

Unrestricted Report

ITEM NO: 8

Application No.
23/00544/RTD
Site Address:

Ward:
Bullbrook

Date Registered:
8 August 2023

Target Decision Date:
2 October 2023

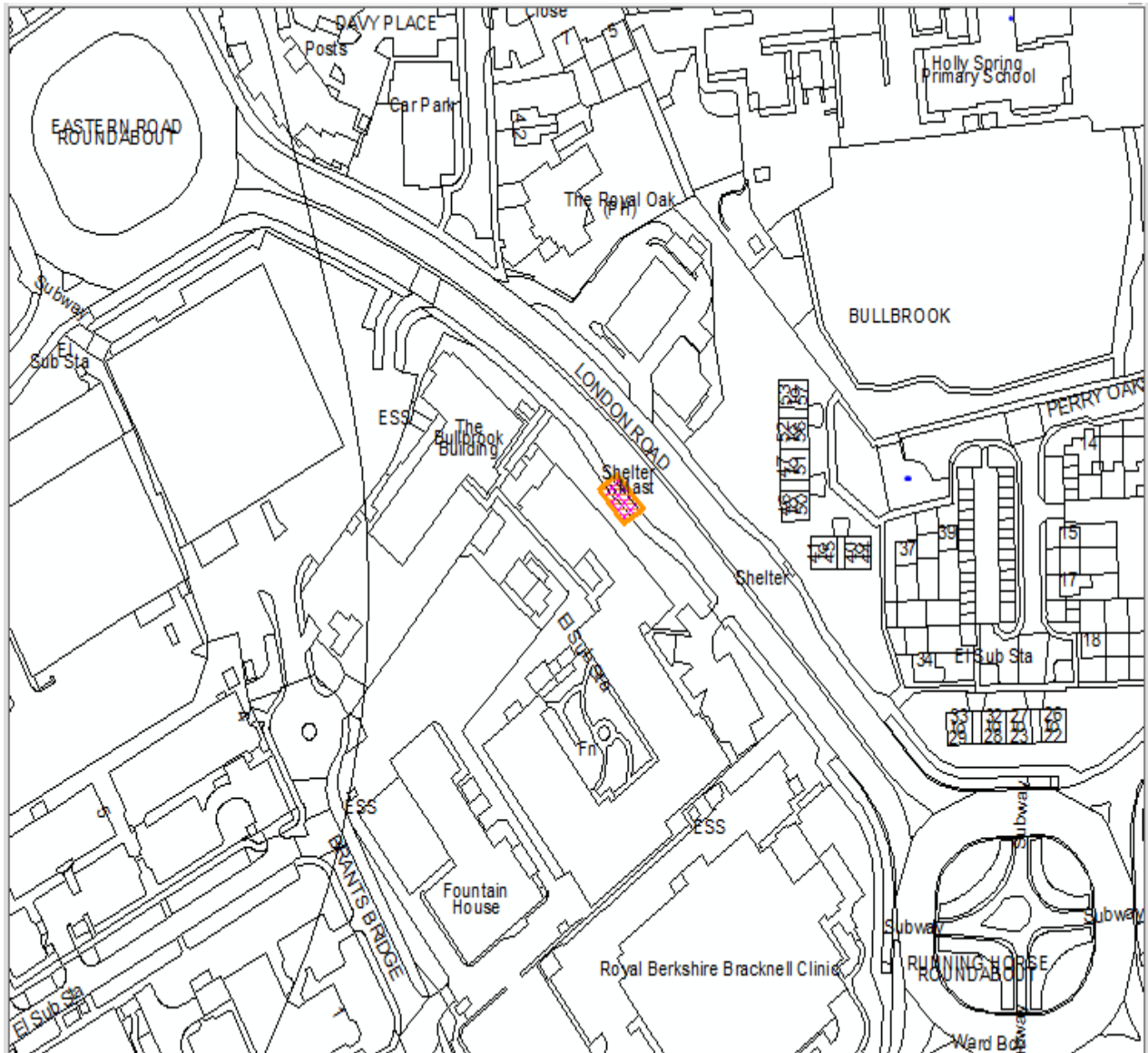
Land For Base Station London Road Bracknell Berkshire

Proposal: **Proposed removal and replacement of the existing 15.0m high Streetpole with proposed 20.0m high Pole on new foundation, together with 6No. Antennas and associated ancillary works. Existing 2No. Cabinets to be upgraded internally.**

Applicant: Cornerstone
Agent: Susannah Help
Case Officer: Will Rendall, 01344 352000

Development.control@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Site Location Plan (for identification purposes only, not to scale)



OFFICER REPORT

1. SUMMARY

1.1 The application seeks to determine if Prior Approval is required for the installation of a 20-metre-high mast, with associated antennas, and upgrade to existing cabinets, with the removal of the existing 15 metre high mast.

1.1 The proposed development is within the settlement boundary. The proposal would not be liable for SPA contributions and CIL payments. The only matters that the Local Planning Authority area able to consider are siting and appearance, which in this case are considered to be acceptable.

RECOMMENDATION

Prior Approval is required and is granted, subject to the conditions set out in Section 11 of this report.
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2. REASON FOR REPORTING APPLICATION TO COMMITTEE

2.1 The application has been submitted under the prior approval procedure and therefore requires to be determined within 56 days.

3. PLANNING STATUS AND SITE DESCRIPTION

PLANNING STATUS

Within Settlement Boundary

3.1 The proposed telecom mast will be located on the footway of London Road, immediately to the south-east of the existing cabinets and mast (to be removed). Adjacent to the site to south is a light industrial estate (designated as the Eastern Business Area in Core Strategy Development Plan Document – 2008). Located to the north, on the opposite side of London Road is a petrol station. There is also another smaller telecom mast located to the north-east on the opposite side of London Road. The nearest neighbouring dwellings, located to the north-east are two blocks of flats on Perry Oaks.

3.2 The site is within Bracknell Settlement Boundary.

4. RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

4.1 The relevant planning history is set out below:

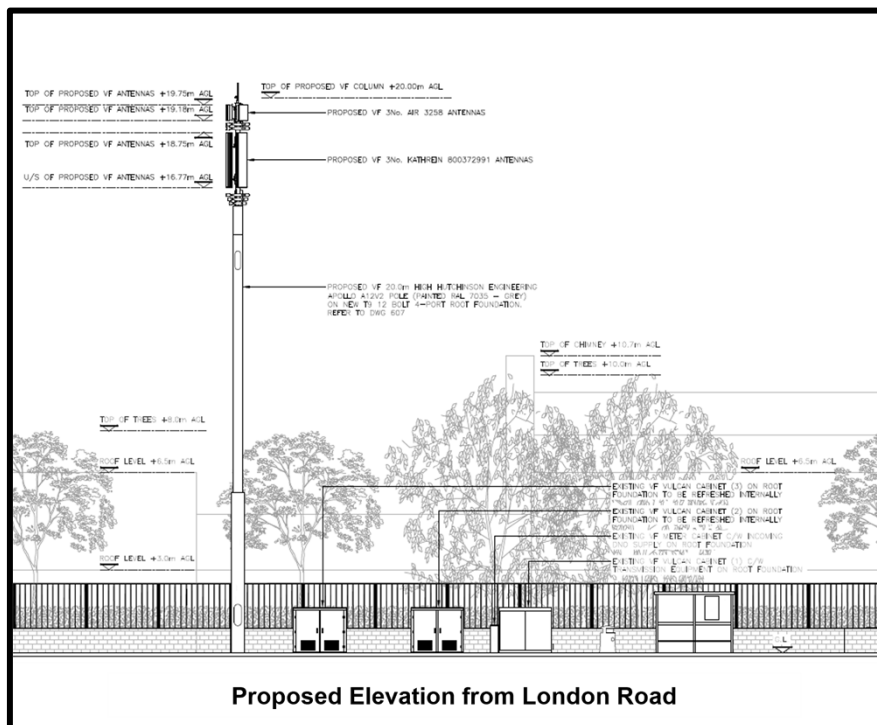
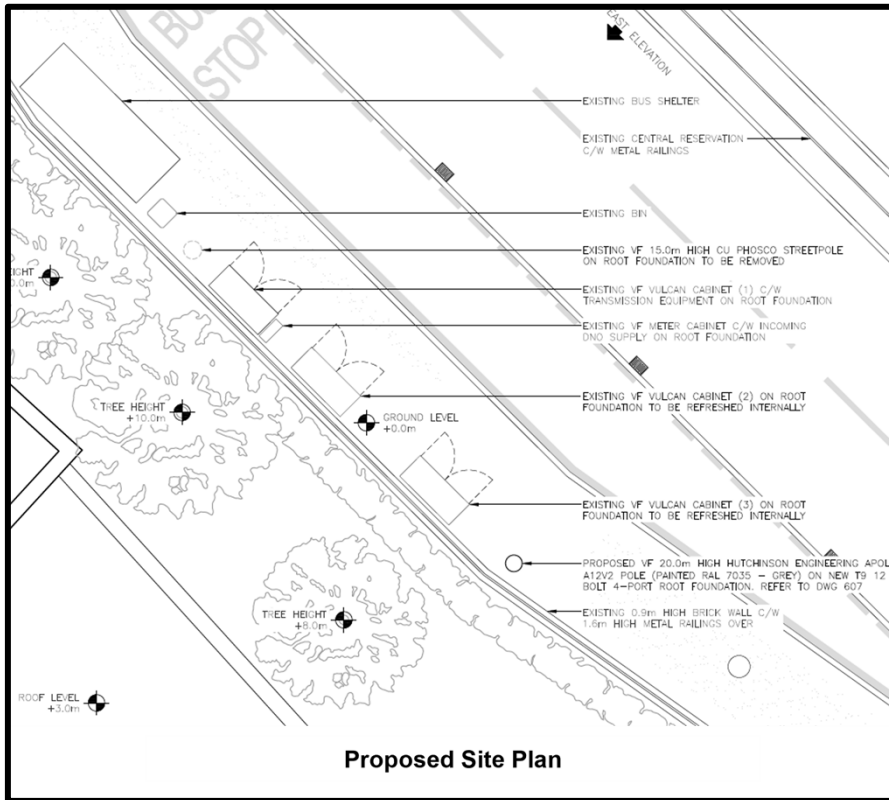
11/00442/RTD. *Installation of a shared Vodafone and Telefonica 14.8m street pole radio base station, housing 6no. 3G Antennas and 1 no. radio equipment cabinet and electrical meter pillar. Approved 04/08/2011.*

14/00235/RTD. *Replacement of existing 14.8M high monopole with new 15M high monopole with associated equipment cabinet and ancillary development. Approved 08/04/2014.*

5. THE PROPOSAL

5.1 The proposal is for a replacement for the existing 15 metre mast located on the footway of London Road. The new mast will be 20 metres high and will have 6No. antennas. In addition, the existing 2No. adjacent cabinets will have internal upgrades.

5.2 The proposed mast will be coloured light grey (RAL 7035), whilst the adjacent cabinets to be retained will continue to be coloured dark green (RAL 6009)



6. REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

Bracknell Town Council

6.1 None received at the time of writing the report.

Other responses received

6.2 None received at the time of writing the report.

7. SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Highway Authority:

No objection, informative recommended.

Environmental Health:

No objection.

8. MAIN POLICIES AND OTHER DOCUMENTS RELEVANT TO THE DECISION

8.1 The primary strategic planning considerations applying to the site and the associated policies are:

	Development Plan	NPPF
General policies	CP1 of SALP,	Not fully consistent
	CS1, CS2 of CSDPD	Consistent
Design	CS7 of CSDPD, Saved policy EN20 of BFBLP	Consistent
Parking	Saved policy M9 of BFBLP	Consistent
Transport	CS23 of CSDPD	Consistent
Telecommunication development	SC4 of BFBLP	
Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)		
Design SPD		
Other publications		
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF – July 2021 Revision) and National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)		
Bracknell Town Neighbourhood Plan 2016-2036. (BTNP - October 2021)		

9. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

9.1 The key issues for consideration are:

- i Principle of development
- ii Siting
- iii Appearance
- iv Highway safety
- v Need
- vi Other Matters

i. Principle of development

- 9.2 The provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) (GPDO 2015) 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 (including highway safety) and appearance, taking into account any representations received.
- 9.3 The principle of development is established by the GPDO 2015 and the provisions of Schedule 2 Part 16, Class A of the GPDO 2015 does not require regard to be had to the development plan or the National Planning policy Framework (NPPF) other than where they are considerations relevant to matters of siting and appearance.
- 9.4 Paragraph 114 of the NPPF states that advanced, high quality and reliable communications infrastructure is essential for economic growth and social well-being. Decisions should support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next generation mobile technology (such as 5G).
- 9.5 Paragraph 115 of the NPPF states that the number of radio and electronic communications masts, and the sites for such installations, should be kept to a minimum consistent with the needs of consumers, the efficient operation of the network and providing reasonable capacity for future expansion. Use of existing masts, buildings and other structures for new electronic communications capability (including wireless) should be encouraged. Where new sites are required (such as for new 5G networks, or for connected transport and smart city applications), equipment should be sympathetically designed and camouflaged where appropriate.

ii. Siting

- 9.6 Policy CS1 of the CSDPD states that development will be permitted which protects and enhances the character and quality of local landscapes.
- 9.7 Policy CS2 of the CSDPD furthers this by stating that development will be permitted which is consistent with the character within a settlement.
- 9.8 Policy HO 8 of the BTNP states that new development should achieve a high-quality design that respects the established appearance, scale and character of the design of the particular neighbourhood in which they are being proposed,
- 9.9 The street scene of the locality of the proposed mast is urban in nature, with a significant amount of street furniture such as an adjacent bus stop with shelter and lampposts. There is also another smaller mast and associated cabinets located to the north-east on the opposite side of London Road. Therefore, it is considered that the proposed mast would be seen within the context of the existing street furniture.
- 9.10 Furthermore, there is also a boundary hedge and a number of mid-size trees located to the rear of the proposed mast which would help soften the appearance within the street scene. As these trees will continue to grow, they will further soften the appearance of the mast over time. The applicant is expected to install the mast with regards to the guidance in *NJUG Vol 4. Guidelines for the Planning, Installation and Maintenance of Utility Apparatus in Proximity to Trees*.

9.11 It is noted that no houses are directly adjacent to the proposed mast, due to the separation distance provided by the London Road itself, and therefore there would be minimal impact on the character of adjacent dwellings.

9.12 Given that there has been a mast existing in this location since approximately 2011 it is considered that there would be minimal material change to the character of the area. In addition as this type of infrastructure is becoming more commonplace it is not considered that there would be significant harm to the character and appearance of the area.

9.13 In conclusion, given the precedent set by existing masts within the street scene, it is considered that the proposed siting of the replacement mast is acceptable, in accordance with Policies CS1 and CS2 of the CSDPD, and Policy HO 8 of the BTNP.

iii. Appearance

9.14 Policy CS7 of the CSDPD states that the Council requires high quality design for all development in Bracknell Forest.

9.15 Saved Policy EN20 of the BFBLP states that proposed developments should be appropriate in their design, scale and siting, both in themselves and in relation to adjoining buildings, spaces and views.

9.16 The replacement mast would be 5 metres taller than the existing mast on site. Whilst the increase in height of 5 metres, would be significant, this is offset by the fact that the proposed mast would be relatively slender with a width of about 35cm in the central section. It is noted that this width would be more substantial at the top of the mast, with a width of about 75cm, due to the placement of antennas. However, this is only about 20cm wider than the top of the existing mast. Therefore, it is considered that the increase in scale is reasonable and would not be visually dominant.

9.17 The proposed mast would be coloured light grey, similar to the appearance of the existing mast. This colour is typical of masts in the local area. Whilst there would be no change to the external appearance of the cabinets, nor are any additional cabinets proposed. A condition is recommended to ensure that the proposed mast is coloured grey, for the reasons outlined above.

9.18 As such it is considered that the appearance of the proposed mast would not be overly dominant and is of an appearance typical to telecommunications masts. Consequently, the appearance of the mast is considered to be acceptable, in compliance with policy CS7 CSDPD and 'saved' policy EN20 of the BFBLP.

iv. Highway safety

9.19 Policy CS23 of the CSDPD states that the Council will use its planning and transport powers to increase the safety of travel and maintain the existing road network within the borough.

9.20 The proposed mast would be sited adjacent to London Road, which is a dual carriage way, that classified A Road. The road has a speed limit of 40mph and carries a high volume of traffic. It is recognised that there is an existing precedent for a mast in this location given the existing mast.

9.21 The Highway Authority has been consulted on the application and has raised no objection, but has recommended an informative regarding obtaining a road occupation consent, due to the potential need for a temporary bus stop suspension.

v. Need

9.22 BFBLP 'Saved' Policy SC4 refers to telecommunication development being permitted provided that there is a need for the development.

9.23 Paragraph 116 of the NPPF states that "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.

9.24 The technical need for the proposed installation within this location has been demonstrated.

vi. Other matters

9.25 Health issues affecting telecommunications equipment have been considered at Government level, which set up an Independent Expert Group under the chairmanship of Sir William Stewart. The conclusion of this Group, which has been accepted by the Government, is that the balance of evidence suggests that exposure to RF radiation below International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) guidelines does not cause adverse health effects to the general population.

9.26 The applicant has confirmed that the proposal would comply with these guidelines. It is not therefore appropriate to consider health issues further in relation to the present application.

9.27 CIL is applied as a charge on each square metre of new development. The amount payable varies depending on the location of the development within the borough and the type of development. CIL applies to any new build (except outline applications and some reserved matters applications that leave some reserved matters still to be submitted). In this case, the proposal would not be CIL liable as it does not comprise the creation of new dwellings.

10. CONCLUSIONS

10.1 The siting and design of the proposed mast is considered acceptable and complies with policies CS1, CS2, CS7 of the CSDPD and 'saved' policy EN20 and SC4 of the BFBLP. Therefore it is recommended that Prior Approval is granted.

11. RECOMMENDATION

11.1 That Prior Approval is required and is granted with the following conditions that are imposed by the Permitted Development Order -

1. The development shall be begun not later than the expiration of 5 years beginning with the date on which the approval was given.

2. The development must be carried out in accordance with the approved details or as otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

11.2 Subject to compliance with the following condition(s) secured by the Local Planning Authority -

1. This approval is in relation to the following drawings;

100 Rev: A - Site Location Maps - received: 09/08/2023.

201 Rev: A - Proposed Site Plan - received: 09/08/2023.

301 Rev: A - Proposed Site Elevation - received: 09/08/2023

2. The proposed mast shall only be carried out in accordance with the paint colour to be used in the external elevations of the development hereby approved as follows:
RAL 7035 (light grey)

Reason: To ensure high quality design and to comply with Policy CS7 of the CSDPD, Policy EN20 of the BFBLP, Policy HO 8 of the BTNP and guidance within the NPPF.

Informatives

01. Bracknell Forest Borough Council hereby gives approval for the siting and appearance of the development proposed in the above-mentioned application in accordance with the plans as stated above.
02. The development shall comply with the National Joint Utilities Group (NJUG) 'Guidelines for the planning, installation, and maintenance of utility services in proximity to trees'.
03. The applicant is advised that consideration should be given to the use of anti-graffiti paint on the proposed cabinets.
04. The applicant will need to apply for road occupation consent for installation which may require temporary bus stop suspension or temporary relocation whilst works are underway. Further information on the requirements can be obtained by email to highwaynetwork.management@bracknell-forest.gov.uk
05. The developer should use the best practice in respect to the trees as described in NJUG Vol 4. Guidelines for the Planning, Installation and. Maintenance of Utility Apparatus in Proximity to Trees.