

2023/0134

Applicant: MBNL, for and on behalf of Three UK Ltd/H3G Ltd

Removal and replacement of existing 11.3m high monopole with a new 18m high monopole supporting 6no. antennas and associated equipment (Prior Approval)

Address: Grass Verge, Huddersfield Road, Darton, Barnsley, S75 5JS

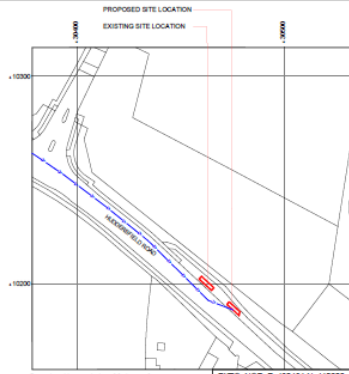
### Site Description

The site is located on a grass verge, Huddersfield Road in Darton. The grass verge is located on the side of the A637, with an industrial estate to the rear and a small number of residential properties adjacent across the road. There is an existing 11.3m high monopole very close to the site with associated cabinets.



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SITE AREA PLAN  
1:50,000



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SITE LOCATION PLAN  
1:1,250



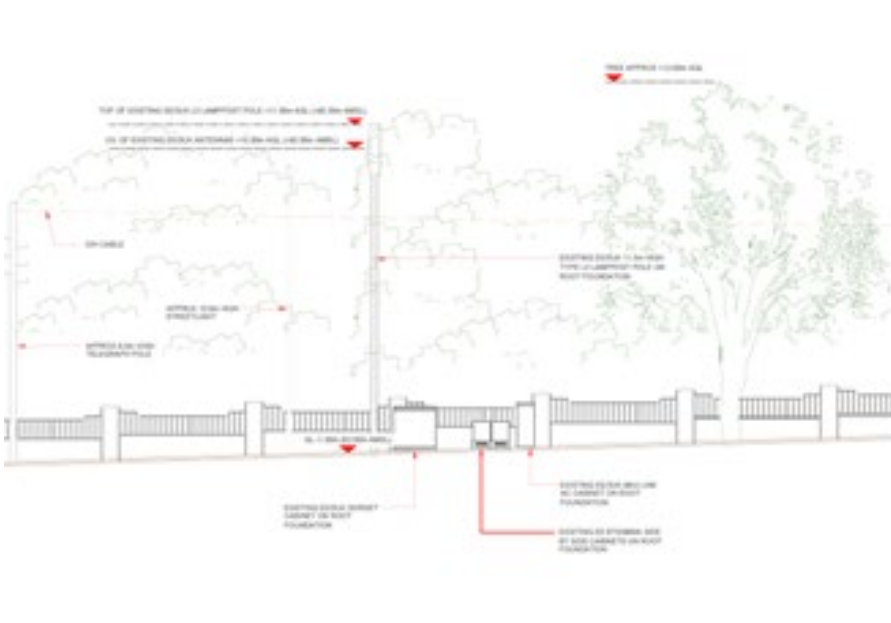
SITE PHOTOGRAPH



GOOGLE MAPS QR CODE

GOOGLE MAPS - [Hyperlink to map of the site](#)

GOOGLE STREETVIEW - [Hyperlink to Streetview of the site](#)



## Site History

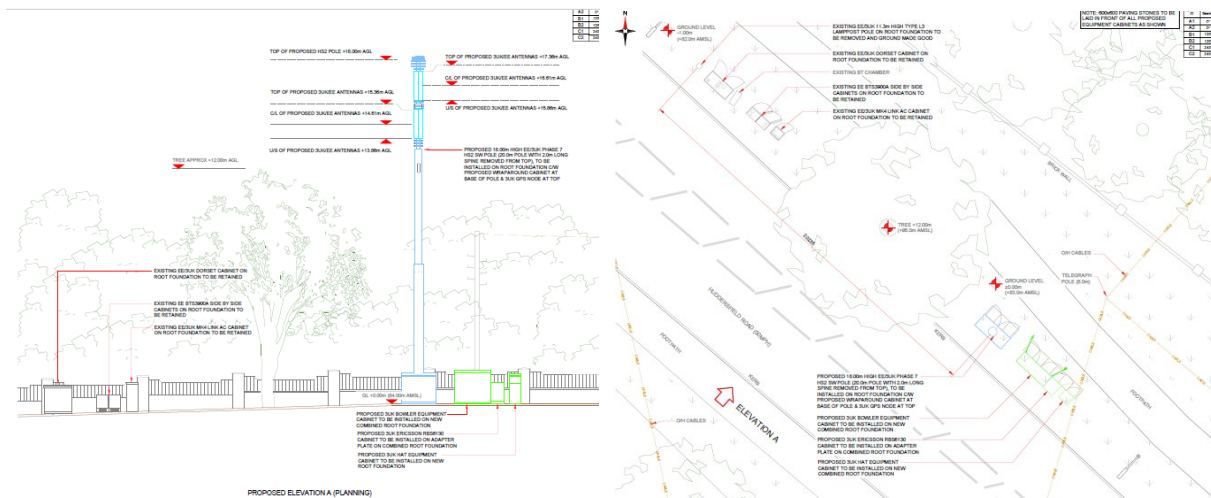
None

## Proposed Development

The applicant is seeking prior approval for the erection and installation of the following:

The removal and replacement of existing 11.3m high monopole with a new 18m high monopole supporting 6 no. antennas, with a wraparound equipment cabinet at the base of the column.

The installation of 3no. new equipment cabinets and ancillary accessories.



The proposed mast and cabinets will be located to the east of the existing site. The existing monopole will be removed after the erection of the proposed to avoid loss of connectivity within the area.

## Policy Context

### Local Plan

The site is allocated as Urban Fabric.

Policy D1 Design

Policy GD1 General Development

### NPPF

The paragraphs below are extracted from Chapter 10 'Supporting High Quality Communications' of the National Planning Policy Framework (Feb 2019):

112. Advanced, high quality and reliable communications infrastructure is essential for economic growth and social well-being. Planning policies and decisions should support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next generation mobile technology (such as 5G) and full fibre broadband connections. Policies should set out how high-quality digital infrastructure, providing access to services from a range of providers, is expected to be delivered and upgraded over time; and should prioritise full fibre connections to existing and new developments (as these connections will, in almost all cases, provide the optimum solution).

113. The number of radio and electronic communications masts, and the sites for such installations, should be kept to a minimum consistent with the needs of consumers, the efficient operation of the network and providing reasonable capacity for future expansion. Use of existing masts, buildings and other structures for new electronic communications capability (including wireless) should be encouraged. Where new sites are required (such as for new 5G networks, or for connected transport and smart city applications), equipment should be sympathetically designed and camouflaged where appropriate.

114. Local planning authorities should not impose a ban on new electronic communications development in certain areas, impose blanket Article 4 directions over a wide area or a wide range of electronic communications development, or insist on minimum distances between new electronic communications development and existing development. They should ensure that:

- a) they have evidence to demonstrate that electronic communications infrastructure is not expected to cause significant and irremediable interference with other electrical equipment, air traffic services or instrumentation operated in the national interest; and
- b) they have considered the possibility of the construction of new buildings or other structures interfering with broadcast and electronic communications services.

115. Applications for electronic communications development (including applications for prior approval under the General Permitted Development Order) should be supported by the necessary evidence to justify the proposed development. This should include:

- a) the outcome of consultations with organisations with an interest in the proposed development, in particular with the relevant body where a mast is to be installed near a school or college, or within a statutory safeguarding zone surrounding an aerodrome, technical site or military explosives storage area; and
- b) for an addition to an existing mast or base station, a statement that self-certifies that the cumulative exposure, when operational, will not exceed International Commission guidelines on non-ionising radiation protection; or
- c) for a new mast or base station, evidence that the applicant has explored the possibility of erecting antennas on an existing building, mast or other structure and a statement that self-certifies that, when operational, International Commission guidelines will be met.

116. Local planning authorities must determine applications on planning grounds only. They should not seek to prevent competition between different operators, question the need for an electronic communications system, or set health safeguards different from the International Commission guidelines for public exposure.

## **Consultations**

Highways – No objection. The proposal to replace the monopole with the new antennae is acceptable from the perspective of highway safety as the site is in a verge that would not impinge of vehicular or pedestrian movements. The site is also further away from the access to the business park, so no issues are raised in terms of visibility.

Pollution Control – No objections

Tree Officer – Raised concerns over the proximity of the installation to a nearby Maple Tree. Has requested a tree survey and arboricultural assessment.

I have looked through the plans and do have concerns over the proximity of the new equipment and the excavations that will be required to a Council owned tree, particularly in light of the recent events on Stocks Lane. I feel the proposal needs to be looked at with regards to the tree to negate any potential impacts in terms of both direct impacts such as the excavations etc. and indirect in

terms of proximity issues and potential future pressures for pruning etc. I would therefore ask that a Tree Survey and arboricultural impact assessment to BS5837:2012 be produced to deal with this.

## **Representations**

The application was advertised by site notice and neighbour notifications, four objections have been received with the following concerns:

- New location in direct site of adjacent properties
- Dominate the landscape
- Obstruct the highway/ pedestrian access/ cycle path
- More suitable sites elsewhere
- Visually intrusive
- Negative impact on enjoyment of home
- Misleading plans
- Unduly prominent and incongruous feature

## **Assessment**

### Principle of Development:

Schedule 2, Part 16 of the Town and Country (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 sets out the permitted development rights for electronic communications code operator with regards to development for the purpose of the operator's electronic communications network.

Class A.1 (c) (ii) allows for the installation of a mast up to 25m above ground level on land which is on a highway.

Under Class A.7 the installation of electronic communications apparatus is permitted if the structure does not exceed 1.5m<sup>2</sup>

Under Class A.9 the installation of radio equipment housing is permitted where the development is ancillary to other electronic communications apparatus and the cubic volume does not exceed 90m<sup>3</sup>.

In accordance with the above, the proposed development falls under permitted development rights. However, paragraph A.3 (4) states that before beginning the development described in paragraph A.2(3), the developer must apply to the LPA for a determination as to whether prior approval of the authority will be required as to the siting and appearance of the development. This is explored below.

### Siting and Appearance:

The proposed mast at 18m will be located adjacent to a commercial area close to the site of an existing 11.3m monopole. Along with the mast will be the installation of three cabinets which will be located within the grass verge and adjacent to existing railings serving the industrial estate to the rear. The cabinets and pole will be positioned on the grass verge in between the pavement and Huddersfield Road, therefore is not expected to pose a dominant feature nor present an obstruction to pedestrian movement.

The siting is also located on the adjacent side of the road from four residential properties. We have received objections from all these properties with concerns with regards to the visual impact of the proposal. Upon receipt of these objections, the agent dealing with the application was contacted, and asked if the monopole could be moved away from these properties or if the site of the existing monopole could be utilised.

With regards to the chosen location the agent replied: *'as distance from the centre of the cell search areas increases, the efficiency of any given installation in meeting the requirements of the cell will decrease. An installation located outside of the search area would not allow the operator to provide their desired level of replacement 3G and 4G service provision and therefore would not adequately fill the current lack of network coverage'*

With regards to using the existing monopole site rather than locating the new monopole a distance away the agent replied: *'the proposal will replace the existing mast with the new monopole and associated equipment cabinets. In accordance with the provisions of the General Permitted Development Order that requires any redundant electronic communications apparatus to be removed after it is no longer required for electronic communications purposes, the existing mast is to be removed once no longer providing coverage (under Part 16 A.2 (2) (a)). This involves decommissioning the existing monopole and integrating the new one. This is not an immediate process and can take several weeks to complete. In order to remove the existing structure, the new monopole needs to be fully integrated into the network and become fully operational. Consequently, the proposal is to retain the existing monopole for a short period, install all the antennas on the new monopole and to remove the existing monopole when it is practicable. The intention is not to have both monopoles in place for an extended period but simply to ensure that the most effective support for the network is provided. This also means that the application proposal cannot be situated in the exact location as the existing mast since there may be a very brief period when both masts existing together whilst the build phase of the proposal is completed.'*

It is concluded that another site further away from the properties is not feasible as it does not fall within the desired search area. Furthermore, it is not possible for the new monopole to be erected in the exact same position as the existing, therefore all avenues for the relocation of the proposal have been addressed.

It should be noted that there are other vertical structures within the immediate area such lamp posts telegraph poles and trees. The mast and associated equipment would be located in a gap between the existing poles and viewed in the same context.

It is acknowledged that the proposal will be more visible to the dwellings across the road, however, there will be still a gap of over 40m to the installation from the properties. The adjacent properties are set well back from the road with large front gardens along with trees and vegetation along these front boundaries. The existing boundaries along with the existing street furniture and trees around the site location will work towards limiting the overall impact of the proposal.

In terms of the design of the proposal, it consists of a monopole with six simple antennas on top. It is akin to a number of monopoles evident across the borough and beyond. Although the proposal is much larger than the existing, when viewed along with the existing street furniture and surrounding trees, the impact will be minimised. Given the location of the site and the surrounding features it is observed that although the monopole will be visible within this setting, it would not be overly prominent or dominant on the streetscene to the detriment of visual amenity.

The existing monopole near the site will be removed once this monopole is fully functioning, and so the development will not result in the proliferation of masts or associated cabinets. The permitted development regulations make it clear that the visual impact of such development on the surrounding area must be minimised so far as practicable.

Concern has been raised from the Council's Tree Officer with regards to the siting being in close proximity to an existing maple tree. The Tree Officer feels the proposal needs to be looked at with regards to the tree to negate any potential impacts in terms of both direct impacts such as the excavations etc. and indirect in terms of proximity issues and potential future pressures for pruning etc. The comments came in late in the process but the agent was contacted and asked if they could provide a tree survey and arboricultural assessment. The agent declined and asked for the

application to be determined as it is and acknowledged that this could lead to a recommendation of refusal. Due to the lack of an assessment the concern remains that the siting of the installation in close proximity to the rooting area of the tree could impact on the health of the tree to the detriment of visual amenity and the tree itself contrary to local plan policy GD1.

**Recommendation**

**Prior approval required and refused**