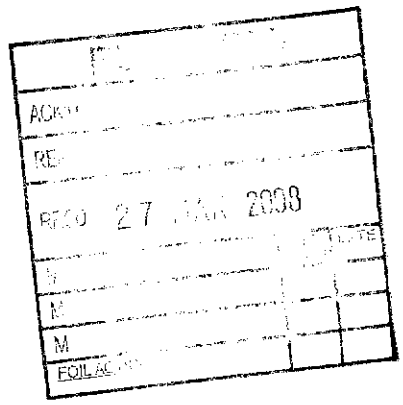
Galloway

Our ref: Airwave/MAN051/JB

26th March 2008

Mr Derek Jones
Planning Development Control
Team Leader, North Area Team
Manchester City Council
Town Hall Extension,
PO Box 463,
Albert Square,
Manchester,
M60 3NY



Dear Mr Jones

Proposed Radio Base Station for Airwave Solutions Ltd: Greater Manchester Police - Claytonbrook Police Training Unit, Louisa Street, Claytonbrook, Manchester M11 1PP

As you are aware from our prior consultation with you dated 2nd October 2007 (copies of which are attached to this application) concerning the above matter, we act on behalf of Airwave Solutions Ltd, the company that is responsible for delivering the Airwave service, within the Greater Manchester Area for Greater Manchester Police. The Airwave service is an integrated, state-of-the-art, mobile radio communications service for all police forces in Great Britain.

The Airwave network in Greater Manchester was commissioned in 2002-03 and includes a number of existing sites in the Greater Manchester area. In line with National and Local Government policy Airwave's original proposal was to share a nearby tower owned by O2 at SGB Hire but as a result of difficulties in agreeing terms with the Landlord of that site it was necessary to install a temporary 30m tower at the nearby Police training centre in a location which is now the subject of this application. In the meantime having agreed terms with the Landlord and O2 for the installation of Airwave apparatus on the O2 tower this agreement proceeded to completion and the site was integrated into the Airwave network in 2007. Since the commissioning of the network however it has become apparent that the landlord of the existing O2 tower at SGB Hire was seeking possession of the site and as such Airwave's occupancy of the site will shortly come to an end. Having therefore gone to the significant expense of acquiring and integrating the O2 tower site into their network, Airwave is now faced with the additional expense of acquiring a replacement site in the immediate area almost immediately. In addition to this it is of course essential (and a part of it's licence obligations) that Airwave maintain continuous coverage to the same level as existing (or better) in order to ensure the Police can continue to communicate effectively in the surrounding areas. This is explained in more detail below, but the solution to these difficulties would be to erect a new radio installation as close to the existing site (which is to be removed) as is possible to provide coverage levels that meet the demands of the emergency services.

We have therefore been instructed to submit a planning application for the erection of a new 30m lattice tower on the site of the former temporary site at Claytonbrook Police Training Unit, on Louisa Street, Clayton, Manchester.

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We therefore enclose the following documents:

1. 4 copies of the planning application form.

2. Certificate B under Article 7 of the Town & Country (General Development Procedure) Order 1995.

3. 4 no. copies of drawings, MAN051-GA-01A, 02A & 03A prepared by Capita Symonds Limited with the subject site outlined in red. A further set of unmarked drawings is also enclosed for your convenience

4. A cheque for the sum of £265.00 to cover the application fee.

5. ICNIRP compliance certificate

6. Airwave Solutions Limited Radio Coverage plots

7. Copies of the prior consultation with Manchester City Council Planning Department and consultation letters forwarded to the local ward Councillors

8. Aerial Map of alternative options.

9. 3 copies of the Design and Access statement

In support of this planning application we submit the following information.

Airwave Services Limited

As you will no doubt be aware from previous consultations, the Airwave Solutions Limited operate a state of the art communications service that is being utilised by the Greater Manchester Police Force, (and eventually it is intended for use by the Fire & Ambulance services). You will also therefore be aware of the coverage that is required from Airwave sites as a result of consultations between Airwave and the Manchester City Council when the original roll-out took place.

It is important to emphasise that the Airwave service is <u>not</u> a commercial mobile phone network available to the general public. Its use is restricted solely to the emergency services.

Airwave Services Ltd recognises that some people may have concerns over health and safety issues. However, the installation will be ICNIRP compliant (Certification enclosed in this regard), as required by PPG8 and would operate at very low power levels.

The Proposal

The application proposes the installation of:

- The erection of a replacement (see background below) 30m 'slimline' lattice mast upon which would be attached three '4 stack dipole' antennae at 30m with two 600mm link transmission dishes located at 27m above ground level, a small 'GPS' antennae and a 2.71 x 2.71 sq.m cabin located at ground level all within a compound measuring 10m x 5m.

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Background to the Proposal

The proposed site is required as direct replacement for the nearby site Airwave site which is located on the O2 tower at SGB Hire. This installation is located at around 27.5m on the existing 02 tower, the proposed installation is lightly higher than the existing Airwave apparatus and this reflects the variations in ground levels and surrounding tree clutter close to the proposed site which mean that a slightly taller installation is required. At present, coverage is provided from the 02 tower and so far as we are aware provides adequate coverage. It is clear form the comments above however that with the Landlord of that site seeking possession that a replacement as close by as possible is required.

The proposed new radio installation site is designed to overcome the loss of the current coverage provided by the O2 tower site at SGB Hire. In choosing the subject site careful consideration has been given to the balancing of the need to be, from a technical point of view, as close to the existing site as possible with the need to ensure that the visual impact of the new installation is minimised. The proposed site is located within the centre of a commercial area and surrounding areas are generally industrial in nature save for some housing on lower ground to the south which is in any event fairly well screened by trees along the boundary of the Police site. In addition to this the visual impact of the permanent proposal can be fairly well determined by consideration of the overall impact of the temporary site which was in the same location and at the same height as the proposed permanent solution which we understand has not been the subject of local discussion or objection during its 3-4 years on site.

The proposed radio site will require a power supply taken from the main electricity supply serving the Police training unit. The communication link with be provided by British Telecom by an underground cable route. This will be determined by BT within the next few weeks.

Alternative sites

A thorough search of the area was undertaken and a number of alternative sites were investigated as part of the initial search for site locations, which potentially meet the technical requirements of Airwave Solutions Ltd. It has to be remembered that this requirement has only arisen because of the need for Airwave to be relocated form the existing 02 tower close by at SGB Hire. Any new site therefore has to be able to fit into the existing Airwave network and in simple terms has to be as close to the existing site as possible - if for example any replacement site was moved too close to a neighbouring Airwave site this could easily cause coverage and interference issues. This, as much as anything explains the relatively small search area and the fact that the subject site which was the home of Airwave's temporary installation for a number of years prior to the completion of what was thought to be the permanent long term solution on the 02 Tower at SGB Hire is so close by.

Notwithstanding this, the alternative options are as follows:-

i) Existing O2 mast site @ SGB Hire, Claytonbrook Road

Existing 30 metre structure with existing Airwave installation. O2 have been given termination notice to vacate site due to proposed re-development

ii) Existing Vodafone mast site Stainburn Road

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Existing 24 metre structure, outside search area and not therefore technically suitable

iii) Existing 'Three' Rooftop site, Halfway House Public House, Edge Lane

Low level building, too low and therefore not technically suitable

iv) Chimney on derelict factory site, Clayton Lane

This site is understood to be due for re-development and is likely to be demolished. The site is not therefore acquirable.

These options are highlighted on the attached aerial map. As a general comment it was noted that the majority of the search area (i.e. the land surrounding the existing 02 site) is industrial but there are were no buildings or other structures noted of a suitable height which would provide adequate radio coverage. There is an area of housing to the south of the subject site but this is on much lower ground and even if an option in this area were in planning terms more acceptable (which is highly doubtful) in our view then a much larger installation than that proposed would be required.

Planning Guidance Policy Guidance Note 8 – Telecommunications

Specific guidance on the development of telecommunications installations is found in PPG8. Many aspects of this guidance are relevant to this proposal. In particular PPG8 is supportive of modern telecommunications and acknowledges that they are an essential and beneficial element in the life of the local community and the national economy.

The guidance further recognises the technical problems associated with telecommunications development and urges Local Authorities to respond positively to such development, by having regard to such difficulties. The Government's general policy on telecommunications is therefore to facilitate the growth of new and existing systems..

The site for the installation has been identified having regard to technical, environmental and site availability considerations. Government guidance in the form of Planning Policy Guidance Note 8 (PPG8) was considered in the siting of the proposed telecommunications equipment. The technical constraints, as set out above, mean that there is very little, if any, flexibility in the siting of the installation.

Structure Plan and Local Plan Policies

We have also had regard to the policies set out in the Manchester City Council unitary Development Plan Policy DC 17.1 which states that

'Applications for telecommunications developments will normally be approved if the Council can be satisfied that the development has been sited and designed to minimise its impact on residential amenity and in environmentally sensitive areas. Wherever possible, the Council will expect the potential of existing buildings and masts, including the sharing of such facilities, to be fully explored before agreeing to additional separate development.'

The Council's reasoning behind this policy is that:

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'The Council recognises the need for Manchester to be at the forefront in the field of telecommunications. The Council therefore starts from a presumption in favour of new development and investment in the telecommunication systems serving the City. Equally, it wishes to ensure that new developments are brought forward in a way which protects residential amenity and minimises the visual impact of such equipment, particularly in Conservation Areas and other environmentally sensitive areas in Parks and the river valleys. The Council is also concerned to make maximum possible use of existing buildings and facilities by encouraging operators to share facilities wherever possible in order to avoid unsightly duplication and clutter'.

The UDP therefore makes a presumption in favour of development having regard for the requirements of the operator if it can be demonstrated that the development has been designed and sited so as to minmise the visual impact on the amenity of any surrounding residential or sensitive use areas including the consideration of other alternative options (existing masts and buildings in the area). In this case we believe that the needs of the emergency services to improve its radio communications system, in the interest of public safety, amounts to a very strong justification as outlined in Policy DC 17.1

The site has been carefully chosen with the appropriate guidance from the local planning officer with regard to the environmental considerations associated with this particular type of development. Appropriate weight has been given to the fact that the site is within a primarily industrial area and needs to be as close to the existing 02 tower as possible.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we stress the importance of the Airwave service in providing and maintaining an integrated, state-of-the-art, mobile communications network for the Greater Manchester Police (and in time, the Fire and Ambulance Emergency Services). The proposed installation would remedy a specific difficulty experienced by the emergency services in this area if a replacement site is not secured. In this respect I would ask you to have regard to the requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. Section 17 of the Act places a duty on a local authority to "exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area". We consider that this is a material planning consideration.

Should you require any further information regarding this application please do not hesitate to contact me at the address below.

rs sincerely

jonn Bird
Galloway Estates Ltd
For and on behalf of Airwave Solutions Ltd

Enc.
4 x Planning Application
4 x Drawing No's DBY075-GA-01A, 02A, & 03A
Cheque for £265
Design and Access statement
Radio Coverage plots
ICNIRP certificate
Aerial Map of alternative options
Certificate B under Article 7 of the Town & Country (General Development Procedure) Order 1995

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