

SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

12. TELECOMMUNICATIONS INSTALLATION (DAL)

1. **Purpose of Report**

1.1 **The purpose of this report is to inform Members of a request to place a telecommunications installation on the Green.**

2. Report

- 2.1 Orange Personal Communications Services Ltd. has recently approached the Crown Estate for permission to install a 'Streetworks Microcell' on the grass triangle of land at Coopers Hill Lane (indicated at Appendix 'E') as part of its mobile telephone network. The proposed installation would comprise of a telegraph pole structure of between 6 - 8 metres in height to support the antennas, with a cabinet at the base, to house the controls, which would measure 1.25m wide, 0.65m deep and 1.25m high. Officers are currently attempting to establish more details of the form of the equipment. Illustrative photographs will be available at the meeting.
- 2.2 Officers understand that a planning application may be submitted shortly. There is, however, a strong presumption in planning terms against the erection of telecommunications apparatus in the area around the Green because of the impact on what is a sensitive and historically important part of the Green Belt and the Englefield Green conservation area. Planning Policy Guidance Note 8 states that telecommunications development is inappropriate within the Green Belt unless it maintains openness. The onus is on the applicant to demonstrate that there are very special circumstances that outweigh the degree of harm to the Green Belt. Policy BE5 of the Borough's Local Plan requires that development should preserve or enhance the character or appearance of a Conservation Area with special regard given to the retention of the historic street pattern and landscape amongst other things.
- 2.3 An application for a 15 metre high telegraph pole style telecommunications mast at the junction of Castle Hill Road/St Judes Road/Ridgemean Road and Coopers Hill Lane (RU02/1247) was refused planning consent in December 2002. The erection of a 15m high telegraph pole style telecommunications mast at land at Priest Hill (RU.03/0066) was refused in March 2003 and subsequently dismissed on appeal. These applications were refused on Green Belt and Conservation Area grounds.
- 2.4 The Crown Estate has sought the views of this Committee on the request in advance of the planning application. The potential financial implications in the event that planning consent is granted are set out in Appendix '1' which is exempt by virtue of paragraph 9 of Schedule 12A to Part 1 of the Local Government Act 1972.
- 2.5 The Committee will consider this question from the standpoint of the Council's role as tenant of the Crown Lands, not as planning authority. Any Member attending the meeting who will also be a Member of the Planning Committee will wish to bear in mind the requirements of the Council's Planning Code of Conduct in order to ensure that decision making is seen to be fair and to prevent the risk of Legal, ombudsman or other challenge to any future planning process.

THE COMMITTEE IS ASKED TO -

comment on the request for the installation of a telecommunications facility on the Green and instruct the Director of Administration and Leisure whether or not to open negotiations with the Crown Estate and Orange regarding terms, subject to the grant of planning consent.

(TO RESOLVE)

Background Papers

Correspondence between Orange and the Crown Estate dated 2 and 4 February.