

Planning Committee Report	
Planning Ref:	PL/2025/0001249/PAEC
Site:	Grass Verge, Corner of, Beake Avenue and Radford Road, Coventry, CV6 3AA
Ward:	Radford
Proposal:	Prior Approval for proposed installation of a 20m monopole accommodating 6no. antennas and 1no. transmission dish; 2no. equipment cabinets, 1no. meter cabinet and ancillary development thereto.
Case Officer:	Emma Spandley

SUMMARY

Part 16 of the General Permitted Development Order (GPDO) establishes that the installation of a telecommunication mast is permitted development and therefore the principle is accepted by virtue of the legislation.

The Local Planning Authority (LPA) can only assess the proposed development on the basis of its siting and appearance, taking into account any representations received.

There is no requirement to have regard to the development plan as there would be for any development requiring planning permission.

The siting of the mast on a grass verge on the corner of a busy traffic light junction does not impact any habitable room windows. The public park and play area are on the opposite side of the busy main Radford Road.

The mast is considered acceptable from a siting and appearance perspective, subject to conditions requiring Tree Protection Plan (TPP), a detailed Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) and the cabinets to be colour coded green, with the mast colour coded black.

KEY FACTS

Reason for report to committee:	Over 5 objections against the Officers recommendation.
Current use of site:	Grass verge, not adopted highway, within Citizen ownership.
Proposed use of site:	Installation of a 20m monopole telecommunication mast and ancillary equipment.

RECOMMENDATION

Planning Committee are recommended to grant the Prior Approval relating to the siting and design only, subject to conditions.

REASON FOR DECISION

- The proposal is acceptable in principle.
- The proposal will not adversely impact upon highway safety

- The proposal will not adversely impact upon trees
- The proposal will not adversely impact upon character of appearance of the area
- The proposal will not adversely impact upon the amenity of neighbours.
- The proposal accords with Policies: C2, DE1 and AC1 of the Coventry Local Plan 2017 and the emerging Local Plan, together with the aims of the NPPF.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is a grass verge on the corner of a busy traffic lighted junction with Radford Road running northwest to southeast and Beake Avenue / Engleton Road running north to south.

The verge is to the northwest of the junction, with Beake Avenue running along its eastern boundary northwards, and Radford Road running along the southwestern.

To the northeast of the site immediately adjacent is a scout hut and car park. To the north of the site are No.11 - 18 Mossdale Close. This terrace of properties are three storeys high. No.11 Mossdale Close has a blank elevation facing onto the grass verge and road junction.

On the opposite side of Radford Road is a children's park and play area.

APPLICATION PROPOSAL

The application seeks prior approval of the Local Planning Authority (LPA) for the installation of a 20m monopole with 6no antenna, 1no transmission dish, 3no cabinets and development ancillary thereto.

PLANNING HISTORY

None

POLICY

National Policy Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) December 2024. The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It sets out the Government's requirements for the planning system only to the extent that is relevant, proportionate and necessary to do so. The NPPF increases the focus on achieving high quality design and states that it is "fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve".

The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) adds further context to the NPPF and it is intended that the two documents are read together.

Local Policy Guidance

The current local policy is provided within the Coventry Local Plan 2017, which was adopted by Coventry City Council on 6th December 2017. Relevant policy relating to this application is:

- Policy DS3: Sustainable Development Policy
- Policy C2: Telecommunications
- Policy DE1: Ensuring High Quality Design
- Policy GE4: Tree Protection
- Policy AC1: Accessible Transport Network

Emerging Local Policy Guidance – Local Plan Review Reg 19 Consultation

Local Plan review is currently at Reg 19 consultation. Relevant emerging policy relating to this application is:

Policy DS3: Sustainable Development Policy

Policy DE1: Ensuring High Quality Design

Policy GE4: Tree Protection

Policy AC1: Accessible Transport Network

CONSULTATION

Statutory

Objections have been received from:

- Local Highway Authority (LHA)

Non-statutory

No Objections received from:

- Ecology

No objections subject to conditions/contributions have been received from:

- Tree Officer, subject to conditions for tree protection measures.

Neighbour consultation

Immediate neighbours and local councillors have been notified; a site notice was posted on 21st July 2025.

7no letters of objection have been received, raising the following material planning considerations:

- a) The siting of the mast near to a park and houses
- b) The impact on the existing trees
- c) The health implications of mobile phone masts
- d) visual impact of the mast

Any further comments received will be reported within late representations.

APPRAISAL

Principle of Development

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.

Part 16 of the GPDO establishes that the proposal is permitted development and therefore it is accepted in principle by virtue of the legislation and there is no requirement to have regard to the development plan as there would be for any development requiring planning permission.

Nevertheless, Policies C2 and DE1 of the Coventry Local Plan (CLP) (and Policy DE1 of the emerging Local Plan) are material considerations as they relate to issues of siting and appearance. In particular, they seek to ensure telecommunications installations are

suitably sited and do not adversely affect character, appearance or amenity. Similarly, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is also a material consideration and includes a section on supporting high quality communications.

Impact on visual amenity

Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) outlines the Government's commitment to good design and attaches great importance to the design of the built environment, highlighting it as a key aspect of sustainable development. Decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes, and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative; however new developments should seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness. Decisions should address the connections between people and places and the integration of a new development into its existing environment. Consequently, decisions should aim to ensure that developments are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.

Paragraph 131 of the NPPF states the creation of high-quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

The National Planning Policy Framework, paragraph 135 states that "Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);
- d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit.
- e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and
- f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

The NPPF further states (at paragraph 139) "Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes".

Policy DE1 of Coventry City Council's Local Plan states that 'All development proposals must respect and enhance their surroundings and positively contribute towards the local identity and character of an area'.

The NPPF directly addresses the need for enhanced wireless communication services. Paragraph 119 states that ‘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’.

In reference to the use of existing sites, the NPPF continues, stating 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 5G networks, or for connected transport and smart city applications), equipment should be sympathetically designed and camouflaged where appropriate” (120).

The Coventry Local Plan also contains a specific policy to telecommunications equipment, Policy C2, (which has not been carried forward within the emerging local plan) and states in part that “When considering notifications, planning applications and prior approval applications, regard will be given to the following factors: a) operational requirements of the telecommunication networks and the technical limitations of the technology, including any technical constraints on the location of telecommunications apparatus; b) the need for the ICNIRP Guidelines (and any other relevant guidance in place at the time of the application) for safe emissions to be met; c) the potential for sharing existing masts, buildings and other structures; and d) the impact of the development on its surroundings with particular regard to the following criteria: i. the visual amenity, character or appearance of the surrounding area. ii. apparatus and associated structures sited on a building should be sited and designed in order to seek to minimise impact to the external appearance of the host building. iii. development should not have an unacceptable effect on conservation areas or buildings of architectural or historic interest or areas of ecological interest or areas of landscape value or sites of archaeological importance. iv. the proposed provision of landscaping.

The supporting information highlights other sites have been considered and discounted with the application site identified as the most suitable option that balances operational need with local and national planning policies and that it will deliver public benefit in terms of the mobile services it will provide.

The search process involved an initial ‘desk-top’ survey to ascertain and identify major constraints and impediments, followed by a physical search of the area. It is important for the reader to acknowledge that demand for network coverage is always most prevalent within dense residential areas, especially following the working from home shift post covid. Complications continue when one realises that 5G frequencies are higher than previous generations and cannot propagate as far, or through materials as well as previously. As a consequence, the technology requires smaller cells which reduces the availability of options even further. It is recognised that the very nature of installing new 5G communications infrastructure within a dense residential area requires a well-measured balance between the need to extend practical coverage with the risk of increasing visual intrusion. Unfortunately, within dense residential areas, views from

residential properties are inevitable but nonetheless, the most viable solution that minimises amenity issues, has been put forward.

For context, apart from the housing located within Moss Dale Close to the north east and any residential elements in the upper floor flats located above the commercial premises on Radford Road, to the northwest the area has a commercial feel, with the junction of Beake Avenue and Radford Road.

Adjacent to the northern boundary of the site is a scout hut, the wide traffic lighted junction. On the opposite side of the road, there is a run of shops, with the last premises being a former car sales place. As you follow the shops round into Radford Road, they adjoin a pharmacy, with an Aldi, bus stop and more commercial units.

The proposed new mast has been sited and designed in order to provide 5G coverage and to support the existing mobile network. It is paramount that digital connectivity is supported and maintained throughout the country. In particular the shift in user demand from city centres and places of work to residential areas and suburbs requires an improvement in coverage and capacity across the whole network. The current proposal therefore provides such additional capacity to the network whilst still promoting the improved 5G technology.

The apparatus and cabinet are not considered to result in any significant impact upon the visual amenity of the area..

Impact on residential amenity

The nearest residential properties, No.11 - 18 Mossdale Close, are located to the northwest of the site; the mast would be located approximately 16m away from the blank side end gable of No.11 Mossdale Close.

No.11 Mossdale Close, is a three storey end terraced property, where the rear gardens abut the pavement on Radford Road. An existing sycamore tree, named T1 within the submitted Tree Survey, is located near to the rear elevation of No.11 Mossdale Close on the adjacent grass verge.

This tree is discussed in more detail below; however, it is to be retained. The tree will obscure any oblique views, from No.11 Mossdale Close to the proposed phone mast.

Due to the location of the phone mast on a busy traffic lighted junction, there will be no impact on residential amenity due to noise or visual intrusion.

Health impacts

The installation of telecoms infrastructure would normally count as development and require planning permission. However, communications network operators have certain permitted development rights.

These are rights to make specified changes to a building or land without the need to apply for planning permission from the local planning authority (LPA). They are derived from a general planning permission granted by Parliament. Whether or not a mobile mast is permitted development will depend on its height and location. As of April 2022, new

ground-based mobile masts up to 30 metres in non-protected areas and up to 25 metres in protected areas (such as conservation areas and national parks) are permitted.

Operators have to submit a statement that confirms that a mobile mast will adhere to exposure limits on non-ionising radiation set by International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP).

The ICNIRP is an independent organisation that provides scientific advice and guidance on non-ionising radiation. It is formally recognised by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

The UK Health Security Agency, which is responsible for assessing risks to public health, recommends that ICNIRP guidance should be followed.

The Government states that local authorities should not set health safeguards that are different to ICNIRP guidelines.

The application has been accompanied by a declaration that all equipment will be in full compliance with ICNIRP guidelines.

The Government also states that local authorities should not refuse applications for mobile masts on health grounds where ICNIRP guidelines are met.

Tree Implications

Paragraph 136 of the NPPF states Trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined (Unless, in specific cases, there are clear, justifiable and compelling reasons why this would be inappropriate), that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments (such as parks and community orchards), that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly-planted trees, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible.

Applicants and local planning authorities should work with highways officers and tree officers to ensure that the right trees are planted in the right places, and solutions are found that are compatible with highways standards and the needs of different users.

Policy GE4 of the Coventry Local Plan states that trees make a valuable contribution to the city's green landscape. New developments should seek to retain existing trees and other landscape features, incorporating them into a high-quality design and landscape proposals where possible. Should loss be unavoidable, compensatory provision of new trees should be proposed as part of a well-designed landscape scheme.

The application has been supported by:

- AMENDED DRAWING - Tree Survey and Constraints Plan - Drawing No.J250857-GCL-ZZ-ZZ-D-ARB-0100 Rev P01
- AMENDED DRAWING - Tree Retention and Protection Plan - Drawing No.J250857-GCL-ZZ-ZZ-D-ARB-0101 Rev P01
- AMENDED REPORT - Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA), dated 11th August 2025 - Report Ref.J250857-GGC-XX-XX-T-ARB-0600 Rev 1.0

However, the Tree Officer has queried why the applicant proposed to crown reduce T1, Sycamore to 15m from 18m, and the Tree Protection Plan (TPP) does not have any dimensions annotated.

Subject to the clarification of the crown reduction works, which will be reported as a late item, the application is acceptable subject to a dimensioned Tree Protection Plan (TPP) and an Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS).

Highway considerations

Policy AC1 'Accessible Transport Network' states that development proposals which are expected to generate additional trips on the transport network should: a) Integrate with existing transport networks including roads, public transport and walking and cycling routes to promote access by a choice of transport modes. b) Consider the transport and accessibility needs of everyone living, working or visiting the city. c) Support the delivery of new and improved high quality local transport networks which are closely integrated into the built form. d) Actively support the provision and integration of emerging and future intelligent mobility infrastructure.

The objection of the Local Highway Authority (LHA) due to the land potentially being required for a future junction improvement is noted, however, telecommunication operators are considered statutory undertakers, who have certain rights to develop land.

The grass verge the subject of this application is not adopted highway; it is owned by Citizen.

There are no formal plans for any junction redeveloped that have been consulted on; there is an undefined ambition that the junction will be redesigned but it is unknown when and how.

Regretfully, due to no details committed to paper for any type of junction redesign, it has no weight within the determination process of this prior approval application.

The siting of the mast is not on adopted highway and is clear of the existing footpath.

Equality Implications

Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 created the public sector equality duty. Section 149 states:-

(1) 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.

Officers have taken this into account and given due regard to this statutory duty, and the matters specified in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 in the determination of this application.

There are no known equality implications arising directly from this development.

CONCLUSION

The proposal falls within the provisions of Schedule 2, Part 16, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) (GPDO) and in line with guidance of the NPPF and therefore it is recommended that the prior approval is required and those details, having been submitted, are acceptable, subject to a condition requiring Tree Protection Plan (TPP) and a detailed Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS); the cabinets to be colour coded green, with the mast colour coded black.

CONDITIONS/REASONS

1.	<p>The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DRAWING - Site Location Maps - Drawing No.100 Rev A • DRAWING - Proposed Site Plan - Drawing No.201 Rev A • DRAWING - Proposed Site Elevation - Drawing No.301 Rev A
Reason	<i>For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.</i>
2.	<p>Before any development commences on site (including any demolition, site clearance or other preparatory works) the following shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority: a) Arboricultural Method Statement (6.1); and b) a Dimensioned Tree Protection Plan (to include protection measures during and after construction and any construction exclusion zones) (in accordance with 5.5/ Table B.1), site monitoring (6.3) of British Standard BS5837:2012 - Trees in relation to design demolition and construction - Recommendations, which shall also include any proposal for pruning or other preventative works.</p> <p>The approved mitigation and / or protection measures shall be put into place prior to the commencement of any works and shall remain in place during all construction work.</p>
Reason	<i>To protect those trees which are of significant amenity value to the area and which would provide an enhanced standard of appearance to the development in accordance with Policy GE3 and GE4 of the Coventry Local Plan 2017 and the emerging Local Plan.</i>
3.	<p>Within one month of the installation of the Mast and associated apparatus hereby approved, they shall have been colour coated Black (RAL 9005). The ground-based cabinet(s) hereby approved, shall have been colour coated Green (RAL 6005)</p>

Reason	<i>To ensure that the proposed development has a satisfactory external appearance in the interests of the visual amenities of the area in accordance with Policy DE1 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016.</i>
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