

2023/0657

Signal Infrastructure UK Limited

Erection of 15.0m high telecommunications monopole and associated equipment (Prior Notification Telecommunications)

Land adjacent to Barnsley Road, Penistone, Sheffield, S36 8AE

Background

No planning History

Description

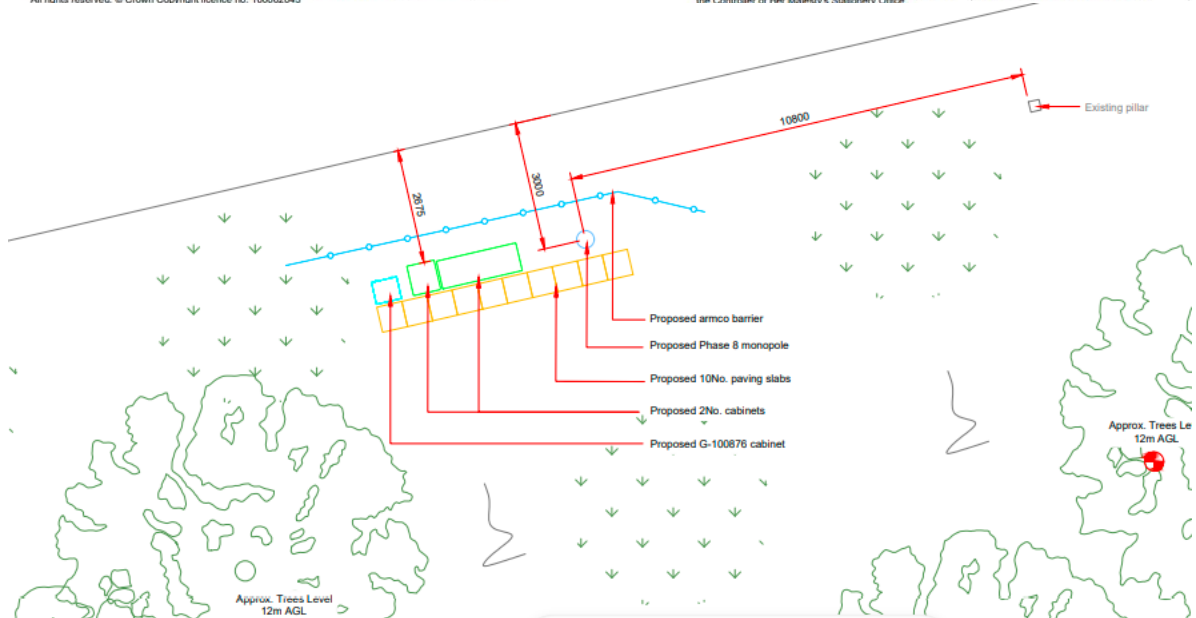
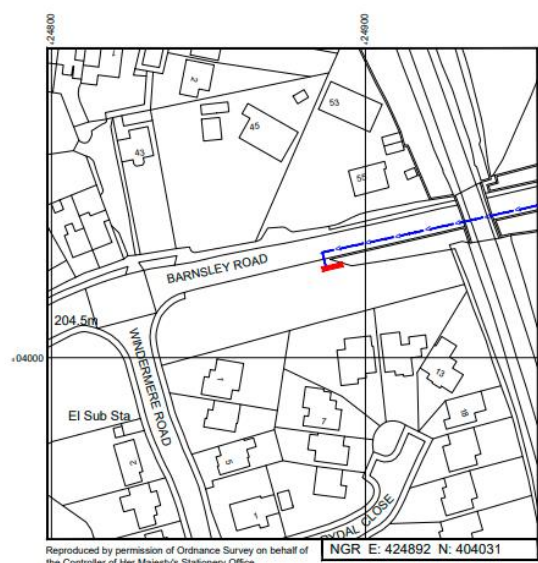
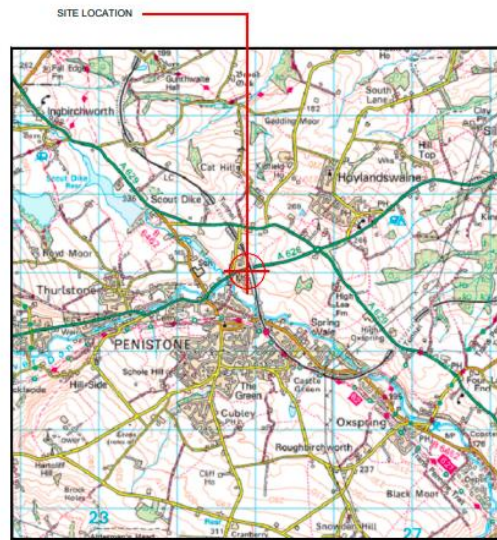
The location for the proposed monopole is situated off the main A628 Barnsley Road, a main road route from Barnsley to Penistone. The proposed monopole would be situated on a grassed verge, which is set at a higher level than the road. There are a number of trees in the area and the closest dwellings are set on the opposite side of Barnsley Road to the north and Rydal Close to the south. A railway bridge exists to the east of the site.

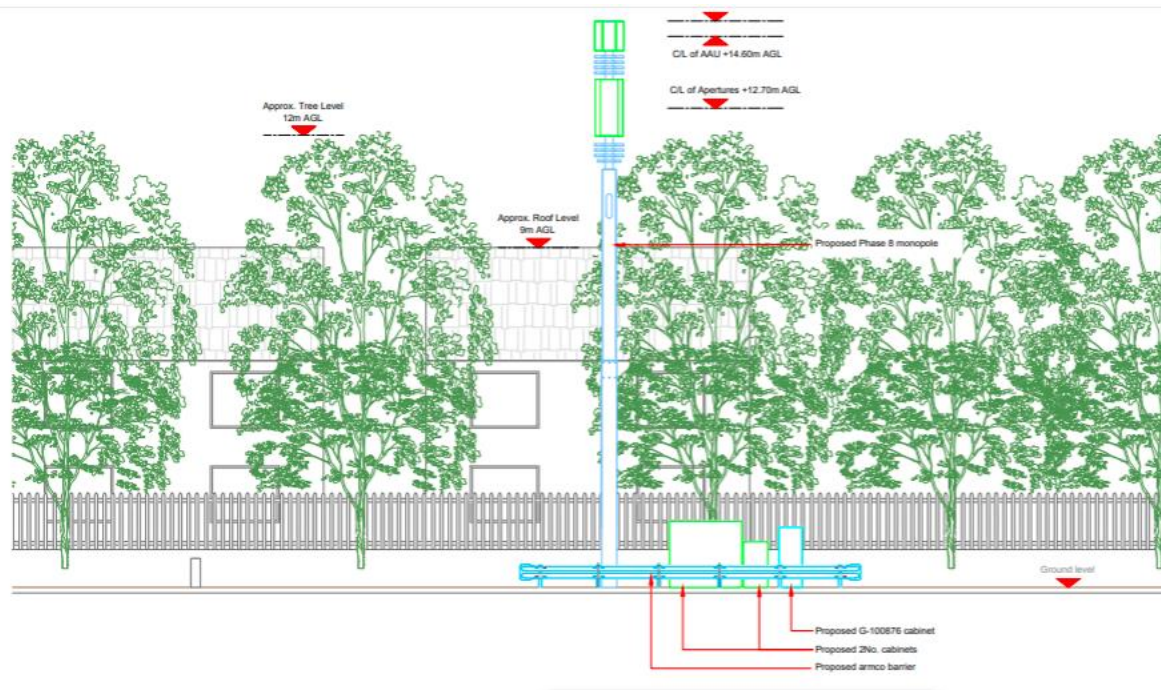


Proposed Development

The applicant has submitted a Prior Notification application for the erection of a 15m high telecommunications monopole and associated equipment. It is proposed to install the

telecommunications equipment within the grass verge (adopted highway) to the southern side of the A628 Barnsley Road between Windermere Road and the railway bridge.





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.

Local Plan

The site is allocated as Urban Fabric within the Local Plan Proposals Maps and therefore the following policies are relevant:

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 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

Pollution Control – No objections

Highways – It is proposed to install telecommunications equipment within the grass verge (adopted highway) to the southern side of the A628 Barnsley Road between Windermere Road and the railway bridge.

It is considered that the proposed telecommunications mast and equipment does not impede pedestrian movements (there is no footway on this side of the road) nor interfere with any vehicular sight lines/visibility nor would it constitute an undue distraction to road users.

As such, there are no objections from a highways point of view.

The applicant should be aware however that any works would be subject to the relevant section 50 licences and contact should be made with the authorities Network Management team on streetworks@barnsley.go.uk, to discuss this. Alternatively, further details are available on the BMBC website at www.barnsley.gov.uk/services/roads-travel-and-parking/road-licences

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. 3 objections have been received and the following comments have been made:-

- Health and safety concerns
- Negative visual impact
- Impact on property values
- Environmental impact
- Noise pollution
- Lack of consultation with neighbours
- Alternative locations should be considered
- Loss of view
- Potential accident site impact on highway safety

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 operators 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) 25 metres above ground level on unprotected land; or

(ii) 20 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 mast, excluding any antenna, would when altered or replaced—

(i) exceed the greater of the height of the existing mast or a height of—

(aa) 25 metres above ground level on unprotected land; or

(bb) 20 metres above ground level on article 2(3) land or land which is on a highway; or

(ii) together with any antenna support structures on the mast, exceed the width of the existing mast and any antenna support structures on it by more than one third, at any given height.

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.

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 siting and appearance.

The location for the proposed monopole is situated off the main A628 Barnsley Road, a main road route from Barnsley to Penistone. The proposed monopole would be situated on a grassed verge, which is set at a higher level than the road. There are a number of trees in the area and the closest dwellings are set on the opposite side of Barnsley Road to the north and Rydal Close to the south. A railway bridge exists to the east of the site. The monopole is a large, bulky structure at 15m in height and would tower over other structures in the area. In addition, the pole would be set at a higher level than the road and is a main road route from Barnsley to Penistone and would be highly prominent from both directions when travelling along the A628.

Whilst there are other vertical elements within the streetscene such as lampposts and trees, the proposed pole far exceeds the height of these. When viewed from the proposed residential dwellings directly opposite the site, the pole would be adjacent to the highway and tower above

anything immediately adjacent and would result in a dominant and intrusive feature on the streetscene, 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 along Barnsley Road, insufficient information has been supplied with the application regarding further alternative positions away from the main road and residential properties.

The agent has offered a different thinner type of mast as an alternative to the one proposed, however whilst the bulk of the mast could be reduced, the siting and height would remain the same and would still have a negative impact upon the street scene and the character of the area, therefore there is no option but to refuse permission on this basis. Given the concerns raised regarding the siting and appearance of the proposal, prior approval is required for the proposal and refused.

Recommendation

Prior approval required and refused

In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority the development would be a prominent and discordant feature in the street scene which would materially harm the visual amenities of the locality by virtue of its siting, height and appearance. The height of the structure, combined with the bulk of the antenna head, would make it an overly dominant feature along the main Barnsley Road and the residential surroundings. The proposal is therefore contrary to Local Plan policies D1 High Quality Design and Place Making and GD1 General Development.