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Gungahlin Community Council Inc.

Comments on Development Application 20031478 Block 345, Section 0, Gungahlin

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Introduction

The Gungahlin Community Council Inc. (GCC) is an incorporated, not for profit, community-based association operating within the Gungahlin region of the Australian Capital Territory.

The district represented by the Council covers an area in the north to northwest of the Territory between the ACT/NSW border and the Barton Highway, Federal Highway/Northbourne Avenue to the South and East.

The objectives of the council as defined in its constitution are as follows:

- To preserve and improve the social, cultural, economic and environmental well being of Gungahlin and the Gungahlin Community.

To achieve these objectives the Council undertakes to:

- Consult with members of the Gungahlin community;



- Represent the Gungahlin community, and lobby authorities on the community's behalf;
- Provide a non-political environment where members of the community can express their aspirations, concerns and suggestions;
- Provide a public forum where members of the community can obtain information, support and opportunities to network with others;
- Advise, support and / or assist any organisation with compatible objectives to those that have been adopted by the Council;
- Liaise with members of the public, legislators, officials and community representatives; and
- To provide appropriate information and opinions on matters relevant to the Gungahlin community.

In line with achieving these objectives the Council Executive Committee resolved that a response to development application 20031478 would be made.



Comments Regarding The Development Application

- The Gungahlin Community Council is supportive of proposals to provide additional facilities to improve mobile telecommunication facilities in the Gungahlin region as the area is currently severely under serviced.
- The Gungahlin Community Council having considered the Development Application questions whether Telecommunications Code of Practice 1997* (as amended 2002), has been fully adhered to.

Specifically we draw attention to Chapter 3 Part 3 Clauses 3.13 & 3.14:

3.13 Co-location

(1) Before engaging in a subscriber connection activity, a carrier must take all reasonable steps to find out whether any of the following things (existing facilities) is available for the activity:

- (a) cabling, conduits or other facilities of the carrier or another carrier; or
- (b) a facility of a public utility; or
- (c) an easement attaching to the land for a public purpose.

(2) The carrier must take all reasonable steps to use existing facilities for the activity.

3.14 Cooperation about activities

Before engaging in a subscriber connection activity, a carrier (the first carrier) must take all reasonable steps:

- (a) to find out whether another carrier, or a public utility, is engaging in, or proposing to engage in, a similar activity for the same land; and
- (b) to consider whether it is practicable to work with the other carrier or the utility to allow the first carrier:
 - (i) to cause as little detriment and inconvenience as is practicable; and
 - (ii) to do as little damage as is practicable.

Note: The carrier is required to take all reasonable steps to ensure that the carrier causes as little detriment and inconvenience, and does as little damage, as practicable in engaging in the activity: see Act, Schedule 3, clause 8.

*

- *Telecommunications Code of Practice 1997* is available at http://www.dcita.gov.au/Article/0,,0_1-2_3-3_213-4_107374.00.html with the explanatory statement at http://www.dcita.gov.au/Article/0,,0_1-2_3-3_213-4_107376.00.html
- *Telecommunications Code of Practice 1997 (Amendment No. 1 of 2002)* is available at http://www.dcita.gov.au/Article/0,,0_1-2_3-3_213-4_107378.00.html with the explanatory statement at http://www.dcita.gov.au/Article/0,,0_1-2_3-3_213-4_107398.00.html



- The Council did not deem it necessary to respond to the Optus Preliminary assessment as discussed on Page 2 of the “Proposed Telstra Wireless Networks Mobile Telecommunications Facility, ACTEW AGL Reservoir, Gungahlin Hill, Crace ACT” (April 2003) document as it was assumed that the code of practice and specifically actions as outlined in clause 3.14 above would be strictly adhered to.
- The Council now questions why a single monopole and triple antenna set (of appropriate additional height over and above the initial height as required by either carrier) cannot be provided to cater for both Telstra and Optus facilities instead a separate monopole and antenna set for each carrier.
- Based on the discussion in the section covering Visual impacts of the document “Proposed Telstra Wireless Networks Mobile Telecommunications Facility, ACTEW AGL Reservoir, Gungahlin Hill, Crace ACT” (April 2003), it is understood that the proponent has assessed the visual impacts of a tower to the height of 27m and found any potential impacts to be acceptable.
- Given that the Telstra only requires their antennas on the proposed monopole to the height of 22.6m, and a typical wireless antenna of equivalent/identical type is less than 3 metres when measured vertically, there appears no apparent reason why both the Telstra (CDMA/GSM) and Optus (GSM) antennas cannot be co-located on to a single monopole of appropriate height which should be less than the total 27m height as evaluated in this development application.

Such sharing of a single monopole antenna will result in a more acceptable visual impact within the region, as there will only be a single monopole with 3 antenna sets visible instead of two monopoles with the same number of antenna sets.

- Given the proximity of the two proposed antenna sets it has been assumed that emissions from each carriers’ antenna will not cause interference with each other.
- As neither the Telstra or the Optus facilities currently exist the proposed building infrastructure for the shelters should be altered to ensure that the single shared monopole is positioned centrally between the proposed equipment shelters



- The council does not have any current issue with the Health and Safety aspects (emissions) of the proposed facility given that at present there are no dwellings in any close proximity within the proposed sub-division of Grace.

Providing the proposed facility is completed and operational before the Grace subdivision is developed and offered to the public, the Council believes that individuals will be able to make an informed choice when purchasing land/dwellings whether or not they wish to live in proximity to a mobile telecommunications facility.

Conclusion

The Gungahlin Community Council whilst generally supportive in principle to the development application and not wanting to introduce delays in the provisioning of improved mobile telecommunication facilities for the region, wish to see the issues as outlined above appropriately addressed and resolved in an expedient manner before development commences.

The Council would also be appreciative of written feedback on how the issues raised will be addressed.