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Introduction

This Planning Supporting Statement has been prepared by Harlequin Group on behalf of Everything Everywhere (EE) Limited. The statement has been prepared in support of the application to upgrade an existing electronic communications installation at Hall Farm, Church Street, Brierley, Barnsley. This application is made under the Development Management Procedure Order (2010). The statement sets out the most relevant considerations in respect of the proposed development. This provides context for the proposal, reasoning, technical justification, planning constraints and policy guidance.

1.0 Proposed Development

1.1 Site

The proposed site is located within the Brierley conservation area, approximately 5 miles north-east of Barnsley. Brierley is a small town which served the nearby Grimethorpe pit, the majority of buildings date back to the Mid-19th Century and early 20th Century, with many examples of sandstone bricks and slate roofs. A full planning application is being submitted because the application site falls within Article 1 (5) Land and due to the nature of the development, permitted developments rights do not apply in this instance.

This application seeks to upgrade an existing telecommunications installation in the grounds of Hall Farm. The proposals consist of the addition of 1 No. 0.6m diameter dish installed at 12.5m above ground level (AGL). The upgrade also includes the installation of 2 No. equipment cabinets but as these are proposed to be located within an existing cabin this element of the development is not subject to planning approval. An aerial photograph identifying the application site is shown below.



Aerial photograph of the application site

1.2 Application History

There is an operational requirement to upgrade the mast to meet capacity and coverage needs for the EE mobile network (consolidation of Orange and T Mobile). The application is in line with national planning policy which states that existing telecommunication sites should be reused and upgraded when possible to avoid the development of new sites.

1.3 Proposed Development

This planning application is for the addition of 1 No. 0.6m diameter dish installed at 12.5m AGL on an existing 15m high column. The column currently hosts 3 No. antennas and 2 No. 0.6m diameter dishes installed at 11.5m AGL. The proposed dish would be north-east facing and fixed onto the existing column. Further details covering the materials and positioning of the equipment are included in the application drawings.

1.4 Local Engagement

The site has been rated as green on the mobile operators' consultation traffic light rating system. The proposals would not significantly alter the current appearance or use of the building, considering this, no local consultation has been undertaken.

1.5 Schools/Colleges

The nearest school to the application site is Brierley Primary School located approximately 250m south-east on Beech Close. Considering the site has previously been rated as green on the traffic light rating mode and the mast is some distance from the School buildings and playgrounds, consultation has been deemed unnecessary.

2.0 Planning Policy

This section sets out the most relevant national and local planning policy concerning the proposed development.

2.1 General Policies

National planning guidance on telecommunications in England is contained in core principle 5 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2012), entitled 'Supporting High Quality Communications Infrastructure'. The framework states that the development of high speed broadband technology and other communications networks is fundamental to securing both economic and social wealth. Core principle 5 also states that, when preparing local plans, authorities should support the expansion of such facilities. Whilst the Government accept that the communications network is essential, it also recognises that the network should be kept to the minimum number of sites required to provide the high quality service required. Use of existing buildings and high structures should be favoured over the development of new mast sites.

2.2 Local Planning Policies

The local planning policy relevant to this planning application is contained within the Barnsley Core Strategy (2011).

Barnsley's Core Strategy (2011) has no specific policies relating to telecommunications. Therefore, it is assumed that the local authority had considered that the national policy set out within PPG8 had provided sufficient guidance to determine telecommunications applications. This has been superseded by the NPPF and core principle 5 above. The principles of PPG 8 have been maintained.

2.3 Policy Analysis

Operational Need (Technical Justification)

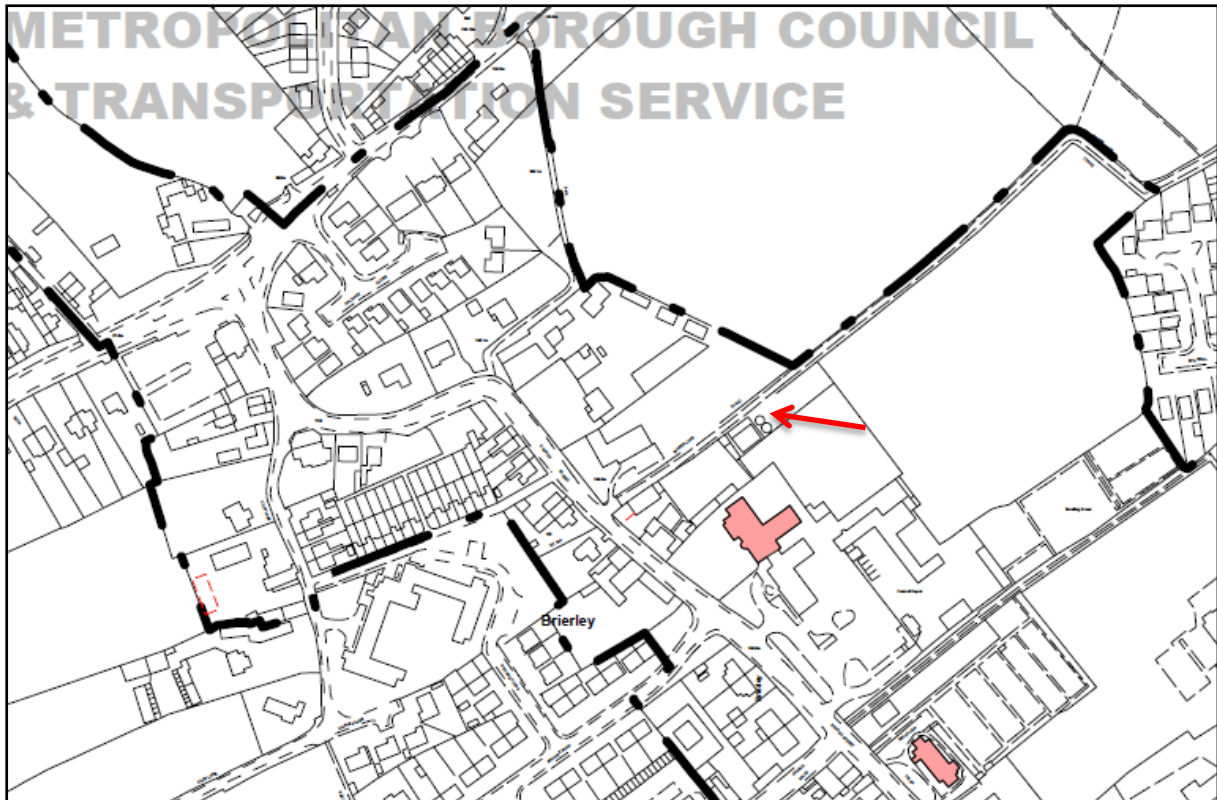
The NPPF states that authorities should not question the need for the telecommunications network for which the proposed development is to support. The proposal in this instance is to upgrade an existing mast site, with the addition of 1 No. 0.6m diameter dish. The proposed development also includes the installation of 2 No. equipment cabinets, although these are to be housed within an existing building. The upgrade is an operational requirement for Everything Everywhere to meet capacity and coverage needs in Brierley.

Visual Impact

The proposed development consists of the addition of 1. No 0.6m diameter dish on an existing telecommunications mast. As shown in the application drawings, the proposed dish is the same size and the existing and would be installed facing north-east.

The mast site is located within the Brierley conservation area, at the rear of Hall Farm on Church Street. Hall Farm consists of a number of medium and small sized agricultural buildings with the mast located towards the north-east corner of the site. The surrounding use is predominately residential with a mixture of Victorian terraces and post-war detached housing.

It is considered that the proposed development will have minimal impact on visual amenity for the surrounding area given that the telecommunications site is already in situ, and the use has been established. The column currently hosts 3 No. antennas and 2 No. dishes and the addition of 1 No. further dish of the same diameter will not materially change the appearance of the building. Whilst the application site falls within the conservation area, the proposed development is not considered to cause any harm to the setting, character or appearance of the area.



Extract of the Brierley conservation area map identifying the application site

Policy Conclusions

The upgrade is an operational requirement for EE to meet capacity and coverage needs in Brierley. Although equipment is being added to the site, it is not considered that the appearance of the structure will be significantly altered. Furthermore, the proposal is in-line with national planning policy which supports the reuse and site-sharing of existing telecommunications infrastructure to prevent the unnecessary development of new mast sites in other locations. Considering the visual impact of the development would not be detrimental to the surrounds and the need for the facility has been justified, the proposal is considered to fully comply with national planning policy.

3.0 Access

The electronic telecommunications installation is located on private property with no unauthorised access. Furthermore, the site is demarcated by a 2.9m high palisade fence which forms a compound around the column and cabin containing the associated equipment cabinets. Therefore issues relating to access have not been considered as part of this planning application.

4.0 Health and Safety

Telecommunications planning guidance states that it is not for the local planning authority to seek to replicate through the planning system controls under the health and safety regime as it is a matter for the Health and Safety Executive.

The Government guidelines state that provided a proposed base station meets the ICNIRP guidelines for public exposure, then it should not be necessary for the local planning authority to consider the impacts of health concerns.

It is confirmed that the proposed equipment and installation complies with ICNIRP guidelines and a Certificate of Compliance has been submitted in support of the application.

5.0 Conclusion

The proposals are for the upgrade of an existing telecommunications site, as an operational requirement to meet coverage and capacity needs. It is considered that the development does not have a significant detrimental visual impact on the character or appearance of Brierley conservation area, or on surrounding properties. In relation to planning policy, whilst there is no local policy on telecommunications to evaluate, national policy clearly states that any development which seeks to improve the telecommunications infrastructure should be supported in principle. Accordingly, the proposed development is considered to conform to national and local planning policies.