

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

PLANNING AND BUILDING STANDARDS COMMITTEE

24 APRIL 2017

APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION

ITEM:	REFERENCE NUMBER: 17/00277/FUL
OFFICER:	Julie Hayward
WARD:	Hawick and Hermitage
PROPOSAL:	Erection of telecommunications tower and associated equipment within fenced compound
SITE:	Land West of Ovenshank Farm Cottage Newcastleton
APPLICANT:	EE
AGENT:	WHP Wilkinson Helsby

SITE DESCRIPTION

The site is situated to the north east of Newcastleton and to the north of the B6357. The site is within an agricultural field used for grazing. The former railway line is to the south in a cutting and the site is surrounded by fields. There is a dwellinghouse to the east, Ovenshank Farm Cottage; Powisholm Farmhouse is to the south and Liddlevale and Byreholm are to the south east.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposal is for the installation of new telecommunication equipment within a compound surrounded by a 1.8m mesh linked fence:

- One 15m high lattice mast on a 3.6 square metre concrete base with three antenna and two 600mm dishes (at 11.5m high);
- Four cabinets (1 green 1110mm by 415mm by 1290mm, 1 grey 770mm by 770mm by 1800mm, 1 grey 730mm by 750mm by 1672mm and 1 grey 600mm by 520mm by 1405mm) to house electronic radio equipment;
- Generator housing;
- A 1143mm satellite dish on a 2.7m high pole;
- A pair of 3m wide gates;
- Associated structures.

Access would be from the B6357 via the farm and field track and across the railway bridge. The ground would be levelled to accommodate the compound. The site is required to give coverage to the surrounding area and to link other sites into the network. This is as part of a project to give mobile, data and emergency services coverage via mobile phones to more remote areas.

PLANNING HISTORY

None

REPRESENTATION SUMMARY

Six representations have been received objecting to the application. These can be viewed in full on the Public Access portal on the Council's website. The principle issues raised are:

- The location address does not exist and the applicant's name is incorrect;
- No neighbour notification was carried out;
- Impact on the re-opening of the railway;
- The proximity of the mast, using the Tetra system and frequency, to dwellinghouses and the impacts on health. The mast should be located away from residential properties;
- If the railway is reopened a new access would be required on adjacent land not owned/under the control of the applicant;
- There are inaccuracies in the submission;
- The track is unsuitable for commercial traffic and is close to residential properties.

APPLICANTS' SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- Site Detail Sheet
- Site Coverage
- Declaration of Conformity with ICNIRP Public Exposure Guidelines

CONSULTATION RESPONSES:

Scottish Borders Council Consultees

Roads Planning Service: I have no objections to this proposal as once completed, this development will generate minimal traffic movements. The construction period will see an intensified use of the access and the contractor should minimise the impact of this where possible.

Landscape Architect: I visited the locality of the site and viewed the site from the B6357 road. I note that the mast is 15m high and over 200m from the nearest property and I cannot find any landscape related reason to object.

Archaeology Officer: There are no known implications for this proposal.

Statutory Consultees

Newcastleton and District Community Council: NDCC has lobbied hard to seek investment to widen the level of basic mobile coverage beyond the village boundary and initially welcome this. However, NDCC does not have the technical expertise to understand if this mast (along with the upgrade to the existing mast at the golf course) will also be 'future proofed' so that it also enables a commercial platform to operate alongside the emergency services network.

Any upgrade or new masts must be able to sustain a commercial platform so a commercial provider can be persuaded to offer a wider service. This site, along with the other on the outskirts of Hawick, will enable coverage of a large area of 'not spot' but only if it has a commercial platform as part of its build.

Other Consultees

None

DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES:

SES Plan Strategic Development Plan 2013

Policy 1B: The Spatial Strategy: Development Principles

Scottish Borders Local Development Plan 2016

PMD2: Quality Standards

ED6: Digital Connectivity

HD3: Protection of Residential Amenity

IS4: Transport Development and Infrastructure

IS15: Radio Telecommunications

OTHER PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS:

None

KEY PLANNING ISSUES:

- Landscape and visual impacts of the proposed development;
- Impact on residential amenities;
- Access;
- Impact on the safeguarding of the Borders Railway.

ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATION:

Planning Policy

Policy ED6 supports proposals that lead to the expansion and improvement of the electronic communications network in the Borders provided that it can be achieved without any unacceptable detrimental impact on the natural and built environment. This includes telecommunication infrastructure.

Policy IS15 deals with radio telecommunications, including masts, antennas and associated structures and such proposals will be assessed against siting and design considerations.

Developers must demonstrate that they have considered options for minimising the impact of the development, including the scale and type of the equipment; mast or site sharing; measures for concealment through appropriate siting, design, landscaping, materials and colours; timing and method of construction; access that takes account of the impact on adjoining users and wildlife habitats and the potential for siting on existing buildings or structures. Where mast sharing is shown to be impractical the developer must demonstrate that there is no alternative location and

siting on existing buildings or structures would cause greater harm to the appearance of the area than that which is proposed. The cumulative impact must also be considered.

The agent has submitted details of other sites that have been considered and discounted due to poor coverage as a result of surrounding topography and woodland, poor access and issues with power connections; the site has to be at this height to communicate with other sites in the area to give sufficient coverage and this site represents the optimum environmental and technical location.

The Site Coverage Plan shows that there is an existing mast adjacent to the B6357 to the south of Newcastleton which provides coverage for Newcastleton itself and an area to the west of the B6399 to the north of Newcastleton. The proposed mast would increase this coverage to the east and the west. The agent has advised that this location has been chosen due to the coverage it would provide.

The lack of existing masts in the surrounding area would appear to discount mast sharing as an option. In terms of cumulative impact, there is a mast adjacent to the B6357 to the south of Newcastleton and one at the golf club. The proposed mast would not result in an unacceptable cumulative impact with other similar installations.

Siting, Design and Visual Impact

Policy IS15 requires that telecommunications equipment should be positioned and designed to avoid unacceptable effects on the natural and built environment.

The site is an agricultural field. There are no landscape designations in this area. The associated equipment is minor in scale and contained within the compound and so the main issue with this application is the visual impact of the mast. This would be a lattice mast, 15m in height and grey in colour. The site would be visible from the B6357 though set back 280m from the public road on elevated ground. There is a degree of screening from the topography of the area and trees and so the visual impact would be localised. The distant hills also provide a backdrop when viewed from the north east. It is considered that the proposal would not be unduly prominent in the landscape. Taking into account the scale of the development, the proposal would not have a significant detrimental impact on the visual amenities of the area.

The Council's Landscape Architect has no objection to the proposal on landscape grounds.

Impact on Residential Amenities

Policy HD3 states that development that is judged to have an adverse impact on the amenity of residential areas will not be permitted.

The neighbouring properties are over 200m from the site. It is considered that the proposal would not affect the light, privacy or outlook of the occupiers of these properties.

Concern has been expressed regarding the proximity of the mast to dwellinghouses and the impacts on health. This is not a matter for the planning process, but a certificate has been submitted demonstrating that the proposal complies with Government guidelines in respect of health and safety and the agent has advised that this would not be a Tetra mast.

The supporting statement advises that there will be minimal noise generated from the proposed base station.

The Council has a legal duty to neighbour notify any properties that are within 20m of an application site (the red line boundary on the site plan). The site plan indicates that there are no properties within this 20m zone that require to be notified. The application form indicates that all land within this 20m zone is owned by Mr Tennant of Shaws Farm and he was served notice of the application on 1st February 2017. Therefore the application does not require to be advertised in the local newspaper for "land without premises". The Community Council was been consulted on the application.

Access

Policy IS4 states that development that could prejudice the delivery of the Borders Railway from Hawick to the English Border will not be permitted.

The proposed equipment compound is within the agricultural field adjacent to the former railway line. The development would not encroach onto the railway line and the proposal would not prejudice the aim of delivering a reinstated railway in the future.

The access to the site would be via the track from the B6357 through the steading and field and over the railway bridge. No upgrading works are proposed.

The Roads Planning Service has no objections to this proposal as once completed, the development would generate minimal traffic movements. It is accepted that the construction period would see a briefly intensified use of the access and additional traffic.

No rights of way would be affected by the development.

CONCLUSION

Subject to compliance with the schedule of conditions, the development will accord with the relevant provisions of the Local Development Plan 2016. It is considered that the proposal would not be unduly prominent in the landscape or harm the visual amenities of the area or residential amenities of occupants of neighbouring properties. In addition, the proposal would not prejudice the aim of delivering the extension to the Borders railway.

RECOMMENDATION BY CHIEF PLANNING OFFICER:

I recommend the application is approved subject to the following conditions:

1. Within no more than 6 months of the date at which the development hereby consented ceases to be required for the purpose of telecommunications infrastructure provision:
 - (a) the telecommunications mast hereby consented, and all ancillary equipment and installations (including fencing, the cabinets and platform in hard standing) shall all be removed from the site; and
 - (b) the land at the site shall be restored to its former condition, unless, an application is first made and consent granted for the development's retention on site to serve an alternative purpose.

Reason: Retention of the mast, and all ancillary installations on site, beyond the point in time at which it has become redundant, would not be sympathetic to the character of the site or the visual amenities of the surrounding area.

DRAWING NUMBERS

- 01 Site Location
- 02 Site Layout
- 03 Equipment Layout
- 04 North West Elevation
- 05 Equipment Details
- 06 North West ICNIRP Elevation
- 07 ICNIRP Plan
- 08 Antenna Schematic

Approved by

Name	Designation	Signature
Ian Aikman	Chief Planning Officer	

The original version of this report has been signed by the Service Director (Regulatory Services) and the signed copy has been retained by the Council.

Author(s)

Name	Designation
Julie Hayward	Lead Planning Officer



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Land West Of Overshank Farm
Cottage
Newcastleton



