Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 November 2025

by N Duff BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29th January 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/J4423/W/25/3371401
Hollinsend Road, Hollinsend, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S12 2EG

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant approval required under Article 3(1) and Schedule 2, Part 16, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).
- The appeal is made by Cornerstone against the decision of Sheffield City Council.
- The application Ref is 25/00792/TEL.
- The development proposed is 17.5m monopole, c/w 6no antennas, 1no. GPS Module, 3no. RRUs, 1no. 0.3m dish, 2no cabinets and ancillary development thereto.

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and approval is granted under the provisions of Article 3(1) and Schedule 2, Part 16, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) for the siting and appearance of 17.5m monopole, c/w 6no antennas, 1no. GPS Module, 3no. RRUs, 1no. 0.3m dish, 2no cabinets and ancillary development thereto at land opposite Alnwick Road, Hollinsend Road, Hollinsend, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S12 2EB in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 25/00792/TEL, dated 17 March 2025 and the plans submitted with it including – Site location maps drawing no. 100 Rev A; proposed site plan drawing no. 201 Rev B; proposed site elevation drawing no. 301 Rev B.

Preliminary Matters

2. For the decision above I have taken the address from the Council's decision notice as this more accurately describes the position of the proposal on Hollinsend Road.

3. The proposal seeks prior approval for the installation of telecommunications equipment under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, under Article 3(1) and Schedule 2, Part 16, Class A, Paragraph A.3(4) (GPDO) which requires the local planning authority to assess the proposed development solely on the basis of siting and appearance, taking into account any representations received. My determination of this appeal has been made on the same basis.

4. The above provisions do not require regard to be had to the development plan, however, the decision notice refers to Policies BE14 and H14 of the Sheffield Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and Policy CS74 of the Sheffield Development Framework Core Strategy (CS). I have taken these policies into account only insofar as they are a material consideration relating to matters of siting and

appearance of the proposed development. Similarly, the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) is also a material consideration, and this includes a section on supporting high quality communications.

Main Issue

5. The main issues of the appeal are the effect of the siting and appearance of the proposal on:

- the character and appearance of the area;
- pedestrian movement; and
- if any harm would occur, whether this is outweighed by the need for the installation to be sited as proposed, taking account of any suitable alternatives.

Reasons

Character and appearance

6. The appeal site is at the back of the pavement on Hollinsend Road and is adjacent to a large area of open space which slopes down from the road, in a break between areas of urban development. The pavement links the areas of urban development comprising of mainly residential uses along the side of Hollinsend Road where the appeal site is located. Hollinsend Road is a reasonably busy road, and the pavement provides direct access to the area of open space behind the appeal site. Businesses are located opposite the site.

7. The site is very open in character in an exposed elevated location on Hollinsend Road. Other street furniture and items are within close proximity of the appeal site including a grit/salt container, road sign, street bin, and bench which faces onto the green open space, and telegraph poles.

8. The proposed development comprises a 17.5m monopole with 6 antennas and other ancillary telecommunications equipment. The proposal includes 2 cabinets. These items would be aligned along the back of the pavement. The proposal would be required to improve mobile telecommunication services to provide 4G and 5G coverage in the local area.

9. The proposed monopole would be slimline and of a significant height, and due to the exposed and open nature of the location, would be a prominent feature along the stretch of road where it would be positioned.

10. Due to the absence of substantial development in this location, the monopole would be higher than other features in the vicinity at 17.5m high. The monopole along with the proposed cabinets would create a line of development along the back of the pavement. I consider that due to the prominence of the proposals, being adjacent to the highway, together with the barrier they would create along the back of pavement, the proposal would be incongruous and have a very utilitarian appearance. This would be incongruous with the surrounding character, particularly against the green backdrop of the open space behind the proposal.

11. The appellant's evidence demonstrates that the proposal may not be directly visible from some residential properties. Nevertheless, the proposal would be prominent from public vantage points, notwithstanding other street furniture within

proximity. Due to the size of the proposals, I do not consider that they would assimilate into the streetscape. However, I did observe many telecommunications poles in the area and some near to the appeal site. Therefore, a feature such as this would not be unusual in this location.

12. Nevertheless, for the above reasons the siting and appearance of the proposal would cause moderate harm to the character and appearance of the area. Therefore, insofar as they are material considerations, the proposal would conflict with Policies BE14 and H14 of the UDP and CS74 of the CS which between them seek to ensure that telecommunications development is sited and designed as to minimise its visual impact, be on a scale consistent with the residential area, and to enhance the townscape and landscape character of the city's districts, neighbourhoods and quarters.

13. Furthermore, for the above reasons, the proposal would fail to accord with paragraph 120 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which states that 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.

Pedestrian movement

14. The proposed development would be located at the back of the pavement, and based on the plans before me would take up part of the width of the existing pavement. The road is busy, therefore, for pedestrians or other users of the pavement to leave it and use the road would be unsafe.

15. The pavement connects areas of housing with the green space adjacent to it and two bus stops are located close to the site. In addition, a primary school is located nearby to the southwest and some amenities are located to the northeast.

16. The proposed reduction in width of the pavement would create a pinch point, which could force pedestrians and other users of the footpath such as wheelchair users or those with prams onto the road.

17. The Council's officer report states that a minimum width of 2m should be retained in order for the proposal to comply with the Manual for Streets requirements and those within the South Yorkshire Residential Design Guide (2011). Both documents refer to Inclusive Mobility[1] specifically when discussing pavement widths. This states that footways and footpaths should be made as wide as is practicable, but under normal circumstances a width of 2000mm is the minimum that should be provided. However, it then goes on to say, that where there is an obstacle, such as lamp columns, sign posts or electric vehicle charging points, the absolute minimum width should be 1000mm, but the maximum length of such restricted space should be 6m.

18. The appellant argues that it would not be possible to retain a pavement width of 2m because the existing footpath is narrower than this. Whilst this may be the case, the proposal would nonetheless reduce the width below what is ordinarily expected in an area such as this. However, the remaining footpath width would measure approximately 1.25m, I consider that it would be possible for use,

[1] Inclusive Mobility: A Guide to Best Practice on Access to Pedestrian and Transport Infrastructure Department for Transport December 2021 paragraph 4.2.

although users would not be able to pass one another easily. However, the length of the restricted space would be relatively short and it would not be unusual for one person to give way to another.

19. For the above reasons, the proposal would have the potential to cause a small degree of inconvenience for users of the footway. This is not the same as endangering pedestrians. Therefore, insofar as they are material considerations the proposal would not be in conflict with Paragraph 116 of the Framework which says that development should only be refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, and would not be in conflict with Policy H14 of the UDP which seeks to ensure that new development would not endanger pedestrians.

Alternative sites

20. Paragraph 122 c) of the Framework requires that 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. The appellant has provided evidence demonstrating that the proposal conforms to current government planning guidelines regarding potential health effects arising from telecommunications development in the form of an International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) declaration of compliance.

21. Based on the information provided, it is not disputed between the parties that the proposed telecommunications equipment is required to improve network coverage and capacity.

22. The appellant has provided a comprehensive list of alternative sites, this provides adequate detail as to why all of the alternative sites were disregarded which includes reasons such as; site sharing, weight of the equipment, being outside of the search area, landowner issues, elevation/topography, physical obstructions, access for engineers, views from residential properties, proximity to heritage assets, presence of overhead lines, presence of underground services, affecting the character of the area. The Council does not disagree with the methodology and evidence for discounting the sites. I agree that the sites explored, including being mounted on existing buildings, and existing masts are unable to meet the requirements of the appellant.

23. Based on the information before me, I am satisfied that suitable alternatives have been adequately explored.

Conclusion

24. The Framework indicates that advanced, high quality and reliable communications infrastructure is essential for economic growth and social well-being. I am satisfied that in this case, given the lack of suitable alternative sites, the benefits of the proposal outweigh the moderate harm identified to the character and appearance of the area and the small degree of harm to the movement of pedestrians as a result of the siting of the proposal.

25. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed and prior approval is granted.

Conditions

26. The Order does not provide any specific authority for imposing additional conditions beyond the deemed conditions for development by electronic communications code operators contained within it. These specify that the development must be carried out in accordance with the details submitted with the application, begin within 5 years of the date of the approval and be removed as soon as reasonably practicable after it is no longer required for electronic communications purposes and the land restored to its condition before the development took place.

N Duff

INSPECTOR