



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 August 2025

by **L Fern BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 5 September 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/J4423/W/25/3365716

To front of 408 Pitsmoor Road, Sheffield S3 9AY

- 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 EE (UK) Limited and Hutchison 3G UK Limited against the decision of Sheffield City Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/00688/TEL.
 - The development proposed is described as “NTQ Proposed telecommunications installation. Proposed telecommunications installation. Proposed Valmont 20m High Phase 7 MK2 Streetworks Pole, 2No. GPS Nodes, 9No. Apertures, 6No. Cabinets and associated ancillary works”.
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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) (GPDO) for the development described as “NTQ Proposed telecommunications installation. Proposed telecommunications installation. Proposed Valmont 20m High Phase 7 MK2 Streetworks Pole, 2No. GPS Nodes, 9No. Apertures, 6No. Cabinets and associated ancillary works” to front of 408 Pitsmoor Road, Sheffield S3 9AY, in accordance with the application Ref 25/00688/TEL and the plans submitted with it, including Drawing Nos: 1739023/002 – Site Location Plan; 1739023/150 – Proposed Site Plan; 1739023/250 – Proposed Site Elevation; 1739023/003 – Access Plan.

Preliminary Matters

2. The address and description of development in the banner heading above have been taken from the appeal form. The address differs slightly from that on the application form, and both differ marginally from those on the Council’s decision notice. However, both are more accurate than the alternative versions before me and I am content that both have been accepted by the appellant.
3. Article 3(1) and Schedule 2, Part 16, Class A, Paragraph A.3(4) of the GPDO require the local planning authority, and therefore the Secretary of State, to assess the proposed development solely based on its siting and appearance.
4. The relevant provisions of the GPDO also do not require regard to be had to the development plan. Accordingly, I have had regard to the development plan policies only insofar as they are a material consideration relevant to the matters of siting and appearance. They are not, in themselves, determinative.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is the effect of the proposed installation on the character and appearance of the area, and if any harm would occur, whether that harm would be outweighed by the need to site the installation in the location proposed.

Reasons

6. The appeal site sits within a predominantly commercial section of Pitsmoor Road, with residential properties beyond. The site comprises a grass verge that is largely devoid of urban paraphernalia and is set adjacent to the footpath running alongside the highway. It is particularly visible from both directions along Pitsmoor Road and creates a visual break in the built form. It therefore contributes positively to the character and appearance of the area.
7. Properties along this side of Pitsmoor Road, including the commercial property behind the site, are mainly two-storey in height. A limited amount of street furniture exists within the immediate vicinity, which includes a lamppost, telephone pole, a litter bin and a bus shelter. The appellant claims the proposal is for a replacement pole, but I saw no existing pole during my visit, and the evidence does not appear to clarify its location nor how it compares to the proposed one.
8. Whilst there are tall vertical elements in the vicinity, such as the lamppost and telephone pole, these are broadly consistent in height with adjacent buildings and therefore assimilate themselves with their surroundings. In stark comparison, the proposed pole would be considerably taller at approximately double the height of the existing tallest element in the immediate street scene. Furthermore, despite the proposal being of monopole design, its width is greater than other vertical elements nearby, the effect of which is exacerbated by the bulky equipment at its highest point.
9. The combined effects of its height and bulk, together with the comparable limited height of surrounding development, would result in an installation that dominates the skyline. The proposal would be a visually intrusive and dominant feature when viewed both in its vicinity and from medium range views when travelling along Pitsmoor Road in both directions.
10. The associated cabinets, whilst partially obscured by the bus shelter and limited in height, would cover a large proportion of the verge, significantly reducing its effectiveness as an undeveloped visual break within an otherwise commercial and urban setting.
11. For the above reasons, I find harm to the character and appearance of the area.
12. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) is clear in its support for the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next generation mobile technology such as 5G, which is proposed in this instance. Furthermore, there is no dispute between the parties that there is an operational need for the proposed development in this general location to address the increasing demand for mobile connectivity, relating to both coverage and data capacity.
13. The proposed installation would assist in bringing about wider social, economic and public benefits, by contributing to a healthy and successful economy, improving digital inclusion across communities and helping to realise the potential of new technologies.

14. The Council contends that the appellant has not satisfactorily considered all other potentially less harmful options for the location of the equipment within their sequential assessment. However, the appellant has undertaken an assessment of a range of nearby sites and has dismissed them for various reasons. Having visited the sites, I see no reason to disagree with their conclusions. Furthermore, the Council has not provided commentary on the merits or otherwise of any of the alternative sites put forward or provided details of any other sites they consider could be preferential to the appeal site.
15. I am therefore content that, based on the information before me, the appeal site represents the most appropriate location for the proposed development. The need for the equipment to be sited on the appeal site, together with the associated social, economic and public benefits of the proposed installation, outweigh the harm found to the character and appearance of the area.
16. I have taken account of the provisions of Policies BE14, S10 and BE18 of the Sheffield Unitary Development Plan (1998), which, amongst other things, seeks to ensure that development respects the character and appearance of the area, and specifically requires telecommunications equipment to be sited and designed to minimise its visual impact, subject to technical and operational considerations. I have found that the appeal site is the most appropriate location for the required equipment, despite the harm to the character and appearance of the area, and I therefore find that it complies with the above policies taken as a whole.

Conditions

17. Any planning permission granted for development under Article 3(1) and Schedule 2, Part 16, Class A is subject to conditions set out in Paragraphs A.3(9), A.3(11) and A.2(2). These specify that the development must, except to the extent that the local planning authority otherwise agree in writing, be carried out in accordance with the details submitted with the application, begin not later than the expiration of 5 years beginning with the date on which the local planning authority received the application, 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.

Conclusion

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

L Fern

INSPECTOR