



Town Planning Statement
Electronic Communications Base Station

At the Existing Arqiva Site

Huddersfield Wakefield Road
Deal House
603-605 Wakefield Road
Huddersfield, Waterloo
West Yorkshire
HD5 9XP

Site Reference 220338

ARQIVA LIMITED

3rd August 2020

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This statement is submitted in support of an application for prior approval for the mobile network operator highlighted on the drawings. The application site is operated by Arqiva Ltd, a radio site infrastructure provider.

1.2 The application includes:

- A description of the site and surrounding area
- A description of the proposal
- A statement of community engagement
- A review of planning policy considerations
- A review of design and access considerations

1.3 A number of other accompanying documents have been submitted in support of the application and these are referred to and should be read in conjunction with this statement.

2. THE SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

Local Planning Authority: Kirklees Council

Development Plan: Kirklees Unitary Development Plan (1999)

Policy Relevant to the Development Site:

The site is designated as being within the settlement boundary, with urban uses to the north, east, south and west. The site location designation is not a material consideration. The site is an existing telecommunications site.

Kirklees Council does not have a specific telecoms policy. Therefore the NPPF is of relevance. The National Planning Policy section of this supporting statement goes into detailed analysis of why this site is in compliance with the NPPF.

Policy Analysis:

The proposed works on this existing site would not be to the visual detriment of the surrounding area (it is accepted they would qualify as a visual change), would not result in demonstrable harm to the character of the area (retaining the form of the existing mast (albeit higher)), but are necessary to ensure improved delivery of service, and would respect and continue to maintain the appearance of the area, and would be suitably distant from potentially sensitive users (as at present), so according with the principles of the Development Plan. It fully accords with the requirements of the NPPF

3. THE PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The development proposed is shown in detail in the drawings submitted and is for an electronic communications base station. The principal elements of this beneficial proposal are as follows:

The upgrading of equipment on the existing installation as captured on the enclosed drawings 220338

- 3.2 As necessary, any uncontaminated earth and materials excavated will be reused for fill and levelling.
- 3.3 The radio equipment housing will need to be mechanically ventilated to avoid overheating of equipment. The ventilation equipment is only likely to operate during the day during hot weather. If it is considered specific noise attenuation measures to be necessary, we would be pleased to discuss practicable solutions.

Network Requirements

- 3.4 Section 6 of the Code of Best Practice on Mobile Network Development in England, published in June 2016, explains how mobile networks operate. In the annual network rollout information supplied, the operator will have explained its network requirements and the anticipated use of existing sites, including those owned by radio site management companies like Arqiva.
- 3.5 Although the operators' networks are mature, improvements, upgrades and new sites are required for their networks for several reasons. For example, to increase capacity in an area of high demand, to provide new or improved network coverage in terms of quality as well as extent, or perhaps to provide coverage over a new development area such as a new housing estate or industrial park.
- 3.6 In this case, the operator has identified a need to upgrade their equipment on the existing installation.

- 3.7 The application site has been selected by the operator as this will provide the required level of network coverage while properly meeting national town planning policy objectives for the shared use of existing electronic communications masts and sites, in this case operated by Arqiva.

4. PRIOR ENGAGEMENT

- 4.3 In our engagement letter we sought to agree with you the appropriate traffic light rating and associated engagement requirements with the local community, and obtain your comments on the siting and design of the development.
- 4.4 The pre-application engagement advice received has been considered very carefully and the siting and design of the development has been modified to incorporate the local planning authority's comments, in so far as this practicable.

5. PLANNING POLICY

5.1 The relevant planning policy and best practice framework is found principally within:

- National Policy, especially the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

5.2 From these documents can be discerned the general policy background that exists for electronic communications development, site specific policies and the key considerations relevant to the siting and design of appropriate electronic communications development. As planning authority, you will be familiar with this framework and so in the interests of brevity, we do not rehearse it back to you in detail, but address instead the principal themes to demonstrate that the application accords with them.

National Support for Modern Communications

5.3 There is significant UK Government support for high quality and advanced communications infrastructure and systems, because they are essential for sustainable economic growth and sustainable development. Our accompanying document of national policy '**National Policy - Benefits of Mobile Connectivity**' sets out how mobile connectivity helps underpin the UK Digital Economy and the significant social, economic and sustainability benefits of modern connectivity. To deliver improvements to existing services and supporting future mobile technologies, it is essential that the planning system looks to support and facilitate new installations such as that proposed.

5.4 In the accompanying document, the **Supporting Operational and Technical Justification**, the way in which mobile networks operate is explained, including the constraint imposed by the mobile devices, which must be able to communicate with the base stations. Cell areas are now much smaller than with earlier systems and consequently this means greater limitations on siting to provide the necessary network coverage. Although in many areas mast height requirements have reduced over successive mobile generations, where there is difficult topography or clutter

from tall buildings or other features that can interfere with signal coverage, then this benefit is unfortunately muted.

Balancing operational and environmental considerations

- 5.5 The special operational and technical factors that require specific siting of base stations should be balanced by the need to minimise environmental and visual impact.
- 5.6 However, paragraphs 3.2 – 3.3 of the Code of Best Practice explain that there is now far greater emphasis that visual impact should not override significant radio planning requirements to achieve mobile coverage to a particular area, particularly with the need to support the massively growing and intensifying demand for mobile communications across the UK. Indeed, in terms of looking to meet operational needs, the Code of Best Practice emphasises that the NPPF now applies a reduced policy test compared to previous guidance. This helps to clarify that an operator is only required to satisfy the normal test of acceptability having regard to all material planning circumstances, rather than looking for the ‘optimum’ solution as required under the former PPG8.
- 5.7 In balancing these requirements, the starting point for planning new networks or the expansion of existing networks is to use existing electronic communications sites owned by other operators or radio site management companies such as Arqiva. This policy objective is backed with the statutory obligation placed upon operators to share apparatus, where practicable out under General Condition 3(4) of the Electronic Communications Code (Conditions and Restrictions) Regulations 2003, as amended.
- 5.28 As a matter of principle, the development proposed is in accordance with the relevant policy framework and should be therefore be acceptable. In the next section, the Design Considerations are reviewed to demonstrate that the detail of the development is also acceptable and that in accordance with the presumption in favour, planning permission should be granted.

Local Policy Considerations

- 5.30 The proposed development is therefore considered to strike the best balance between meeting the specific network requirements for the operator and minimising environmental impact.

6. DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 The development proposed is exempt from the requirement to provide a design and access statement under Article 9 of The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. However, to assist your consideration of the detail, this section provides a description of the process adopted in the design of the proposals and explains the access considerations. Due regard has been given to the factors listed in Appendix A of the Code of Best Practice.

Amount, Design, Layout and Scale of the Development

- 6.2 The scale, layout and design of the development has been guided by the special technical and operational factors affecting the need to provide coverage to the local area, having regard to the need to minimise visual impact, already referred to above explained in detail in the **Supporting Operational and Technical Justification**. With regard to the main component elements of the development proposed:

7. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1. In summary, the application is in respect of electronic communications base station necessary to improve a vital network that provides public services.
- 7.2. The service provided by the operator is in the public interest and is in very high demand. In the UK there are now more than 92 million subscriptions to mobile networks and mobile services now exceed fixed landlines in terms of customer numbers and usage.
- 7.3. The public interest of the system is clear from the considerable benefits that will flow and it makes a significant and major contribution towards sustainable objectives.

- 7.4. The operator's requirement is in the context of network needs associated with a cellular system. These impose particular locational and siting requirements. The technical justification clearly demonstrates the need for this apparatus proposed within the context of the operator's surrounding network.
- 7.5. The operator has followed national and local planning policy and best practice guidance in the siting and design of its apparatus in recognition of the need to minimise visual impact. This has included:
- Network planning based upon existing sites, including those controlled by Radio Site Management companies like Arqiva.
 - Siting at an existing electronic communications site to minimise new sites and help avoid the unnecessary proliferation of new radio masts and sites for them.
 - Engagement in accordance with the Code of Best Practice procedures.
 - An examination of design options to try and minimise potential visual impact.
- 7.6. The proposed antennas will comply with all relevant health and safety requirements and will be compliant with the ICNIRP guidelines. There are no exceptional circumstances in this case and therefore no need to consider health effects and related concerns such as the perception of risk further.
- 7.7. This statement and the other accompanying material has demonstrated that the proposal is in accordance with local Development Plan policy and national policy set out in particular within the NPPF. In particular, it is a form of development that is specifically encouraged as a matter of principle and in its detail complies with the policy objective of minimising potential environmental impact.
- 7.8. In conclusion, the application is for sustainable development, acceptable as a matter of principle and appropriate in its detail and so one which the presumption in favour of granting approval applies.