
14. FULL PLANNING APPLICATION – REPLACEMENT OF 20M MAST WITH NEW 20M MAST, COMPLETE WITH NEW ANTENNAS, NEW DISH ANTENNA, AND ASSOCIATED WORKS, SURREY FARM, HOLLOW MEADOWS (NP/S/0814/0859, P.3743, 12/8/2014, 425857 / 387797, MN)

APPLICANT: TELEFONICA UK LTD

Site and Surroundings

Surrey Farm lies a short distance to the east of the former Hollow Meadows hospital, sited on the northern side and adjacent the A57, Sheffield to Manchester Road. The farm complex comprises the farmhouse and a range of traditional and modern farm buildings.

The application site is an established telecommunications facility some 20m north of the farm, and consists of a 20m mast with antennas as well as several ground mounted cabinets. Open fields lie to all sides of the site, with the farm buildings to the south and a group of further dwellings around 150m to the west.

For the purposes of the Local Plan the site is located in an area of open countryside outside any designated settlement boundary.

Proposal

Upgrade of an existing telecommunications base station to include the replacement of 20m mast with new 20m mast, complete with new antennas, new dish antenna, and associated works that amount to the addition of a 300mm wide cable tray and 2.5m tall supporting pole.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the application be APPROVED subject to the following conditions:

- 1. Standard time limit**
- 2. To be completed in accordance with submitted plans**
- 3. The pole mast to have a dark green coloured matt finish (BS colour ref 12B29) before the new mast is brought into use**
- 4. All equipment to be removed from the site when no longer required**

Key Issues

The impact of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

History

1997 – Planning permission granted for the erection of a 20m telecommunications mast and associated ancillary development.

2004 – Planning permission granted for the replacement of 2 antennae on the existing mast and associated ancillary development.

Consultations

Sheffield City Council (Highways) – No response at time of writing.

Sheffield City Council – No response at time of writing.

Bradfield Parish Council – No objection subject to the development conforming to planning regulations.

Main Policies

Core strategy

GSP1, GSP2, GSP3, DS1, L1

Local Plan

LC4, LU5, LU6

National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 27 March 2012 and replaced a significant proportion of central government planning policy with immediate effect. The Government's intention is that the document should be considered to be a material consideration and carry particular weight where a development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date. In the National Park the development plan comprises the Authority's Core Strategy 2011 and saved policies in the Peak District National Park Local Plan 2001. Policies in the Development Plan provide a clear starting point consistent with the National Park's statutory purposes for the determination of this application. It is considered that in this case there is no significant conflict between prevailing policies in the Development Plan and more recent Government guidance in the NPPF with regard to the issues that are raised.

Wider Policy context (if relevant)

Not relevant in this instance.

Environmental Management

Not applicable.

Assessment

Local Plan policy LU5, which deals specifically with telecommunications infrastructure states that development will be permitted provided that the landscape, built heritage or other valued characteristics of the Park are not harmed and it is not feasible to locate the development outside the National Park. In this case, siting the equipment outside of the Park would not be an alternative, as the base serves to provide local mobile phone reception and services. As there is already an approved mast on the site, the main consideration is the additional impact that the proposed replacement would be likely to have. The impact of the existing mast in public views is reduced by its positioning away from the road and behind the farmstead, and because it is screened close to a group of tall trees. In views from the south these serve to screen the mast from view by roadside trees when approaching from the west. The road to the north, Rod Side, also affords views of the mast to the south at a distance of almost 500m.

The proposed replacement mast would be in the same position and of the same height, but would be slightly thicker. The antennas mounted to the top the mast would be of the same height but would have a wider spread, and a small additional dish antenna would be added too. The impact of these over the existing arrangement is not considered significant in terms of the appearance and prominence of the mast. It is proposed for the mast to remain unpainted

galvanised steel. Typically masts would be required to be painted a dark colour so as to better blend with the surrounding landscape. In this case it would be seen most closely in views from the A57 to the south, where it would be seen against the sky when approaching on the road from the east. In views from Rod Side to the north though, it would be seen backed by trees and moorland. On balance, a dark green finish painted finish is considered most appropriate. This is because in views from the south the farmstead is prominent already, and the mast would be seen in close association with it. In views from the north however, a light coloured mast would serve to draw attention to the farm development in what is a largely undeveloped vista. The painted finish could be controlled by planning condition were permission to be granted. Subject to such a condition, the mast is considered to conserve the character and appearance of the area as required by policies LC4 and LU5.

Policy LU5 also states that telecommunications equipment should be mounted on existing masts, buildings and structures. As outlined above, the proposed development relates to the provision of additional equipment on an established facility. This would reduce the further impact of the development in the landscape. Its wider impact, given the similar size of the replacement mast to the development already present on the site, is not considered to be significant and accords with policies LC4 and LU5.

The nearest residential properties are those of Surrey Farm and 'The Barn' and 'The Cottage' located immediately south of the site. Whilst the development would be prominent in views from these dwellings, it would have little further impact above that of the existing mast and is not considered to have a significant effect on outlook. The proposal is not considered to raise any further amenity issues.

Overall, taking into account the relatively small size of the proposed development, its positioning and the existence of other equipment on the site, it is considered that it would not detract from the immediate local area or be so visually prominent as to cause sufficient harm to the valued characteristics of the National Park.

Policy LU6 requires that when utility infrastructure sites are no longer used to meet an appropriate operational need, the Authority should guarantee its removal from the site. It is therefore considered reasonable and necessary to include such a condition on any permission that might be granted.

Human Rights

Any human rights issues have been considered and addressed in the preparation of this report.

List of Background Papers (not previously published)

Nil