



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 October 2025

by **A Hickey MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21 October 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/J4423/W/25/3368174

Land at junction with Nether Shire Lane and Sicey Avenue, Sheffield S5 0QA

- 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) (GPDO).
 - The appeal is made by Cornerstone Telecommunications, Infrastructure Limited against the decision of Sheffield City Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/03386/TEL.
 - The development proposed is erection of 15.0m 5G pole with associated equipment cabinets and ancillary development.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and prior 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 erection of 15.0m 5G pole with associated equipment cabinets and ancillary development at Land at junction with Nether Shire Lane and Sicey Avenue, Sheffield S5 0QA in accordance with application Ref 24/03386/TEL and the details submitted with it including plan nos: 100 Dwg Rev A Pack Issue C, 201 Dwg Rev B Pack Issue C and 301 Dwg Rev C Pack Issue C.

Preliminary Matters

2. The site address has been described in different terms on the application form, appeal form and decision notice. For clarity, I have used the address provided by the Council on its decision notice, as this appears to be a more precise description of the site's location. I have also taken the description of development from the decision notice, as this is more concise, albeit I have removed the superfluous bracketed wording.
3. Article 3(1) and Schedule 2, Part 16, Class A of the GPDO establish the principle of telecommunications development and require the local planning authority to assess proposed development solely on the basis of its siting and appearance, taking into account any representations received. I have assessed the appeal on this basis, having regard to the development plan and National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) as material considerations so far as they are relevant.

Main Issue

4. The main issue in this case is the effect of the siting and appearance of the proposal on the character and appearance of the 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

Character and Appearance

5. The appeal site consists of a triangular parcel of land behind the footway at the junction of Nether Shire Lane and Sicey Avenue. The area is predominantly residential in character with a mix of two-storey short terraces and semi-detached dwellings. To the east, close to the junction of Nether Shire Lane and Bellhouse Road, is a small parade of commercial/retail uses. The prevalence of residential development and the presence of verdant areas created by grass verges and tree-lined streets contribute to the area's suburban character.
6. The topography of the surrounding area sees the road rise upward on Sicey Avenue, whilst Nether Shire Lane is mainly flat. The junction where these roads meet is wider than most nearby roads, as it includes footpaths, grass verges and a short section of road which provides driveway access to some nearby properties on the bend. Consequently, the proposed installation would be sited in a prominent location.
7. There are other vertical structures in the street scene, such as a feature signpost, lampposts, and road signage, along with other utility cabinets. The proposed mast would be relatively slimline in profile, along with its antennae and dishes. The mast would be partially screened from several vantage points by the trees in proximity, particularly during the spring and summer months. The trees would lessen the prominence of the monopole in longer views from surrounding streets.
8. However, it would be taller than the adjacent streetlights, and while there are nearby trees taller than those close to the site on Nether Shire Lane, they are not of the same height. Therefore, existing features would not offer significant screening from some views along this section of the road. As such, this would introduce a harmfully stark and dominant vertical feature into the local area. Moreover, the cabinets, whilst green, are of significant size and would add clutter to the grassed area, eroding this small but pleasant open and verdant part of the street scene. Taken together, the siting and appearance of the mast and associated equipment would result in moderate harm to the character and appearance of the area.
9. As far as they are material considerations, the proposal would therefore conflict with Policy CS74 of the Sheffield Development Framework Core Strategy and Policies BE5 and H14 of the Sheffield Unitary Development Plan. Together, these require high-quality development that is well-sited and designed and in scale and character with the neighbouring area. There would also be some conflict with the expectation of the Framework that new electronic communications equipment should be sympathetically designed.

Alternative Sites

10. The Framework advises that applications should be supported by the necessary evidence to justify the proposed development. For a new mast or base station, this includes evidence that the applicant has explored the possibility of erecting antennas on an existing building, mast or other structure.

11. As part of my findings, I have taken the appellant's site selection process and evidence in respect of the technical requirements for the equipment into consideration. This includes that the pole would be the smallest size possible to address the areas of poor coverage identified in the submitted evidence.
12. The Council officer report acknowledges that the appellant has sought to address the visual impact of the mast by reducing its height and siting the cabinets close together. The report also accepts that the appellant's site selection process, which did not find any viable options for site share, roof-mounted installation or alternative sites, was thoroughly considered. On the evidence before me, I am satisfied that the search area is robust, given the limited size of the search area in which the coverage is sought.
13. Consequently, a robust search and assessment of alternative sites has been undertaken, and no demonstrably more suitable site has been identified within the search area. The appellant has satisfied the Framework requirement to explore the possibility of installing the equipment on an existing building or other structure. The lack of feasible alternative locations to deliver improved mobile signal coverage and capacity within the required area is a factor which weighs in the proposal's favour in the planning balance.

Other Matters

14. The proposal would improve mobile connectivity for local residents and business users. These matters weigh significantly in favour of the proposal. In this regard, the proposal would comply with the Framework's requirements to support the expansion of electronic communications networks.
15. The proposal would generate moderate harm to the character and appearance of the area through the siting and design of the proposed equipment. Nonetheless, the proposal would have significant benefits in providing 5G coverage in the area, as supported by paragraph 119 of the Framework. Along with the lack of any suitable alternative sites, this would outweigh the harm identified.

Conditions

16. The GPDO 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.
17. Consequently, I have not imposed the additional condition suggested by the Council in respect of the colour of the installation.

Conclusion

18. For the reasons given above, the appeal is allowed and prior approval granted.

A Hickey

INSPECTOR