

1. CELL SITE APPLICATION PROCESS

Officer responsible Property Manager	Author Victoria Murdoch, Property Projects Officer, DDI 941-8053
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The purpose of this report is to seek the Council's approval of the recommendations adopted by the Property and Major Projects Committee at its meeting on 4 April 2003. This meeting followed a seminar by staff outlining the process regarding the installation of cell sites on Council land.

CONTEXT OF REPORT

Following disestablishment of the Cell Sites Subcommittee the Council has delegated authority to the Property and Major Projects Committee for the approval process of siting of cell sites on Council land. A seminar was held on 4 April 2003 to brief the Property and Major Projects Committee on the approval process for micro and macro sites on Council land. The process and procedures are well established and documented in a protocol that was developed in conjunction with both Telecom and Vodafone in July 2001.

Previously the Cell Sites Subcommittee met as and when required to process cell site applications. The Property and Major Projects Committee has fixed monthly meeting dates and does not provide the degree of flexibility that was previously available to staff in terms of processing. Council officers are therefore seeking changes on some minor aspects of the protocol to enable this process to once again be streamlined and too improve communication.

A DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL

The protocol for situating cell sites on Council land was implemented some time ago and has worked well with the former Cell Sites Subcommittee meeting and approving applications as required. With expressions of interest now going to the Property and Major Projects Standing Committee the timing is more regulated. Council officers believe that in order to streamline the protocol and keep applications progressing as they were before, it would be beneficial for delegated authority to be given to Council officers to approve Step 12 of the Protocol. Step 12 is where the Council advises the telecommunications company if they have any issues with the proposed site. This is the preliminary approval for macro (high) impact sites as these go back to the Property and Major Projects Committee at Step 20 of the protocol which is the final approval process for micro (low/medium) impact sites.

In addition to this Council officers have noted that feedback from the public is not so much concern for the sites but more importantly knowing what is occurring. A further step is recommended for the protocol which would notify affected parties that proposed works in terms of construction of a new site is about to commence. This would involve the telecommunications company sending a letter stating the timing of construction and who can be contacted for further information. Generally most of the enquiries Council officers and/or the telecommunication companies receive regarding sites are of this nature.

CONCLUSIONS

The protocol for approving cell sites was developed in conjunction with Telecom and Vodafone as a means by which all parties know what is expected at each step and to implement a smooth running process. This process worked well with the former Cell Sites Subcommittee, which could meet as and when required. As mentioned earlier the standing committee timetables are much more fixed and accordingly less flexible.

If the Council agrees to delegate authority to the Property Manager approvals from the Committee similar to those sought in clause 7 of this report will no longer be necessary.

- Recommendation:**
1. That the Council approve delegation of Step 12 of the Cell Site Protocol to the Property Manager on the proviso that Councillors are notified of applications and approvals.
 2. That installation of sites with medium visual impact (e.g. light poles) are notified to nearby residents consistent with the similar notification process used for utility installations.