

**TO: ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMIC POLICY COMMITTEE – 20TH JULY
2005**

SUBJECT: TELECOMMUNICATIONS DEVELOPMENT

FROM: HEAD OF PLANNING & ENGINEERING

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To update members about policy and practice relating to assessment of planning applications/notifications for telecommunications development.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Existing policy and practice in relation to Telecommunications Development was summarised in a report to Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 20th July 2004. A copy of this report is attached as an appendix.

2.2 Members have requested an update on current policy in terms of any changes in national guidance and emerging Local Plan policy.

2.3 The revised policy on Telecommunications Development as now contained in the second Deposit Draft of the Warwick District Local Plan 1996-2011 is attached.

2.4 There have been no changes at the national level and the Key Policy document is PPG8 “Telecommunications” issued in August 2001, after publication of the Stewart Report.

2.5 In relation to procedures, operators are able to submit notifications for prior approval to the Planning Authority where masts do not exceed 15 metres in height on which the Planning Authority must respond in 56 days.

2.6 A private members bill which would have had the effect of ending the ‘56 day’ notification procedure which enables operators to go ahead with their proposals if the Planning Authority has not responded within the prescribed time has not been successful.

2.7 The Mobile Operators Association acts on behalf of the individual operators and one of its aims is to promote effective liaison with Local Planning Authorities. The Association undertakes general awareness/liaison sessions with Local Authorities to this end. A date of 15th September 2005 at 6.00 p.m. has been allocated for a session at Warwick District Council and all District Councillors have recently been informed of this date and invited to attend.

2.8 Part of the concern which prompted the report to the former Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee in July 2004 related to the approval of a telecommunications “flag-pole” mast on the roof of the B.T. Telephone Exchange in Priory Road, Warwick and the concerns about health effects on the nearby Kings High School. The handling of the application was the subject of a complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman. The finds of the subsequent Ombudsman’s report (January 2005) confirmed that there was “no evidence of maladministration in the way in which the application was considered and approved”.

3. **POLICY AND BUDGET FRAMEWORK**

3.1 There are no policy or budget implications associated with this report.

4. **OUTCOMES REQUIRED**

4.1 That Members note the contents of this report.

John Edwards
Group Leader: Development Control

BACKGROUND PAPERS

PPG8 “Telecommunications” August 2001
PPG8 Good Practice Guidance Document – ODPM 2002
Federation of the Electronics Industry “Ten Commitments” November 2001
Warwick District Local Plan First Deposit Draft 1996-2011
Report to Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 20th July 2004

Areas in District Affected: Whole District

For further information about this report please contact:

Contact Officer: John Edwards
Tel: (01926) 456541 (Direct Line)
E-Mail: john.edwards@wawickdc.gov.uk