

Planning

Growth & Development

Delegated officer report for planning application

Application no. 143862/TEL/2025

Date registered valid: 1 September 2025

Proposal: Prior Approval for the installation of a telecommunications base station comprising a 20-metre-high monopole supporting 6 no antennas, 1 no. 300mm dish together with 3 no. ground-based cabinets, 1 no. meter cabinet, and ancillary development thereto

Address: Land At Droylsden Road, Manchester, M40 2FT

Ward(s): Miles Platting & Newton Heath Ward

Applicant: Cornerstone

Agent (if any): Mrs Rachel Gormley, Perry Williams Ltd

Case officer: Steven McCoombe
Tel: 0161 234 4607
Email: steven.mccoombe@manchester.gov.uk

Recommendation: Approve

Date of recommendation: 30 September 2025

Application details

Type of application: Telecommunication Application

Development type: Notifications

Date of site visit: 26 September 2025

Standard consultations:

Printed: 3 September 2025

Expired: 24 September 2025

Neighbour notifications

Printed: 3 September 2025

Expired: 24 September 2025

Site notice

No site notice has been produced

Press advert

No press advert had been published

Departure from Development Plan: No

Environmental Statement: Not required

Description of site and surroundings

The application site relates to an area of recessed public pavement situated to the northern side of Droylsden Road, close to the junction with Oldham Road.

The site lies immediately adjacent to a surface car park associated with 'Farmfoods' retail store situated just beyond. To the opposite side of Droylsden Road is recent residential development comprising a combination of 2 and 3 storey houses and apartments. Further beyond to the south-east is a bakery. To the west, on the opposite side of Oldham Road are two storey residential properties, an industrial premises and Wyncors shoe store.

The wider area is considered mixed in character containing a variety of residential, retail and other commercial uses situated just off the main north/south arterial route of Oldham Road.

Listed building: Not applicable

Conservation area: No

Tree Preservation Order: No

Description of development

Prior Approval is sought for the installation of a telecommunications base station, which would include a 20-metre-high monopole supporting six antennas, one 300mm transmission dish, three ground-based cabinets, one meter cabinet, and associated ancillary equipment.

This application follows the approval of a similar telecommunications installation (Ref: 138669/TEL/2023).

Technical issues encountered during the construction phase have prevented the implementation of the approved scheme. Specifically, Openreach has installed an enlarged inspection chamber and equipment cabinet to support its fibre network directly within the area designated for the applicant's development.

As a result, this proposal represents a revised scheme. The proposal involves relocating the equipment cabinets and reducing their number from five to four, as well as decreasing the number of transmission dishes from two to one.

The monopole would remain in its originally approved location, but the type of pole is proposed to be changed from a 20m Hutchinson Apollo A12V2 Streetpole to a 20m Hutchinson Engineering M-Range G_506 Streetpole.

Consultations & Notification Responses

Local Residents/Occupiers – No representations received.

Highway Services - Both the mast and associated antennas and cabinets appear to be placed at the back of the adopted footway. The final positioning of apparatus should maintain the minimum desirable clearance of 2 metres to any adjacent street furniture and the edge of carriageway.

It is accepted that the proposal would not cause a distraction to passing vehicles and would not give rise to forward visibility issues.

Operatives undertaking servicing / maintenance thereafter will be expected to comply fully with the relevant traffic laws, including any local parking and movement restrictions.

Relevant Planning History

138669/TEL/2023

Prior Approval for the installation of a 20-metre-high telecommunication monopole supporting 6 no antennas, 2 no 300mm dishes together with 4 no ground-based cabinets, 1 no meter cabinet, and ancillary development thereto. *Approved 2 January 2024.*

Policy

The following policy and guidance is considered relevant to the consideration of this application:

- Schedule 2, Part 16 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015;
- Saved policy DC17.1 of the UDP;
- Policies DM1 and SP1 of the Core Strategy;
- Sections 10 and 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Issues

Background

he proposed site is intended to replace the existing coverage currently provided at Newton Mill, which can no longer support the operator's equipment. A Notice to Quit has been issued, making continued use of the location unfeasible.

Consequently, the applicant is seeking a nearby alternative site to maintain uninterrupted connectivity for surrounding businesses, commercial areas, and transport links.

Principle

The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 confers 'permitted development rights' for certain types of telecommunications development. This includes the erection of telecommunications masts which do not exceed a height of 30m above ground level on unprotected land. These permitted development rights remove the need to submit a full planning application but rather require a 'prior approval' application to be made.

This means that the Local Planning Authority can only control the details of the siting, design and external appearance of a telecommunication development, as the acceptability of the principle of the development is already established. The Local Planning Authority has 56 days in which to let the applicant know of its decision on whether prior approval is required for siting and appearance and to let the operator know of its decision to allow or refuse approval.

Given background Government planning guidance, a principal theme running through the National Planning Policy Framework is the commitment to ensuring sustainable economic growth. This includes the advancement of infrastructure and the use of smarter technologies.

Paragraph 119 at Section 10 of the NPPF states that "Advanced, high-quality communications infrastructure is essential for sustainable economic growth and social well-being".

Saved policy DC17.1 of the UDP similarly looks to support telecommunication development, subject to minimising any impact upon siting and appearance.

Within a letter issued to Local Planning Authorities from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, dated 24 May 2021, the Government is clear that digital connectivity is considered now, more than ever – vital to enable people to stay connected and businesses to grow. The demand for mobile data is increasing rapidly, and the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted how important it is that we all have access to reliable, high quality mobile connectivity.

It is stated further that The National Planning Policy Framework ("the Framework") for England states that planning policies and decisions should support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next generation mobile technology, such as 5G.

The Framework is clear that decisions on applications should be made as quickly as possible, and within statutory timescales. Local planning authorities must determine applications on planning grounds only and they should not seek to prevent competition between different operators or question the need for an electronic communications system.

In this case, given the prevailing policy and Government support for telecommunication installations coupled with the siting and appearance of the proposed installation in the case, the principle of the proposal is considered satisfactory. The public benefits of a greatly enhanced communications network for businesses and residents alike in this location, would also qualify as a considerable positive that would contribute to the wider economic output of the area, as well as social improvements.

As such, it is considered that the proposal complies with the overarching policy framework which outlines a general presumption in favour of telecommunication development. It is necessary however to further assess the appropriateness of the siting and appearance of the proposed equipment, as outlined below.

Siting and Appearance

In keeping with the National Planning Policy Framework which advocates the use of high-quality communications infrastructure, the proposed design has been selected to balance the visual impact upon the street scene by integrating within the existing commercial backdrop, against operator coverage requirements.

The introduction of a tall structure will always to some degree be noticeable, particularly to passers-by and nearby occupiers. This does not necessarily mean any harm will result or that there will be an overwhelming, undue impact.

In this instance, it is considered that the applicant has minimised the impact by practicable and appropriate siting and design, balancing the siting and appearance of the installation against technical requirements and material planning policy and guidance which advocates a presumption in favour of such equipment. The site selection process has also been influenced by the numerous vertical elements of street furniture distributed around the vicinity of the site including street lighting columns. The height of the pole has been kept down to the absolute minimum capable of providing the required essential new 5G coverage.

The proposal has undergone a sequential site selection, with the current proposal representing the best fit when balancing siting against coverage requirements. The proposed installation would facilitate advanced coverage in the area to aid the social well-being and business needs of the occupants of the nearby properties and local businesses.

In terms of appearance, the design reflects the utilitarian emphasis provided by existing lighting columns and traffic signals.

Given the established backdrop of the Farmfoods retail store and its associated car park, coupled with the uncluttered layout of the Droylsden Road/Oldham Road junction, the proposed installation can be comfortably integrated into the existing streetscape without causing any notable detriment to visual amenity.

Although new residential properties have recently been constructed opposite the site, the orientation of these buildings ensures that none of the primary windows directly face the proposed mast. Any views from these dwellings would be limited to oblique angles, thereby significantly reducing potential visual intrusion.

Furthermore, the separation distance between the mast and nearby residential properties, along with the physical buffer provided by the intervening roads serves to mitigate any perceived impact. The presence of existing tall, vertical street furniture in the vicinity, combined with the area's mixed-use character, reinforces the view that the mast would blend into its surroundings without appearing incongruous or overly prominent. The mast is also relatively slim-line in appearance, situated in the same position as that previously approved and not materially different to the approved both in terms of its visual appearance, with a reduction in transmission dishes. The mast would have a galvanised steel finish to reflect other nearby street furniture, typical of an urban streetscape.

The proposed equipment cabinets are less than 2.5m³ each and would be located immediately alongside the mast, a little further to the east than that previously approved, with a reduction of 1 cabinet. It should be noted that if seen alone as standalone developments, they would constitute permitted development. The cabinets have also been designed to appear like other statutory undertakers' equipment cabinets. They are small for telecommunications apparatus

and are again similar in appearance to other equipment cabinets commonly found in urban environments.

Given the above, it is considered that taking into account the technical constraints of the operator, available sites and immediate environmental context of the area, the siting and appearance of the proposal can be satisfactorily accommodated without significant, undue impact to visual amenity. The siting and appearance of the proposed installation is therefore considered acceptable.

Access

The proposed equipment is sited towards the rear of an existing area of wide pavement, which is already recessed. Pedestrian access along the public footway will not therefore be impeded.

Impact on Health and Safety

The role of the planning system is not to duplicate existing controls under other legislation and is not the place to determine health safeguards. It is the Government's view that if a proposed development conforms to International Compliance for Public Exposure Guidelines for Public Exposure to Electromagnetic Fields established by the International Commission on Non-Ionising Radiation Protection (ICNIRP), further consideration of this issue should not be necessary by the Local Planning Authority.

It should also be noted that within the recent letter issued to Local Planning Authorities from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Support, dated 24 May 2021, it is stated that the Government's independent advisers on matters of public health, are clear that there is no credible evidence of a negative impact of mobile technology, including 5G on people's health. Central to PHE's advice are the guidelines published by the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP), which is formally recognised by the World Health Organisation.

Other Legislative Requirements Equality Act 2010

Section 149 (Public Sector Equality Duty) of the Equality Act 2010 requires due regard to the need to: Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act and; Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The Equality Duty does not impose a legal requirement to conduct an Equality Impact Assessment. Compliance with the Equality Duty involves consciously thinking about the aims of the Equality Duty as part of the process of decision-making.

Human Rights Act 1998 considerations

This application needs to be considered against the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998. Under Article 6, the applicants (and those third parties, including local residents, who have made representations) have a right to a fair hearing and to this end the local planning authority must give full consideration to their comments.

Protocol 1 Article 1, and Article 8 where appropriate, confer(s) a right of respect for a person's home, other land and business assets. In taking account of all material considerations, including Council policy as set out in the Core Strategy and saved policies of the Unitary Development Plan, the Director of Planning, Building Control & Licensing has concluded that some rights conferred by these articles on the applicant(s)/objector(s)/resident(s) and other occupiers and owners of nearby land that might be affected may be interfered with but that that interference is in accordance with the law and justified by being in the public interest and on the basis of the

planning merits of the development proposal. She believes that any restriction on these rights posed by the recommendation given is proportionate to the wider benefits of and that such a decision falls within the margin of discretion afforded to the Council under the Town and Country Planning Acts.

Recommendation: Approve

Condition(s) to be attached to decision for approval OR Reasons for recommendation to refuse

1) The City Council is satisfied with the siting and appearance of the proposed telecommunication installation, in accordance with policies SP1 and DM1 of the Manchester Core Strategy, saved policy DC17.1 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The consent hereby provided shall ensure the installation be carried out only in accordance with drawings referenced 100/1B, 201/B and 301/1B, received by the City Council as Local Planning Authority on 1 September 2025.

Reason - To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans, pursuant to saved policy DC17.1 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester and policies SP1 and DM1 of the Manchester Core Strategy.

Appendix 1 – List of consultees & neighbours notified

Highway Services
Manchester Cathedral

1338 Oldham Road, Manchester, M40 1EZ
1336 Oldham Road, Manchester, M40 1EZ
1334 Oldham Road, Manchester, M40 1EZ
11 Holyoak Street, Manchester, M40 1HB
9 Holyoak Street, Manchester, M40 1HB
7 Holyoak Street, Manchester, M40 1HB
5 Holyoak Street, Manchester, M40 1HB
1145 Oldham Road, Manchester, M40 2FU
1332 Oldham Road, Manchester, M40 1EZ
1340 Oldham Road, Manchester, M40 1EZ
1342 Oldham Road, Manchester, M40 1EZ
INPOST DELIVERY LOCKER OUTSIDE 1149-1167, Oldham Road, Manchester, M40 2FU
T D AUTOCARE, Workshop, Lonsdale Street, Manchester, M40 2FT
Warehouse Adjacent Unit 16, Reliance Street Trading Estate, Reliance Street, Manchester, M40 3AL
Unit 16, Reliance Street Trading Estate, Reliance Street, Manchester, M40 3AG
24 Droylsden Road, Manchester, M40 1WT
1133 - 1141 Oldham Road, Manchester, M40 2FU
3 Droylsden Road, Manchester, M40 1AA
International House, 30 Holyoak Street, Manchester, M40 1HB
1147 Oldham Road, Manchester, M40 2FU
1149 - 1167 Oldham Road, Manchester, M40 2FU
The Amber Club, 1143 Oldham Road, Manchester, M40 2FU

Appendix 2 – Planning constraints

Article 4 Direction - Removal Of PD Rights Change Of Use From Class C3 To Class C4
Coal Authority - Development Low Risk - Name: DEVELOPMENT_LOW_RISK_AREA
Manchester Cathedral Ownership - Manchester Cathedral Newton Heath Manor
Area Team Boundary - Name: NORTH AREA