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28th April 2009

Dear Sarah Humphries,

With reference to recent letter received, dated 15th April, your ref 09/00267/GDOT, concerning planning application by Vodafone in conjunction with Patrick Farfan for proposed erection of 12.4m mast with equipment cabinet and associated works located within street verge of Rugby Road directly outside my property. It goes without saying that myself and family and all our neighbours along this stretch of Rugby Road and more are totally against this monstrous proposal on a large number of grounds. Please also see copy of my letter addressed to Mr George Oliver of Patrick Farfan which I enclose. All views expressed in that letter are held by all of our neighbours and below I wish to draw to your attention important particulars noted upon reading through recent consultations posted upon council website, in particular several statements contained within 'General background information on radio network development for planning applications v.7 doc'.

Section 2.0, last paragraph:

Have Vodafone complied with planning policy guidance (PPG8) by ensuring apparatus installed on existing buildings and structures, including masts wherever possible? Personally on further readings of posted consultations I don't think they have. I drive a lot with my work and over recent months have been keeping a very close eye on phone mast locations. Without exception all masts of different types and sizes are located along side of major infrastructure routes ie motorways/dual carriageways/railways and within industrial areas or sited on existing masts/structures or on farmland. **I have not seen one mast located within residential areas**, in direct view from front of large number of residential properties, many owned by the elderly such as my next door neighbour (no. 194 aged late eighties), or by families like mine with young children.

Section 2.3 states:

'In open rural areas 1 base station can typically cover several kilometres in radius. However in urban areas where surrounding buildings will obstruct signal, range can be reduced to little as few hundred metres'. If this is the case, which makes total sense, why are Vodafone looking to locate in middle of a well populated middle-class housing area in very close proximity to many existing homes, elderly, young children and schools, not to mention the presence of well established mature Sycamore trees? Vodafone's real reason for coming back to this already rejected site proposal in my opinion is purely a financial one. It is in theirs and no-one else's financial interests to try to locate their mast here, they can easily tap into the existing data super-highway and power supplies required with little significant cost and effort to themselves, regardless of impact on local residents and the environment both physical and visual. Why can they not use length of M69, elevated position for section that runs nearby past Burbage?

Section 2.5, reference proximity of adjacent radio base stations:

In Hinckley we already have presence of very large and domineering high tower and mast on Britannia buildings in Burbage to name a few. Both of these are less than 1km away

as crow flies from this proposed site and offer significantly higher altitude as a preferential alternative (see criteria ref. terrain height within consultations). I am sure more suitable sites exist around the community eg derelict land near train station/new Tesco's and industrial areas located other side of Rugby Road between canal and railway line as a few.

Section 4.0:

PPG8 aims to keep environmental impact to a minimum. The presence of this mast would be a total eyesore, protruding well above existing mature sycamore tree line, ruining the general view of street layout as nothing comparable elsewhere and would dramatically change the whole view of surrounding area very detrimentally indeed and is not in-keeping with area. I insist that as law demands that a full Environmental Impact Assessment be carried out and its findings made public asap.

Section 4.2:

PPG8 to identify as very important 'Protection from visual intrusion'. Quite bluntly Vodafone have obviously not considered this at all. This mast would be located virtually directly in front of my property and along with many of my neighbours in direct view from sitting room and bedroom windows. The total height of mast will be significantly higher than the tops of existing mature trees by approximately 3-4 metres and will be particularly obtrusive to sight and mind, indeed will be very ugly to general street scene during months of deciduous leaf drop ie autumn, winter and partly spring. What have Vodafone done in their planning application to reduce this impact on surroundings to an absolute minimum? On viewing their proposal, absolutely nothing in my opinion. They haven't tried to camouflage the mast in any shape or form, or hide the very large ugly equipment cabinet that is also required. This mast would be an eyesore and particularly viewable for a long stretch of Rugby Road, not just our immediate surroundings!!

Regarding consultation submitted via mapping sent by Natasha Hopka of Plant Protection team of National Grid. There is the presence of existing 15" CI LP and 7" PE MP gas mains running parallel to footpath within grass verge through proposed worksite. From my works I know that no plant machinery/excavation is permitted within 3m of such apparatus (which has already been illegally performed to date) therefore such mains would need to be diverted significantly. This would undoubtedly cause interruption of supply during works, leading to significant compensation claims by homeowners affected for lost supply (in my case affecting heating/cooking and hot water supplies).

There is not only the financial extra expense of such works but more importantly the significant impact of works on immediate local environment. The extra digging of trenches, re-routing mains, noise of plant etc could easily damage the extensive root network to mature sycamore trees which surround the immediate proposed work site and potentially threaten their future growth/existence. Surely a professional tree expert would need to be consulted first before any subsequent plans submitted/approved?

Within Vodafone's documentation ref. 'suitable alternative sites' on discussing why vast majority of alternative sites have had either planning permission refused or they constantly refer to 'not meeting vodafone's technical requirements'. As council tax rate-payers and not large multi-national companies fund council's budget, what about the local community and residents requirements, needs and opinions? Surely of much more importance is substantial consideration to local environmental impact of such planning applications both visually and physically and not in promoting technological advancement in this way.

I sincerely hope you give very careful consideration indeed to all objections raised by myself and all other neighbours before finalising your decision on this planning application. I cannot stress how important your decision will be on this matter for all residents concerned in

the future. Any such mast would be a significant eyesore to the local community on an every day basis and will undoubtedly dominate the local street scene. Not to mention other factors such as health implications, which are far from reliably conclusive and likely impact on re-sale values of our homes. We already have a busy road to contend with and this installation would undoubtedly deter future home-buyers and will lower house prices still further in this area.

Finally you need to consider how your decision will affect the wider community. If you grant this planning application you will undoubtedly be giving Vodafone and the other network providers the green light to submit future like applications in their droves. You will subsequently find it increasingly harder to refuse such applications in time and Hinckley and Bosworth borough will gradually become awash with such hideous monstrous eyesores dominating the street scenes of the entire borough as they seek to relentlessly increase their mast density!!

I trust you will make the correct decision based upon all sides of the argument and on my behalf, I sincerely hope you refuse this and any subsequent planning applications of this type for the surrounding community. Would you like to wake up every day and have your view from your property windows dominated by such a visually intrusive eyesore as one of these masts? These type of installations do not belong within residential communities and must be confined to much more suitable locations where their intrusive impact will be significantly reduced.

Yours faithfully,

Iain Burton