

Application No: N/99/00974/FUL
Date Registered: 20th July 1999
APPLICANT: ORANGE PLC
Agent: James Barr, 226 West George Street, Glasgow, G2 2LN
DEVELOPMENT: PROPOSED ROOFTOP INSTALLATION OF ONE 1200MM MICROWAVE DISH
LOCATION: 1 TAY WALK, TOWN CENTRE, CUMBERNAULD
Ward No: 60
Grid: 275743 674479
File Reference: JR
Site History: N/99/00105/FUL - Installation of a rooftop 300mm microwave dish.
Development Plan: Zoned SH1, 8 in the Cumbernauld Local Plan (Adopted) 1993
Contrary to Development Plan: No

CONSULTATIONS:

Objection:
No Objection:
No Reply:
Conditions:

REPRESENTATIONS:

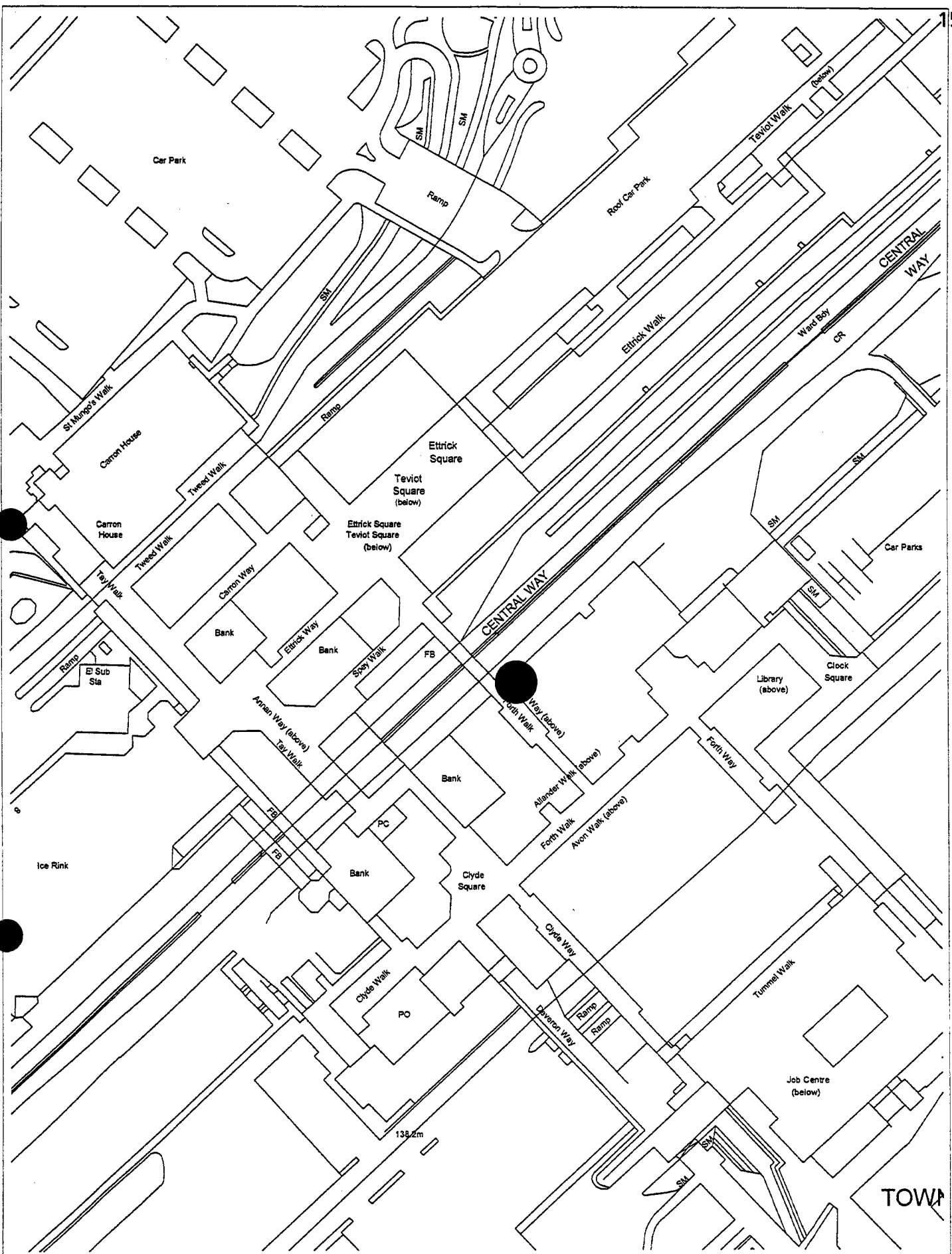
Neighbours: None
Newspaper Advert: Not Required

COMMENTS:

This application has been submitted for the installation of 1200mm microwave antenna at 1 Tay Walk, Town Centre Cumbernauld. The site is currently owned by Cumbernauld Centres Limited. The application is required as the permitted development rights of a structure allow only 2 microwave antennae. The apparatus which is the subject of this application will bring the number of antennae to four.

My detailed observations on this proposal are contained in the accompanying report. I would deem that this proposal is acceptable and recommend that planning permission be granted.

RECOMMENDATION:/



Produced by
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N/99/00974/FUL
 ORANGE PLC
 Proposed Rooftop Installation of One 1200mm Microwave Dish
 1 Tay Walk, Town Centre, Cumbernauld
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NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL
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N

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-2-

RECOMMENDATION: Grant permission subject to the following condition

1. That the development hereby permitted shall be started within five years of the date of the permission

Reason: To accord with the provisions of the Town and Country (Planning) Scotland Act 1997.

List of Background Papers:

Application Forms and Plans

Cumbernauld Local Plan

Consultation response from Protective Services dated 2 August 1999

Any person wishing to inspect these documents should contact Jim Ravey on 01236-616479

APPLICATION NO:**1. SITE AND PROPOSAL**

1.1 This application has been submitted by James Barr, on behalf of Orange PLC, for the erection of a 1200mm microwave dish on the roof of Cumbernauld Town Centre. The existing Town Centre is a multi level facility providing car parking, commercial, civic and office functions for Cumbernauld. The site for the proposed antennae is a service tower which is believed to house elevator winding equipment and/or other essential plant for the functions at the lower levels.

1.2 The site is currently zoned

“SH1,8 :- Shopping Centres - to be retained predominately in shopping uses; preferred location for new shopping”

in the Cumbernauld Local Plan (Adopted) 1993. The proposed development does not conflict with the policies contained within said Plan.

2. CONSULTATIONS AND OBJECTIONS

2.1 Consultation and neighbour notification has generated no adverse responses.

3. OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSION

3.1 The proposed location on top of the existing Cumbernauld Town Centre cannot be viewed from any of the shopping malls or adjacent road network and is of sufficient height and distance from the adjacent office accommodation as not to be detrimental to the visual amenity of the areas..

3.2 There is currently a perception amongst sections of the public that there are certain health issues associated with proposals for telecommunication masts, antennae and their associated Electro Magnetic Fields (E.M.F. 's). Strictly speaking, health considerations in cases such as this are a matter outwith the scope of planning control and should be dealt with by the Health and Safety Executive.

3.3 The National Radiological Protection Board (N.R.P.B.) is the Government's Statutory advisor on radiological protection matters. It sets out guidance limiting exposure to E.M.F. 's and current advice from Central Government is that so long as the guidelines are adhered to, there is no proven risk to health from such developments.

3.4 However, recent draft guidance indicated that public perception of danger can be a valid planning consideration when assessing proposals for this type of development, although it has to be weighted against other land use considerations.

3.5 In this instance there have been no objections received from the adjacent notified neighbours or members of the public to the proposal.

3.6 Given that the proposal is not considered to be detrimental to the amenity of the area, and that there has been no objections submitted, it is recommend that planning permission be granted.

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

LATE REPRESENTATIONS

PLANNING APPLICATION No. N/99/00974/FUL

Since the preparation of the Committee report by the Director of Planning and Development a further representation has been received. In the Director's opinion:-

The letter submitted on behalf of the applicant indicates the proposed aerial will not be in a position to generate Electro Magnetic Fields at a level which will exceed the safety limits set by the National Radiological Protection Board. This matter is referred to in my report.

NOTE

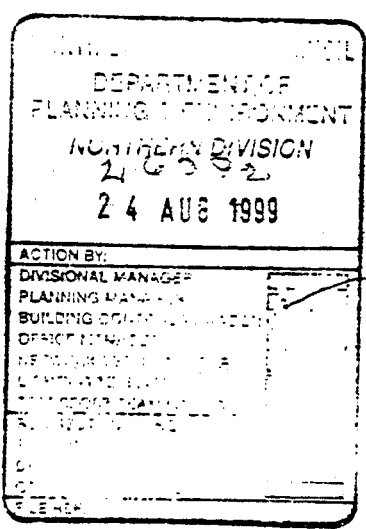
This form will be copied 6 times, together with the representations referred to, and given to Convenor, Vice Convenors, Director and Chief Committee Services Officer (X2).

99/00974late rep

CM/PM

20 August 1999

Jim Ravey Esq
North Lanarkshire Council
Northern Division
Broan Way
CUMBERNAULD
G67 1DZ



JAMES BARR 
CHARTERED SURVEYORS
226 West George Street
Glasgow G2 2LN
Tel: 0141 300 8000
Fax: 0141 300 8001

Dear Jim

ORANGE PCS LIMITED
CELL SITE: STR0015 – APPLICATION NO. N/99/00974/FUL
INSTALLATION OF 1 NO. 1.2 METRE MICROWAVE DISH – 1 TAY WALK, TOWN CENTRE, CUMBERNAULD

Further to our telephone conversation of Friday, 20 August 1999, I am aware that the above application has now been continued to a site visit to take place beginning to mid September. In response to potential concerns of the Committee, I write with information which would assist the assessment of this application at the site visit and would be grateful if you could pass this correspondence to the appropriate parties.

In Scotland, the guidance contained in Scottish Development Department circular 25/85, contains the most up-to-date policy guidance to Planning Authorities concerning the benefits of modern telecommunications. The circular clearly states that the proliferation of telecommunications mast should be kept to a minimum and that the "sharing of masts, where practical, will help to achieve this, so too will the use of existing buildings to site new antennas". This proposal is, indeed, in accordance with both local and national policy concerning site sharing and use of existing structures.

As you will be aware, this proposal involves the erection of 1 no. microwave dish which, by definition, operates on a "fixed point to fixed point basis". The signal, which is passed between these points, is relatively narrow in width and depends on a direct, uninterrupted line of site "to work properly". Any physical obstruction in this path would result in this link failing. Placing microwave dishes at roof level removes any possibility of physical obstruction in the microwave link path. Similarly, the customer end of the link would be located at roof level. It is therefore argued that physical contact with this signal is a hypothetical concern as contact may only be made if the recipient was positioned in the direct path of the microwave dish. The NRPB guidelines states that the only area where guidelines may be exceeded is directly in front of antennas. Since the area is directly in front of the antennas and not accessible to members of the public, there is no danger that the safety limit specified by the NRPB would be exceeded.

The NRPB are an independent agency charged by the UK Government ensuring that all forms of radio waves in the atmosphere are kept within safe levels to ensure no risk to public health. As such, they take account of ongoing research, both in this country and throughout the rest of the world, and advise both the Government and telecommunications operators with regard to

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safe prescribed levels of radio wave emissions. Orange PCS Limited are responsible telecommunications operators who operate well within the guidelines suggested by the NRPB.

Furthermore, there have been sustansive conclusions reached from international research that they have been unable to establish any adverse health effects associated with telecommunications equipment and public exposure. More specifically, in May 1999 the Royal Society of Canada published a comprehensive report inferring that "the cause of low fuelled strength associated with public exposures to R F fields from wireless telecommunications base station transmitters, neither biological or adverse health effects are likely to incur". I can also draw your attention to a recent article in the Glasgow Herald Newspaper, dated Wednesday, 14 July 1999, which stated:-

"There is no firm evidence to suggest electro magnetic fields from telecommunications mast pose a risk to health, the Government said yesterday. Environment Minister of State, Richard Kayburn at Commons Question Time acknowledged widespread public concern on the issue but added that expert research had discounted any casual link".

I enclose a copy of this article for your perusal, along with the full transcription from the House of Commons Parliamentary questions on 13 July 1999 from which the article was taken.

I trust that this information will help assist your assessment of this application and address any concerns the Committee may have concerning this proposal.

Kind regards,
Yours sincerely



Carey McLean
For and on behalf of ORANGE PCS LIMITED

Direct Dial: 0141 300 8039

Cc: Denis Meikleham – Orange PCS Limited

Enc.

Telecommunications Masts

Mr. Harry Barnes (North-East Derbyshire): What recent representations he has received concerning the siting of telecommunications masts; and if he will make a statement. [89484]

The Minister for the Regions, Regeneration and Planning (Mr. Richard Caborn): My Department received 269 responses to the consultation paper, "Telecommunications Development Control" published in July 1998 and 147 responses to the draft circular, "Land Use Planning and Electromagnetic Fields" published in December 1998. Since then, we have answered 10 parliamentary questions and responded centrally to some 140 letters regarding telecommunications masts.

Mr. Barnes: My right hon. Friend recently made a welcome statement to point out the tightening up of the provisions within those areas. I am concerned about existing telecommunications masts, which may have been placed in areas where they are unacceptable. Many are in school playing fields, right next to schools and to residents. There is one in my constituency on top of a bakery, right next to a residential area, which seems a dangerous position. Are any moves being made to ensure an exclusion zone around telecommunications masts and will it operate for those already in existence?

Mr. Caborn: I appreciate that there is public concern about this issue and we take that seriously. My right hon. Friend the Minister for Public Health and I will be writing to all hon. Members and to local authorities shortly to set out the Government's position on the issue. As the House is aware, our Departments issued jointly for consultation in December the draft of a circular on land use planning and electromagnetic fields. We are considering the responses.

Government experts tell us that the National Radiological Protection Board advises that the strength of radio waves at ground level and in areas normally accessible to the public is many times below the recommended guideline level and should present no health risk. However, we are aware of the public concern that there might be other risks to health, such as cancer. The Government consider it important that high-quality research continues to be carried out. We are involved in research in the United Kingdom and internationally. I stress that the NRPB advises that there is no firm evidence of a causal link between exposure to electromagnetic fields and cancer.

Mr. David Lidington (Aylesbury): Could the Minister give an assurance that he will pay particular attention in his review to applications for sites within areas of outstanding natural beauty, including the Chiltern hills? Will he take careful account of the reports that pressure is being exerted to overturn the decision of the local planning authority on Chisleys wood in my constituency? That pressure is coming from Government Departments and the current tenant of Chequers. Will he ensure that he takes all steps within his Department to avoid any conflict of interest in determining the outcome?

Mr. Caborn: It would be inappropriate for me to get involved in a site that was the subject of a particular planning application. There was wide consultation, to which the hon. Gentleman may or may not have responded. We got the support of local authorities, planning authorities and, indeed, the industry. I now believe that there is a sensible approach to the issue. Areas of outstanding natural beauty were taken into consideration in the consultation and the Government responded accordingly.

Computers are culprits

Hi-tech cause of office illness

ROSEMARY FREE

COMPUTERS are to blame for illnesses related to sick building syndrome such as headaches, backache and irritability, researchers claimed yesterday.

They said more than a third of symptoms linked to the syndrome were caused by low-level electromagnetic radiation from computer monitors.

The research, by Professor Derek Clement-Croome from Reading University and environmental consultant Mr John Jukes, has been given a cautious welcome by scientists, union officials and business organisations.

However, concern was expressed that the research was linked to the sale of a new device designed to counter the effects of radiation from visual display units (VDUs).

Researchers found that in only four working weeks, 50% of staff experienced between seven and 12 symptoms linked to sick building syndrome, including dry itchy eyes, tiredness, fatigue, and depression.

Although the problems were not severe enough to cause absence from work, they affected personal well-being and productivity. The researchers claimed the symptoms could be reduced by between 27% and 44% by fitting the special alpha oscillator device to VDUs.

A spokesman for the National Radiological Protection Board said it could not comment on the research until it had been published in a scientific journal.

However, he added: "We support research in this area and the need for it. If evidence did emerge that the magnetic field was having an effect we would change our advice."

Ms Hope Daley, a health and safety officer at the public sector union Unison, said: "It sounds interesting but we would have to see how they arrived at that conclusion. We would also have to be a bit wary because it is linked to something being sold. In our experience, it is much more likely that symptoms of sick building syndrome are caused by a variety of things such as poor ventilation,

photocopiers being in the main office, lighting, and perhaps low level fumes from newly-laid carpets or tiles."

She was backed up by Mr Phil Taylor, a lecturer in industrial relations at Stirling University, who has done extensive research on sick building syndrome over the past five years.

"Serious research into sick building syndrome has demonstrated there is no one single cause," he said. "There is no doubt, however, that the massive increase in IT usage in offices over the last decade and a half has to be seen as one major contributory factor in the growth of building-related ill health."

"This is not just in relation to muscular skeletal conditions but also in contributing to the drying out of the atmosphere, acting as a magnet for dust and leading to complaints associated with both breathing and eyesight."

A spokesman for the British Chambers of Commerce said it would be interested to see further research into this matter.

"If, indeed, it is the case that there are health and safety issues that need to be addressed by employers, they need to know," he said.

Professor Clement-Croome said that although sick building syndrome could be caused by other factors, research had shown that by eliminating the effects of radiation from computer screens, the other symptoms could be reduced by a third.

There is no firm evidence to suggest electromagnetic fields from telecommunication masts pose a risk to health, the Government said yesterday.

Environment Minister of State Richard Caborn, at Commons question time, acknowledged widespread public concern on the issue but added that expert research had discounted any causal link.

Labour's Harry Barnes (Derbyshire, NE) asked the Government to consider an exclusion zone for the placing of masts around residential areas.