

## AGENDA ITEM NO: 8/2(g)

<b>Parish:</b>	<b>Southery</b>	
<b>Proposal:</b>	<b>30m high radio mast</b>	
<b>Location:</b>	<b>Pump House Ferry Bank Southery Norfolk</b>	
<b>Applicant:</b>	<b>Southery &amp; District IDB</b>	
<b>Case No:</b>	<b>17/00408/F (Full Application)</b>	
<b>Case Officer:</b>	<b>Mr Bryan Meredith</b>	<b>Date for Determination: 28 April 2017 Extension of Time Expiry Date: 12 May 2017</b>

**Reason for Referral to Planning Committee** –The views of Southery Parish Council is contrary to the Officer recommendation

### **Case Summary**

The site comprises the existing Southery Pumping Station, located to the east of the A10 on Ferry Bank, to the south of Southery village. The site is bounded by a row of mature trees to the west of the site, a drain to the north and a timber boarded fence along the eastern and southern boundaries. Vehicular access to the site exists from the A10, with good visibility in both directions. There is adequate space within the site to accommodate large vehicle manoeuvring and construction and maintenance of the mast.

The application seeks full planning permission for the construction of a 30 metre high radio mast.

### **Key Issues**

Principle of Development  
Visual Impact  
Other Material Considerations

### **Recommendation**

**APPROVE**

### **THE APPLICATION**

The application seeks the installation of a 30 metre high radio mast in order to monitor and control IDB pumping stations and equipment in the Drainage Board area.

The application site is located on a site to the south of the settlement of Southery and classified as Countryside according to Policy CS02- Settlement Hierarchy of the Core Strategy (2011).

The site comprises of a rectangular plot that contains an existing IDB Pumping Station. The site has an established row of tall trees along the western boundary, a drain to the north of the site and timber boarded fencing along the eastern and southern boundaries.

The proposed concrete base and proposed mast is to be located on the west of the site adjacent to the existing pumping station unit.

## **SUPPORTING CASE**

The application is supported by an accompanying Planning Statement with the key points set out below:

- The radio mast is required for the automatic monitoring and control of IDB pumping stations and equipment in the Drainage Board area.
- The proposed radio mast will be sited behind the existing pump house building, as shown on the site plan.
- The pumping station is located in Flood Zone 3(a) where a Flood Risk Assessment would normally be required. However, this is water compatible development and is required in connection with the prevention of flooding.
- It is deemed unnecessary, therefore, for a full FRA to be prepared for this simple proposal.
- The Environment Agency has confirmed that a full Flood Risk Assessment is not required.
- The height requirement for the mast is because the signal needs to be passed over higher ground at Southery & Hilgay, to the north of the site. - The ground level at the Southery pump is only around minus 1.00m AOD, whereas ground levels in Southery rise to 10.50m AOD and there is a high spot to the southeast of Hilgay which is approximately 20.00m AOD.
- Parts of Hilgay village itself rise to between 17.00-18.00m AOD which makes the tops of buildings around 27.00m AOD, compared with the top of the proposed 30m high mast at approx. 29.00m AOD.
- The proposed mast is, therefore, required to be up to 30m in height in order to function properly.
- It will become a vital part of the IDB flood protection and land drainage management.
- Excellent vehicular access to the site exists from the A10, with very good visibility in both directions. This access will not be affected by the proposal.
- There is adequate space within the site to accommodate large vehicle manoeuvring and construction and maintenance of the mast.

## **PLANNING HISTORY**

None

## **RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION**

**Parish Council: OBJECT** Southery Parish Council has raised an objection to the planning application. Objections were raised on the basis that the mast would have a negative visual impact on the area and a detrimental effect on the openness of the green belt. Concerns were raised as to what effects the mast would have on TV, radio and phone signals in the area and the structure may be a danger to the highways.

**Local Highway Authority: NO OBJECTION** It is very difficult to consider that this proposed mast will engender significant levels of additional traffic to, and from, the site or represent any detriment to highway safety and therefore have no reason for objection to the granting of permission.

**IDB: NO OBJECTION** Southery & District IDB have no objection to this application subject to the Board's Byelaws being complied with.

**Civil Aviation Authority: NO OBJECTION** The CAA has No Comments on the proposal.

**Ministry of Defence: NO OBJECTION** This application relates to a site outside of Ministry of Defence safeguarding areas. Therefore the Ministry of Defence has no safeguarding objections to this proposal.

**National Air Traffic Services: NO OBJECTION** The proposed development has been examined from a technical safeguarding aspect and does not conflict with our safeguarding criteria. Accordingly, NATS (En Route) Public Limited Company ("NERL") has no safeguarding objection to the proposal.

## REPRESENTATIONS

**THREE** representations were received **OBJECTING** to the application for the following reasons:

- Excessive height of the proposed mast
- Overbearing structure
- Out of character with the surrounding agricultural land and countryside setting

One representation was received which stated they had no objections to this proposal.

## NATIONAL GUIDANCE

**National Planning Policy Framework** – sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

**National Planning Practice Guidance** - Provides National Planning Practice Guidance, in support of and in addition to the NPPF

## LDF CORE STRATEGY POLICIES

**CS02** - The Settlement Hierarchy

**CS06** - Development in Rural Areas

## SITE ALLOCATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICIES PLAN 2016

**DM1** – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

## **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

This application raises the following issues:

- Principle of Development
- Visual Impact
- Other Material Considerations
- Conclusion

### **Principle of Development**

The site is located to the south of Southery village. Southery is designated as a Rural Village as defined by Policy CS02 where limited minor development will be permitted which meets the needs of settlements and helps to sustain existing services in accordance with Policy CS06 Development in Rural Areas of the Core Strategy (2011). The proposal meets the requirements set out in the NPPF which identifies that high quality communications networks play a vital role in enhancing the provision of local community facilities and services. The proposed 30 metre high radio mast is required as part of the Internal Drainage Board flood protection and land drainage management system.

The principle of development is acceptable as the application has provided evidence to justify the proposed development including the need for communication coverage in the area. On this basis the proposal accords with section 5 of the NPPF.

### **Visual Impact**

To the north, west and south of the site is open countryside. The site sits to the east of the A10. Whilst the mast is set to the west of the site, between the pumping station and existing western boundary treatment consisting of a mature row of trees it will be seen in the majority of public views across the countryside. However, this proposed mast is required infrastructure for the IDB and on balance, taking into account the visual appearance of the proposed mast and its operational requirements, the impact of the mast in this location is considered acceptable.

### **Other Material Considerations**

The pumping station is located on land designated as Flood Zone 2, 3 and Hazard Zone of the Council's adopted Strategic Flood Risk Assessment where a Flood Risk Assessment would normally be required. However, the proposed radio mast is classified as water compatible development and is required in connection with the prevention of flooding.

It is deemed unnecessary, therefore, for a full FRA to be prepared for this proposal. Correspondence between the applicant and the Environment Agency is provided in the Planning Statement, which accompanies the application, and confirms that a full Flood Risk Assessment is not required for this proposal.

Southery Parish Council and third party representations received have raised concerns with the proposal regarding the negative impact the mast would have on the visual amenity and the countryside regarding its height, creating a proposal which is out of keeping with the area which is predominantly farmland. Concerns were also raised regarding highway safety and one representation suggested moving the proposed mast to another site belonging to the IDB at the Denver Complex.

## CONCLUSION

On balance, the siting and appearance of the mast are considered appropriate and necessary in the context of being a vital part of the Internal Drainage Board's flood protection and land drainage management.

For the reasons outlined in this report it is considered that the proposed development accords with the overarching aims of national and local policy and would not have a significant detrimental impact on the visual amenity of the locality. Any visual harm is outweighed by the benefits to the IDB's infrastructure in connection with preventing flooding. It is therefore recommended that this application be approved subject to the following conditions.

## RECOMMENDATION:

**APPROVE** subject to the imposition of the following condition(s):

- 1 Condition The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
- 1 Reason To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990, as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004.
- 2 Condition The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans titled:
  - Site Plan, Location Plan and Section, drawing plan number 12637
- 2 Reason For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.