

North York Moors National Park Authority

District/Borough: Scarborough Borough Council
(South)
Parish: Newby and Scalby

Application No. NYM/2020/0115/FL

Proposal: erection of 15.97 metre high mast with associated dishes and antennas together with ground based cabinets, satellite dish, generator, fencing and access

Location: field north of Keld Runnels Road, Scalby Nabs, Suffield

Decision Date: 20 May 2020

Extended to:

Consultations

Parish -

Highways – 17 April 2020 – No objections

Arqiva - 02 April - No observations to make.

Site Notice Expiry Date – 26 May 2020

Others –

Paul and Sue Coates, Keld Runnels Farm, Scalby Nab - 08 May 2020 - Whilst we do not object to this application in principle, access to the site is from a private (and privately maintained!) road and we would hope that if permission is granted it will be a condition that the access road is reinstated to a good condition on completion of the work.

Peter Ward, Spring Farm, Scalby Nabs - 10 May 2020 – Object - The National Park must be protected from such "eye soars" just for the sake of modern communications. Being close to Scarborough and an elevated location is no reason to place a mast in a most beautiful and unique part of the park.

Jean Levitt, West Farm, Scalby Nabs - 3 May 2020 – Object - The site in question is on land adjoining mine. The owner of the field (and presumably the financial beneficiary) has the land higher than the prospective site and less obtrusive.

Director of Planning's Recommendation

Refusal for the following reason:

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| 1. | The proposed 15.97m mast and associated access track, would by reason of its siting, height and materials, have an adverse impact on the landscape and character of this part of the National Park contrary to Core Policy A and Development Policy 25 of the North York Moors Local Development Plan Policies which seek to conserve and enhance the landscape and ensure that the development does not have an adverse visual impact upon the character of the locality. |
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Background

The proposed site is located north of Keld Runnels Road. The site is on open, elevated ground with access from Keld Runnels Road and has a clear picture of the target coverage area. The proposed site is adjacent an existing tree which would provide limited visual mitigation.

This proposed telecommunications site is required as part of the Emergency Services Network; and comprises the installation of a 15.97m high monopole mast equipped with 2 dishes and 3 antennas. Also proposed is an associated compound measuring 42.5sqm accommodating 3 equipment cabinets, 1 meter cabinet, one 1.2m sat dish and 1 generator. Also proposed are 6m wide double access gates and a 3m wide 198m permanent gravelled access track.

In support of the application it is stated that the height is necessary to ensure that the antennas can meet the emergency services communications network coverage demands in the surrounding area and fit into the coverage provided by surrounding sites in the network. The dimensions of the proposed tower are the thinnest available to support the required antennas and associated equipment at this geographical location. The proposed monopole and the proposed ground based equipment will be painted green (RAL 60009), unless otherwise requested. This colour scheme is considered to be the most appropriate finish to reduce contrast with the surrounding environment.

The proposed site is primarily required to provide new uninterrupted, high quality emergency services communications coverage to a section of Low Road, Keld Runnels Road and the surrounding area and is part of a Government programme which seeks to replace the existing Airwave blue-light communications system with a 4G platform

The proposed mast has been reduced in height. However, the applicants were requested to relocate to a differ part of the field but

A ICNIRP (International Commission on Non-Ionising Radiation Protection) Certificate has been submitted with the application, as required by Government.

Main Issues

The main issue is whether this 15m mast and associated equipment would have an adverse impact on the character of the National Park landscape.

Development Policy 25 (Telecommunications) of the North York Moors Local Development Framework relates to telecommunication provision within the Park and states that the erection of radio and telecommunication masts will be permitted where the proposal does not have an unacceptable impact on the character of the locality and wider landscape.

Furthermore Government Guidance states that National Parks should respond positively to telecommunications development proposals whilst taking into account the need to protect the best and most sensitive environments.

The English National Parks and The Broads Circular 2010 is a UK Vision and Circular is explicit in its positive approach to encouraging communications infrastructure in National Parks. In the context of the additional constraints presented by protected landscapes, the Government nevertheless “is committed to working with operators to ensure the best possible outcome.”

However, it is important to consider whether the proposed mast would have a detrimental impact on the character of the locality and the wider landscape.

The proposed mast would be sited in a prominent position, set against the context of rising land and only a single tree. The tree would not screen the mast, or provide a sufficient back drop and it would be clearly visible from the adjacent highway. Alternative locations have been suggested to the applicant, such as further up the field adjacent a much more substantial tree belt. However the applicant does not wish to re-locate the mast and has asked that the application be determined on the basis of the current plans.

Associated with the proposal would be a 3m wide gravel track that would skirt across the edge of the field. It is considered that a gravel track of the length proposed would also be visually harmful to the character of the existing field and surrounding open landscape.

In view of the above considerations, it is recommended that this application be refused.

Draft Local Plan

Policy BL10 – Communications Infrastructure – seeks to permit the provision of telecommunications infrastructure where there is no unacceptable adverse impact on the character of the locality and the siting makes use of the least environmentally intrusive option available.

Pre-commencement Conditions

N/A

Explanation of how the Authority has Worked Positively with the Applicant/Agent

Refusal (Amendments Requested and Declined)

Negotiations have taken place with the aim of making changes to ensure the proposal complies with the relevant policies of the Development Plan/delivers a sustainable form of development as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, though unfortunately such changes were not implemented/accepted.