

Officer Report

Application Number:	HGY/2026/2105
Application Type:	Prior notification: Development by telecoms operators
Address:	Footway of Jarrow Road, Ferry Lane, London, N17 9PX
Proposal:	Installation of a 20m high monopole supporting 6no. antennas, 2no. transmission dishes, 2no. equipment cabinets and ancillary development thereto including Remote Radio Units (RRUs) and GPS module
Case Officer:	Mark Chan
Valid Date:	23/07/202
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Applicant:	N/A
Agent:	Mr Joshua Fiteni

RECOMMENDATION

Approve with Conditions

1. Description of Proposal

This application concerns the installation of a 20m high monopole supporting 6no. antennas, 2no. transmission dishes, 2no. equipment cabinets and ancillary development thereto including Remote Radio Units (RRUs) and GPS module. The installation would be located on the public footpath on the western side of Jarrow Road near the junction with Ferry Lane. There is a small open space west of the application site and blocks of flats on the southern, eastern and northern side.

2. Site and Surroundings

The application site is on the public footpath on the western side of Jarrow Road near the junction with Ferry Lane. The footpath is approximately 3.5m wide and adjacent to a grassed open space. The character of the locality is a primarily residential and Ferry Lane to the north is a busy public route in the area. There are currently road signs on the footpath north of the site and several trees up to 24m high around the site in the open space. The site is not within a conservation area but is highly visible from Jarrow Road and Ferry Lane. The proposed monopole would be taller than some of the nearby trees and road signs. It is observed there are existing equipment cabinets on Jarrow Road.

3. Relevant Planning and Enforcement History

HGY/2022/2401 – Proposed 5G 20m telecoms installation - H3G street pole and additional equipment cabinets. (Prior notification: Development by telecoms operators). Refused 17/10/2022. APP/Y5420/W/22/3310154 Appeal allowed 22/06/2023.

4. Internal & Statutory Consultation

The following stakeholders were consulted:

- LBH Transportation Group: No objections raised
- Historic England's Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service: No objection raised.

5. Local Representations

The following number of representations were received from local residents or groups in response to the public notification of the application:

- No. of individual responses: 1
- Objections: 1
- Support: 0
- Neutral: 0

The reasons for objection are summarised as follows:

- Cluttering of the footpath and open space

6. Assessment of Planning Considerations

Principle of development

The proposal is permitted development under Class A, Part 16 of the General Permitted Development Order (as amended) and does not therefore require planning permission.

The 56-day notification procedure requires the Local Planning Authority to determine (a) whether prior approval of the siting and appearance of the proposed development is required and, if so, (b) to notify the applicant giving or refusing such approval. Therefore, the principal issues in this case are considered to be:

1. Whether prior approval is required for the siting and appearance of the mast.
2. Whether the details provided regarding the siting and appearance are acceptable in relation to national and local planning policies, particularly the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Local Development Plan.

Siting and Appearance

The proposal is assessed under Policy DM3 of the Local Development Plan, which sets out requirements for telecommunications equipment, including minimizing visual impacts and ensuring equipment is sympathetically designed to blend into its surroundings. The proposal has also been evaluated under Paragraphs 113 and 119 of the NPPF, which emphasize the need to justify new sites for telecommunications equipment and to design masts in a way that is camouflaged or discreet.

The applicant has explained in their Site Specific Supplementary Information (SSSI) document the current application is a new installation by the operator (Virgin Media O2) to improve existing levels of service provision. The application site would provide new coverage and capacity to ensure that customers continue to experience access to the latest service provision of 4G coverage and capacity. A new installation at this location would allow to provide improved coverage to this area, as well as to improve capacity on the operator's network and ensure that this area of Tottenham Hale has access to the latest technologies.

The proposal involves the installation of a 20m high monopole supporting 6no. antennas, 2no. transmission dishes, and 2no. equipment cabinets on the street level and ancillary development thereto including Remote Radio Units (RRUs) and GPS module.

Officer acknowledges that a previous prior approval application for a similar design and the same height, submitted by another operator and that application (Ref: HGY/2022/2401) refused was refused by the Council in October 2022 due to concerns regarding its siting, size, scale, and prominent location, which would result in a visually intrusive, incongruous, and obtrusive form of

development. However, the applicant appealed the planning refusal, and the appeal was allowed in June 2023. In the appeal decision, the Planning Inspector stated that while the mast would be taller than the closest dwellings on the Ferry Lane Estate, the nearby trees would provide a backdrop, thereby minimising the visual impact. The Inspector also noted that although the mast would be taller than other street furniture in the vicinity, it would still blend in visually, preventing it from looking out of place.

The current application would at a location almost identical to the previous application and the two proposals are very similar in terms design, massing and height. Therefore, considerable weight must be given to the appeal decision, and the location of the current application is acceptable in principle.

Given the existence of the appeal decision, the applicant has acknowledged the possibility of two different radio base stations being constructed at the application site. However, the applicant has explained that it would not be possible for both be constructed for two reasons. Firstly, it is confirmed the mast and base station allowed on appeal has now come to an end, and it is not expected that the proposal would be built. Secondly, even if that were not the case, there is a minimum distance requirement between radio base stations to ensure their effective operation. Therefore, even in the scenario where both operators wish to proceed with construction, realistically, only one would be able to do so. As a result, the proximity of the current proposal to the other operator's approved mast should not be a concern that would lead to the refusal of the current application.

The height of the proposed mast at 20m would constitute the tallest item of street furniture within the locality, being 15m above the height of the existing road signs. However, the proposed height of the monopole is unavoidable, given that it is to support the 6no. antennas for the provision of increased coverage and capacity to the surrounding area as well as future proofing for the provision of new 5G services.

The proposed mast is the slimmest and simplest aesthetical solution that exists in the operator's design portfolio. The antennas are all unshrouded for technical reasons and have been designed to be as tight as possible to minimise their visual appearance. The higher the radio frequency the more signal attenuation there is with higher frequency antennas unable to operator effectively through the like of Glass Reinforced Plastic shrouding. If the column were to be a uniform width throughout then the overall width would have to increase which would appear more visually prominent in the street scene, than the proposed design. The proposed design is more visually sensitive and much easier to assimilate into a street scene than lattice towers or more traditional monopoles with bulky headframes. These non-stealth designs are preferred by operators as they are structurally capable of hosting more equipment and give greater scope for antenna orientation and are thus more efficient structures. However, such designs would appear alien in this location. Therefore, the operator has compromised on obtaining maximum coverage in order to better assimilate into the street scene.

It is accepted that the height of the proposed installation is taller than other pieces of surrounding street furniture, and some nearby buildings, but this in itself is not a valid reason to conclude that it is not appropriate at a specific location. Telecommunications apparatus by its very nature must be taller than surrounding built and natural form to ensure its efficient operation. Furthermore, the planning inspector in the appeal decision noted that there is a variety of street furniture at differing heights around the site which allows the monopole to blend in with the area here.

Having regard to the above, it is considered that the proposed monopole is situated within a sensible location available to the applicant and that the most appropriate design solution has been chosen. However, despite the careful design and siting as stated above, it would have a degree of impact upon the character and appearance of the area primarily by virtue of its height. A balancing exercise must therefore be undertaken to determine whether it has been demonstrated that, the degree of visual harm is offset by whether or not there is a demonstrable need for the proposal. This report has already set out that there is a demonstrable requirement for the monopole to provide coverage

and capacity within the area. In this instance, officer is content that the degree of harm created by the proposal, particularly having regards to its height, is sufficient to justify the limited harm created by the proposal.

Given the slim profile and appearance of the proposed monopole, and partial screening/backdrop provided by existing trees and road signs, it is considered that the proposal would not significantly result in any undue impact upon the amenities currently enjoyed by the occupiers of any dwellings.

The proposed equipment cabinets have been designed to look like the other existing cabinets on Jarrow Road. They are small for telecommunications apparatus and proposed to be coloured grey to match the other cabinets already in situ. The equipment cabinets can be installed under the operators permitted development rights once the monopole is built but have been included on the plans and in the description to remain fully transparent. The RRUs are small, each one about the size of a shoe box. They are designed to make the antennas more efficient and reduce the amount of ground-based equipment cabinets thus minimising the visual impact on the surrounding area. Given their significant height above ground level underneath the antennas, they would not be overly prominent in the street scene.

The proposed mast and associated cabinets would not impinge on movement of pedestrians. In addition, no highways issues would arise from the proposal. The Council's transportation team has been consulted and did not raise any objections.

Other Matters

The application was accompanied by the required ICNIRP Certificate, which satisfied the requirements as laid down by the NPPF. Health considerations and public concern, including perceived fear of health risks can in principle be considerations in determining applications for planning permission. However, it is for the decision maker (generally the local planning authority) to determine the weight to be afforded to such considerations in any particular case. In the Government's view, if the development meets the ICNIRP guideline for public exposure, it should not be necessary for a local planning authority, in processing planning application, to further consider health aspects and concerns. The applicant, in this case, has confirmed that the proposed installation would comply with the relevant ICNIRP guidelines, and a Certificate has been provided to this effect.

7. Conclusion

The proposed 20m high monopole is sited in a location and of such height as to form a reasonably prominent addition to the street scene. However, it is considered that in this instance there is demonstrable requirement for the proposed structure, having regard to the operator operational needs. The planning history of the site and the sympathetic design of the proposal are considered material to the extent that the degree of limited visual harm created by the proposal is outweighed for the reasons as set out in this report.

In addition, the proposal is not expected to result in any undue impacts upon residential amenity or highway safety, and the applicant's have confirmed that the base station will be fully ICNIRP compliant.

8. Recommendation

Prior approval is required and granted.

Conditions:

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in complete accordance with the approved plans listed below, other than where those details are altered pursuant to the conditions of this planning permission or where alternative details have been subsequently approved following an application for a non-material amendment. :

Approved drawings and documents:

MobileUK Health Fact Sheet V1.pdf

DSIT Minister of State letter to Leaders - Supporting digital infrastructure deployment.pdf

CS_23718720_GPDO_Application_Letter_(England)_V.8.pdf

MobileUK 5G Local Authority Toolkit.pdf

EMF Guidelines v21.pdf

gsma 5G EMF briefing web 05 20.pdf

Proposed Plans Rev A.pdf

Health summary v20.pdf

allaying health concerns regarding 5g.pdf

Permitted development notice.pdf

DCMS MHCLG Collaborating for Digital Connectivity Letter.pdf

Local Authority Engagement Brochure - Sept 2020 (002).pdf

5G Services v10.pdf

pre-application consultation letters and responses document.pdf

Digital Public Benefit Brochure updated.pdf

CS 23718720 ICNIRP Declaration with Clarification Letter V.6.pdf

Radio Planning and Propagation V6.pdf

Planning for telecommunications v8.pdf

Coverage and Capacity v13.pdf

CS_23718720_Jarrow_Road_SSSI_(England)_V.9.pdf

HM Government Ofcom 5G Guide.pdf

How it works v12.pdf

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

Informatives:

INFORMATIVE: Hours of Construction Work

The applicant is advised that under the Control of Pollution Act 1974, construction work which will be audible at the site boundary will be restricted to the following hours:-

8.00am - 6.00pm Monday to Friday

8.00am - 1.00pm Saturday

and not at all on Sundays and Bank Holidays.

INFORMATIVE: Land Ownership

The applicant is advised that this planning permission does not convey the right to enter onto or build on land not within his ownership.