

MARLBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Minutes of a **Special Meeting** of the **Planning Committee**, which was held on **Monday 25<sup>th</sup> October 2004** in the Court Room, Town Hall, Marlborough at 7.00pm

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PRESENT

Councillor D. L. Parker  
Councillor G. Francis  
Councillor Mrs H. A. Cripps  
Councillor S. R. Dobson  
Councillor Mrs E. M. Hannaford  
Councillor Mrs P. A. Dow  
Councillor N. J. Fogg  
Councillor M. Gray  
Councillor M. C. Curtis  
Councillor P. B. Cossey

Chairman  
Town Mayor  
Deputy Town Mayor

Mr Robert Lofthouse  
Jonathan Mansfield  
Mr N. Kerton  
Miss A. Outrim

FPDSavills  
Civic Secretary  
Wiltshire Gazette & Herald  
The Adviser

Plus approximately 50 Members of the Public

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314/04

**APOLOGIES:**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor M. P. Cooper, Councillor W. B. Cavill, Councillor B. Castle and Councillor R. J. Allen.

315/04

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:**

There were no declarations of interests.

316/04

**MINUTES:**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2004 be taken as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

317/04

**PLANNING APPLICATIONS:**

The Committee considered the following planning application, which was received from Kennet District Council –

- (a) K/051025      Erection of two rooftop flagpole antenna mounts, with rooftop apron and ancillary telecommunications apparatus at Marlborough Telephone Exchange, Blowhorn Street, Marlborough for Crown Castle UK.

The Chairman stated that this application has nothing to do with the dish that has already been erected on the telephone exchange; this is subject to a separate investigation by Kennet District Council.

The Chairman introduced Mr Robert Lofthouse, Planning Consultant from FPDSavills.

**The Chairman suspended Standing Orders at 7.02pm and invited Members of the Public to speak**

(a) Mr C. Joseph, 12 Alexandra Terrace, said that if this application is approved, the roofline in this Conservation Area would change dramatically due to the addition of other masts. Once one mast is in place it is difficult to refuse the addition of more masts. Mr Joseph asked that the Council reject the application on environmental grounds.

(b) A resident asked why the Savernake mast could not be used.

Mr Lofthouse explained that the mast needs to be closer to built-up areas due to the small size of the coverage.

(c) Mrs E. Moreton, 10 Blowhorn Street, stated that the public had the same concerns as when the last application was put forward; namely the potential health risks. Mrs Moreton asked what had changed?

Mr Lofthouse stated that the proposed equipment meets all the criteria for the international standards on public exposure to electromagnetic radiation.

(d) Mr B. McClintock, 11 Blowhorn Street, expressed his concern that the public and professionals do not know the real risks that these transmitters pose. Mr McClintock said that there are no safe levels and therefore, if the exchange is going to be subject to regular applications of this sort, he recommends that the telephone exchange is moved out of Marlborough.

(e) Mr R. Owen, 4 Alexandra Terrace, asked where the demand for extra coverage for this area has come from?

Mr Lofthouse explained that this was part of the T-Mobile and '3' network roll-out.

(f) Ms R. Skittrall, 8 Alexandra Terrace, asked the developers to consider a more suitable industrial area, such as the site on the south of the Town. Ms Skittrall stated that Kennet District Council had already refused a proposal of this sort in Pewsey on health grounds.

Mr Lofthouse stated that consideration had been given to other locations for the mast, but that the telephone exchange was considered to be the only viable option. He understood that the reason for the mast in Pewsey being rejected was due to the fact that alternative sites had not been considered.

(g) Mr S. Brett, 12 Blowhorn Street, said that this was the mobile phone providers 'wish' and not a 'need' that has arisen from consumer demand. Mr Brett asked the Town Council to reject this and any other application of this sort in the future.

- (h) Councillor N. J. Fogg asked if FPDSavills would take responsibility for any damage to health that is found to have been caused by the phone mast. Councillor Fogg stated that in Sweden and California, electromagnetic sensitivity is classed as an illness and in both places, thousands of people are registered as suffering from this sensitivity.

Mr Lofthouse explained that the Government issues guidelines on the safe levels of electromagnetic transmissions and that ultimately it would not be the telecommunications providers who would be liable.

- (i) Councillor Mrs H. A. Cripps said that the needs of the local people were being ignored. Councillor Mrs Cripps asked where such demand for Third Generation mobile phones was coming from in this area?

Mr Lofthouse explained that the operator's justification is that '3' need to establish their own infrastructure across the country.

Councillor Mrs E. M. Hannaford stated that in order to retain her position at Kennet District Council's Regulatory Committee, she would listen to the debate, but she would not take part and she would not vote on any decision.

- (j) Councillor P. B. Cossey asked if the developers would re-submit an amended planning application if this one was refused?

Mr Lofthouse said this would be the supplier's decision and would be based on whether an alternative site could be found.

- (k) Councillor Mrs P. A. Dow asked for an objection to be based on the same reasons as the previous application.

- (l) The Mayor said that he was particularly concerned with the visual impact on the Conservation Area. The Mayor can understand why such an ugly concrete building is being used for a development of this type, however there are always more suitable alternatives.

- (m) Mr P. Hussey, 1 Alexandra Terrace, has recently attended a meeting on mobile phone mast emissions safety and he is particularly concerned with the number of health issues that are occurring in areas where such masts have been located for the longest period of time. Mr Hussey explained that evidence on Cancer clusters has been proved and that Swedish research shows that transmitters of this sort should not be placed in residential areas.

### **The Chairman re-instated Standing Orders at 7.40pm**

Before asking for a proposal from the Planning Committee, the Chairman referred to *Planning Policy Guidance 8 – Telecommunications*, section 29, which states:

'29. Health considerations and public concern can in principle be material considerations in determining applications for planning permission and prior approval. Whether such matters are material in a particular case is ultimately a matter for the courts. It is for the decision-maker (usually the local planning authority) to determine what weight to attach to such considerations in any particular case'.

**Councillor Mrs E. M. Hannaford left the room at 7.45pm**

Proposed by Councillor N. J. Fogg, seconded by Councillor M. Gray and –

RESOLVED: Unanimously, that Marlborough Town Council strongly objects to this application on the grounds of –

- (a) the environmental impact on the immediate local area
- (b) the future impact that this development may have on the Conservation Area
- (c) the potential health hazards as described in an number of international reports on electromagnetic transmissions

Marlborough Town Council urge the applicants to withdraw this application as this site is totally unacceptable, now and in the future, for the erection of any antennae of this sort. This Council believes that the applicants have not adequately explored alternative and more suitable sites.

The Chairman thanked Mr Lofthouse for attending the meeting and answering questions.

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Meeting closed at 7.46pm