



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

18TH AUGUST 2020

SITE MEETING

**APPLICATION: 20/0404/10 - Virgin media telecommunications cabinet.
1 THE PARADE, PONTYPRIDD, CF37 4PU**

**REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, DEMOCRATIC SERVICES &
COMMUNICATION**

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To consider the outcome of the site inspection in respect of the above-mentioned proposal and to determine the application, as outlined in the report of the Director, Prosperity & Development, attached at Appendix 1.

2. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 Approve the application in accordance with the recommendation of the Director, Prosperity & Development.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In accordance with Minute No 262 (Planning and Development Committee – 6th August 2020), a site inspection was undertaken on Tuesday 18th August 2020 to consider the visual impact of the proposed development upon the Conservation Area and the potential highways safety implications.
- 3.2 The meeting was attended by the Planning and Development Committee Members County Borough Councillors S. Rees, G. Caple, D. Grehan, P. Jarman, W. Owen and J. Williams.

- 3.3 Apologies for absence were received from Committee Members - County Borough Councillors S. Powderhill, R. Yeo, J. Bonetto, G. Hughes and D. Williams.
- 3.4 Members met at the proposed site of the application, at the corner of 1 The Parade, Pontypridd.
- 3.5 The Planning Officer in attendance informed members that full planning permission is sought for the installation of a Glass Reinforced Plastic (GRP) ground based kiosk in order to improve telecommunications network coverage for the Virgin Media Group in the locality.
- 3.6 The Planning Officer advised Members that the kiosk would measure 350(W) x 775(H) x 255(D) mm and showed Members where it would be located within the footpath outside no. 1 The Parade, against the boundary wall.
- 3.7 The Planning Officer informed Members that no objections had been received as part of the neighbour notification process undertaken for the application. Committee Members were informed that due to the height and size of the proposed installation it is considered that the kiosk would occupy an unobtrusive position within the street scene and would be minor in scale. The Planning Officer highlighted to Members the colour of the proposed installation is green, as shown in the submitted application, but advised Members that should this colour be considered unsuitable a condition could be applied to the application to change this. As such Members were advised that Officer's judgement is that it would not result in an adverse impact upon the character of the Conservation Area.
- 3.8 The Highways Officer addressed Members concerns regarding the impact of the proposed installation on highway safety and the space allowed for wheelchair users and pushchairs. The Highways Officer informed Members that the size of the proposed installation would still allow for 1.3m of walkway on the pavement which Members were informed is greater than required for wheelchair users and pushchairs. For this reason, the Highways Officer informed Members that there were no significant reasons to raise any objections to the application.
- 3.9 Members queried the cabling that would be required for the installation and the impact this could have on the surrounding area. The Planning Officer informed Members that the application has been submitted by a large communications company that already have service in the area with existing cables.
- 3.10 Members also noted that the installation would be one of many across the Borough with the Planning Officer informing Members that this was part of

a wider network of installations to improve the telecommunications network coverage for the Virgin Media Group in the locality. Members were reminded the reason that planning permission is required for this development was due to the locality of the proposed installation in a Conservation Area, and that planning permission for such apparatus is not required outside of a Conservation Area.

3.11 The Chair thanked the officers for the report and closed the meeting.

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RHONDDA CYNON TAF

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

6 AUGUST 2020

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, PLANNING

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

Members are asked to determine the planning application outlined below:

APPLICATION NO: 20/0404/10 (BJW)
APPLICANT: Virgin Media
DEVELOPMENT: Virgin media telecommunications cabinet.
LOCATION: 1 THE PARADE, PONTYPRIDD, CF37 4PU
DATE REGISTERED: 04/05/2020
ELECTORAL DIVISION: Trallwn

RECOMMENDATION: Approve, subject to conditions.

REASONS:

The application proposes a modest piece of street furniture within the footway in order to improve the Virgin Media Group's telecommunications coverage within the area through Fibre to the Premise (FTTP) installation (fibre optic cabling within the kiosk).

The proposed kiosk is considered to be of an acceptable design, appearance and scale that would be appropriate to the character and appearance of the street scene and the special visual qualities of the wider Pontypridd (Taf) Conservation Area. Furthermore, it is not considered the kiosk would have an adverse impact upon highway or pedestrian safety in the locality.

REASON THAT THE APPLICATION IS BEING REPORTED TO COMMITTEE

The application is reported to the Planning and Development Committee for final determination by the request of the Local Member, Cllr. Mike Powell, to assess the visual impact of the kiosk and the potential pedestrian safety implications.

APPLICATION DETAILS

Planning permission is sought for installation of a Glass Reinforced Plastic (GRP) ground based kiosk in order to improve telecommunications network coverage for the Virgin Media Group in the locality.

The proposed cabinet will contain equipment for Fibre to the Premise (FTTP). The cabinets are passive and simply contain fibre trays which are used to splice together fibre optic cables and fibre splitters. The splitters split the wavelengths of light that are passed down the fibre cable which is then sent to each premise, if/when customers sign up.

The kiosk would measure 350(W) x 775(H) x 255(D) mm, would be green in colour and located within the footpath outside no. 1 The Parade, against the boundary wall.

SITE APPRAISAL

No. 1 The Parade is a two storey, end of link dwelling within a residential street in the Trallwn area of Pontypridd. The site occupies a corner plot, with a lane to the south which marks the end of The Parade and the beginning of West Street and also provides access through to Middle Street to the east.

The proposed kiosk would be placed against the boundary wall of the property immediately adjacent to the boundary with the lane.

PLANNING HISTORY

None relevant

PUBLICITY

This has included site notices; no responses have been received.

CONSULTATION

Transportation Section – No comments received at the time of writing.

Pontypridd Town Council – no response received at the time of writing.

POLICY CONTEXT

Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan

The application site is within the settlement boundary of Pontypridd and within the Pontypridd (Taf) Conservation Area.

Policy CS2 - sets out criteria for achieving sustainable growth including promoting and enhancing transport infrastructure services.

Policy AW2 - supports development proposals in sustainable locations including sites within the defined settlement boundary.

Policy AW5 - sets out criteria for new development in relation to amenity and accessibility.

Policy AW6 - requires development to involve a high quality design and to make a positive contribution to place making, including landscaping.

Policy AW7 – refers to the protection and enhancement of the built environment. This policy states that development which impacts upon sites of architectural and historic merit will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the proposal would preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the site.

Policy SSA1 – gives criteria for development in the Principal Town of Pontypridd including: reinforcing the role of Pontypridd as a Principal Town; respecting the culture and heritage of Pontypridd; is of a high standard of design and makes a positive contribution to the townscape of the defined town centre; and that it would integrate positively with the built form.

National Guidance

In the determination of planning applications regard should also be given to the requirements of National Planning Policy that are not duplicated in the Local Development Plan, particularly where National Planning Policy provides a more up to date and comprehensive policy on certain topics.

The Welsh Government published Planning Policy Wales 10 on 5th December 2018 and the document aims to incorporate the objectives of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act into Town and Country Planning.

It is considered that this proposal meets the seven wellbeing of future generations goals inasmuch as they relate to the proposed development and that the site has been brought forward in a manner consistent with the five ways of working.

It is considered that the proposed development is consistent with the key principles and requirements for placemaking as set down in Chapter 2, People and Places: Achieving Well-being Through Placemaking of PPW10 and is also consistent with the following chapters of PPW inasmuch as they relate to the development proposed:

Chapter 3 (good design and better places, promoting healthier places, sustainable management of natural resources)

Chapter 4 (moving within and between places, transport, living in a place, housing)

Chapter 6 (distinctive and natural places)

PPW Technical Advice Note (TAN) 12: Design (2016)

PPW Technical Advice Note (TAN) 24: The Historic Environment (2017)

REASONS FOR REACHING THE RECOMMENDATION

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that, if regard is to be had to the development plan for the purposes of any determination to be made under the Planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Furthermore, applications that are not in accordance with relevant policies in the plan should not be allowed, unless material considerations justify the grant of planning permission.

Main Issues:

Principle of the proposed development

The application proposes a contemporary, modest and utilitarian kiosk within the existing footway of The Parade.

The kiosk is one of several that are proposed throughout this area of Trallwn in order to improve the direct network coverage for subscribers to the Virgin Media Group telecoms and other tele-services (such as subscription television).

In this regard it is considered that the principle of an improvement in network coverage would be broadly acceptable.

Impact on neighbouring residential properties

The installation is proposed to be located against the boundary wall of no. 1 The Parade and within the existing footpath area.

It is considered that the kiosk would occupy an unobtrusive position within the street-scene and would be minor in scale. As such it would not result in an adverse impact on the amenities of neighbouring properties.

It is also acknowledged that there have been no objections received as part of the neighbour notification process undertaken for the application.

Visual amenity of the area

The kiosk is considered to be of an acceptable scale and design that, although of a contemporary appearance, would be typical of many similar features throughout the County Borough and would be acceptable in terms of the street-scene and the general visual amenity of the locality.

In terms of the effect of the proposal on the visual amenity of the area, with particular relevance to the Pontypridd (Taf) Conservation Area, it is considered that the proposal, due to its modest scale and unobtrusive position, would not have an adverse impact in this regard.

Highway safety

Given the minor scale of the proposal and the fact that such structures are common street features within residential areas of this nature, it is considered that there would be no undue impact upon pedestrian or highway safety in the locality. However, notwithstanding this view, comments have been sought from the Council's Transportation Section but not received at the time of writing. As such the

Transportation Section's comments will be reported orally to Members at the Committee meeting.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Liability

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was introduced in Rhondda Cynon Taf from 31 December 2014.

The application is for development of a kind that is not CIL liable under the CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended).

Conclusion

The proposed kiosk is considered to be of an appropriate design, appearance and scale that would be appropriate to the character and appearance of the street scene and the special visual qualities of the Pontypridd (Taf) Conservation Area. Furthermore, it is not considered the kiosk would have an adverse impact on highway or pedestrian safety in the locality.

RECOMMENDATION: Grant

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of five years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Sections 91 and 93 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plan(s) no(s)
 - Site location plan
 - Block plan

and documents received by the Local Planning Authority unless otherwise to be approved and superseded by details required by any other condition attached to this consent.

Reason: To ensure compliance with the approved plans and documents and to clearly define the scope of the permission.

3. Notwithstanding the approved details, prior to any development works being undertaken on site, details of the colour of the kiosk shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The installed kiosk shall be in accordance with the agreed colour scheme.

Reason: To ensure that the external appearance of the proposed development will be in keeping with the character of the area and adjoining buildings in the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policies AW5 and AW6 of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan.