MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

Planning

Growth & Development

Delegated officer report for planning application

Application no.	144631/TEL/2025
Date registered valid:	27 November 2025
Proposal:	Prior Approval for the installation of 20m telecommunications pole with 12 no. antennas and 3 no. associated cabinets.
Address:	Upper Brook North, Brunswick Street, Manchester, M13 9SR
Ward(s):	Ardwick Ward
Applicant:	CornerStone
Agent (if any):	Mr Ryan Milligan WHP Telcoms Ltd
Case officer:	Sam Elliott Tel: 0161 219 2856 Email: sam.elliott@manchester.gov.uk
Recommendation:	Refuse
Date of recommendation:	16/01/2026

Application details

Type of application: Telecommunication Application

Development type: Notifications

Date of site visit: 19 December 2025

Standard consultations:
Printed: 3 December 2025 Expired: 24 December 2025

Neighbour notifications
Printed: 3 December 2025 Expired: 24 December 2025

Site notice
Posted: 19 December 2025 Expired: 12 January 2026

Press advert
Published: 9 December 2025 Expired: 23 December 2025

Departure from Development Plan: No

Environmental Statement: Not required

Description of site/building

The application site relates to a section of grass verge adjacent to the footpath on the north side of Brunswick Street.

Listed building: Not applicable

Conservation area: Not applicable

Tree Preservation Order: Not applicable

Description of area

The site is in short proximity to the junction with Brunswick Street, a major arterial route into the City Centre, and also located in The Corridor character area within the City Centre, with the University of Manchester Campus to the west.

It is adjacent to a two-storey supermarket complex, and opposite a row of terraced houses. The site is therefore an area of mixed development, though more immediately related to the Brunswick estate, a predominantly residential area comprised of open low-density two storey housing.

Description of development

The development consists of a 20m mast, 12no. antennas, 6no. RRUs, 3no. associated cabinets and the removal of shrubs and tree stumps. The proposal would be sited within the grass verge on the northern side of Brunswick Street, following the removal of shrubbery and tree stumps.

In submitting applications for prior approval under the General Permitted Development Order, Paragraph 122 of the NPPF states that applications for electronic communications development should be supported evidence that the applicant has explored the possibility of erecting antennas on an existing building, mast or other structure.

Moreover, a statement has been submitted that self-certifies that International Commission guidelines will be met, in accordance with Paragraph 122 of the NPPF.

Relevant Planning History

137399/FO/2023|Erection of a 6 to 9 storey building for Sci-Tech use (Use Class E (g)(ii)) and 265sqm of a cafe/bar (Use Class E (b)), and a 9 to 23 storey building for Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSA) (Use Sui Generis), comprising 737 bedrooms and 293sqm of community use (Use Class F2 (b)) and 80sqm of commercial floorspace (Use Class E), alongside new public realm, access, parking, and associated works following demolition of existing buildings. Approved 29/11/2024

137401/FO/2023|Full planning application for the demolition of existing buildings and erection of three ground floor + 12/14/29 storey buildings to be used for Purpose Built Student Accommodation (Use Sui Generis), comprising 983 bedrooms in total and 506sqm of ground floor ancillary uses (café/commercial and convenience store - Use Classes E (a)/(b)/(c)), three buildings comprising ground floor + 5/7/9 storeys for Science and Innovation uses (Use Class E (g)(i) & (ii)) and 834sqm ground floor community uses (retail/ cafés and medical facility (Use Classes E (a)/(b) and (e)), and the provision of new public realm, two new public squares, new access and parking, and associated works. Approved 29/11/2024.

144255/FO/2025| Creation of temporary construction compound with associated boundary treatment until August 2028. Approved 15/12/2025.

Consultations & Notification Responses

Publicity and Advertisement:
Neighbour notification letters were sent to surrounding properties and advertised via site notice as being of public interest. At the time of writing this report, no representations have been received because of this publicity.

Local Highways Authority
No objection:

- Final positioning of apparatus should maintain the minimum desirable clearance of 2m to any adjacent street furniture.
- Operatives undertaking installation / servicing / maintenance will be expected to comply fully with the relevant traffic laws, including any local parking and movement restrictions.
- Proposed Plans demonstrates that doors to the equipment are outward opening. Therefore, appropriate management should be in place to protect and maintain pedestrian movement along Brunswick Street.
- Applicant required to discuss licensing, traffic and pedestrian management.

Environmental Health
No objection, subject to condition:

- Condition requested to control noise, with verification report.

Grounds Technical (Trees)
No objection:

- trees proposed for removal are of low amenity value, and a few would require removal in <5 years due to defects in their growth habit (poor specimens from nursery.)
- no objection to works subject to their being carried out in accordance with BS3998, BS5837.

Local Ward Councillors
No response.

Policy

The principle of development is established by the GPDO and the provisions of Schedule 2, Part 16, Class A of the GPDO do not require regard be had to the development plan. Notwithstanding this, the following policies are considered in so far as they are a material consideration relevant to matters of siting and appearance:

Places for Everyone
- JP-Strat2 – City Centre
- JP-Strat13 – Strategic Green Infrastructure
- JP-C5 – Streets for All
- JP-G6 – Urban Green Space
- JP-G7 – Trees and Woodland
- JP-P1 – Sustainable Places

The Adopted Core Strategy for the City of Manchester

- SP1 – Spatial Principles
- CC5 – Transport
- T1 – Sustainable Transport
- EN1 – Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas
- EN9 – Green Infrastructure
- DM1 – Development Management

The Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester (Saved Policies)
- DC17 – Telecommunications
- DC22 – Footpath Protection
- DC26 – Development and Noise

NPPF
- Section 9 (Promoting Sustainable Transport)
- Section 10 (Promoting High Quality Communications)
- Section 12 (Achieving Well Designed Places)
- Section 15 (Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment)

Draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2025)

- The government has published a consultation National Planning Policy Framework which is intended to improve housebuilding rates through a clearer, more predictable and faster policy basis for decision and plan making.

  Whilst this is a draft NPPF for consultation it is considered that the development proposals are in accordance with the general thrust of policy contained within it. As set out in the printed report no adverse impacts have been identified through consideration of the application proposals that would outweigh a positive decision in this instance.

Oxford Road Corridor Strategic Regeneration Framework Guidance (SRFG) (2019).

- Upper Brook Street (UBS)

GDPO

The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, Schedule 2, Part 16 confers 'permitted development rights' for certain types of telecommunications development. These permitted development rights remove the need to submit a full planning application but may rather require a 'prior approval' application to be made.

This includes:

> *(a) the installation, alteration or replacement of any electronic communications apparatus, and*

The proposed mast and associated cabinets constitute Class A(a) development.

A.1 Development not permitted

Section A.1 (*ground-based apparatus*), does not permit the erection of ground-based telecommunications mast apparatuses which exceed a height of 30m above ground level on unprotected land.

The proposed mast is 20m in height and therefore compliant with Section A.1, subject to the conditions outlined in Section A.2. The associated cabinets are also compliant under Section A.1, subject to the conditions in Section A.2.

A.2 Conditions

The conditions outlined in Section A.2 for Class A(a) development specify that development of this type is permitted subject to:

(c) the siting and appearance of the development which is visible from a site which is

> (ii) a listed building

are such that the visual impact of the development on the site *is minimised so far as practicable*, taking into account the nature and purposes of the site.

From some vantages, the proposed mast would be seen together with the Grade II listed Mawson Hotel. However, given the separation distance it is not considered to have a strong visual relationship with its setting. The mast is therefore compliant with A.2, (c), (iii).

The conditions outlined in Section A.2 for Class A(a) development specify that development of this type is permitted subject to

(b) the siting and appearance of any

> (iv) radio equipment housing

are such that the visual impact of the development on the surrounding area *is minimised, so far as practicable.*

It is considered that the cabinets would result in an over dominant structure and visual clutter in a residential area, with direct views from within a residential area. While outside of the scope of this prior approval application (outlined below), the Council does not view that the visual impact of the cabinets on the surrounding area would be minimised so far as practicable.

A.3 Prior Approval

Schedule 2, Part 16, A.2(3) sets out where permitted development may require prior approval. Class A development on unprotected land where that development consists of the installation of a mast, or the construction of radio equipment housing where the volume exceeds 2.5 cubic metres, is permitted subject to the conditions set out in Section A.3 (prior approval).

The proposal consists of a mast on unprotected land, and therefore prior approval is required for this element. However, the proposed cabinets would not exceed 2.5 cubic metres, and prior approval is not required for this aspect of the scheme.

The following prior approval assessment therefore solely relates to the proposed mast.

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.

Principle of Development

Given background Government planning guidance, a principal theme running the 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 118 at Section 10 of the NPPF states that “Advanced, high-quality communications infrastructure is essential for sustainable economic growth and social well-being”.

As per the provisions of Section A.3, (4) of the GPDO, the Local Planning Authority must assess the proposed development solely on the basis of its siting and appearance, as the acceptability of the principle of the development is already established. Saved policy DC17.1 of the UDP similarly looks to support telecommunication development, subject to minimising any impact upon siting and appearance.

In consideration of the siting and appearance of the proposed mast, it is viewed that the mast would constitute a large vertical structure in a relatively low-rise open residential setting, constituting the most dominant feature within the street scene. By virtue of its siting and appearance, the proposed mast would result in visual harm to the street scene and the outlook of residential properties opposite the site.

When this visual harm is weighed against the public benefits of an enhanced communications network for users in this location, it is considered on balance that these benefits would not outweigh the visual harm of the proposed mast resulting from its siting and appearance. In addition, it is considered that the benefits proposed could be achieved in a less harmful way. The Council has offered to continue exploring alternative sites with the applicant.

These matters are discussed further below.

Issues

Siting and Appearance – Visual Impact

The application site relates to a grass verge adjacent to the footpath along the northern side of Brunswick Street. The site is in short proximity to the junction with Brunswick Street, with the University of Manchester Campus to the west. It is adjacent to a two-storey supermarket complex, and opposite a row of terraced houses. The site is therefore an area of mixed development, though more immediately related to the Brunswick estate, a predominantly residential area comprised of open low-rise two storey housing.

It should also be noted that Brunswick Street is a wide street and combined with the low rise nature of the area, any change in scale in the area is noticeable.



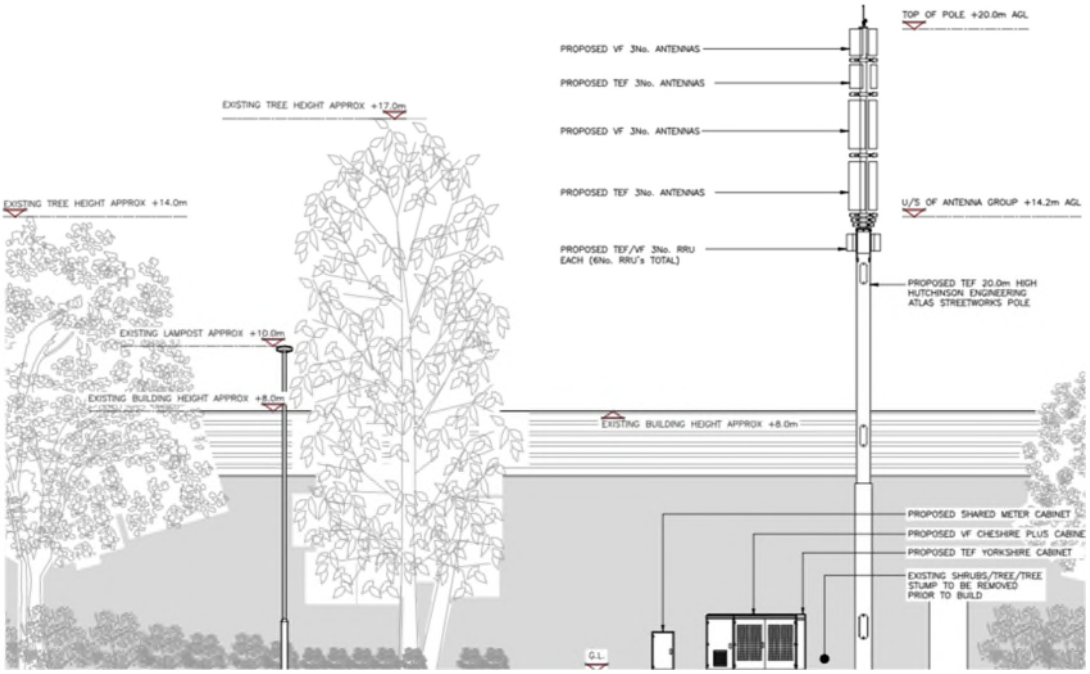






(Figures 1-4: Site context in low-density open residential setting)

At 20 metres high, the proposed mast would dwarf the adjacent supermarket and be more than double its approximate 8m height. By virtue of its scale, it would appear as a dominant, intrusive, and conspicuous feature in the street scene.



(Figure 5: Proposed Elevations)

The proposed mast would also be substantially taller than the terraced properties opposite and would moreover be taller than the lampposts along Brunswick Street and the trees within the verge to be retained. It is noted that there is no other street furniture of significant height in this location.

The upper antenna section of the mast is also particularly bulky with 15 antennas proposed at the upper level contributing to its overall obtrusiveness.

Given the scale of the proposed mast, it would be readily seen in the setting, clearly visible above surrounding buildings and appear as the most prominent feature within the street scene with an inappropriate vertical emphasis in a predominantly low-rise setting. With the 12no. antenna concentrated at its apex, it would have a busy functional appearance seen in the skyline, in contrast to the domestic scale and appearance of residential development in the area. It is therefore considered that the mast would be harmful to the visual amenity of the area, detracting from the residential and open character of this section of Brunswick Street.

While not requiring prior approval, the associated cabinet equipment housing would add additional clutter to the street scene and impact the visual amenity of surrounding neighbours and area.

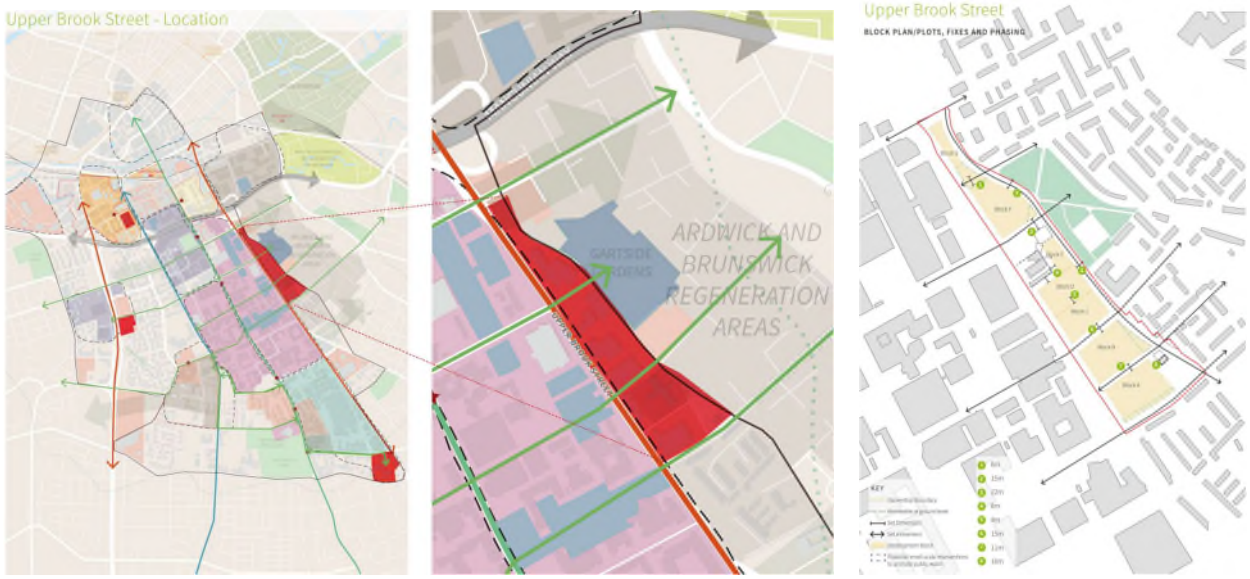
There are also several residential properties opposite the proposed site that would have a direct outlook towards the mast, where other properties would have a more oblique view of the mast. While some properties feature lampposts immediately sited to their front windows on the southside footpath, the proposed mast would be double the height of these 10m lampposts. It is noted that these terraced properties have limited views to Brunswick Street, and the harm to their outlook would be more acute.



(Figure 6: Two-storied terraced properties along Brunswick Street opposite proposed mast)

It is therefore considered that the mast would adversely impact the outlook of the residential properties opposite, harming their views of the street setting.

The site is also within the Block A plot of the Upper Brook Street (UBS) development site, identified in the Oxford Road Corridor Strategic Regeneration Framework Guidance (SRFG) (2019).



(Figures 7-9: Upper Brook Street Site, with development plots)

Planning permission has been approved for Blocks B-G in applications 137399/FO/2023 and 137401/FO/2023. Following the approval of 144255/FO/2025 for a temporary construction compound, work has begun in relation to application 137399/FO/2023. The proposed development site for the mast would be within the last remaining development site within the

UBS masterplan, impacting upon the delivery of high-quality development with animated ground floors fronting Brunswick Street earmarked for the plot. The mast would similarly impact any tree-planting and landscaping works along the southern Brunswick Street boundary, which would effectively extend the newly created Brunswick Park.

Whilst the public benefits of an enhanced communications network for businesses, residents and visitors in this location would qualify as a considerable positive, the impact upon visual amenity as a consequence of the proposed siting and appearance of the installation is considered to outweigh these factors. On balance, it is considered that the proposed telecommunication installation would be out of context in the street scene and detrimental to the character and appearance of the open nature of the street environment, the surrounding area and the visual amenity of neighbouring residential occupiers.

The Council is of the opinion that the benefits proposed here can be achieved in a less harmful way and have offered to continue to discuss the matter with the applicant to explore alternative sites.

For these reasons, the proposed installation would be contrary to Places for Everyone policies JP-Strat2, JP-C5 and JP-P1; Core Strategy policies SP1, EN1 and DM1; Saved UDP Policy DC17; and Sections 10 and 12 of the NPPF, as they relate to the siting and appearance of telecommunications infrastructure.

Siting – Highways

The proposed mast would be sited within a grass verge and leave the footway clear, as well as leave a 2m distance to any existing street furniture on the footway.

The Local Highways Authority has reviewed the application and commented that the proposed plans demonstrate that doors to the equipment would be outward opening. While the cabinets do not require prior approval, had the application been considered acceptable The Council would have requested details on management to protect and maintain pedestrian movement along Brunswick Street.

As such, the proposed siting is considered acceptable with respect to PfE Policies JP-C5 and JP-P1, Core Strategy Policies SP1, CC5, T1 and DM1 and saved UDP Policy DC22; as well as Section 9 of the NPPF, as they relate to the impact on public footways.

Siting – Trees

A tree officer has reviewed the application and does not object to the proposal, noting that the trees proposed for removal are of low amenity value, and a few would require removal in under 5 years due to defects in their growth habit. No root protection plan was requested.

It is therefore not considered that the proposal would impact upon adjacent trees by virtue of its siting, nor would the removal of trees and shrubbery as a result of its siting be unacceptable.

The proposal is considered acceptable with respect to PfE Policies JP-Strat13, JP-G6, JP-G7 and JP-C5; Core Strategy Policies EN9; and Sections 12 and 15 of the NPPF, as they relate to trees.

Siting – Noise

Due to the siting of the proposal in a residential area, Environmental Health were consulted on the application. Subject to a condition controlling noise, the consultee would have no objection

to the scheme. Had the scheme been considered acceptable, a condition to control noise to background levels would have been recommended. This would have been considered sufficient to comply with saved UDP policy DC26.

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 polices 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:

Refuse

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

1. By virtue of its siting and appearance, it is considered that the proposed mast would form a dominant, bulky and obtrusive vertical structure with an overly functional appearance in an open , low rise residential setting. It would be out of context in the street scene and detrimental to the character and appearance of the street environment, the surrounding residential area and the visual amenity of neighbouring residential occupiers. The proposed mast is contrary to Places for Everyone policies JP-Strat2, JP-C5 and JP-P1; Core Strategy policies SP1, EN1 and DM1; Saved UDP Policy DC17; and Sections 10 and 12 of the NPPF.

Appendix 1 – List of consultees & neighbours notified

Highway Services
Environmental Health
Neighbourhood Team Leader (Arboriculture)

2 Glenbarry Close, Manchester, M13 9RQ
103 Upper Brook Street, Manchester, M13 9JS
101 Upper Brook Street, Manchester, M13 9JS
99 Upper Brook Street, Manchester, M13 9JS
79 Brunswick Street, Manchester, M13 9SR
83 Brunswick Street, Manchester, M13 9SR
85 Brunswick Street, Manchester, M13 9SR
89 Brunswick Street, Manchester, M13 9SR
87 Brunswick Street, Manchester, M13 9SR
81 Brunswick Street, Manchester, M13 9SR
83 - 97 Upper Brook Street, Manchester, M13 9TX
99 Brunswick Street, Manchester, M13 9SR
93 Brunswick Street, Manchester, M13 9SR
103 Brunswick Street, Manchester, M13 9SR
91 Brunswick Street, Manchester, M13 9SR
95 Brunswick Street, Manchester, M13 9SR
97 Brunswick Street, Manchester, M13 9SR

Appendix 2 – Planning constraints

Article 4 Direction - City Centre PD Restriction - Class B1(a) To C3
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
Flood Zones Type 2 (low to medium risk) -
Flood Zone Plus Climate Change -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -
Susceptible to Surf Water Flood (Less) -
Area Team Boundary - Name: CENTRAL