



Karina Sissman
Finchley & Golders Green Planning Team
London Borough of Barnet
Barnet House
1255 High Road, Whetstone
London N20 OEJ

25 January 2005

Dear Ms Sissman

C16109/04 Outside Texaco Service Station, Lyttleton Road, London N2

We understand that an application has been received for a mobile phone transmitter within the HGS Conservation Area at the above location. On behalf the HGS Residents Association, we wish to lodge a strenuous objection.

The HGS Conservation Area is subject to an Article IV Direction which requires owners of properties to submit applications to a very high standard of design and materials. Any alterations to properties must “preserve or enhance” the conservation area. We consider that any development in the street (such as a mobile phone transmitter which requires planning consent) should conform to an equally high standard. We do not consider that this application for a transmitter conforms to this standard.

In particular we would refer you to application C00831AL/02 for three advertisement signs at almost precisely the same location as the present application. That application was a split decision. Although we would condemn the planning authority for partially accepting that application against the advice of its Conservation Area Advisory Committee, we note that you did reject that part of the application which related to a high pylon, similar to that in the current application, for the following reasons:

“The proposed pylon would by reason of its height, scale, siting, appearance and materials present an unduly obtrusive feature, detrimental to the character and appearance of this part of the Hampstead Garden Suburb Conservation Area contrary to Policy T1.1, T7.1 and T2.1 of the Adopted Unitary Development Plan (1991) and D2, D7, D20 and HC1 of the Revised Deposit Draft Unitary Development Plan (2001).

No attempt has been made in the application to conceal the transmitter or to camouflage it. This contravenes recommendation 24 of *Planning Policy Guide Telecommunications PPG8*, revised September 2003 which states:

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“In seeking to arrive at the best solution for an individual site, authorities and operators should use sympathetic design and camouflage to minimise the impact of development on the environment. Particularly in designated areas, the aim should be for apparatus to blend into the landscape.”

Detailed recommendations for camouflage are also contained in *Code of Best Practice: Mobile Phone Network Development* published by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2002 . This application has not adopted the recommendations contained in that document. The HGS Article IV Conservation Area is such a *designated area*.

In addition the transmitter in question will be accompanied by up to four equipment boxes, each of a different design and size, although the planning application only requests permission for one such box. These equipment boxes attract graffiti and are unsightly. I suggest the test should be whether permission would be granted to a resident who wished to erect the proposed equipment boxes in his or her front garden. The answer would self-evidently be no.

Part of our committee’s work is concerned with reducing the amount of street clutter in the area. We feel this application is contrary to good practice contained in *Streets for All: A guide to the management of London's streets* published by English Heritage which was commissioned by English Heritage, the Government Office for London, the London Forum and the Pedestrians Association. This publication describes good practice for Street Furniture. The location of these boxes close to the advertisement signs mentioned above would be inappropriate, even if there were no application for a pole.

We suggest that such a transmitter would be in conflict with policies T1.1, T3.1, T3.2, G3, T7.1 and T8.1 of the UDP and policies D1, D2, D7, D16, D20 and HC1 of the Deposit Draft UDP and is also in conflict with the guidance in PPG15 *Planning and the Historic Environment*.

It is imperative that the highest emission levels are within ICNIRP guidelines and are not considered a health hazard to the public. It appears that the location is within 100 metres of two schools Kerem House Nursery School at the corner of Middleway and Kinglsey Way and the Lubavicher Yeshiva almost opposite in Kingsley Way. It is close to two other schools: Brooklands Infant School and Brooklands Junior School which would be in line of emissions as they are located on a hill overlooking the proposed site. Evidence should be sought to prove that no health risk is likely. We note that the latest Stewart Report (January 2005) on mobile phone emissions recommends a “precautionary approach” where transmitters are proposed near schools and given that this proposal is within a short distance of four schools, you should consider whether this is another reason for rejecting the application.

We refer you to three appeal decisions where appeals have been dismissed for mobile phone transmitters in the HGS Conservation Area: Highways Verge 190 Falloden Way (2004; C14891A/03); Junction of Ossulton Way and Lyttleton Road (2001; C14083/00); highways verge, Spaniards Road (2002; C14341/01) and suggest that these are a precedent which you must follow.

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You have also refused permission to several applications of similar or identical size in the immediate locality of this application C16033A/04,

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C00065AK/03, C14082/00 and again you should remain consistent and refuse the current application.

We therefore urge you to reject this application as damaging to the character of the Conservation Area and inconsistent with current standards of good practice as laid out in your UDP, PPG15, PPG8, the English Heritage document. the Code of Best Practice and the six previous refusals quoted above of which three were appealed and your decision was upheld in all three cases.

We take the view that the only acceptable location is for the transmitter to be concealed in a working lamp post identical to other lamp posts in the street. With regard to the "equipment cabins" these should not be granted permission unless they can be placed underground or located within a nearby building. If there is a problem of damp underground, the applicant must solve this by using equipment which is readily available from companies which install cables under the ocean.

Such a result would satisfy Government policy which both encourages this new technology *and* the preservation of the historic environment.

We do accept that our members use mobile phones and our objection does not rule out the location of mobile phone transmitters in our area provided any potential health hazards are overcome and the transmitters and associated equipment boxes are completely invisible which is possible but may come at a higher cost to the applicant.

If officers are minded to accept this application, we would request that a member of our Committee be allowed to speak in person at the Planning Committee meeting.

Yours sincerely

David Lewis, Chairman
Conservation and Amenities Committee (Consam)

Cc Georgina Malcolm, Chairman HGS Residents Association
Suburb Councillors