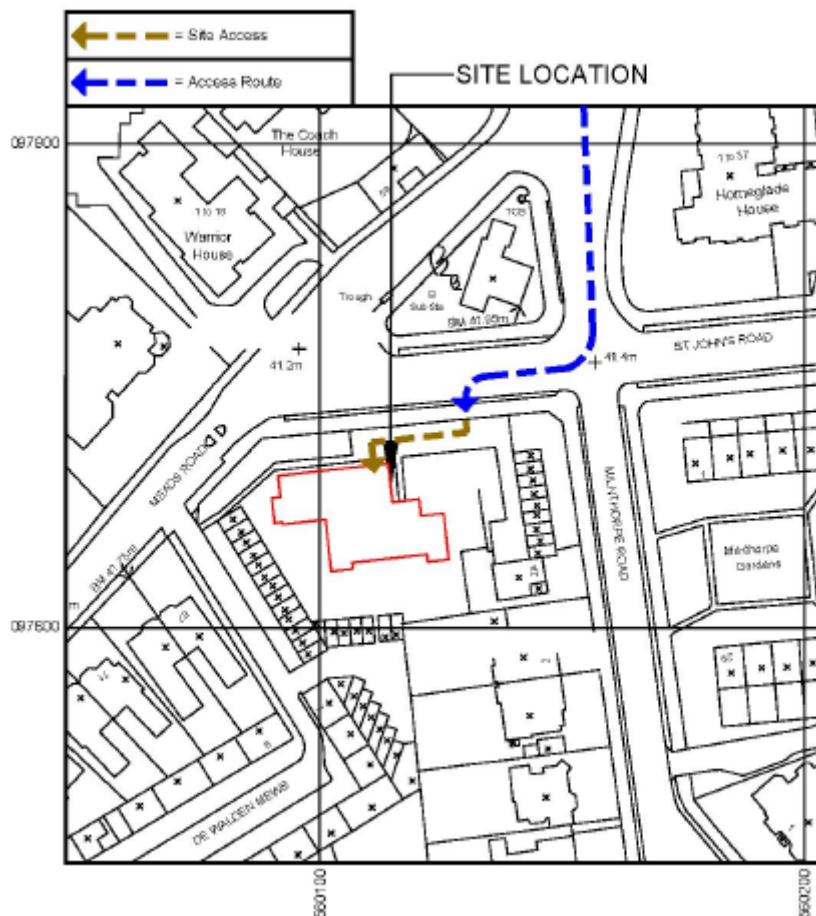


Report to: Planning Committee
Date: 20th October 2020
Application No: 210661
Location: The Moorings, 25 St Johns Road, Eastbourne
Proposal: Installation of antennas and ancillary development
Applicant : EE Ltd
Ward: Meads

Recommendation: Approve Conditionally

Contact Officer: **Name:** Chloe Timm
Post title: Specialist Advisor
E-mail: Chloe.Timm@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk
Telephone number: 0750602851

Map Location:



1. **Executive Summary**

- 1.1 The application is being presented at planning committee due to the number of objections received following public consultation.
- 1.2 It is considered that the installation of additional antennae and ancillary works to the building would not result in substantial or harmful impacts upon the surrounding environment, residential or visual amenities.
- 1.3 It is considered that the proposed development complies with national and local policy and is recommended for approval subject to condition.

2. **Relevant Planning Policies**

2.1 National Planning Policy Framework:

- 2: Achieving Sustainable Design
- 4: Decision-Making
- 6: Building a strong, competitive economy
- 8: Promoting health and safe communities
- 10: Supporting high quality communications
- 12: Achieving well-designed places.

2.2 Eastbourne Core Strategy Local Plan 2006-2027:

- B2: Creating Sustainable Neighbourhoods
- C11: Meads Neighbourhood Policy
- D1: Sustainable Development
- D2: Economy
- D10a: Design.

2.3 Eastbourne Borough Plan 2001-2011:

- HO20: Residential Amenity
- UHT1: Design of New Development
- UHT4: Visual Amenity
- US9: Telecommunications Development.

3. **Site Description**

- 3.1 The application site is an existing telecommunications base station situated on the roof top area of The Moorings, 25 St Johns Road, Eastbourne.
- 3.2 The Moorings is situated on a corner plot on the junctions of St Johns Road, Milthorpe Road, De Walden Mews and Meads Road.
- 3.3 The Moorings is a mid-rise purpose-built block of residential flats with 22 flats over seven storeys.
- 3.4 The site is situated within the Meads Conservation Area.

4. Relevant Planning History

4.1 010547

Installation of Telecommunications equipment comprising three face mounted antennae and two pole mounted dishes, together with associated equipment cabins

Planning Permission

Refused

21 January 2002

Allowed on Appeal 23 June 2002.

4.2 040444

Installation of three telecommunications antennas concealed in painted GRP shrouds on north and south elevations, together with two pole mounted dishes and ancillary equipment

Planning Permission

Approved Conditionally

08 September 2004.

4.3 040543

Installation of four telecommunications antennas on north, east and west elevations, together with two pole mounted dishes and ancillary equipment cabinet on the roof

Planning Permission

Withdrawn

17 October 2004.

4.4 100200

Replacement of three existing antennas and provision of an additional equipment cabinet on rooftop

Planning Permission

Approved Conditionally

18 June 2010.

4.5 140007

Alterations to the existing telecommunications equipment on the roof, comprising the replacement of three antennas, the replacement of two of the radio equipment cabinets and development works ancillary thereto.

Planning Permission

10 April 2014.

4.6 141484 The removal of 3no telecommunications antennas and their replacement with 3no new antennas, the installation of 2no additional transmission dishes, the installation of an additional radio equipment cabinet

and development works ancillary thereto. Planning Permission Approved Conditionally 21 January 2015.

5. **Proposed Development**

- 5.1 The proposal is to install 3no additional antennae along with associated ancillary works and relocation of existing equipment within the existing telecommunications site.
- 5.2 The existing telecommunications site is situated on the roof top of 7/8 storey purpose-built block of flats located in the Meads neighbourhood and the Meads Conservation Area.

6. **Consultations**

6.1 Specialist Advisor (Conservation)

- 6.1.1 This application seeks permission to introduce new antennae and undertake additional related works at the upper level of this contemporary apartment block located in the Meads Conservation Area.
- 6.1.2 The property already hosts a set of existing structures, approved by my predecessors on the basis of their limited impact on the protected setting.
- 6.1.3 I believe that this situation continues to apply, and do not feel that the integrity, character and appearance of the conservation area is compromised so significantly as to warrant an objection.

7. **Neighbour Representations**

- 7.1 28 Objections have been received and cover the following points:
- 5G is a risk to public and environment health;
 - The technology has not been tested properly;
 - ICNIRP guidelines are inadequate and outdated;
 - There is no exclusion zone around the masts;
 - Air Pollution;
 - Incompatible and unacceptable use of land;
 - Create additional visual clutter;
 - Visual Impacts to the surrounding Conservation Area;
 - Impact value of properties.

8. **Appraisal**

8.1 Principle of Development

- 8.1.1 There is no principle conflict with adopted policy, which would prevent the approval of the application, subject to consideration of the design and visual impact upon the character of the area and the

impact upon the amenity of neighbouring occupants, pursuant to the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021, policies of the Core Strategy 2006-2027 and saved policies of the Eastbourne Borough Plan 2001-2011.

- 8.1.2 Para 114 of the NPPF states: Planning policies and decision should support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next generation mobile technology (such as 5G) and full fibre broadband connections.
- 8.1.3 Para 115 of the NPPF states: Use of existing masts, buildings and other infrastructure for new electronic communications capability (including wireless) should be encouraged.
- 8.1.4 Para 118 of the NPPF states: Local planning authorities must determine applications on planning grounds only. They should not seek to prevent competition between different operators, question the need for an electronic communications system, or set health safeguards different from the International Commission guidelines for public exposure.
- 8.1.5 Policy US9 (Telecommunications Development) of the Borough Plan states that proposals will be permitted provided that:
- The possibility of using an existing mast, building or other structure has been investigated and proved to be unsuccessful;
 - The siting height and design of the equipment will not cause unacceptable harm to the character or appearance of the area or be visually intrusive within the street scene;
 - Apparatus to be mounted on an historic building or structure will not harm the character or appearance of the building or its setting;
 - The visual impact of the development can be minimised by the use of screening by trees or other appropriate landscaping;
 - The equipment will meet the ICNIRP guidelines on the limitation of exposure of the general public to electromagnetic fields; and
 - The relevant body has been consulted where the proposed siting of the development is on or near a school or college.
- 8.1.6 It is considered that the proposal complies with the above policy for the following reasons:
- The proposal is using an existing building and established telecommunications site.
 - It is considered the proposed scheme would only have minimal impact on the surrounding area. The alternative of an additional site would likely result in greater impact and would require a new 30m (approx.) mast to achieve the coverage required.
 - It is not proposed to site the equipment on a historic building. Whilst the site is within the Meads conservation area, it is

considered that due siting of the existing equipment the additions to the site will have limited impact on the conservation area.

- Due to the location being on an existing building no landscaping or screening is included as part of the application.
- A certificate is included with the application confirming compliance with the ICNIRP Guidelines.
- The proposed development is not located near to a school therefore no consultation was required in this regard.

8.2 Impact of the proposed development on amenity of adjoining occupiers and the surrounding area:

8.2.1 The Moorings, sited on the junction of St Johns and Meads Road, falls within Meads Conservation Area. As a modern introduction, The Moorings, does not hold the historic and architectural merit associated with the character of the wider conservation area. However, as a periphery site within the conservation area, the immediate 'area' is primarily of mid to late 20th century design, reflective of its architectural period and of sufficient local interest to warrant inclusion within the conservation area.

8.2.2 As identified, The Moorings is a 20th century introduction to the area, a seven to eight-storey purpose-built block of flats, the elevations are articulated with recessed blocks at lower heights. An approach which assists with reducing the overall mass, of the building, whilst providing some visual interest and rhythm to the urban block.

8.2.3 In assessing the submitted plans against the scale, location and design of the existing equipment, whilst there is slight variation in terms of scale and design. This variation does result in limited harm when balanced against the identified character and appearance of the immediate and wider conservation area.

In summary, the proposed works are considered to have little or no harm on the character and appearance of the immediate and wider area.

8.3 Other Matters

8.3.1 Objections have been raised with regards to the introduction of 5G into the area and the health risk this may pose, and the impact on the surrounding conservation area.

8.3.2 Within the supporting information supplied with the application a signed certificate confirming the proposal complies with ICNIRP guidelines was provided. As stated in the NPPF 2021 a local authority should not seek to *set health safeguards different from the International Commission guidelines for public exposure* and must be on planning grounds only.

8.3.3 Objections on the unsuitability of the site have been noted however the site is an existing telecommunications site and therefore the site

is considered to appropriate for the proposed additional equipment to the roof top.

- 8.3.4 The proposed additional telecommunications equipment to the roof top of The Moorings is not thought to impact on character of the surrounding conservation area due to the use as a telecommunications site already being established.

9. **Human Rights Implications**

- 9.1 The impacts of the proposal have been assessed as part of the application process. Consultation with the community has been undertaken and the impact on local people is set out above. The human rights considerations have been taken into account fully in balancing the planning issues; and furthermore, the proposals will not result in any breach of the Equalities Act 2010.

10. **Recommendation**

- 10.1 It is considered the proposal complies with both national and local policy and is therefore recommended for approval subject to the following conditions:

- 10.2 **TIME LIMIT:** The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of permission.

Reason: To comply with Sections 91 and 92 of the Town and County Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

- 10.3 **DRAWINGS:** The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

- 002 – Site Location
- 205 – Proposed EE Site Plan
- 256 A – Proposed EE Site North Elevation
- 256 B – Proposed EE Site East Elevation
- 256 C – Proposed EE Site South Elevation
- 256 D – Proposed EE Site West Elevation

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that development is carried out in accordance with the plans to which this permission relates.

- 10.4 **REMOVAL:** In the event of the mast/equipment hereby permitted ceasing to be used for telecommunications purposes, the mast/equipment together with all debris shall be removed from the site and the site cleared and restored to a condition to be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority no later than six months after the cessation of such use.

Reason: In the interest of visual amenity in accordance with saved policies UHT1, UHT4 and US9 of the Eastbourne Borough Plan and policies B2 and D1 of the Eastbourne Core Strategy.

11. **Appeal**

11.1 Should the applicant appeal the decision the appropriate course of action to be followed, taking into account the criteria set by the Planning Inspectorate, is considered to be written representations.

12. **Background Papers**

12.1 None.