

**MOBILE PHONE MASTS – SCRUTINY REVIEW PANEL
19 DECEMBER 2005**

Report Title: **MOBILE PHONE MASTS**

Report of: Assistant Director, Planning, Environmental Policy & Performance

Wards(s) affected: All

Report for: Information

1. Purpose

1.1 To advise the Scrutiny Panel of the numbers of mobile phone mast/antennae sites in Haringey, the numbers of applications submitted to the Planning Service since April 2000, on the level of consultation carried out on Planning Applications, and on the 'roll-out plans' of the five Mobile Phone companies for future installations

2. Recommendations

2.1 That the Report be noted and taken into consideration when the Scrutiny Committee formulates its proposals for dealing with Mobile Phone Site proposals.

Report Authorised by: Anne Fisher – Director of Environmental Services

Contact Officer: Paul Tomkins – Head of Development Control (North)
Telephone No:0208 489 5167

3. Executive Summary

3.1 The majority of the 105 mobile phone masts in the borough are mounted on buildings. There is thought to be only 3 on-street pole masts. The proportion of masts mounted on council owned property or land is just below 30%. As far as the council is aware only two schools have antennae mounted on their buildings, at Fortismere and Alexandra Park secondary schools. The "roll-out" plans of the mobile phone operators suggest that each of the 5 operators has the intention of providing another 6 to 9 sites in the borough to complete their networks. Council consultation on planning applications for mast sites tends to be more extensive than planning guidelines recommend and is significantly more than for building developments requiring planning permission. Not all masts require formal planning permission and permission can only be refused for sound planning reasons.

4. Reasons for any change in policy or for new policy development (if applicable)

4.1 None

5. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

5.1 Ofcom Sitefinders Schedules of Installations.

5.2 Lists of Telecommunications Planning Applications submitted to Haringey Council

REPORT

Background

6.0 Mast Register.

- 6.1 In order to assist in assessing proposals for additional telecommunications installations, it is advisable for Councils to have a Mast Register, of sites where such installations have taken place.
- 6.2 It is important to note that although in everyday speech these installations are referred to as Mobile Phone Masts, in practice not all are masts, many being antennae fixed to the roofs of buildings, with only a very short stub mast or no mast at all. On most occasions there will be three antennae in an installation, at 120 degree intervals, to give all-round coverage; (sometimes four on the roof of a building, at all four corners).
- 6.3 Utilising the OFCOM Sitefinder records (a national database), and cross-comparing these with the 'roll-out' plans of the five Mobile Phone operators (Referred to in more detail in section 9 below), and the lists of planning applications submitted to the Borough in the last five years, an Interim Mast Register has been prepared. This has been done on a Ward basis.

The main findings are;-

Number of sites;	105.
Number mounted on buildings; at least	75.
Number on Council-owned buildings or street;	29.

- 6.4 The number of phone masts per ward ranges from 1 in Bruce Grove Ward, to 11 in Highgate, and 11 in Noel Park (most of which are roof-mounted at Shopping City). There are 9 in Fortis Green, Tottenham Green, and Northumberland Park Wards. Other wards with lower numbers are Bounds Green, White Hart Lane, St. Ann's and Stroud Green, all with 3, and Hornsey with 2.

- 6.5 Three **TETRA** sites exist (this is a system that serves the emergency services); at Highgate Police station Archway Road, at Clarendon Road N8, and at West Road N17 on an industrial estate.
- 6.6 Many of the Sites have two installations, i.e. the older GSM antennae and the newer UMTS system which is understood to serve the latest 3G technology.
- 6.7 The next stage, for the Mast Register, will be adding those sites where there have been Refusals of consent or applications withdrawn; this will be gleaned from records of applications submitted.

7. Numbers of applications.

- 7.1 The numbers of applications, both of full planning and of Prior Notification (i.e. those made as Permitted Development under Class 24 of the General Permitted Development Order where the Council has limited powers of objection just to design and siting), is of the order of 112 since April 2000, so the average annual total of applications made is around 22.
- 7.2 The rate of refusal has increased in recent years; in 2004, 5 out of 11 applications were approved; so far in 2005, 4 out of 19 have been granted (with 2 still pending). In 2002 and 2003, 11 out of 16 and 8 out of 9 were approved respectively.

8. Consultation

- 8.1 A small sample has been made of applications submitted both in 2005 and in 2000 to 2002 to indicate the level of consultation and the response.
- 8.2 Looking first at six applications of this year (2005):-

2005	Consulted	Responded
45, Walpole Rd. N17.	65	7
Durnsford Road N11	108	11
Albert Rd.	97	31, plus 500 signature petition
Tesco Metro, High Rd. N22	11	0
52 Aylmer Road N2	16	7
311 The Roundway N17	33	400 signature petition

2000 to 2002	Consulted	Responded
28 Lawrence Road N15	13	0
Coles Park, White Hart Lane, N17	191	7
Wesbury Court N22	37	6, plus 1 supporting
555 White Hart Lane	26	0
Broadwater Farm; roof of Kenley	102	0, plus 1 supporting
50 Clarendon Road N8	9	0

8.3 **Points to note:**

- In general, the numbers of persons consulted will depend on the density of surrounding population; for example the 52 Aylmer Road application was near to open space, and opposite a less densely developed area than say Durnsford Road, Albert Road or Walpole Road where more were consulted..
- To consult 50 or 60 nearby residents is well in excess of the numbers that would be consulted over say an application for the erection of two new houses; three either side, three behind and six opposite would give about 15 consultees on such a scheme.
- The numbers consulted already exceed the number of individual letter responses.
- Government advice on the handling of applications is that the sheer number of persons supporting or opposing, whether by individual letter or in petition, is not of itself grounds for granting or refusing permission; objection would have to be based on planning policy grounds or other material considerations.
- The Mast Operators carry out their own pre-application discussion on proposed sites with Ward councillors, local amenity groups, and schools, to gauge whether there is likely to be support or opposition to such proposals. They submit details of the responses to this round of pre-application consultation, when they submit the formal application for either prior notification or full permission.

9. **Mobile phone operators 'roll-out' plans.**

- 9.1 The five Mobile phone companies, Orange, Vodafone, MM 02, T-mobile, and Hutchison (also known as '3'), have submitted, at the end of October, their annual 'roll-out' plans for their expectations for future sites. These roll-out plans also include the list of their existing sites and these have been useful in drawing up the Mast Register; there is very good correlation between the operators lists and those Ofcom Sitefinder schedules.
- 9.2 As far as future plans are concerned, the five operators indicate in their roll-out plans that they are proposing an additional 6 to 9 sites each. It is not known over what timescale, but presumably, in the light of the time taken to secure a site (i.e. often after several refusals/withdrawals, and then there are the often-protracted negotiations with the landowner), it is for the next 1 to 2 years.
- 9.3 It is hoped that the existence of a Mast Register will help the Council in deciding whether there is scope for any additional installations, of any of the proposals in the 'roll-out' plans to be even given preliminary consideration, or whether more mast-sharing or alternative locations can be encouraged.

10. Conclusions.

- 10.1 A high proportion (three-quarters) of installations are on buildings, so the number of free-standing masts is relatively low; on-street masts, in the form of poles on the footpath, are quite rare (no more than 3); a number have recently been refused.
- 10.2 The proportion on Council-owned sites, roof-mounted on blocks of flats or school, is significant at just below 30%. There are school mounted antennae at Fortismere and Alexandra Park Secondary Schools. There are also two installations at St. Ann's Hospital.
- 10.3 There are concentrations in some Wards, particularly the higher ground in the West of the Borough, the roof level at Shopping City, and roof levels in some of the industrial/commercial areas in the East of the Borough.
- 10.4 Each of the five Mobile Phone companies has the intention of providing another 6 to 9 sites in the Borough, to complete their existing network.
- 10.5 Consultation by the Planning Service on mobile phone masts tends to be more extensive than would be the case for say a new build housing scheme. There have been a number of high –profile cases particularly in the west of the borough which have drawn forth petitions objecting, or numbers of individual letters. However numbers alone are not sufficient basis for refusal; there need to be sound planning reasons.

11. Financial Comments

- 11.1 None as a result of this report. The Council receives rental income and business rates from the operators, in respect of mobile phone masts erected on council owned buildings and land.

12. Legal Comments

- 12.1 None as a result of this report.

13. Equalities Implications

- 13.1 None as a result of this report.