

**2021/1619**

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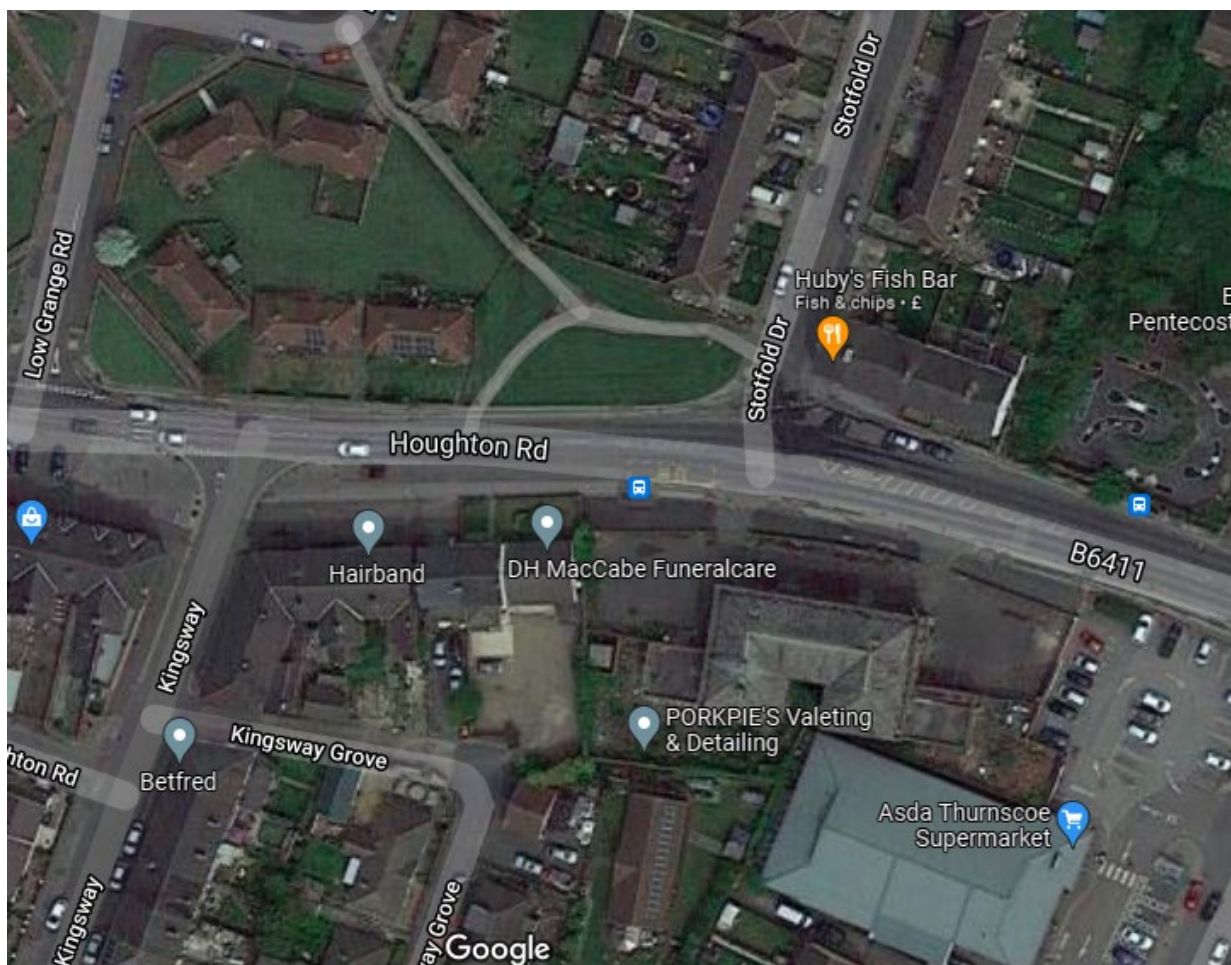
Erection of 20m high telecommunications monopole, 12no. antennas, equipment cabinets and associated ancillary development to replace existing rooftop installation adjacent

SW Houghton Road, Houghton Road, Thurnscoe, Rotherham, S63 0JX

### Description

The site is set within the allocated Local Centre of Thurnscoe which provides shopping and local facilities. The location for the proposed telecommunications monopole and equipment is set to the rear of an existing bus shelter and adjacent to the site of the former Thurnscoe Hotel and Public House. A planning application 2021/0104 is currently under consideration for this site for its redevelopment into a new petrol station with jet washes (sui generis) and retail units (class E).

The land to the north of Houghton Road and opposite this site is mainly residential in nature and consists of one and two storey dwellings.







At the heart is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Development proposals that accord with the development plan should be approved unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out of date, unless the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies of the Framework taken as a whole.

Section 10 – Supporting high quality communications of the NPPF, paragraph 114 states that advanced, high quality and reliable communications infrastructure is essential for economic growth and social well-being. Planning decisions should support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next generation mobile technology (such as 5G and full fibre broadband connections).

Paragraph 115 goes on to state that the number of electronic communications masts, and the site 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.

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.

Paragraph 117 states that 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
- 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

## **Consultations**

Highways – Raised concerns with regard to impact of proposal upon the adjacent proposal and accesses under consideration 2021/0104 at the Thurncoe Hotel site.

Ward Councillors – No comments received

## **Representations**

Neighbour notification letters have been sent to surrounding properties and the application has been advertised by the way of a site notice. No comments have been received.

## **Assessment**

The NPPF actively promotes the growth of telecommunication infrastructure as it is recognised as being essential to promoting sustainable economic growth and enhancing the provision of local community facilities and services.

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.

The location for the proposed telecommunications monopole is set behind an existing bus shelter and adjacent to the former Goldthorpe Hotel site which is currently subject to a planning application for its redevelopment into a petrol station with associated retail units. This application is currently under consideration. The installation would replace a rooftop mast set on top of the roof to the Goldthorpe Hotel site, which is to be demolished as part of the proposal. The requirement for a mast in this location is therefore justified, subject to its impact upon, residential amenity, visual amenity and highway safety, which are considered below.

### Residential Amenity

The surrounding area is a mix of residential and commercial properties, with the nearest dwellings located at least 30m away. Although the replacement mast will be a tall structure it is unlikely to have any significant detrimental effect in terms of overshadowing or overbearing. The proposal is therefore considered acceptable.

### Visual Amenity

The proposed new mast and associated antenna will be of a much larger scale and height to the roof top installation they replace. The applicant's supporting statement states:- 'It is noted that there is an increase in the scale of telecommunications development. However, the proposed site will be seen in the context of the existing vertical features in the street scene. The proposed design is larger than existing street lighting columns, but it needs to be in order to function and upgrade the technologies available in the area.'

Whilst it is appreciated that the proposal has been designed as one of the thinner options for such 5G telecommunications monopoles, the monopole is a large structure at 20m in height and would tower over the existing one and two storey buildings along Houghton Road. Whilst there are other vertical elements within the street scene such as lampposts, the proposed pole far exceeds the height of these. When viewed from the Houghton Road, the pole would tower above anything immediately adjacent and would result in a dominant and intrusive feature on the street scene, to the detriment of visual amenity and contrary to Local Plan Policy D1.

Further to the above, whilst the applicant has provided a statement which explores other possible locations for the mast, insufficient information has been supplied with the application regarding the overall size of the mast and whether a smaller mast would be acceptable in this location. Given the concerns raised regarding the scale and appearance of the proposal, it is considered that the application should be refused.

#### Highway Safety

The Highways Officer has been consulted on the application and raises the following concerns:- 'The proposed location for the installation of the telecommunications equipment is immediately adjacent to the site of a proposed filling station (ref 2021/0104) which includes for alterations to the existing accesses. Presently, it is unclear whether the requisite amendments to the access arrangements will conflict with the proposal for the erection of telecommunications equipment at this locale.' As such the Highways Officer has requested that the application is not determined until such time as the final layout for the filling station has been agreed and reviewed holistically alongside this proposal. However, given the concerns expressed on visual amenity, the application is still not acceptable from a planning perspective and can be refused on those grounds. The agent will be made aware of the highways issues through separate communication to ensure that if they re-submit and the adjoining application has been determined then that could be an issue.

#### **Recommendation**

#### **Refuse**