

DECISION DELEGATED TO HEAD OF PLANNING

Application No:	H09-0998-25	Applicant:	Cornerstone
Proposal:	Proposed upgrade of existing telecommunications base station comprising removal of existing 17.6m monopole and replace with 22.50m monopole with headframe supporting 9 antennas and internal upgrade to existing ground based equipment cabin and ancillary development		
Location:	Land Adjacent To Holbeach United Fc Social Club Park Road Holbeach		
Terminal Date:	11th December 2025		

Planning Policies

South East Lincolnshire Local Plan - Adopted: March 2019

01	Spatial Strategy
02	Development Management
03	Design of New Development
05	Meeting Physical Infrastructure and Service Needs
29	The Historic Environment

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework December 2024

Section 10 - Supporting high quality communications
 Section 12 - Achieving well-designed places

Representations:

	Object	Support	No Obj.	Comments
PARISH COUNCIL	0	0	0	0
WARD MEMBER	0	0	0	0
ENVIRONMENT AGENCY	0	0	0	1
HIGHWAYS & SUDS SUPPORT	0	0	0	1
SOUTH HOLLAND INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD	0	0	0	1
SHDC INTERNAL	0	0	1	0

OTHER STATUTORY BODIES	0	0	1	4
RESIDENTS	0	0	0	1

CASE OFFICER ASSESSMENT

Description of Proposal

This application seeks determination as to whether the prior approval of the Local Planning Authority is required for the installation of a 22.5m tall monopole with headframe supporting 9 antennas and internal upgrade to existing ground based equipment cabin and ancillary development. This would replace an existing 17.6m monopole.

Site Description

The site is within the settlement boundaries of Holbeach, as outlined within the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan, 2019. The site is located within the car park for Holbeach United Football Club's social club. Holbeach Conservation Area is located approximately 75m to the south, while the University Academy Holbeach is located due north. The specific location of development is currently occupied by a telecommunications mast and associated infrastructure. Large trees shade the site to the north.

Relevant History

H09-0817-00 - Telecoms determination - Installation of telecommunications apparatus - Approved 25/07/00.

Consultation Responses

The responses received from consultees during the initial consultation exercises, which can be viewed in their entirety through the South Holland website, can be summarised as follows:

Arqiva

"Arqiva is responsible for providing the transmission network for the BBC & ITV along with the majority of the UK's radio companies and is responsible for ensuring the integrity of ReBroadcast Links. Tall infrastructure such as wind turbines and other tall structures have the potential to block radio transmission links and rebroadcasting links (through direct blocking of radio signal or deflecting signal). Our radio transmission networks normally operate with a 100m buffer either side of a radio link, free from interference by a tall development.

Arqiva do not assess the potential impact of tall buildings & wind turbines on the domestic reception of television and radio services. We would recommend that the developer undertakes its own reception survey to understand the potential for interference to television and radio reception, and consideration is made for a planning condition requiring the developer to mitigate the impact of any degradation of television and radio reception caused by tall buildings & wind turbines, similar to many other wind turbine and wind farm schemes.

Further details can be found on the Ofcom website via the following URL.

https://www.ofcom.org.uk/siteassets/resources/documents/manage-your-licence/fixedlinks/tall_structures.pdf?v=333938

We have considered whether this development will have any adverse effect on our operations and have concluded that we have no objection"

Wingland Aero Club and Wingland Airfield

"Wingland Aero Club and Wingland Airfield has no objections to the application at all."

Sports England

"Sport England raises no objection to the application which is considered to accord with exception 3 of our playing fields policy and the requirements of paragraph 104 of the NPPF in that the proposed layout of the replacement monopole and equipment should not impact on the use of the playing field."

Conservation Officer

"We have no objection to this proposal. We do not consider that the proposed development would result in any undue risk of harm to the historic environment. However, any minor harm to the conservation area, will be mitigated by the public benefit of the installation"

South Holland Internal Drainage Board

"Thank you for your consultation on planning application H09-0998-25. Having screened the application, whilst the site in question lies within the Internal Drainage District of the South Holland Internal Drainage Board the proposed application does not meet our threshold for commenting as per our Planning and Byelaw Strategy. Therefore, the Board has no comments to make."

National Air Traffic Services

"The proposed development has been examined from a technical safeguarding aspect and does not conflict with our safeguarding criteria. Accordingly, NATS (En Route) Public Limited Company ("NERL") has no safeguarding objection to the proposal. However, please be aware that this response applies specifically to the above consultation and only reflects the position of NATS (that is responsible for the management of en route air traffic) based on the information supplied at the time of this application. This letter does not provide any indication of the position of any other party, whether they be an airport, airspace user or otherwise. It remains your responsibility to ensure that all the appropriate consultees are properly consulted. If any changes are proposed to the information supplied to NATS in regard to this application which become the basis of a revised, amended or further application for approval, then as a statutory consultee NERL requires that it be further consulted on any such changes prior to any planning permission or any consent being granted."

Historic Environment Officer

"Having reviewed the application documents and the updated available Historic Environment information for this application, the proposal is unlikely to have an impact on significant archaeological remains. Consequently, no further archaeological input is necessary for this application. It is not necessary to consult us on this application again, unless there are material changes to the proposals. However, if you would like advice from us, please contact us to explain your request. Finally, considering the proposal is within the Holbeach Conservation Area, the SHDC Conservation officer must be consulted before a decision is made (setting impact)"

Environment Agency

"There are no matters for consideration in relation to Schedule 2, Part 16, Class A of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) within the remit of the Environment Agency. We therefore have no comments to make on this application."

SHDC Environmental Protection

"No comments regarding land contamination."

Highway and Lead Local Flood Authority

"Proposed upgrade of existing telecommunications base station comprising removal of existing 17.6m monopole and replace with 22.50m monopole with headframe supporting 9 antennas and internal upgrade to existing ground based equipment cabin and ancillary development. The

replacement will be sited in the exact same location - it is off the public highway and there is sufficient space on site for the parking of works vehicles. The proposal will not have an adverse impact on the public highway"

Also request an informative condition to be applied to this proposal.

Public Representations

This application has been advertised in accordance with the Development Procedure Order and the Council's Statement of Community Involvement. In this instance, no letters of representation have been received.

These can be summarised as:

Key Planning Considerations

Principle of Development - Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order, 2015 (as amended)

The development is proposed under the provisions of Schedule 2, Part 16, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended).

Schedule 2, Part 16, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order, 2015 (as amended) provides that the following development as described below is permitted:

'Development by or on behalf of an electronic communications code operator for the purpose of the operator's electronic communications network in, on, over or under land controlled by that operator or in accordance with the electronic communications code, consisting of -

- (a) the installation, alteration or replacement of any electronic communications apparatus,
- (b) the use of land in an emergency for a period not exceeding 18 months to station and operate moveable electronic communications apparatus required for the replacement of unserviceable electronic communications apparatus, including the provision of moveable structures on the land for the purposes of that use, or
- (c) development ancillary to radio equipment housing..'

Part 16 Class A details that development is not 'permitted' for 'ground-based apparatus', that:

"(1) Development consisting of the installation, alteration or replacement of electronic communications apparatus (other than on a building) is not permitted by Class A(a) if -
(a) in the case of the installation of electronic communications apparatus (other than a mast), the apparatus, excluding any antenna, would exceed a height of 15 metres above ground level;
(b) in the case of the alteration or replacement of electronic communications apparatus (other than a mast) that is already installed, the apparatus, excluding any antenna, would when altered or replaced exceed the height of the existing apparatus or a height of 15 metres above ground level, whichever is the greater;"

A.1(1)(c) to (e) of Class A of Part 16 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended) state:

"A.1-(1) Development consisting of the installation, alteration or replacement of electronic communications apparatus (other than on a building) is not permitted by Class A(a) if -
(c) in the case of the installation of a mast, the mast, excluding any antenna, would exceed a height of-

- (i) 30 metres above ground level on unprotected land; or
- (ii) 25 metres above ground level on article 2(3) land or land which is on a highway;
- (d) in the case of the alteration or replacement of a mast, the height of the mast, excluding any antenna, would when altered or replaced exceed the greater of the height of the existing mast or a height of
 - (i) 30 metres above ground level on unprotected land; or
 - (ii) 25 metres above ground level on article 2(3) land or land which is on a highway; or
- (e) in the case of the alteration or replacement of a mast
 - (i) the mast is on any land which is, or is within, a site of special scientific interest; and
 - (ii) the mast would, when altered or replaced, exceed the original width of the mast by more than one third".

Para. A.2 sets out conditions in which the aforementioned development must comply with in order

for the development to be permitted. In this regard Para A.2(2) provides that:

"Class A development is permitted subject to the condition that -

(a) any electronic communications apparatus provided in accordance with that permission is removed from the land or building on which it is situated:

(i) if such development was carried out in an emergency, at the expiry of the relevant period; or

(ii) in any other case, as soon as reasonably practicable after it is no longer required for electronic communications purposes; and

(b) such land or building is restored to its condition before the development took place, or to any other condition as may be agreed in writing between the local planning authority and the developer."

A.2(3) of Part 16, Class A, expresses that development under Class A of Part 16 is permitted subject to the conditions set out in paragraph A.3 (prior approval). This specifically states that "Subject to sub-paragraph (5), Class A development - is permitted subject, except in case of emergency (in which case only paragraph A.3(12) applies), to the conditions set out in paragraph A.3 (prior approval)".

Paragraph A.3 sets out that before beginning the development, the developer must write to the Local Planning Authority for a determination as to whether the prior approval of the authority will be required as to the siting and appearance of the development.

Specifically, A.3(4) states that: "(4) Before beginning the development described in paragraph A.2(3), the developer must apply to the local planning authority for a determination as to whether the prior approval of the authority will be required as to the siting and appearance of the development", with A.3(5) detailing the requirements for such submission.

Accordingly, the only matters that may be considered are the siting and appearance of the development, as stated by Part 16 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended).

Notification of Development

Paragraph A.3(1) of Part 16, Class A of the Order states that "Before making the application required by sub-paragraph (4), the developer must give notice of the proposed development to(a)any person (other than the developer) who is an owner of the land to which the development relates". Paragraph A.3(2) expands upon this, listing the details which must accompany a notification to the developer. Amongst these is "the date by which any such representations should be received by the local planning authority, being a date not less than 14 days from the date of the notice"

There was previously contention, prior to the submission of this application, over the site ownership. Included as part of this submission is evidence of the applicant placing an advert within the local press, which demonstrates due diligence to seek out the site owner. This aligns with the requirements of A.3 (2)(b).

On this basis, it is considered that the proper notification has been served correctly and the application is valid.

Assessment

Officers note that Section 10 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) (NPPF), relating to 'Supporting high quality communications' states, within Paragraph 123, 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".

With regard to the aforementioned, the applicant has submitted a declaration of conformity in relation to the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) within the application as required.

Siting and Appearance

Section 12 of the NPPF, "Achieving well-designed places", states that the "creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and

development process should achieve" and as such, it is generally accepted that good design plays a key role towards sustainable development.

Paragraph 135, contained within Section 12 of the NPPF, states that new development should function well and add to the overall quality of the area (including beyond the short term) and should be visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping. This goes on to establish that it is important that new development should be of the highest quality, to enhance and reinforce good design characteristics, and that decisions must have regard towards the impact that the proposed development would have on local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting such as topography, street patterns, building lines, boundary treatment and through scale and massing. Developments should 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, among other considerations.

Policy 2 of the SELLP outlines sustainable development considerations for proposals; providing a framework for an operational policy to be used in assessing the sustainable development attributes of all development proposals. Furthermore, Policy 3 of the SELLP requires development to comprise good design; identifying issues that should be considered when preparing schemes so that development sits comfortably with, and adds positively to, its historically designated or undesignated townscape or landscape surroundings.

These policies accord with the provisions of the NPPF and require that design which is inappropriate to the local area, or which fails to maximise opportunities for improving the character and quality of an area, will not be acceptable. Proposals for new development would therefore require the aforementioned considerations to be adequately assessed and designed, including the siting, design, and scale to be respectful of surrounding development and ensure that the character of the area is not compromised.

Due to the significant scale of the proposal, it is considered that the monopole will be readily visible and prominent in the location. That being said, the existing monopole has already created a degree of tolerance for structures such as this within the immediate setting. Whilst the proposal would be taller than the existing structure, it would not be so significantly taller as to detrimentally impact upon the character of the area and the intensity of the use would not be altered as a result. Moreover, the existing large trees adjacent to the site would offer a degree of screening, particularly when viewed from the north. These two factors would combine to lessen the impact.

Views could be obtained from the Conservation Area; however, these would only be present from the periphery of the Conservation Area. Lines of site towards the structure from within the Conservation Area, including from the cemetery, would be obscured by existing trees. This lowers visibility, in turn lowering impact.

Taking account of the design, scale, and nature of the development, as detailed above, the proposal is considered to be acceptable. The proposal would not cause an adverse impact to the character or appearance of the area and would therefore be in accordance with Policies 2 and 3 of the SELLP and Section 12 of the NPPF.

Communication Infrastructure

Paragraph 119 of the NPPF 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".

Paragraph 120 goes on to detail 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".

Planning Balance

As stated by Part 16 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted

Development) Order 2015 (as amended), the only matters that may be considered as part of an application of this nature are the siting and appearance of the development.

The siting, scale and design of the proposed equipment is considered to cause minor harm to the character of the area, but the chosen siting is viewed as reasonable, and the visual harm caused is considered to be outweighed by the social, technological and economic benefits of improved services provided by the development.

Additional Considerations

Public Sector Equality Duty

In making this decision the Authority must have regard to the public sector equality duty (PSED) under s.149 of the Equalities Act. This means that the Council must have due regard to the need (in discharging its functions) to:

A. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act

B. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. This may include removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic; taking steps to meet the special needs of those with a protected characteristic; encouraging participation in public life (or other areas where they are underrepresented) of people with a protected characteristic(s).

C. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The PSED must be considered as a relevant factor in making this decision but does not impose a duty to achieve the outcomes in s.149. It is only one factor that needs to be considered, and may be balanced against other relevant factors.

It is not considered that the recommendation in this case will have a disproportionately adverse impact on a protected characteristic.

Human Rights

In making a decision, the Authority should be aware of and take into account any implications that may arise from the Human Rights Act 1998. Under the Act, it is unlawful for a public authority such as South Holland District Council to act in a manner that is incompatible with the European Convention on Human Rights. The Authority is referred specifically to Article 8 (right to respect for private and family life) and Article 1 of the First Protocol (protection of property).

It is not considered that the recommendation in this case interferes with local residents' right to respect for their private and family life, home and correspondence, except insofar as it is necessary to protect the rights and freedoms of others (in this case, the rights of the applicant). The Council is also permitted to control the use of property in accordance with the general public interest and the recommendation is considered to be a proportionate response to the submitted application based on the considerations set out in this report.

Conclusion

The proposal constitutes permitted development Class A, Part 16 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended). The siting and appearance of the development is considered acceptable.

Recommendation

Based on the assessment detailed above, it is recommended that the proposal should be approved under Delegated Authority.