



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 April 2025

by **C Skelly BA (Hons) MSc MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21 May 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/J4423/W/25/3359947

Boundary Club RFC, Jordanthorpe Parkway, Sheffield, S8 8BU

- 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 Conerstone against the decision of Sheffield City Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/01758/TEL.
 - The development proposed is removal and replacement of mast, antennas and ancillary development. Removal and replacement of: 14.5m mast incorporating 12.5m monopole, headframe, 3No. antennas, 1No. 300mm dish, 3No. cabinets (2No. 1300x700x1450mm; 1No. 600x600x1415mm) and all ancillary development with: 17.5m high mast and headframe (galvanised steel, Grey), 12No. antennas (RAL7035 Grey), 2No. 300mm dishes (RAL7035 Grey), 2No. cabinets (1No. 800x660x1770mm; 1No. 705x931x2068mm), (RAL7035 Grey) and all ancillary development.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 as amended (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 representation received. My determination of this appeal has been made on the same basis.
3. 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 to be had to the development plan. I have therefore had regard to the policies of the development plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) (the Framework) only insofar as they are a material consideration relevant to matters of siting and appearance.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are:
 - the effect of the siting and appearance of the proposed installation on the character and appearance of the surrounding area; and
 - If any harm would occur, whether this is outweighed by the need for the installation to be sited as proposed, taking into account any suitable alternatives.

Reasons

5. The appeal site is an area of land located in the corner of a field to the south of the Jordanthorpe Parkway road. The site is an existing telecommunications compound which was located next to the former Boundary Social Club, which has been demolished and its associated playing fields. There is another mast and associated structures located to the north of the appeal site next to the highway and streetlights along both sides of Jordanthorpe Parkway. There are residential properties on the opposite side of Jordanthorpe Parkway, however this road provides a strong boundary between the built form and wider countryside beyond.
6. The appeal site comprises an existing 14.5m monopole which has some visual containment from the west through the presence of trees, although the top extends beyond the tree canopy. The area to the east has a largely open appearance and therefore the existing mast is visually prominent against the back-drop of the wider countryside.
7. The proposed mast would remove and replace the existing mast with a 17.5m mast and headframe constructed from galvanised steel with apparatus coloured grey. This mast would comprise 12 no antenna with 2 dishes below, there would also be two cabinets at ground floor level. Because the existing trees are approximately 10m in height, the mast would extend significantly above the tree canopy.
8. In contrast with the existing mast the proposal would have a much thicker profile and more cluttered, bulkier appearance due to the components which would be accommodated. From public views it would appear as an urban structure against the backdrop of the countryside. Although the lower parts of the mast would be screened by trees from some views particularly in the summer months, its height and bulk would be visually prominent. Whilst there are streetlights and another mast along Jordanthorpe Parkway the proposed mast would be appreciably thicker and taller than these structures. It would therefore appear as an intrusive feature within the countryside.
9. The appellant puts forward that the operator is committed to limiting the size and amount of apparatus to an operational minimum. I also note that this proposal is significantly reduced in height from a similar proposal submitted to the Council in 2023, which the appellant contends has reduced coverage. Nevertheless, as a result of its height and bulk it would appear as an intrusive feature, which would harm the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Alternative sites

10. The Framework places importance on decisions that support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next generation mobile technology (such as 5G). Where new sites are required, equipment should be sympathetically designed and camouflaged where appropriate. The proposal is required to provide maintained and improved 2G, 3G and 4G and establish new 5G coverage for the Vodafone and Virgin networks. It has been demonstrated that the site is within an area with demonstrable need for a new installation in the vicinity to achieve a full and appropriate level of coverage.
11. The Framework encourages the use of existing masts, buildings and structures for new electronic communications capability. Paragraph 122 of the Framework

requires evidence to be submitted to demonstrate that applicants have explored the possibility of erecting antennas on an existing building, mast or other structure.

12. The appellant contends that there are no more obvious development options present in the local area and that planning policy advocates the use of established sites. However, the appellant has not submitted evidence with regards to the consideration of alternative sites, which may cause less harm. Therefore, based on the submitted evidence I am not satisfied that there would not be more suitable alternative sites which would achieve the same level of coverage as the appeal site.
13. I conclude that the siting and appearance of the proposed installation would cause harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. No alternative sites have been put forward, therefore the identified harm is not outweighed by the need for the installation to be sited as proposed.

Other Matters

14. Whilst I recognise that there are wider social and economic benefits arising from the proposal, the GPDO is clear, that the only considerations should be the siting and appearance of the proposal. The public benefits of such a development are recognised in the in-principle permission granted in the Order. Therefore, these considerations neither weigh in favour of nor against the proposal.
15. The parties refer to policies within the Development Plan. However, the only issues which can be considered in respect of a prior approval application for telecommunications equipment are its siting and appearance. Therefore, these policies are not relevant to my determination of this appeal.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

C Skelly

INSPECTOR