

North York Moors National Park Authority

Delegated decision report

Application reference number: NYM/2022/0453

Development description: prior notification for erection of 20 metre high mast with antennas and remote radio heads together with associated ground based equipment under Part 16

Site address: Gateway Centre Garages, Whitegate Close, Staithes

Parish: Hinderwell

Case officer: Miss Megan O'Mara

Applicant: Cornerstone
c/o Agent

Agent: Clarke Telecom

fao: Mr Jamaal Hafiz, Unit E Madison Place, Northampton Road, Manchester, M40 5AG

Director of Planning's Recommendation

Refusal for the following reason:

Reason(s) for refusal

Refusal reason code	Refusal reason text
1	The proposed single 20m mast, would by reason of its height towering above nearby buildings and trees would constitute a dominating and unduly obtrusive feature in the wider townscape and have an adverse impact on the landscape and character of this part of the National Park contrary to Strategic Policy A and Policy BL10 of the Authority's Adopted Policies as set out in the Local Plan, which seek to conserve and enhance the landscape and ensure that the development does not have an unacceptable adverse visual impact upon the character of the locality and the wider landscape.

Consultation responses

Parish

Object – 11 July 2022 – The Parish Council consider that the location is wrong. The visual impact on the village will be negative. It is too close to residential developments.

Highways

No objections – 20 June 2022

Third party responses

No responses

Publicity expiry

Advertisement/site notice expiry date: 1 August 2022



This photo shows the location of the proposed development, from the resident's section of Staithes Car Park.

Background

This application seeks prior approval for the erection of a 20m telecoms mast between two garage/storage units at the southern end of the Staithes Pay and Display Car Park. The proposed development is not within the Staithes Conservation Area.

Cornerstone is a mobile infrastructure services company. They seek approval for works which will comprise the installation of a 20 metre high slim-line monopole supporting 3 no. antennas, 2 no. equipment cabinets, 1no. meter cabinet and ancillary development thereto, including 3 no. Remote Radio Units (RRU's).

The purpose of the development is to improve and enhance 2G, 3G and 4G coverage and capacity to the surrounding area as well as provide new 5G service provision for Telefónica as demands on the network increase and technologies change.

The proposed development would sit adjacent to some mature trees, storage units, domestic garages, industrial buildings and residential properties. The development would be prominent and clearly visible from the Staithes Car Park.

Main issues

Local Plan Policies

Strategic Policy A relates to Achieving National Park Purposes and Sustainable Development. Within the North York Moors National Park, a positive approach to new development will be taken, in line with the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in the National Planning Policy Framework and where decisions are consistent with National Park statutory purposes. New development should conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park and also promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park by the public. Where there is an irreconcilable conflict between the statutory purposes the Sandford Principle will be applied and greater weight will be attached to the first purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park.

Policy BL10 relates specifically to Communications Infrastructure. The policy states that the provision of infrastructure for radio, broadband and other telecommunications and information technology will only be permitted where it is of a scale and design appropriate to the National Park and helps meet the needs of local communities. There should be no unacceptable adverse visual impact upon the character of the locality and the wider landscape and should make use of the least environmentally intrusive option available.

Discussion

Modern communications are increasingly vital to those living in, working in or visiting the National Park. They provide online access for residents to services that otherwise

can be physically located miles away, they are essential for businesses that are located or would wish to locate in the National Park – especially in the tourism sector. They can also help visitors in their understanding of and navigation around the North York Moors. However, the remoteness and terrain of much of the National Park imposes limitations on services and deficiencies continue to exist.

Policy BL10 of the Authority's adopted policies facilitates this expansion of broadband and mobile infrastructure for the benefit of all, whilst at the same time minimising any environmental and landscape impacts. The Authority can support development that does not result in an unacceptable adverse visual impact upon the character of the locality and the wider landscape. It is also important that the siting of the installation makes use of the least environmentally intrusive option available.

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.

Whilst it is appreciated that the surrounding context of the development site is varied, with a mixture of domestic garages, storage units, industrial buildings, a car park and residential properties, it is considered that the height of the proposed mast is inappropriate and would have a detrimental impact on the character of the surrounding area. At 20m tall, the exceptional height of the proposed mast would sit more than twice the height of the adjacent streetlamps and would significantly exceed the height of nearby dwellings, therefore failing to relate well to the surrounding context. The surrounding structures and buildings do not provide a sufficient backdrop to minimise the wider visual impact of the proposed development.

For clarity, the Authority does not object to the principle of development or the location of the proposed mast; it is the overall height of the mast that the Authority is unable to support. The proposal to erect a single 20m mast does not represent an acceptable environmental and communications balance due to the wider visual impact from the height and impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area. A much shorter mast in the proposed location could be acceptable, however the applicants state in their supporting information that a mast of reduced height would not be viable in this particular location.

In view of the above, it is considered that the proposed development is contrary to Strategic Policy A and Policy BL10 of the Authority's Adopted Policies, as set out within the Local Plan. As such, the prior-notification application is recommended for refusal.

Explanation of how the Authority has worked positively with the applicant/agent

The Authority's Officers have appraised the scheme against the Development Plan and other material considerations and concluded that the scheme represents a form of development so far removed from the vision of the sustainable development supported in the Development Plan that no changes could be negotiated to render the scheme acceptable and thus no changes were requested.