

2024/0138

Cornerstone

Proposed Base Station upgrade to the existing telecommunications installation. Existing 15.00m monopole (overall height 17.3m), 3no. antennas, existing base and 2no. cabinets to be removed and replaced with proposed 22.50m monopole on new concrete base together with new headframe, 6no. antennas, 2no. 300mm dishes, 3no. cabinets and associated ancillary works. (Prior Approval Telecommunications)

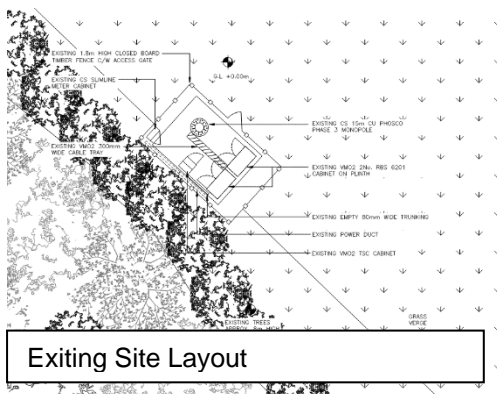
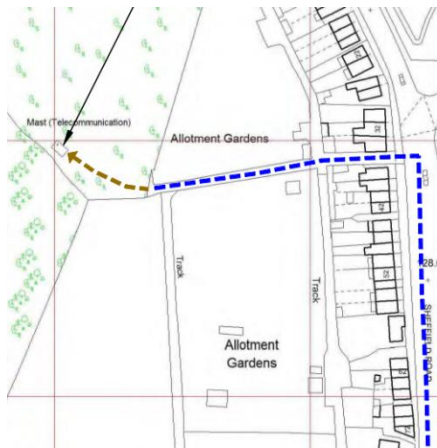
Land off Sheffield Road, Birdwell, Barnsley, S70 5UZ

Site Description

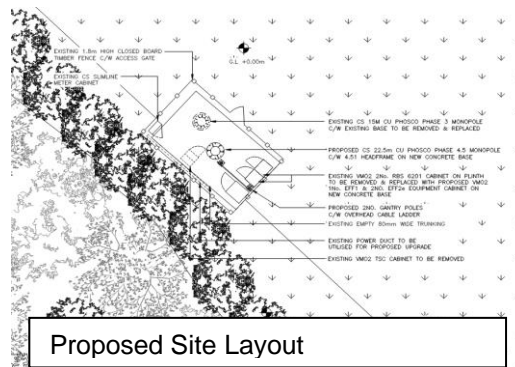
The site is located off Sheffield Road, Birdwell, with the proposed development itself being located in a pocket of land to the west of Sheffield Road, beyond the allotment gardens to the rear of the properties fronting onto Sheffield Road and adjacent to a small woodland area. The site is located approximately 100m from the properties on Sheffield Road.

Proposed Development

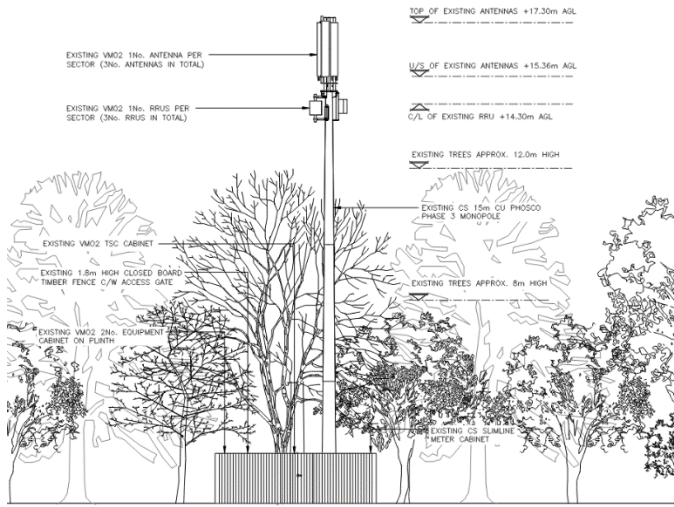
The applicant has submitted a Prior Notification application for the erection of a 22.5m high telecommunications mast with associated antennas, dishes, and equipment to provide 5G network coverage. The mast itself is set on concrete base measuring 5.3m x 3.1m, within a compound measuring 5.8m by 3.6m.



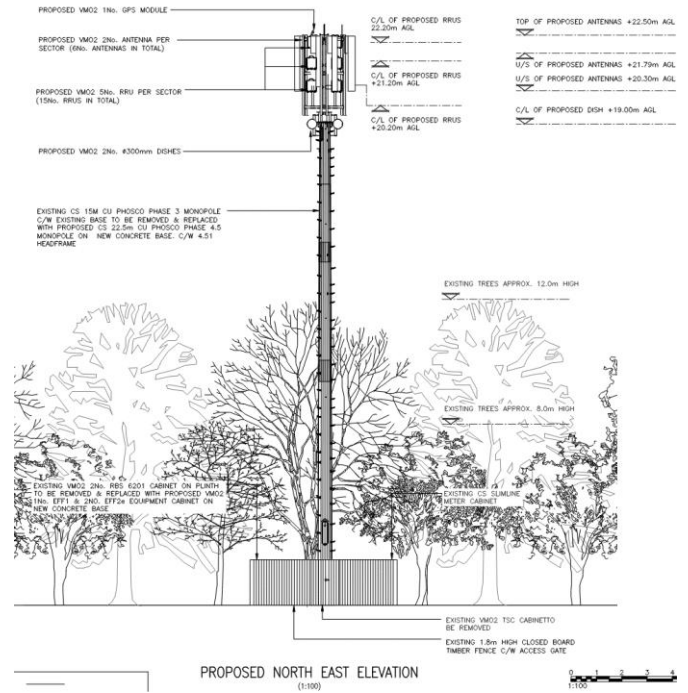
Existing Site Layout



Proposed Site Layout



EXISTING NORTH EAST ELEVATION
(1:100)



PROPOSED NORTH EAST ELEVATION
(1:100)



Policy Context

Planning decisions should be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise and the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. The Local Plan was adopted in January 2019 and is also now accompanied by seven masterplan frameworks which apply to the largest site allocations (housing, employment and mixed-use sites). In addition, the Council has adopted a series of Supplementary Planning Documents and Neighbourhood Plans which provide supporting guidance and specific local policies and are a material consideration in the decision-making process.

The Local Plan review was approved at the full Council meeting held 24th November 2022. The review determined that the Local Plan remains fit for purpose and is adequately delivering its objectives. This means no updates to the Local Plan, in whole or in part, are to be carried out ahead of a further review. The next review is due to take place in 2027 or earlier if circumstances, require it.

The site is designated as Green Belt in the adopted Local Plan and therefore the relevant polices are:

Local Plan

Policy GB1 Protection of Green Belt
 Policy D1 High Quality Design and Place Making
 Policy GD1 General Development
 Poll1: Pollution Control and Protection

NPPF

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

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 118 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 119 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.

Paragraph 121 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.

Paragraph 122 states that 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.

Section 13 – Protecting Green Belt Land

Consultations

Highways – No objections.

Forestry Officer – No objections 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 letters of representation have been received.

Assessment

Schedule 2, Part 16 of the Town and Country (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) 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 –electronic communications code operators

Permitted development

A. Development by or on behalf of an electronic communications code operator for the purpose of the operator's electronic communications network in, on, over or under land controlled by that operator or in accordance with the electronic communications code, consisting of—

- (a) the installation, alteration, or replacement of any electronic communications apparatus,
- (b) the use of land in an emergency for a period not exceeding 18 months to station and operate moveable electronic communications apparatus required for the replacement of unserviceable electronic communications apparatus, including the provision of moveable structures on the land for the purposes of that use, or
- (c) development ancillary to radio equipment housing

Development not permitted: ground-based apparatus

A.1- (1) Development consisting of the installation, alteration, or replacement of electronic communications apparatus (other than on a building) is not permitted by Class A(a) if—

- (a) in the case of the installation of electronic communications apparatus (other than a mast), the apparatus, excluding any antenna, would exceed a height of 15 metres above ground level;
- (b) in the case of the alteration or replacement of electronic communications apparatus (other than a mast) that is already installed, the apparatus, excluding any antenna, would when altered or replaced exceed the height of the existing apparatus or a height of 15 metres above ground level, whichever is the greater;
- (c) in the case of the installation of a mast, the mast, excluding any antenna, would exceed a height of—
 - (i) 30 metres above ground level on unprotected land; or
 - (ii) 25 metres above ground level on article 2(3) land or land which is on a highway; or
- (d) in the case of the alteration or replacement of a mast, the height of the mast, excluding any antenna, would when altered or replaced exceed the greater of the height of the existing mast or a height of—
 - (i) 30 metres above ground level on unprotected land; or
 - (ii) 25 metres above ground level on article 2(3) land or land which is on a highway; or
- (e) in the case of the alteration or replacement of a mast—
 - (i) the mast is on any land which is, or is within, a site of special scientific interest; and

(ii) the mast would, when altered or replaced, exceed the original width of the mast by more than one third

Development not permitted: ground or base area

(7) Development consisting of the installation, alteration or replacement of any electronic communications apparatus other than—

- (a) a mast;
- (b) an antenna;
- (c) a public call box;
- (d) any apparatus which does not project above the level of the surface of the ground; or
- (e) radio equipment housing,

is not permitted by Class A(a) if the ground or base area of the structure would exceed 1.5 square metres.

Development not permitted: radio equipment housing

(9) Development consisting of the installation, alteration or replacement of radio equipment housing is not permitted by Class A(a) if—

- (a) the development is not ancillary to the use of any other electronic communications apparatus;
- (b) the cumulative volume of such development would exceed 90 cubic metres or, if located on the roof of a building, the cumulative volume of such development would exceed 30 cubic metres; or
- (c) on any article 2(3) land, or on any land which is, or is within, a site of special scientific interest, any single development would exceed 2.5 cubic metres, unless the development is carried out in an emergency.

(9A) Sub-paragraph (9)(b) and (c) does not apply where the development is carried out within a permitted compound (and accordingly the development described in that sub-paragraph is permitted by Class A(a))

This application is for prior notification and this assessment relates to whether or not the Council would seek a prior approval application for the proposed works. The proposed complies with these restrictions as set out in Schedule 2, Part 16, Class A of the GPDO (as amended) and is therefore permitted development, subject to adequate design, siting and appearance.

The site is currently occupied by an existing 15m phase 3, monopole on a concrete base measuring 4.2m by 3.1m, enclosed by a 1.8m close boarded timber fence enclosure, measuring 5.8m by 3.6m. The existing monopole is to be replaced by a 22.5m phase 4.5m monopole on a new concrete base measuring 5.3m by 3.1m within the existing enclosure.

Whilst the site is located within the green belt, it is not considered that the proposed development would have a greater impact on the openness of the green belt than the existing monopole and enclosure. In addition, there aren't any other masts near the site and so the development will not result in the proliferation of masts or associated cabinets.

As mentioned previously the site located adjacent to a woodland of trees, whilst not protected by a tree preservation order, there is potential for the proposed works to impact on the trees. The Forestry Officer has been approached for comment; however, no objections have been received. It is considered that given the replacement pole and concrete base are to be located within the existing enclosure which is accessed via a track from Sheffield Road

which serves allotment gardens beyond the properties fronting onto Sheffield Road. As such it is considered that the development would not pose a significant impact on the trees, with the existing enclosure providing suitable protection of the trees during construction.

The telecommunications mast is some 130m+ from the public highway and is not located within close proximity to any Public Rights of Way. The proposed upgraded mast and equipment is within the same location with no proposed changes to access for maintenance vehicles. The mast does not interfere with any vehicular sight lines/visibility nor does it constitute an undue distraction to road users, as such, it is considered that the proposals do not adversely impact upon the highway.

Based on the assessment above it is considered that the siting, design and appearance of the proposed 22.5m high telecommunications mast with associated antennas, dishes and equipment is acceptable.

Recommendation

Prior approval not required