

Meeting: Planning and Development Committee **Agenda Item:**

Date: 9 August 2022

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Application No: 22/00625/PATELE

Location: Burghley Close, Stevenage, Herts

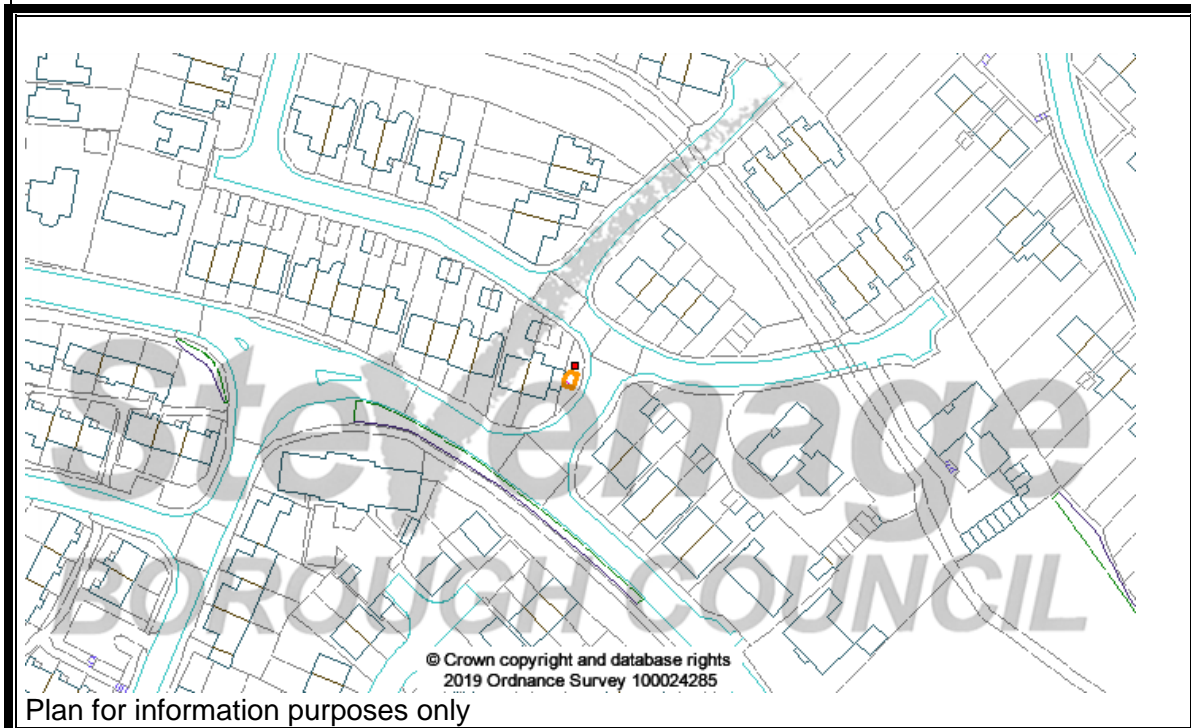
Proposal: Proposed 5G telecoms installation: 15M street pole and 3 additional ancillary equipment cabinets and associated ancillary works

Drawing Nos.: 002; 215; 265;

Applicant: CK Hutchison Networks (UK) Ltd

Date Valid: 7 July 2022

Recommendation: PRIOR APPROVAL REQUIRED AND GIVEN



1. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 1.1 The application site is located on a highway verge on the western side of the entry road into Burghley Close from Hertford Road. The junction with The Glynde lies to the north-west of the application site and Hertford Road to the south.

2. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1 None.

3. THE CURRENT APPLICATION

- 3.1 Prior approval is sought under Schedule 2, Part 16, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (As amended) for the installation of a 15m high Phase 8 Monopole with associated equipment cabinets.
- 3.2 The proposed pole would be 15m high while the 3no. associated cabinets would measure 1.9m by 670mm and 1.8m high; 750mm by 650mm and 1.1m high and 450mm by 650mm and 1.5m high.
- 3.3 The application comes before Committee for consideration as it has been called in by Councillor Howells.

4. PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS

- 4.1 This planning application has been publicised by way of neighbour notification letters, sent to 76 properties within a 100m radius of the application site.
- 4.2 A site notice was not erected in the locality in this instance as to do so would result in the public consultation period ending after a decision is made at this committee meeting. However, under Schedule 2, Part 16, Class A, A.3, (5)(d) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (As amended), the Local Planning Authority is required to give notice of the application by way of a site notice OR serving notice on any adjoining owner or occupier. Therefore, by sending letters to all properties within a 100m radius of the site exceeds our requirements under the aforementioned Legislation and the addition of a site notice placed locally is not necessary.
- 4.3 As a result of the public consultation, 8 letters of objection from local residents and a letter from the Stevenage MP, Mr McPartland, have been received. The residents' letters are summarised as follows:
- Could reduce visibility between vehicles and pedestrians;
 - Shocked it will be in a residential area so close to a residential dwelling;
 - Eyesore in the street scene;
 - Concerned about health impacts;
 - Only people to benefit are passing cars;
 - Plenty of alternative sites;
 - Not in line with the NPPF of 2019;
 - Adverse impact on visual amenity
 - Hertford Road is an attractive area and this mast will irreparably damage the pleasing character of the street scene unless it can be camouflaged or hidden;
 - If this was a remote rural area there may be a case for a 5G mast, however nearly all properties in this area have fast fibre from Virgin Media (the optimum solution) so there is no need for 5G when the existing broadband is superior in speed;
 - How will 5G increase economic growth?
 - Will affect house prices;
 - Will affect wildlife in the local stream.
- 4.4 The letter from Mr McPartland, MP for Stevenage, is summarised as follows:
- Not an appropriate site being a residential area;
 - I have started a campaign to the local residents to make them aware of the impacts of these masts and to hopefully have them reconsidered in the planning process;
 - The mast is not in line with the NPPF of 2019 as it is not sympathetically designed and is more visible than the current infrastructure;
 - More favourable sites could be found.

- Advice is that masts should be tens or hundreds of metres away from the user and not accessible to the public;
- It is clear that a wider debate and strategy in the location of these huge masts is needed; they need to be absorbed into existing street furniture such as street lights on roundabouts.

4.5 Please note that these are not a verbatim of the comments received. Full copies of the comments received against this application can be viewed on the Council's website.

5. CONSULTATIONS

5.1 Hertfordshire County Council as Highways Authority

5.1.1 The Highway Authority are unable to extend the grant of planning permission as a boundary plan identifying if the land is highway land has not been submitted.

5.1.2 The Planning Officer confirmed via email on 26 July 2022 that the land is adopted highways grass and the Highways Officer responded to advise they would reply with their comments as soon as they can.

5.2 Council's Environmental Health Section

5.2.1 No objections.

6. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

6.1 Background to the development plan

6.1.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 provides that the decision on the planning application should be in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. For Stevenage the statutory development plan comprises:

- The Stevenage Borough Council Local Plan 2011-2031
- Hertfordshire Waste Development Framework 2012 and Hertfordshire Waste Site Allocations Development Plan Document (adopted 2012 and 2014); and
- Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan 2002 – 2016 (adopted 2007).
- National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

6.2 Central Government Advice

6.2.1 Section 10 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF; 2021) states advanced, high quality and reliable communications infrastructure is essential for economic growth and social well-being. Planning policies and decisions should support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next generation mobile technology (such as 5G) and full fibre broadband connections. Policies should set out how high quality digital infrastructure, providing access to services from a range of providers, is expected to be delivered and upgraded over time; and should prioritise full fibre connections to existing and new developments (as these connections will, in almost all cases, provide the optimum solution).

6.2.2 The relevant paragraphs of the NPPF are as follows:

Paragraph 114 - supports the provision of 5G infrastructure in order to support economic growth and social well-being through the increased connectivity that 5G will provide. Central Government is also supportive of the provision of 5G network infrastructure.

Paragraph 115 - Where new sites are required (such as for new 5G networks), equipment should be sympathetically designed and camouflaged where appropriate.

Paragraph 118 - Local planning authorities must determine applications on planning grounds only. They should not seek to prevent competition between different operators, question the need for an electronic communications system, or set health safeguards different from the International Commission guidelines for public exposure.

- 6.2.3 The installation of a mobile phone mast is classed as development and would normally require a full application for planning permission. However, designated mobile network operators have certain permitted development rights and this allows them to build prescribed infrastructure without having to apply for planning permission from the Local Planning Authority (LPA). "Prior approval" from the LPA regarding the siting and appearance of the development is required in certain circumstances, including for all new ground-based masts.
- 6.2.4 A mobile network operator may submit an application for prior approval under the General Permitted Development Order (Part 16 of Schedule 2 of the GPDO 2015 (as amended)). The Order grants approval of the principle of the development as permitted development but requires operators to obtain the prior approval from the LPA for the siting and appearance of the items to be installed, in addition to providing the 'necessary evidence' set out in NPPF chapter 10, paragraph 115, including a statement that self-certifies that, when operational, International Commission guidelines will be met.

Latest Government Advice 22nd July 2020

- 6.2.5 The government has published the outcome of a consultation exercise in 2020 on proposed reforms to permitted development rights to support the deployment of 5G and extend mobile coverage. The following paragraphs are relevant to this application.
- 6.2.6 The scope of the consultation was on the principle of proposed planning reforms to support the deployment of 5G and extend mobile coverage. However, concerns were raised that did not relate to the specific proposed planning changes that views were sought on. These concerns, expressed by the majority of personal respondents, were in relation to in-principle opposition to the deployment of 5G infrastructure. In particular, on grounds relating to public health concerns, and the effects of electromagnetic fields (EMF) radiation on the environment, including on wildlife populations.
- 6.2.7 Public Health England's (PHE) Centre for Radiation, Chemical and Environmental Hazards (CRCE) takes the lead on public health matters associated with radiofrequency electromagnetic fields, or radio waves, used in telecommunications. PHE is familiar with the evidence submitted to the consultation about possible risks to public health and considers that its advice, as set out below, remains unchanged. PHE updated its guidance, published in October 2019, in respect of 5G in '5G technologies: radio waves and health'. PHE summarised its guidance as:

"It is possible that there may be a small increase in overall exposure to radio waves when 5G is added to an existing network or in a new area. However, the overall exposure is expected to remain low relative to guidelines and, as such, there should be no consequences for public health."

- 6.2.8 Some 5G technology will use similar frequencies to existing communications systems. Other 5G technology will work at higher frequencies where the main change would be less penetration of radio waves through materials. Central to PHE advice is that exposure to radio waves should comply with the guidelines published by the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP). In compliance

with PHE advice, mobile network operators have committed to follow the ICNIRP guidelines.

- 6.2.9 ICNIRP is an independent organisation which is formally recognised by the World Health Organisation. It issues guidelines on human exposure to EMF, based upon the consensus view of a large amount of research carried out over many years. This includes the frequencies used by 5G and all other mobile / wireless technologies. Over the last two decades there have been over 100 expert reports on EMF and health published internationally with well over 3,000 studies informing these reviews and the existing scientific exposure guidelines.
- 6.2.10 Ofcom will carry out audits of mobile base stations on an ongoing basis to ensure that ICNIRP guidelines are not exceeded and publish the results of these audits on its website. Mobile operators are responsible for ensuring that all sites remain compliant. PHE have also published guidance in respect of 'Mobile phone base stations: radio waves and health'. Ofcom is also proposing new licence conditions for spectrum licensees using equipment that can transmit at power levels above 10 Watts. Under these proposals, licensees would be required to operate within the ICNIRP guidelines as a condition of their Ofcom licence – including keeping data and records of any testing to demonstrate their compliance.
- 6.2.11 PHE is committed to monitoring the evidence applicable to this and other radio technologies, and to revising its advice, should that be necessary.
- 6.2.12 EMF radiation has the potential to impact the movement of insects and some species of animals. However, there is currently no evidence that human-made EMF radiation at realistic field levels has population level impacts on either animals or plants.

Justification of Need

- 6.2.13 Central Government expects LPAs to respond positively to proposals for telecommunications development and not question the need for equipment in principle, or obstruct the competitiveness of code operators. If a code operator provides justification for needing a telecommunications installation in any given vicinity, the LPA has no choice but to agree to some form and kind of installation.
- 6.2.14 The justification provided to support the development is that the location has been identified as being necessary for CK Hutchison Networks (UK) Ltd business development and meets its specific technical and operational requirements. The application site is required to provide new 5G network coverage for CK Hutchison Networks (UK) Ltd. The cell areas for 5G are very limited with a typical radius of only 50m.
- 6.2.15 Other locations in the vicinity of the site have been considered and dismissed and it is accepted that mobile phone base stations operate on a low power and accordingly, the base stations need to be located in the areas they are required to serve. With increasing numbers of people using mobiles in their homes for business as well as for social purposes, the base stations need to be located in, or close to, residential areas to ensure coverage.
- 6.2.16 The information submitted with the application states that six other sites, all within residential streets in the area, have been considered but dismissed as not suitable due to narrow footpaths, proximity to railway lines, topography of the land and un-adopted land. The discounted sites are as follows:

Site	NGR	Discounted Reason
D1 – Spencer Way	525435, 221482	This option has been discounted due to the proximity of residential properties with narrow pavements
D2 – Tintern Close	525387, 221385	This option has been discounted due to the proximity of residential properties and a railway line
D3 – Hertford Road	525483, 221566	This option has been discounted due to the topography of the land
D4 – Kimbolton Crescent	525387, 221544	This option has been discounted due to the narrow pavements
D5 – Hertford Road	525593, 221462	This option has been discounted due to the proximity of residential properties and the location falling on unadopted land
D6 – Hertford Road	525447, 221571	This option has been discounted due to the topography of the land

- 6.2.17 The Government is driving forward the delivery of 5G networks. In a press release in May 2022 they state that 5G is the next generation of mobile internet and can offer download speeds up to 100 times faster than 4G. It is expected to broaden the role that mobile technology plays in wider society which could transform the way public services are delivered by allowing greater real-time monitoring and responsiveness in order to reduce waste, pollution or congestion.
- 6.2.18 At the time of writing, our dependence on network services and connectivity is ever more apparent. Restrictions on travel resulting from the Coronavirus pandemic, plus three national lockdowns, have resulted in a large shift from office based to home working, from physical, professional and social gatherings to virtual ones, and to unprecedented reliance on online shopping and entertainment services. Network usage within suburbs has increased dramatically as less people are travelling to town and city centres than during pre-pandemic times. Maintaining and enhancing the mobile networks is of vital national importance, and it was significant that telecommunications were designated as “critical work” during that time. It is anticipated that the current shift towards homeworking and online services will persist, to a lesser degree, in the future. It is vital that the infrastructure is in place throughout the UK to meet this demand, and the needs of the public.
- 6.2.19 The benefit of having a strong and resilient network has been highlighted in the last 30 months following the sudden shift in the network requirements, as the demand on the network in residential areas increased with home-working and home-schooling. Research by Ofcom, Online Nation 2020 found that until early that year, online video calling was used much less than other online communication services, with 35% of online adults using online video calling at least weekly in the 12 months to February 2020. However, in May 2020, this had doubled to 71% of online adult consumers using online video calling services at least weekly, with 38% using them at least daily. Research suggests that 7% of adult internet-users used video calling for the first time as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.
- 6.2.20 The Ofcom Connected Nations 2020 UK Report outlined a sharp increase in both mobile and voice data, particularly during the enforced national lockdowns of 2020. The report states that average call volumes and average call duration increased in the week that national lockdown was introduced in March 2020, with mobile hotspots shifting away from city centres to the suburbs and residential areas as restrictions continued. Significantly, the same report states that the consumption of mobile data saw a staggering rise of 42%, when compared with the previous year. Additionally, the traffic carried in England in June 2020 (during lockdown) exceeded that carried across the

whole of the UK (England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland) in February 2020 (prior to lockdown).

- 6.2.21 Research by Online Nation 2020 found in April 2020, internet users in the UK spent an average of 4 hours 2 minutes online each day, 37 minutes more each day per online adult compared with January 2020. This emphasises the importance of telecommunications infrastructure in being able to provide internet users with reliable network coverage and capacity to deal with an increasing amount of time online each day.
- 6.2.22 Notwithstanding the Covid-19 pandemic, and the increase in network reliance, a look at past data shows that our reliance on mobile networks was increasing year-on-year, prior to 2020. Ofcom's Communications Market Report 2018 provides a figure of 92 million active mobile subscribers in the UK at the end of 2017. It detailed that 78% of adults used a smartphone and that 76% of mobile users were using their devices for web and data access. Figures within the report also confirm that users were spending an increasing amount of time per day using their mobile phone. 68% of participants in the Touchpoints research reported that they "could not live without" their mobile phone (rising to 78% among 25-34s). Whilst not included within the research figures, anecdotal evidence suggests that this number is greater still amongst those aged under 18. Given that two years have now passed since this report, it is anticipated that these figures have increased further. All of which points towards the nation's increasing dependency on mobile services and connectivity.
- 6.2.23 A relatively recent YouGov survey (January 2021) adds further support to this, with 67% of those who were at the time working from home during the pandemic confirming that they had been using mobile data, as opposed the fixed-line broadband, agreeing that access to it would be an important factor when choosing where to live in the future. This rises to 76% for 18 to 34-year olds. The survey also confirmed that 44% of one network Operator's data traffic in January 2021 went to streaming services, such as Disney+, and that 45% of 18 to 24 year olds confirming that they are more likely to use their mobile data for browsing social media.
- 6.2.24 All of the above occur in a domestic setting. There is a clear need and demand for connectivity and capacity, and it is anticipated that telecommunications infrastructure has become, and will continue to become, commonplace in residential and suburban settings, and on highways verges, such as the application site.
- 6.2.25 Ofcom's 2018 Communications Market Research Report shows that smartphones are owned by four of every five UK consumers and smart TVs are in almost half of all households. Demand for data continues to grow rapidly for UK consumers, with 1.9GB consumed by an average mobile subscription per month in 2017, (up from 1.3 GB the previous year). The report found that more than seven in ten now use their mobile to access the internet, sufficient coverage is obviously vital for this basic utilities service to be provided.
- 6.2.26 Since 2016, and particularly during the enforced lockdowns of 2020 and 2021, public and business reliance on the established mobile networks has continued to increase. Improved mobile coverage and connectivity is now no longer viewed as a 'luxury', but rather an every-day necessity. This has been further exacerbated as, at the time of writing, the country appears to be adopting a more hybrid-working pattern, split between traditional office working, and working from home. As this 'working from home' naturally occurs within a residential setting, then it follows that the necessary infrastructure and apparatus must be in place to allow this to happen. As such, this type of infrastructure must be deployed within sub-urban, urban and residential areas. It is imperative that improving network connectivity and capacity is continuous – to meet the demands of the

public who have changed both their working and social behaviour over the last 2 and a half years.

6.4 Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011 – 2031 (adopted May 2019)

- Policy SP8 – Good Design;
- Policy GD1 – High Quality Design;

7. APPRAISAL

7.1 The determining issues relate to the acceptability of the application in terms of siting and appearance as defined under Schedule 2, Part 16, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended). The factors which can be considered in relation to appearance as part of the prior approval process include:

- design, form, shape and dimensions;
- colour and materials; and
- whether there are more suitable sites for the proposed works.

7.1.1 The factors which can be considered concerning siting include:

- the height of the site in relation to surrounding ground;
- the existing topographical features and natural vegetation;
- the effect on the skyline or horizon;
- the site when observed from any side;
- the site in relation to areas designated for scenic value;
- the site in relation to existing masts; and
- the site in relation to residential properties

7.1.2 It is therefore clear that the considerations to be taken into account in the determination of Prior Approval applications are prescribed and are very limited and do not include issues of public health.

7.2 Appearance

7.2.1 The proposed development is for the erection of a 15m tall monopole with 3no. associated equipment cabinets on the highway grass verge on the western side of the entry road into Burghley Close from Hertford Road. A recent change in legislation has increased the height of some masts to 20m, therefore while this proposed mast may be taller than others in the borough, a height of 20m will become more typical. A Government press release in March 2022 indicates that the Government intends to relax the permitted development rights further to allow masts up to 30m tall and 2m wider than is currently allowable.

7.2.2 There are no significant trees within the immediate area, and those that are present are within private gardens and cannot be guaranteed to remain to screen the proposed mast. There are a number of lampposts in the area and a number of houses have very tall aerials on their roofs.

7.2.3 A previous telecommunications application (21/00638/PATELE) was refused in Fishers Green and subsequently allowed on appeal (APP/K1935/W/21/3281055). In his report, the Inspector stated that the area of Fishers Green was essentially urban in nature despite the open common land due to the presence of roads, kerbs, footways, verges, street lighting, a bus shelter, traffic signs, speed humps, lane markings, yellow lines and other urban paraphernalia. As such, he concluded that a mast in an urban setting, even

when visible from substantial distances, would nevertheless not appear out of place in these urban surroundings.

7.2.4 It is, therefore, considered that on balance the appearance of the proposed mast in this urban residential setting is acceptable and would not appear of keeping within the urban setting and would not therefore give rise to undue harm to the character and appearance of the area. The justification of the need for the mast and the continued provision of coverage for mobile users are considered to outweigh any harm in this instance.

7.2.5 Turning to the proposed equipment cabinets, they are essential to the operation of the mast. Moreover, these cabinets being less than 2.5m³ each could be implemented under permitted development. Therefore, the cabinets are deemed to be acceptable in this instance.

7.3 Siting

7.3.1 In terms of siting and position, the mast and its associated cabinets are set on an existing highway verge. The Highways Authority issued notice that they cannot extend the grant of permission as no boundary plan has been submitted to confirm if the land is adopted highway. The Planning Officer advised the Highways Officer that Council records indicate the land is adopted highway grass. The Highways Officer has advised they will re-assess the application and submit their comments. At the time of writing this report, no comments have been received and it is therefore anticipated that their comments will be presented at the committee by way of an addendum report.

7.3.2 While concern has been raised by local residents regarding the impact of the proposal upon the inter-visibility between pedestrian and vehicles at the adjacent T-junction, the submitted plans indicate the mast and associated cabinets would be approximately 6m to the south of this junction and would therefore be unlikely to interfere with highway safety. Further, the siting would be approximately 2.5m from the footpath to the east and approximately 4.5m from the footpath to the north so it is not considered that there would be an impact on pedestrian safety on the adjacent footpath.

7.3.3 The Council's Environmental Health department have raised no objections to the siting of the mast and equipment cabinets in this location despite the proximity to No.85 Hertford Road. It is noted that the owner/occupier of this property has not made any representations to the Council on the matter either.

7.3.4 Neither the Legislation, NPPF nor the Code of Practice for Wireless Network Development in England set any parameters or guidance on siting of masts in residential areas; nor do they set any prescribed distances from residential dwellings. As such, despite the proximity of the development to No.85 Hertford Road, there are no Legislative or policy means with which to refuse the application on this basis and defend at appeal.

7.3.5 The comments from local residents regarding residents already having access to better broadband and therefore not requiring a mobile phone mast, as referred to in point 6.2.17 above in this report, the siting of masts are not just for the benefit of immediate local residents, but rather by having masts covering all areas of the Town, they will allow a greater degree of accuracy for real-time monitoring of public transport as well as improving access to mobile services by members of the public in the area who would not have access to a broadband service.

7.3.6 The importance of continued, and improved, telecommunications network coverage cannot be underestimated, especially throughout the years 2020 and 2021, when the dependence on these networks has been higher than ever before. This dependence has continued into 2022 as our online shopping, gaming, and social habits have changed,

post-pandemic, as well as many people adopting a working-from-home or hybrid work pattern. The applicant has provided a number of appeal cases which have been considered appropriate by the Planning Inspectorate for installations very similar to the one proposed here, even within close proximity to residential housing. One such appeal, very recently in March 2022, the decision of Broadland District Council to refuse their Prior Approval for the installation of a 17.5-metre-high monopole and associated cabinets was overturned by the Planning Inspectorate (MBNL Limited Vs Broadland District Council, appeal reference APP/K2610/W/21/3280694). Within the decision notice, the Inspector made specific reference to the ‘*Living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties*’, stating that:

“At the location where the mast is proposed to be located there are houses which face onto, but are not accessed from, Dussindale Drive. These houses are set behind hedges and fences and separated from the proposed site of the mast by a cycleway and footpath. They also have front gardens and drives between the front elevation of the house and the cycleway and footpath. The proposed equipment cabinets would not be visible from these houses. However, the mast would be visible from the windows of their front elevations” (Applicant emphasis added).

“Policy GC4 of the DPD seeks, amongst other things, to consider ‘the impact upon the amenity of existing properties’ of new development. Whilst the proposed mast is significantly taller than other street fixtures in the area it has a slim profile and will be finished in a light grey colour. It is also set off the boundary with existing residential properties with a cycleway and footpath in between the proposed site and the boundary of the houses. In these respects, it is therefore consistent with Policy CG4 of the DPD” (Applicant emphasis added).

“Moreover, the residential properties have front gardens and drives between their front elevations and their boundaries. Consequently, given the slim profile of the mast, its light grey colour, and its distance from the front elevations of nearby properties I do not consider that its siting and appearance would unacceptably harm the outlook of the occupiers of these properties” (Applicant emphasis added).

- 7.3.7 Given that the Planning Inspectorate have, as recently as March 2022, determined that taller installations than the one proposed as part of this application (i.e. a 17.5m-high monopole as outlined in the appeal above), are considered acceptable within close proximity to residential properties, then it is recognised that a smaller mast in this instance is considered acceptable in terms of impact on residential dwellings.

7.4 Other Considerations

- 7.4.1 The comments received from the members of the public and the Stevenage MP about the application are noted. However, the information submitted with the application states that six other sites, all within residential streets, have been considered but dismissed as not suitable due to narrow footpaths, proximity to railway lines, topography of the land and un-adopted land.
- 7.4.2 The Council’s environmental Health Officers have not raised objection to the proposal on noise grounds.
- 7.4.3 The impact of the proposed mast upon property values and health are not issues that may be taken into consideration in the determination of the application as they are not specifically included in the legislation and are not planning issues.
- 7.4.4 The application has been accompanied by an ICNIRP certificate stating the proposed mast would comply with the required guidelines and would accordingly not have a harmful impact upon health.

Human Rights and Equalities

- 7.4.5 Consideration has been given to Articles 1 and 8 of the First Protocol of the European Convention on Human Rights. It is not considered that the decision would result in a violation of any person's rights under the Convention.
- 7.4.6 When considering proposals placed before Members it is important that they are fully aware of and have themselves rigorously considered the equalities implications of the decision that they are taking.
- 7.4.7 Rigorous consideration will ensure that proper appreciation of any potential impact of that decision on the Council's obligations under the Public Sector Equalities Duty. As a minimum this requires decision makers to read and carefully consider the content of any Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) produced by officers.
- 7.4.8 The Equalities Act 2010 requires the Council when exercising its functions to have due regard to the need to (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act; (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it and (c) foster good relations between persons who share protected characteristics under the Equality Act and persons who do not share it. The protected characteristics under the Equality Act are: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief; sex and sexual orientation.

8. CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 The proposed 15m Phase 8 Monopole and associated ancillary works would not have an unduly harmful impact on the character and appearance of the area and are therefore considered acceptable in terms of siting and appearance. The justification of the need for the mast and the continued provision of coverage for mobile users outweigh any harm identified in this instance.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 That prior approval is Required and Given.

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

1. The application file, forms, plans and supporting documents having the reference number relating to this item.
2. Responses to consultations with statutory undertakers and other interested parties referred to in this report.
4. Central Government advice contained in the National Planning Policy Framework June 2021 and the Planning Policy Guidance March 2014.
5. Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031 (adopted May 2019).
6. Central Government advice contained in the Code of Practice for Wireless Network Development in England, 2016.