



3G mobile phone network plan approved

The ACT Planning and Land Authority has given approval to a consortium of Telstra and Hutchison Telecoms to build a third generation (3G) mobile phone network in Canberra.

The consortium, 3GIS, will establish some 100 3G mobile phone base stations across Canberra and Queanbeyan with most of the stations, which consist of an antenna and an associated equipment shed, involving conversions to existing 2G sites.

“Of the 100, 25 were new sites that required ACT Planning and Land Authority approval,” the Authority’s Chief Planning Executive, Neil Savery said.

“Rather than processing 25 separate development applications and preliminary assessments in isolation, a network plan approach was taken to streamline the process and enable the project to be considered in its entirety as a series of inter-dependent proposals.”

The Authority engaged an independent technical consultant to advise whether the network plan and its elements were consistent with relevant Commonwealth standards and laws governing telecommunications facilities. This was particularly relevant to emissions of electromagnetic energy.

A whole of Government consultation process was conducted in parallel with a public notification process that gave the public 15 business days within which to make submissions. This was extended by a further month because the closing date for submissions fell just before Christmas 2005.

“As a result of considering the submissions, the whole of Government consultations and an assessment against the Guideline for Telecommunications (Mobile Phone) Networks, a number of amendments were made to the network plan and these have been included in the final version,” Mr Savery said.

“The network plan has now been approved with a number of conditions that satisfy the requirements of referral agencies and ensure the siting of equipment sheds is appropriate to individual locations.”

The approved network plan may be viewed on the Public Register at the ACT Planning and Land Authority Customer Service Centre, 16 Challis Street Dickson ACT. It may also be viewed on the Authority’s website at www.actpla.act.gov.au from early April.

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