



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 January 2021

by Tim Wood BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 15 February 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/W/20/3260222

Hume Way, Ruislip HA4 8DY

- 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 54873/APP/2020/721, dated 25 February 2020, was refused by notice dated 19 June 2020.
 - The development proposed is described as the installation of a 20m monopole, 12 no. antenna apertures, equipment cabinets, the removal of the existing 13.7m 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, which is then weighed against the benefits of the proposal.

Reasons

3. The appeal proposal would be sited within a narrow area of grass verge adjacent to the pavement on Hume Way. The proposed monopole would be 20m high and contain 12 antennas at 4 levels, as well as a number of equipment cabinets sited within the verge. The proposal would also result in the removal of a 13.7m high monopole and all but 1 equipment cabinet, sited about 85m away on the same road.
4. The surrounding area is predominantly residential in nature and contains a variety of houses of 2 and 3 storeys in height. The wider verge which separates the houses from the road here, contains a number of trees, some mature and tall. There are street-lighting columns, a telegraph pole and an existing telecommunications monopole (to be removed) within the street-scene. The lighting columns and telegraph pole are modest in height, in comparison to the trees and about the same height as some of the houses.
5. The proposed monopole would have a wide base and its main body would have a significantly greater width than the other features that I have referred to. Its upper section would again be wider. The proposal would be significantly taller than the adjacent houses, about twice the height of the 3 storey properties,

according to the appellant's drawings. It would also be taller than those trees closest to the appeal site. Its position on the verge would place the monopole and cabinets forward of the adjacent trees, which align further away from the road here, adjacent to the junction with Hale End Close. I consider that these factors would combine to result in a significantly negative effect on the street-scene. The proposal would have a visually dominating effect due to its appearance, width, height and positioning.

6. The existing monopole which would be removed is slimmer, lower and when seen from the road, its upper section is screened by the canopy of the trees as one enters Hume Way and approaches it from the north west, as it is also from much of Campbell Close. Therefore, in comparison with the existing telecommunications monopole, I consider that the proposal would have a significantly greater, and an unacceptable effect.
7. In addition, I consider that the number, size and positioning of the equipment cabinets would also have an unacceptable visual effect on the surroundings. Again, I have considered the removal of some of the existing cabinets but the position and size of the proposed cabinets would have a detrimental effect on the locality
8. There is clearly a balance to be struck between the need for such a proposal, the benefits arising from it, and any visual effects that may arise. I have given very careful attention to the appellant's statement relating to the need for the proposal and to their search for alternatives. I also acknowledge the considerable encouragement given to the provision of an efficient communications network within the National Planning Policy Framework. I also note that it states that sympathetic design is a requirement. The Council do not seek to criticise the appellant's evidence in this respect and I confirm that I have taken it into account and so give weight to these matters in favour of the appeal. I have also taken account of the other appeal decisions submitted by the appellant but what is important to keep in mind is that the individual circumstances of each case will be different and so the balance of differing factors may also be different. When balanced against the significant and unacceptable visual effects of the proposal in this case, I consider that those other matters are insufficient to outweigh the harm that would arise from this proposal. Therefore, I find that the proposal is contrary to Policies DMHB 11, DMHB 12 and DMHB 21 of the Council's Local Plan Part 2 Development Management Policies and there are no matters sufficient to outweigh that conflict.
9. As a consequence of the above, the appeal is dismissed.

S T Wood

INSPECTOR