

GESTINGTHORPE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Planning Committee of Gestingthorpe Parish Council AGM in the Village Hall on Thursday 13th. June 2019 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs J. Nott (Chair), P Collett, S. Bolter, D. Smith and Kevin B. Money (Parish Clerk). Also present was Mr Crumpton-Taylor and 35 members of the public

010/2019 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES were received from Cllrs A. Cooper & T. Flower

011/2019 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

To declare the existence and nature of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, other Pecuniary Interest or Non-Pecuniary Interest relating to items on the agenda

No Councillor declared any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, other Pecuniary Interest or Non-Pecuniary Interest relating to items on the agenda

012/2019 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

A period of up to 15 minutes when members of the public can speak about planning matters

- Siting of the mast at the proposed site is not viable. A higher ground in the village is better.
- Is the siting down to cost
- The PC was not consulted – Lack of communication with PC and residents
- Health reasons for the elderly and children.
- 9mtrs higher than the highest building in the village
- Why a lattice pole and not a mono pole. Will in the future will more equipment be mounted on the pole?
- This mast is not just for Gestingthorpe but for surrounding areas. Why so close to listed buildings
- Agree with mast but it is the siting that is the problem.
- Disguise the mast
- Has the applicant investigate alternative sites
- After village meeting residents came out with great ideas and alternatives
- What are the technical constraints have been applied
- Application has a lot of untruths
- Planning arguments
- Landowners livelihood will be impaired
- Long-Term health arguments
- An alternative siting was discussed

On Church but there are better alternatives

Landowner to extend the barn on his property

Mast 100m away from school and residential homes

Siting the mast on higher ground

Conclusion

- Numbers of objections in strength
- Due process is wrong
- Planning objection

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013/2019 CONSIDERATION OF THE FOLLOWING APPLICATIONS

19/00362/FUL - 1 Pound Farm/Annexe Pound Farm North End Road CO9 3BN
Retention of Change of use from full term let to holiday let. **Pending Consideration**

19/00914/HH - Forge Cottage Gestingthorpe Road Belchamp Walter Essex CO10 7AU
Erection of single storey rear extension (amendment to approved single storey extension
12/01251/FUL) - **Pending Consideration**

Documents can be found at

<https://publicaccess.braintree.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=PRUEZOBFOJD00>

GPC Decision: Councillors noted that this application is in Belchamp Walter Parish

19/00933/T56 - Hall Farm Church Street Gestingthorpe Essex CO9 3BA
The proposed development in this case is the installation of a 18m lattice mast with three
antennas, two dish antennas, two radio equipment cabinets, an associated electricity meter
cabinet within a fenced compound and development works thereto - **Pending Consideration**

Documents can be found at

<https://publicaccess.braintree.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=PRYHFBRBFGOJ00>

GPC Decision: The Parish Council **OBJECTS** to this planning application

In the planning application Telefonica (UK) Ltd states that they had notified the Parish Council. This statement is incorrect, the application was submitted to Braintree District Council on 23rd. May but the first notification to the Clerk of Gestingthorpe Parish Council of the application was from the Braintree Planning Department on 29th. May 2019. The Clerk then informed the Councillors. There was no prior communication or pre-application consultation with the Parish Council before the application was submitted by Telefonica (UK) Ltd. Furthermore, there was no pre-application consultation with local residents, Ward Councillor and our local MP, James Cleverley, prior to submission of the application. This contravenes The Code of Best Practice on Mobile Network Development in England and questions the validity of the planning application to Braintree District Council

Gestingthorpe Parish Council object to both the siting and design of the proposed mast. Whilst the Parish Council do wish to deter the improvement of mobile phone coverage within the Parish, it is suggested that Telefonica (UK) Ltd could find better suitable alternatives within the locality.

The proposed siting of the mast within the heart of the village will affect the visual amenity of the locality. The proposed site lies very close to many houses whose view of the unblemished local countryside will be marred by such a prominent and substantial mast. The proposed site lies close to Gestingthorpe Hall, a Grade 2* listed property, and the former home of Captain Oates of South Pole expedition fame. It is also within 200 metres of Grade 1 listed Church of St Mary the Virgin, noted for its unusual Church tower, built from bricks made within the Parish. There are several other Grade 2 listed properties located along Church Street, including The Rectory, Ashley Cottage, Church Cottages, Church Farmhouse and Tong Cottage. The view as you head north along Church Street includes many of these listed properties within the pretty village setting, and the visual intrusion of a 18m lattice tower within this view would be substantial. Also, the proposed mast would substantially change the character of the village and its listed assets by overlooking them all.

The application demonstrates no consideration for the Gestingthorpe Village Design Statement. Guideline 6.7 states: *A mobile phone mast could be erected in the Village, but siting and*

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appearance are of crucial importance and the Village community must be consulted. The Gestingthorpe Village Design Statement was produced in context of Braintree District Council's Local Plan Review 2005 and has been approved by Braintree District Council as a material planning consideration.

The Parish Council are against the siting of a phone mast at Hall Farm as it is inconsistent with the Village Design Statement and the District Council's Local Plan.

The proposal is for an 18m lattice mast, the design and height of which will visually monopolises the locality. The Parish Council would question why has a site on low ground in the heart of the village been chosen, when there are many suitable alternative sites on higher ground on the perimeter of the village? Whilst the siting of the proposed mast is to the rear of a grain store, this adjacent building is only half the height of the mast and provides little mitigating visual protection to the wider village residents. No plans for further screening have been suggested and there are not any photographs showing the rolling countryside and the Stour Valley Special Landscape Area (A2b - side valleys) immediately to the North and East, given extra protection through Policy RLP79 of the adopted Braintree District Local Plan Review 2005. The detailed guidance which replaces the simple quality grading states that the area has high sensitivity to change, and to development which impinges on the skyline viewed from the valleys. The proposed mast would be on the viewed at distance from the surrounding countryside.

Also, there are no photographs within the application showing the very close proximity of homes including Ridley House to the East, Hall Farmhouse and the Grade 2* listed Gestingthorpe Hall to the North.

Consideration has been given to the following extract from the BDC Local Plan:

BDC Local Plan Chapter 12 - Utilities

12. 7 Proposals for new masts and apparatus will only be supported if there are overriding reasons why the sharing of existing installations cannot act as an alternative. In addition, the Council considers that areas with special designations (such as Conservation Areas) do warrant a more critical approach to telecommunications as well as other forms of development. This view is supported in PPG8. There may be particular concerns over siting and design of masts in such designated areas. Whilst arbitrary restrictions such as mast height will not automatically be imposed across the District, proposals raising particular environmental or amenity issues will be treated particularly carefully in terms of long range views and setting issues. Regard will nevertheless be had to technical and operational constraints when considering proposals.

Also, Gestingthorpe Parish Council sites the following policy which is in the BDC Local Plan:

Policy RLP 162 Telecommunications

Development Proposals for telecommunications development must first consider the sharing of masts and sites, in order to reduce the proliferation of structures. Where it can be proven that this is not possible, new telecommunications development will be permitted where it accords with the following criteria:

its siting, design, height and any screening keep environmental and amenity impacts to a minimum (see (d) below);

new masts and other installations are sited and designed to harmonise with any existing structures on the site, especially their height and profile;

measures to reduce the proliferation of structures, including mast sharing and additional underground or other infrastructure works, are not practicable; and

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they preserve or enhance the setting of Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings, and there is no conflict with the settings of Registered Parks and Gardens, areas of archaeological, landscape or nature conservation interest and similar areas with special designations.

Permissions will be subject to a condition requiring the removal of all telecommunications apparatus and equipment when its use becomes redundant.

It is the Parish Council's view that the proposed site does not meet the criteria set out in Policy RLP 162 for the reasons given above.

There is no evidence supplied of an assessment of light or noise pollution on a quiet, dark village with no streetlights nor does it comment on health issues, people's quality of life and wellbeing which is covered by The International Commission on Non Ionising Radiation Protection.

The proposed location of the mast will impact on future operations and development at Hall Farm. The proposed mast is directly behind and adjacent to the farm barn restricting and limiting how operations can in future develop and flex in response to changing environmental and agricultural demands. We would question whether Telefonica (UK) Ltd has fully consulted with the owner of the land to which this application relates.

This objection from the Parish Council is made following consultation with local residents at a village meeting held on 13th. June 2019 just, 15 days after receiving notification of the planning application from BDC, which 35 residents attended.

Residents made great suggestions and alternatives that it would appear Telefonica have not considered fully i.e.

To place on existing structures in the Parish possibly National Grid pylons to the south of the village

The mast must be positioned at a considerable distance from residential homes.

Siting the mast on higher ground which would mean a smaller mast away from village properties

Disguise the mast

2 smaller masts in the area rather than 1 large mast

Further Consultations with all residents and Parish Council on the future siting of the mast.

As stated above the Parish Council are not against the improvement of telecommunications coverage within Gestingthorpe and the surrounding area but consider that Telefonica's application is not the way in which this should be achieved. The Parish Council and the Residents would be happy to meet with Telefonica or their representatives to consult on more suitable sites and installations.

In summary the Parish Council urge Braintree District Council to REJECT this application.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.30pm and thanked everyone for attending

Signed.....18th. July 2019

James Nott