be considerably less conspicuous.

Planning permission will be granted for telecommunications development if, amongst other things, there are “no unacceptable adverse effects on the amenities of the local residents” and “investigation has been made into alternative sites where there may be less impact on landscape, ecology, or the amenities of countryside users or local residents”. The Association is of the opinion that the application fails to meet these requirements and will be submitting an objection to the proposals.

It would be helpful if as many residents as possible would also send in their own comments on the application. It is easy to do if you have access to the internet (using the internet address overleaf) or just write to ...

Mr S R Carvell, Director of Environment, Chichester District Council,
East Pallant House, 1 East Pallant, Chichester PO19 1TY
and quote planning application CC/11/01446/TEL56

The paragraphs in the box above summarises the Committee’s view. The full response that will be submitted on behalf of the Association, will be placed on our website as soon as it is finalised.

The notice gives until 27 April for comments but because of the very tight timescales that the District Council is obliged to meet, it is understood that the application will be discussed on that day by the Area Development Control Committee (South). It is therefore recommended that you send your comments to arrive by Wednesday **20 APRIL 2011** to give plenty of time for them to be reported to councillors.

Yours sincerely

Chris Lindsay
Chairman