



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 May 2022

by S Edwards BA MA TCP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29th July 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/L3815/W/21/3282914

Northern Crescent, East Wittering, Chichester PO20 8BD

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 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 Hutchison UK Ltd against the decision of Chichester District Council.
 - The application Ref EWB/21/01920/PA16A, dated 3 April 2021, was refused by notice dated 11 August 2021.
 - The development proposed is "proposed 15m Phase 8 Monopole C/W wraparound Cabinet at base and associated ancillary works".
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) (the GPDO), under Article 3(1) and Schedule 2, Part 16, Class A, Paragraph A.3(4) require the Local Planning Authority to assess the proposed development solely on the basis of its siting and appearance, taking into account any representations received. Policies of the development plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) may be considered relevant, but only in so far as they relate to these matters. My determination of the appeal shall proceed on the same basis.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on the surrounding area in respect of its siting and appearance and, if any harm would occur, whether this would be outweighed by other considerations, including the need for the installation to be sited as proposed, having regard to the potential availability of alternative sites.

Reasons

4. The appeal site lies within an area of mixed character, and is immediately adjacent to a car park, located to the rear of a shopping parade. This arrangement provides an open setting around the appeal site. Whilst there are examples of three-storey buildings in proximity to the site, the surrounding area is predominantly characterised by single- and two-storey properties, which give the locality a domestic scale. Street furniture along Northern

Crescent is generally slim and modest in height, being to a large extent limited to road signs.

5. Whilst it would be perceived against the backdrop of the properties adjacent to the car park, the proposed mast would be sited at considerable distance away from the rear elevation of these buildings. The development would appear bulkier and significantly taller than any other built forms and features in the area, including the nearest street lamps. The monopole would be sited within proximity to trees, but these would offer little screening. Consequently, the proposal would unduly stand out as a prominent addition highly visible above nearby dwellings, built development and trees, which would add clutter to the street scene, and detract from the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
6. The appeal is supported by a sequential approach to site identification, which includes a number of discounted options within the search area. That said, the evidence before me in that respect is very limited. Having regard to the available information, it is for example unclear whether the appellant has explored the possibility of erecting equipment on an existing building. Limited evidence has also presented to explain how the search for sites was carried out or how sites were selected for further consideration. Furthermore, the reasons provided to discount some of the sites are very brief, with limited supporting information.
7. Whilst the colour of the equipment could be addressed by a suitably worded condition, this would not address the unacceptable harm which the development would cause to the surrounding area, by virtue of its siting and appearance. Furthermore, and although it is accepted that the largely residential nature of the locality may represent a constraint, there is insufficient information before me to demonstrate that there are no suitable alternatives to the appeal site. The proposal would therefore be in conflict with Sections 10 and 12 of the Framework, in so far as they are a material consideration to this appeal.

Other Matters

8. Reference has been made to various social and economic benefits but these have not been taken into account in considering the matters of siting and appearance.

Conclusion

9. The Framework supports advanced, high quality and reliable communications infrastructure, which are considered essential for economic growth and social well-being. However, the siting and appearance of the development would cause unacceptable harm to the surrounding area, and I am not satisfied that the evidence before me demonstrates that there are no less harmful suitable alternatives to the appeal site. For the reasons detailed above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

S Edwards

INSPECTOR