

Report To: The Planning Board

Date: 3 January 2018

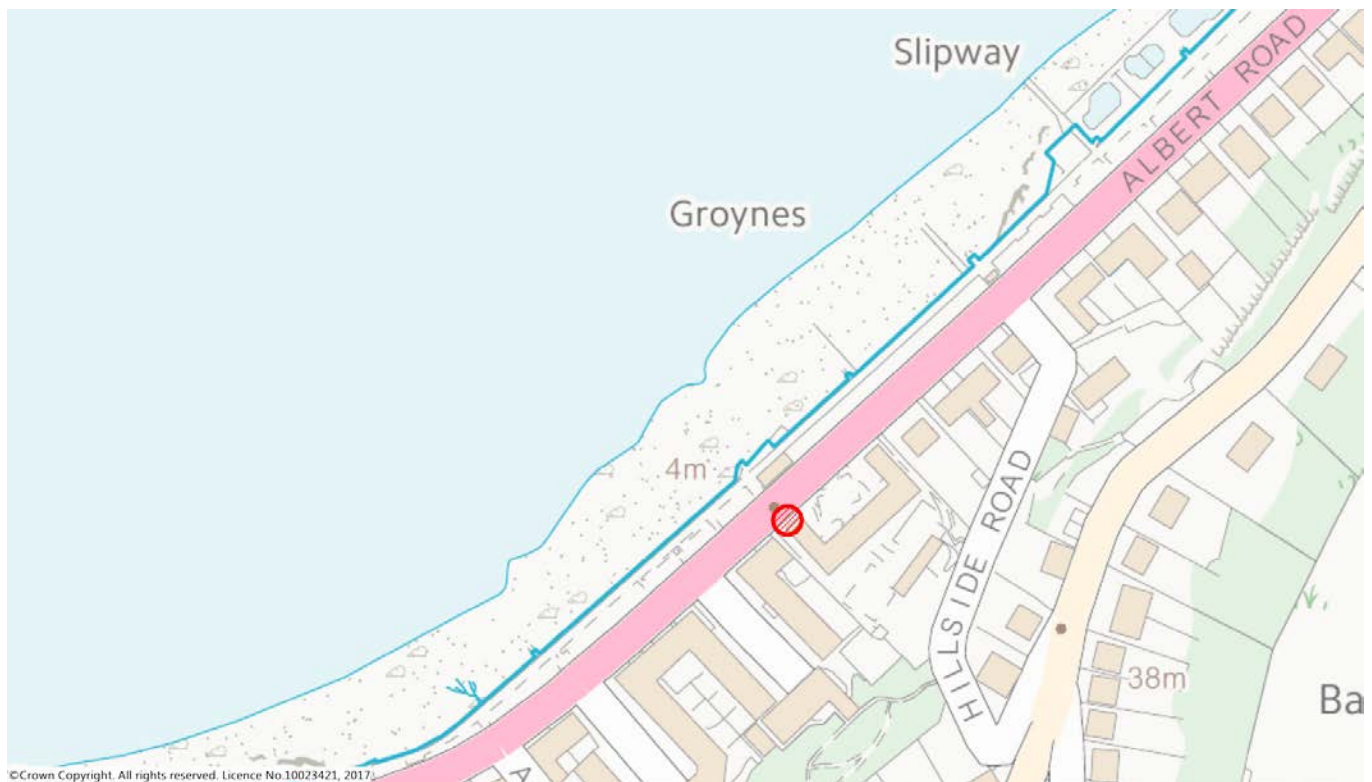
Report By: Head of Regeneration and Planning

Report No: 17/0325/IC
Plan 01/18

Contact Officer: Guy Phillips

Contact No: 01475 712422

Subject: Installation of grey coloured Virgin Media street cabinet at
Albert Road, outside Cragburn Gate, Gourrock



SUMMARY

- The proposal accords with the Inverclyde Development Plan.
- Twenty nine objections have been received raising concerns over the impact on road safety and visual impact.
- The Head of Environmental and Commercial Services considers the development acceptable on road safety grounds.
- The recommendation is to GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION subject to conditions.

Drawings may be viewed at:

<https://planning.inverclyde.gov.uk/Online/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=OXNWAMIMMP300>

SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is a section of the public footway on the south-eastern side of Albert Road within the Gourrock West Bay Conservation Area. Adjoining the heel of the footway is the approximately 0.9m high imitation stone boundary wall of the south-western wing of the U-shaped 4/5 storey flatted development at Cragburn Gate. A box hedge runs parallel to the rear of the boundary wall and projects approximately 0.1m above it. Two approximately 1m high green-coloured metal telecommunications cabinets are located to either side of Cragburn Gate's south-easternmost pedestrian access and are immediately in front of the boundary wall.

PROPOSAL

It is proposed to site a grey coloured telecommunications cabinet, approximately 0.985m high by 0.535m wide by 0.315m deep in connection with the provision of underground telecommunications cabling. It is also set immediately in front of the imitation stone wall and is approximately 13m to the south west of the nearest existing green cabinet.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

Policy RES1 - Safeguarding the Character and Amenity of Residential Areas

The character and amenity of residential areas, identified on the Proposals Map, will be safeguarded and, where practicable, enhanced. Proposals for new residential development will be assessed against and have to satisfy the following criteria:

- (a) compatibility with the character and amenity of the area;
- (b) details of proposals for landscaping;
- (c) proposals for the retention of existing landscape or townscape features of value on the site;
- (d) accordance with the Council's adopted roads guidance and Designing Streets, the Scottish Government's policy statement;
- (e) provision of adequate services; and
- (f) having regard to Supplementary Guidance on Planning Application Advice Notes.

Policy HER1 - Development which Affects the Character of Conservation Areas

Development proposals which affect conservation areas will be acceptable where they are sympathetic to the character, pattern of development and appearance of the area. Such proposals will be assessed having regard to Historic Environment Scotland's SHEP and "Managing Change in the Historic Environment" guidance note series.

Policy INF6 - Communications Infrastructure

Proposals for electronic communications infrastructure will be assessed against the following criteria:

- (a) the siting and design of the equipment has regard to PAN62 on Radio Telecommunication;
- (b) there being no satisfactory alternatives;
- (c) appropriate landscaping and screening works being incorporated where necessary; and
- (d) there being no adverse impact, including cumulative, on the built and natural heritage, including the landscape.

CONSULTATIONS

Head of Environmental and Commercial Services - the proposed cabinet achieves the required 1.4m separation from the edge of the footway.

PUBLICITY

The application was advertised as a development affecting a conservation area.

SITE NOTICES

A site notice was posted as a development affecting a conservation area.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A total of 29 written representations have been received. They comprise four individual communications and twenty five copies of a standard letter, ten copies which have an incomplete address.

The objectors are concerned that:

- the site is within the Gourock West Bay Conservation Area
- there are two existing telecommunications cabinets outside Cragburn Gate
- the pavement is too narrow to accommodate the proposed cabinet
- sightlines onto Albert Road from Cragburn Gate's vehicular access shall be obstructed; and
- occupiers of Cragburn Gate have recently invested in the refurbishment of the property and neighbour notification has not been fully completed

ASSESSMENT

The material considerations in the determination of this planning application are the Local Development Plan, Historic Environment Scotland's "Managing Change in the Historic Environment" guidance note series and Policy Statement, Planning Advice Note (PAN) 62, the visual impact within the Conservation Area, the observations of the Head of Environmental and Commercial Services and the written representations. The determining factor is whether the proposal accords with the Development Plan and, if not, whether there are other material considerations to suggest that planning permission may be granted contrary to the Plan.



Local Development Plan Policies RES1 and HER1 combine to seek to safeguard residential amenity and character and to ensure that development proposals are sympathetic to the character, pattern of development and appearance of the Conservation Area. It is further advised by Policy HER1 that proposals require to be assessed having regard to Historic Environment Scotland's "Managing Change in the Historic Environment" guidance note series and SHEP (superseded by the "Policy Statement"). Policy INF6 provides the assessment criteria for telecommunications infrastructure including the provision of broadband services.

The Managing Change in the Historic Environment guidance note advises that "setting" can be important to the way in which historic places or structures are understood, appreciated and experienced. Planning Authorities must take into account the setting of historic assets or places when making decisions on planning applications.



The visual presence of services and utilities within the streetscape is an established and increasing feature of the streetscape to meet public expectation and demand for services. Streetlights, bus stops, directional street signs and service utility boxes are all evident within close proximity. Within the context of the street, this small scale cabinet set against the backdrop of a wall parallel hedge and large flatted building combine to satisfy me that the impacts upon residential amenity and the character and setting within the Gourock West Bay Conservation Area are neutral. In reaching this conclusion I am further satisfied that the separation of the proposed cabinet from the two existing in front of Cragburn Gate is not such that any cumulative visual impact is so significant as to justify refusal of planning permission. It may, therefore, be determined that the proposal is acceptable with reference to the Managing Change in the Historic Environment guidance note on "setting", Historic Environment Scotland's Policy Statement in managing the historic environment with intelligence and understanding, and the aims of Local Development Plan Policies RES1 and HER1. I am also satisfied that the proposal is acceptable when assessed against the criteria set out within Policy INF6; there is no adverse visual impact, there is no requirement for landscaping or screening, there are no appropriate alternatives and there is no conflict with the general guidance provided by PAN 62.

Notwithstanding my satisfaction with the submitted design, in order to further safeguard the Conservation Area, I consider it prudent to attach conditions requiring the cabinet to be removed in the event of it becoming redundant and prohibiting the display of any signs, logos or lettering upon it.

In noting objections from residents on sightlines from Cragburn Gate's vehicular access and the width of the pavement along its frontage, I note that the Head of Environmental and Commercial Services offers no objection to these aspects of the proposal.

I note the representations on neighbour notification and the residents' investment in the fabric of Cragburn Gate. I can confirm that notices were posted to all statutorily notified neighbours; this required notification of properties within 20 metres of the site of the proposed cabinet. Investment by residents in Cragburn Gate's common fabric does not provide any justification for refusing planning permission for the proposed cabinet.

Overall, I consider that the proposal merits support.

RECOMMENDATION

That the application be granted subject to the following conditions:

1. In the event that the cabinet hereby approved becomes redundant or obsolete at any time in the future, it shall be removed and the site restored to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority within 2 months of the date at which the cabinet becomes redundant or obsolete.
2. No symbols, signs, letters or logos shall be displayed on any part of the cabinet. Details of any small signage necessary for operational reasons must be submitted to and approved by the Planning Authority prior to display.

Reasons

1. To ensure the removal of redundant or obsolete equipment in an appropriate timescale, and in the interests of the visual appearance of the Gourock West Bay Conservation Area.
2. To minimise visual intrusion within the Gourock West Bay Conservation Area.

Stuart Jamieson Head of Regeneration and Planning

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 – Background Papers. For further information please contact Guy Phillips on 01475 712422.