

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT:**Application Ref:** PN/25/99763**Site Address:** Land off Woodhouse Lane, Botley, Southampton, SO30 2EZ**Case Officer:** Clare Martin

Description: Prior notification application under Schedule 2, Part 16, Class A of the General Permitted Development Order for the upgrade of the existing telecommunications mast comprising the replacement of the existing headframe to support 6.no antennas and 1.no transmission dish and ancillary works.

Particular Site Constraints?	Yes ☒	No ☐
• Outside Urban Edge - Countryside • Within Settlement Gap		

Planning History?	Yes ☒	No ☐
• Z/38091 – Prior approval for the erection of a 14.75m high sectorised telecommunications column with cabin and cabinet – Permitted (September 2001)		

Publicity:	Letters ☒	Site Notice ☒	Newspaper ☐
Representations:	None		
Tree Officer:	No objection		
Southampton Airport:	No response provided		
Parish Council:	No response provided		

Site Visit:	Yes ☒	No ☐
Details: Carried out August 2025		

Pre-commencement Conditions:	Yes ☐	No ☒
Details:		

Legislation:
Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states:- "If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise." The Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (Amendment) Schedule 2, Part 16, Class A grants permission for installation, alteration or replacement of any electronic communications apparatus by communication operators, subject to certain exceptions, limitations and conditions: Under this act the developer must apply to the Local Planning Authority, before starting development, to determine whether the prior approval of the authority will be required,

and if so whether this is granted by the LPA. The matters to be considered under the prior approval are the siting and appearance of the equipment including:

- minimising the visual impact of the development on the building and surrounding area
- ensuring the development does not prevent pedestrians from passing along a footway or accessing a premise.

Policy:

National Planning Policy Framework

Planning Practice Guidance

Development Plan - The Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016-2036:

- Strategic policies: S1 (sustainable development) S5 (new development in the countryside) and S6 (protection of settlement gaps)
- Development Management policies: DM1 (general development), DM9 (public utilities and communications) & DM13 (transport).

Proposal:

The proposed communications equipment is to increase capacity and coverage in the Hedge End area, to ensure high quality 4G & 5G services. The prior notification application comprises the removal and replacement of the headframe on an existing 15m monopole to accommodate 6 no. antennas and 1 no. transmission dish. The new headframe will be 5m wide (3.2m wider than existing) and the total height of the structure will be 17.9m (0.4m higher than existing).

The submission includes:

- Site specific supplementary information
- An ICNIRP certificate declaring the equipment conforms to public exposure guidelines.
- Developers notice made under article 13.
- Copy of developer notice to Southampton Airport

Assessment:

Siting

The technical requirements of 5G technology means that available sites are limited to a very small radius within the immediate vicinity in order to transmit signals to neighbouring base stations. A list of seven alternative sites has been provided (within the supplementary information form) along with the reasons why these have been discounted.

While the chosen site is within the countryside and local gap, it is considered appropriate given that the mast is already in situ and the proposal is simply exchanging the current headframe for a larger structure. The mast is positioned 30m back from the main road and is less exposed than other parts of Woodhouse Lane having a dense cluster of trees along the front and to the southern side.

The enlarged headframe will be more visible during the winter months and when approaching the site from the north along Woodhouse Lane where there are views across the adjacent fields. However, the site is along a main road approaching the settlement boundary and there are other tall structures within the street scene (such as lamp posts, telegraph poles and a smaller mast to the east). As such the enlarged head frame mounted on the existing monopole should not look out of place.

The mast is sited on private land, where it will not impact upon highway safety, restrict access or encroach upon the pavement.

Appearance

While the proposed headframe is bulkier, and slightly taller, than the existing structure it has been designed to be as compacted as possible while meeting the technical requirements needed for the telecoms equipment. The design of the headframe and new antennas maintains its simple, functional, vertical structure and will be a neutral steel colour. As such the development is considered to minimise its visual impact upon its surroundings.

Equalities Act:

Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 created the public sector equality duty.

Section 149 (1) states:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

When making policy decisions, the Council must take account of the equality duty and in particular any potential impact on protected groups.

It is considered that this application does not raise any equality implications.

Climate Change:

In July 2019, the Council declared a Climate Change and Environmental Emergency. In doing so it agreed, among other things, to: (a) put in place measures to ensure the Council's own operations and functions achieve carbon neutrality by 2025; (b) work with partners to aim for all projects and services delivered in the Borough to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030; (c) ensure that the Council's procurement policy recognises carbon neutrality as one of its primary considerations; and (d) recognise the urgency of action to mitigate and adapt to climate change in every decision taken by the Council. This is underpinned by the Climate and Environment Emergency Strategy 2020–2030 and the supporting Climate and Environmental Emergency Action Plan – Update June 2020.

The declaration of the Climate Change and Environmental Emergency demonstrates a strong commitment from the Council to achieve net zero. The NPPF, development plan and plan policy do not set this as a specific target, but it is a material consideration to be considered alongside all other material considerations. In any case addressing climate change is a core part of the NPPF and plan policy. The need to support the economy is part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment for the Local Plan, as is an assessment of climate impacts.

The NPPF aims for the need for housing to be met, and Policy S2 of the Adopted Local Plan sets a target for 14,580 dwellings to be provided by 2036. The NPPF, Policies S1, DM2 and DM3 of the Adopted Local Plan and energy and water elements of the adopted Environmentally Sustainable Development SPD require development to be sustainable in terms of resource use, climate change and energy use. When considering the impact of climate change, the proposed development is expected to be resilient to the potential effects of climate change and is expected to reduce/limit impacts on climate emissions as a result of the development or its use.

Conclusion:

Recommendation:	CONSENT ☒	REFUSE ☐
Comments ...		