
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 November 2020

by Tim Wood BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 30 November 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/W/20/3248852

Park Parade, Communications Mast, Barra Hall Circus, Hayes UB3 2NU

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by MBNL against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref 54868/APP/2019/3087, dated 20 September 2019, was refused by notice dated 14 January 2020.
 - The development proposed is the installation of a 20m monopole, 12 no. antenna apertures, 9 equipment cabinets, the removal of the existing 13.2m monopole, 3 no. antennas, redundant equipment cabinets and development ancillary thereto.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this appeal is the effects of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal seeks to erect a 20m high telecommunications pole and 9 equipment cabinets. The proposal would be sited on an area of grass verge immediately adjacent to the road on this section of Judge Heath Lane (notwithstanding the appellant's use of the address of an existing nearby mast, which I have repeated above).
4. The verge sits adjacent to a number of 2 storey houses which are behind another wide verge and a service/access road. There are also 2 storey homes on the opposite side of Judge Heath Lane (some on Voltaire Way) which face towards the appeal site. Further to the west on the same side of the road as the appeal proposal are a number of single storey homes.
5. Within the street-scene here are a number of lamp-posts, telegraph poles and other normal street furniture items, common to suburban locations such as this. None of these items that I refer to are of such a size or in such numbers that they dominate the area.
6. The proposed 20m high mast would be by far the tallest structure or feature within the area, that I observed. It would be well over twice the height of the adjacent 2 storey houses and about twice the height of the street lights.

Combined with its width, I consider that it would have a considerable and negative effect on the character and appearance of the area, appearing significantly out of place and dominating the street-scene. The profusion of associated cabinets would add to the visual effects of the proposal. Whilst I can see that the cabinets would be sited close to the existing low railings, these would be insufficient to disguise their presence.

7. The proposal would bring about the removal of the telecommunications mast located adjacent to Park Parade, and would remove all but one of the existing cabinets. The existing mast is shown to be 13.7m high (notwithstanding the appellant's description, used above) and this is only marginally taller than the adjacent 3 storey, part-commercial buildings on Park Parade. Whilst I accept that there would be some visual benefit in removing an existing mast, in this case, that benefit would be far outweighed by the negative effects of the proposal due to the difference in heights and widths and also the difference in the heights of the buildings that provide a backdrop in some views.
8. I also fully acknowledge the encouragement given to providing improvements to communications systems such as this. But these associated benefits must always be part of a balance and in this instance, I consider that the significantly negative effects that the proposal would have are not outweighed by this and any other benefits. I have also taken account of the appellant's statements in relation to alternative sites but, again, find that this is insufficient to outweigh the harmful effects of the proposal.

Conclusions

9. For the reasons set out above, I find that the proposal is contrary to Policies DMHB 12 and DMHB 21 of the Council's Local Plan Part 2 – Development Management Policies and there is nothing sufficient to outweigh that conflict. As a consequence, the appeal is dismissed.

S T Wood

INSPECTOR