

The proposal is for the installation of a 15 metre monopole with three antennas, one 0.6m diameter dish pole mounted above the headframe, three equipment cabinets and one meter cabinet all contained within a 7m x 5.5m compound enclosed by a 1.8m high palisade fence on two sides and an existing block wall and timber fence to the other two sides.

The application site lies within the Urban Area of Kidsgrove as defined on the Local Development Framework Proposals Map, adjacent to the Green Belt.

The application has been called in to Committee by two Councillors due to public concerns about the development which they consider to be an unnecessary and unwelcome addition which will be detrimental to the area and not in-keeping with the existing environment.

Unless a decision on this application is communicated to the developer by the 22nd August 2017 the development will be able to proceed as proposed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (a) That **prior approval is required**, and
- (b) That such prior approval is **refused** for the following reason;

The proposed development by virtue of its siting, design and undue prominence would have an unacceptable adverse impact on the street scene and visual amenity of the area which would be contrary to Policy CSP1 of the Core Spatial Strategy, Policy T19 of the Local Plan and the guidance and requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Reason for Recommendation

Whilst it is acknowledged that the application demonstrates that there is a technical justification for the development, it is considered that, by virtue of the proposed developments siting, design and undue prominence, it would have an unacceptable adverse impact on the street scene and visual amenity of the area and the harm would not be outweighed by the technical justification. Accordingly it would be contrary to Policy CSP1 of the Core Spatial Strategy, saved Policy T19 of the Local Plan and the guidance and requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Statement as to how the Local Planning Authority has worked in a positive and proactive manner in dealing with this application

Pre application advice was not sought from the LPA prior to the application being submitted and for the reasons set out it is not considered to represent an acceptable form of development. Due to the time constraints imposed on the LPA discussions to address any concerns have not been possible.

KEY ISSUES

The proposal is for the installation of a 15 metre monopole with three antennas, one 0.6m diameter dish pole mounted above the headframe, three equipment cabinets and one meter cabinet all contained within a 7m x 5.5m compound enclosed by a 1.8m high palisade fence on two sides and existing block wall and timber fence to the other two sides.

The application site is an existing storage yard on the edge of the urban area of Newchapel in Kidsgrove. The site borders the open countryside which is designated as Green Belt and as an Area of Landscape Restoration and has a number of residential properties in the vicinity along with commercial premises.

The Council must initially decide whether prior approval is or is not required to the siting and appearance of the development and if prior approval is required go on to consider whether it should be granted.

Is prior approval is required?

Prior approval is only required where local planning authorities judge that a specific proposal is likely to have a *significant* impact on its surroundings.

The proposal is for a new 15 metre high monopole with antennas and ancillary ground based equipment. Whilst much of the ground based equipment will not be visible the monopole with its headframe, antennas and dish, due to its size and appearance, would be clearly visible within the street scene and it is considered that prior approval is therefore required.

Should prior approval be granted?

Paragraph 42 of the NPPF details that advanced, high quality communications infrastructure is essential for sustainable economic growth. The development of high speed broadband technology and other communications networks also plays a vital role in enhancing the provision of local community facilities and services. The NPPF also goes on the state that LPAs should support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including telecommunications and high speed broadband.

Saved Policy T19 of the Local Plan supports proposals for telecommunications development that do not unacceptably harm the visual quality and character of sensitive areas and locations such as the countryside and do not adversely affect the amenity of nearby properties. Such development is also supported provided that there are no other alternative suitable sites available.

The applicant's submission focuses on the technical need for the new installation in this location which they consider justifies the development. The submission indicates that two operators would share the mast and the applicant indicates that a number of other sites in the immediate vicinity have been explored and discounted for a number of reasons. The height of the proposal is the minimum required to meet the technical coverage and capacity in the area.

The introduction of a 15 metre high monopole and exposed antenna would be clearly visible within the street scene and would have a stark appearance. The proposal would be immediately adjacent to a row of bungalows to the north and would be exposed to views. The proposal would also be exposed to views from the west and whilst it would be seen within the context of the urban area and adjacent buildings it would appear as an alien feature within the context of the area. This would be harmful to the visual amenity of the area and street scene.

Whilst the NPPF supports high quality communications infrastructure and the application seeks to justify the development, including the technical need, it is considered that the siting and design of the proposal would be significantly harmful to the visual amenity of the area and it considered unacceptable and contrary to local and national planning policy.

APPENDIX

Policies and Proposals in the approved development plan relevant to this decision:-

[Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Core Spatial Strategy \(CSS\) 2006-2026](#)

CSP1: Design Quality

[Newcastle-under-Lyme Local Plan \(NLP\) 2011](#)

Policy T19: Telecommunications Development – General Concerns

Policy T20: Telecommunications Development – Required Information

Other Material Considerations include:

[National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\) \(2012\)](#)

[Planning Practice Guidance \(PPG\) \(2014\)](#)

Relevant Planning History

None relevant

Views of Consultees

The **Environmental Health Division** confirms that there are no objections to the application.

Kidsgrove Town Council advises that they believe that there are already monopolies in the vicinity that could be utilised via mast sharing by the applicant. Furthermore, a mast of this size and design would be completely out of character with its surroundings which are bordered by green belt land.

Representations

Twenty objections and one representation of support have been received.

The **objections**, which include a letter from Newchapel Residents Association, raise the following concerns;

- It is out of keeping with the area,
- The proposed mast would tower above all buildings in the area,
- The site is within the designated Green Belt and the proposal would damage the landscape
- Has the applicant provided evidence that mast sharing has been considered?
- A more suitable alternative site should be sought.

The letter of **support** advises that it would improve mobile phone coverage in the area and the mast will be hidden.

Applicant/agent's submission

The agent has submitted a supporting statement in relation to the above proposal which is required in order to enable the expansion of the existing network capacity.

The applicant has declared that the proposal conforms to International Commission on Non-Ionising Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) Public Exposure Guidelines.

The full documents are available for inspection at the Guildhall and on the Council's website <http://publicaccess.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/online-applications/PLAN/17/00548/TDET>

Background Papers

Planning File referred to

Planning Documents referred to

Date report prepared

02 August 2017