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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 November 2025

**by S Brook BA (Hons) MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

**Decision date: 26 November 2025**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/W4705/W/25/3371334**

**Land west of the BT Openreach Building on Reva Syke Road, Clayton, Bradford  
BD14 6QY**

- 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 City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council.
  - The application reference is 25/02041/PNT.
  - The development proposed is described as 'Proposed installation of a 22.5m high monopole with a headframe accommodating 12No antennas, 4No dishes and ancillary development. The proposal also involves the installation of 2No cabinets and 1No meter cabinet in a proposed compound surrounding by a 2.1m high fence and ancillary development thereto'.
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### 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 representations received. My determination of this appeal has been made on the same basis.
3. The provisions of Schedule 2, Part 16, Class A of the GPDO do not require regard be had to the development plan. I have had regard to the policies of the development plan<sup>1</sup> (CS) only in so far as they are a material consideration relevant to matters of siting and appearance. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) is a further material consideration.

### Main Issues

4. The main issues are the effect of the siting and appearance of the proposed installation on (a) the living conditions of occupiers of nearby residential properties, with particular regard to outlook, and (b) the character and appearance of the area.

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<sup>1</sup> Local Plan for the Bradford District, Core Strategy Development Plan Document, July 2017.

## Reasons

### *Living conditions*

5. The appeal site comprises an area of unused grassland, part of the grounds of a commercial building, which is positioned to the east. The surrounding area is predominantly residential in character, with the dwellings and gardens of Oakleigh Road located to the north and west, Oakleigh Grove to the southwest, Oakleigh Avenue to the south, and a single dwelling to the southeast. Land levels fall notably from north to south.
6. The proposed development would introduce a 22.5m high monopole to the site, with a headframe accommodating an array of 12 antennas and 4 dishes, along with ancillary development at ground floor level. The broader siting of the installation has been determined by the target area for improved coverage and capacity, over and above an existing roof mounted installation at Beck Mill on the opposite side of Reva Syke Road, which the proposal would replace. The search area is further constrained due its built-up nature, and by a number of designations, including for conservation, open space, and protected trees.
7. I am advised that the proposed installation is essential apparatus, designed to the minimum height and size necessary, to meet the technical requirements of delivering 2G, 3G, 4G and 5G coverage across the identified target area on a shared basis for two operators, while avoiding interference from surrounding buildings and trees. A shared structure would likely reduce the need for additional installations. A galvanised finish has been selected to assimilate with a more typical grey sky.
8. Nevertheless, due to its siting, the occupiers of a number of dwellings along Oakleigh Road, particularly those at No's 73 and 75, would have a direct line of sight of the proposed installation from rear habitable room windows and rear gardens. I appreciate that these dwellings are positioned at a higher ground level, and occupiers currently benefit from an expansive outlook. However, there would be no intervening trees, which could serve to filter or soften the impact of the proposal. Although trees located on neighbouring land to the south of the appeal site, would form a backdrop, the plans indicate that the bulky headframe would sit above these trees in any event. Given the scale of the proposal, the limited intervening distance, the direct position of the proposal in relationship to these dwellings on Oakleigh Road, and the lack of screening, the proposal would have an overly dominant and significantly harmful impact on the outlook of occupiers of these dwellings.
9. The principal elevations of the dwelling to the immediate southeast are orientated away from the appeal site, while an outbuilding and mature trees are positioned along the shared boundary. Taking these into account, I am satisfied that the proposal would not significantly harm the outlook of occupiers of this dwelling. The rear elevation and private rear gardens of dwellings along Oakleigh Avenue, which sit at a lower ground level, would be orientated towards the appeal scheme. However, where views of the proposed installation would be more direct, it appears that intervening trees would screen or soften the impact of the proposal to an extent.

10. However, the rear elevation and rear garden of the bungalow to the northeast of Oakleigh Grove is also orientated towards the appeal site. In views from within and around this dwelling, the proposed installation would sit at a higher ground level and while it would be positioned adjacent to some trees, it would not be screened by them. Albeit some separation would be afforded by the gardens of nearby properties, the proposal would also have a dominant impact on the outlook of occupiers of this property.
11. Consequently, the siting and appearance of the proposed installation would harm the living conditions of occupiers of nearby residential properties, in terms of outlook. CS policies SC9, DS1, and DS3 collectively, and amongst other matters, seek to ensure that development proposals contribute to cohesive settlements by being appropriate to local context, through a good understanding of the site/area and by being informed by it, including through the consideration of layout and scale. The Framework requires development to create places that provide a high standard of amenity for existing and future users, and that new telecommunication equipment is sympathetically designed. As the siting and appearance of the proposed installation would harm the living conditions of nearby residents, it would conflict with these policies.

#### *Character and appearance*

12. The appeal site is set back from public roads and vantage points, within a built-up area. It would be located near to a number of large trees and the commercial building on site, which extends to three storeys. Given the extent of surrounding built form, the proposed installation would often be screened from public view, particularly from Oakleigh Road and Reva Syke Road. Glimpsed views would be more likely between houses along Oakleigh Avenue, or potentially over them, from further away. In such views from the south, the proposal would be seen with the backdrop of terraced housing sitting at a higher ground level. As such, albeit the proposed installation would be a modern, stand-alone, tall and utilitarian feature, it would not appear overly dominant, given its set back position, nor would it be particularly out of character, given its urban context.
13. Information provided by the appellant indicates that the southern boundary of the Clayton Conservation Area (CA) extends to the corner of Oakleigh Road and Reva Syke Road. While the proposal would be within the wider setting of the CA, a number of buildings, including the commercial premises at the appeal site, would lie between the proposed installation and the southern edge of the CA. From the available evidence and my own observations, I consider that the character and appearance of the CA would be preserved.
14. My attention has also been drawn to a Grade II listed building, The Syke Farmhouse. This building lies to the southeast of the appeal site, surrounded by modern residential development. Given the separation distance and intervening modern housing, the setting of this listed building would not be harmed, and so it would be preserved.
15. For these reasons, the siting and appearance of the proposed installation would not have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area. Consequently, in this respect, the proposal would not conflict with CS policies SC9, DS1, and DS3.

## Other Matters

16. Paragraph 119 of the Framework recognises that advanced, high quality and reliable communications infrastructure is essential for economic growth and social well-being. Planning decisions should support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next generation mobile technology (such as 5G) and full fibre broadband connections.
17. As noted above, the proposed installation would provide a shared structure for two Mobile Network Operators, continuing 2G, 3G and 4G coverage, addressing capacity pressures, while delivering a more robust indoor and outdoor 5G service to the area. Improved capability and capacity would bring social and economic benefits for both residents and businesses, including for home working, or remote access to health services and learning, which in turn, would offer environmental benefits is reducing the need to travel. These improvements to the network have attracted local support. Other benefits would include improved consumer choice and market competitiveness.
18. The Council has not disputed that the upgrade is necessary and that there is a need for the siting of such an installation within this area, in order to achieve these improvements. I attach significant weight to the need to locate the proposal within this area, to facilitate this upgrade.
19. However, while there is no requirement within the Framework or GPDO for developers to select the best feasible siting, for the above reasons, I have found that the siting and appearance of the proposed installation would result in harm to the living conditions of those nearby. Therefore, it is necessary to consider whether there is a need for the installation to be sited as proposed, or whether the same benefits could be achieved by siting the proposal elsewhere within the search area, considering any suitable alternatives.
20. The appellant has considered a number of alternative sites. No existing masts or structures that could provide opportunities for sharing have been brought to my attention. The supporting information indicates that the applicant has explored the possibility of erecting antennas on a number of existing buildings, but that these are unsuitable structurally. While interested parties have suggested Drumhill House as an alternative, I have not been provided with the location of this building and so I cannot be certain it falls within the search area.
21. Of the alternative sites considered for a new shared installation, sufficient reasoning has been provided to discount many of these. However, D5 is referenced as being within the Green Belt, open in character and with a lack of screening opportunities. On this basis, the appellant considered the appeal site to be more suitable. However, permitted development rights for Part 16 development apply in the Green Belt and I was able to observe that the indicated location of D5 is not without some mature trees in the vicinity. As such, I do not find the submitted evidence to be conclusive in terms of discounting this option.
22. The consideration of alternative sites has been based on the provision of a shared facility, which I understand has differing physical requirements to a facility for a single operator. Interested parties have questioned whether smaller masts around the area would be more sympathetic, given its built-up nature. There is limited evidence before me suggesting that the appellant has considered this alternative approach.

23. While the appellant highlights that the Council has not identified any alternative locations that would meet the strict operational requirements of the proposal, this would be difficult for the Council to achieve, given the technical issues involved.
24. From the available information, I am unable to conclude that alternative options for siting the proposal have been fully exhausted, in order to clearly establish that there is a need to site the proposal at this particular location, to accrue the identified benefits.
25. My attention has been drawn to a number of other planning and appeal decisions, by both the appellant and interested parties. In some cases, these decisions highlight relevant considerations in the approach taken to decision making and the planning balance, and I have taken these into account.
26. In other cases, they are raised as comparable schemes. However, the full details of these other schemes have not been provided. With regards to the allowed appeal at Toller Lane, Bradford<sup>2</sup>, involving a similar installation, those houses closest to the proposed installation were recorded as being at an oblique angle, rather than directly facing, as I have found in this case. Further, in that decision, the Inspector was able to conclude that there were no alternative sites that were capable of, or more appropriate for accommodating the proposed installation, a consideration which weighed strongly in favour of that development, a conclusion I do not share in this case. As such, this example does not appear to be directly comparable to the appeal scheme, and it does not draw me away from my earlier findings.
27. A significant number of local residents have expressed a wide range of concerns including, but not limited to the following: health and safety including noise, proximity to wildlife and trees, highway safety, the presence of underground water sources, and disruption during construction, amongst other things. However, I note that these representations were considered where relevant by the Council at the application stage and no further matters formed part of the reasons for refusal, which I have dealt with in the assessment above. The proposal provides the necessary ICNIRP certificate. Whilst I can understand the concerns of local residents, there is no compelling evidence before me that any other matters could not be appropriately managed or mitigated.
28. Concerns have also been raised with the level of notification provided. The GPDO requires that notice be given by site notice *or* by serving notice on any adjoining owner or occupier (emphasis added). The available evidence suggests that notice was given by site notice, indicating that the requirements of the GPDO were met.

## Conclusion

29. Whilst I have not found any harm arising from the proposal in relation to the character and appearance of the area, I have found that the siting and appearance of the proposed installation would result in harm to the living conditions of occupiers of neighbouring residential properties, with specific regard to outlook. As I am unable to conclude that there is a need to site the installation as proposed, in order to deliver the upgrade and increased coverage identified, it has not been demonstrated that the harm resulting from the proposal is outweighed by its benefits. For these reasons, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

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<sup>2</sup> APP/W4705/W/25/3359809

*S Brook*

INSPECTOR