



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 January 2026

by Nick Davies BSc(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 February 2026

Appeal Ref: 6000825

Perowne Way, Sandown, Isle of Wight PO36 9BX

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant approval required under Article 3(1) and Schedule 2, Part 16, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).
 - The appeal is made by M B N L against the decision of Isle of Wight Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/00184/16APA.
 - The development proposed is the installation of a 20m monopole supporting 9no antenna apertures, space reserved for 2no. 0.3m dishes, 6 no cabinets and development ancillary thereto.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 as amended (the GPDO), under Article 3(1) and Schedule 2, Part 16, Class A, Paragraph A.3(4) require the local planning authority to assess the proposed development solely on the basis of its siting and appearance, taking into account any representations received. My determination of this appeal has been made on the same basis.

Planning Policy

3. The provisions of Schedule 2, Part 16, Class A of the GPDO do not require regard to be had to the development plan. Nevertheless, Policy DM2 of the Island Plan Core Strategy¹ is a material consideration, insofar as it relates to issues of siting and appearance. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) is also a material consideration, and it includes a section on supporting high quality communications.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are the effect of the siting and appearance of the proposed installation on the character and appearance of the area and the living conditions of the occupants of neighbouring residential properties, and, if any harm would occur, whether this is outweighed by the need for the installation to be sited as proposed, taking into account any suitable alternatives.

¹ Island Plan: The Isle of Wight Council Core Strategy (including Minerals & Waste) and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (March 2012)

Reasons

Character and appearance

5. The appeal site is a triangular area of grassed open space which, together with a similar space on the opposite side of the road, serves as a gateway to a suburban estate of bungalows to the north. The area is not, however, entirely residential, as there is a floodlit sports field immediately to the west surrounded by security fencing. The railway line runs close by, and there is a yard surrounded by security fencing adjacent to the eastern boundary of the site. So, there are a mixture of uses in the immediate locality. Furthermore, there is an engineered narrowing of the road adjacent to the open space, with bollards and road markings. Combined with a zebra crossing and the security fencing to either side of the road, the open space has a somewhat urban setting when approaching from the south. From the north, however, the site is seen in an entirely residential environment comprising of bungalows and houses.
6. The 20-metre monopole and cabinets would be set back within the open space, alongside a boundary hedgerow and trees. It is not disputed that this verdant backdrop would ensure that the cabinets would have a minimal visual impact. Even so, the monopole would be very much taller than the trees, or any of the surrounding buildings or other structures. Being located in an open space, it would be seen in isolation, so would be entirely visible from bottom to top. Consequently, its uncharacteristic scale would be immediately evident.
7. It is contended that its siting near to other street furniture and floodlighting columns would reduce its visual impact. However, it would be at least twice the height of the nearest streetlights, and considerably broader in diameter, so would be a much more strident feature in the street scene. The nearest floodlight column is some distance away, and is not immediately apparent in close views of the appeal site. Consequently, it does nothing to disguise the stark visual impact of the 20-metre monopole in a low-level residential environment. The use of a grey colour would do little to conceal its dominant, functional appearance. Viewed from locations immediately around the open space it would be a very imposing and incongruous structure, resulting in significant harm to the character and appearance of the area.
8. The installation would also be readily visible from a considerable distance along Perowne Way to the north. Looking south from the bend in the road the monopole would be a prominent feature, framed by bungalows on either side, which would emphasise its discordant scale. Whilst it would be backed by trees, a considerable proportion of it would rise above them, and would be silhouetted against the sky to form an uncharacteristic focal point. The floodlights on the sports field cannot be seen from here, so the only other street furniture that is visible are the relatively low and slim streetlights. The proposal would be much higher and broader so would be an alien feature in this low-level residential environment, resulting in considerable visual harm.
9. The monopole would also be widely visible from the southwest, along Station Approach. However, in these views it would be seen as part of a wide vista, with trees and buildings on higher land beyond, so it would not have such a stark appearance. It would also be seen in association with the floodlight columns in the foreground, so would not seem quite so incongruous. The visual impact from this direction would, therefore, be modest. Nevertheless, in close views, and in longer

distance views from the residential area to the north, the siting and appearance of the proposal would result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the area.

Living conditions

10. The nearest residential properties to the site are Nos 1 and 2 Perowne Way, which lie either side of the road just to the north of the open space. No 1 borders the site, and has a window in its gable end facing it, but it is unlikely to serve primary living accommodation. The main windows in this bungalow face the road and rear garden, so some effort would be required to view the monopole from within the main living accommodation. It would be readily visible from the front garden, but as it is open plan, it is unlikely to be used as a relaxation space. Consequently, the proposal would not have a significant impact on the outlook for residents of this bungalow.
11. No 2 lies opposite, so the monopole would be more readily visible for occupants when looking out of the windows that face the road. However, these windows are largely obscure glazed, so residents rely more on views out of the rear windows, which face the garden and open sports field beyond. Consequently, whilst the installation would be visible from this property, it would not have a significant impact on the living conditions of its occupants.
12. Consequently, there would be no significant loss of outlook to the occupants of either property, and their living conditions would not be harmed. Nevertheless, I have concluded that the proposal would result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the area. I must consider whether this harm is outweighed by the need for the installation to be sited as proposed, taking into account any suitable alternatives.

Need for installation and alternative sites

13. The installation is required to maintain 4G services, and to facilitate the rollout of 5G services, to the residential areas along Perowne Way; Sandown Station and the railway line; The Bay Church of England School; and across surrounding residential and commercial areas. The need arises due to the imminent decommissioning of an antenna on the roof of The Friends Hotel, approximately 200 metres to the southeast.
14. Paragraph 120 of the Framework advises that the number of telecommunications masts should be kept to a minimum, consistent with the needs of consumers, the efficient operation of the network, and the provision of reasonable capacity for future expansion. It also encourages the use of existing masts, buildings, and other structures. However, it does recognise that new sites may be required for new 5G networks. The appellant's evidence indicates that regard has been had to the sequential approach to site selection set out in paragraph 122 of the Framework, and that no opportunities for erecting antennas on existing buildings, masts, or other structures have been identified within their area of search, which is identified as land within a 300-metre radius of the existing site.
15. The appellant's evidence identifies ten alternative sites that were considered for a new installation. The Council has not suggested that any of these would have provided a preferable option. Indeed, one of them was rejected following consultation with the Council. I viewed all the locations, and saw that they were

either in residential areas, close to a school, or lacked any significant degree of screening. They would not, therefore, represent less harmful locations for the installation.

16. Without specifying any particular alternative sites, the Council has questioned why locations on industrial land, railway land, public buildings, hotels, and golf clubs have not been considered. In response, the appellant discounts the potential for using railway land on the basis that it is used for storage, and that there may be access difficulties. However, these concerns appear to be based on assumptions, rather than as a result of any consultation with the railway operator, so I am not persuaded that this option has justifiably been rejected. The appellant contends that there are no industrial sites, golf clubs, or holiday parks within the search area. Furthermore, it is contended that any public buildings and land within the search area are constrained by heritage and visual amenity constraints. I have no evidence on which to come to a different conclusion.
17. However, whilst these alternatives may not be available within a 300-metre radius of the existing site, the appellant's own evidence indicates that sites further afield may be suitable. Seven of the alternative sites identified in the site selection process lie outside the 300-metre search area, but were not rejected for technical reasons. No rationale has been provided for identifying sites beyond the search area to the northwest, but not extending it to a similar distance in other directions. A similar widening of the scope would introduce open areas of land to the southwest, carparks to the south, busier, less suburban roads to the east, and additional railway land to the north. It is unclear to me whether these areas have been considered. Consequently, I am not satisfied that a thorough review of all feasible options has been conducted.
18. The evidence provided is not, therefore, sufficiently comprehensive for me to safely conclude that there are no more suitable sites for the installation. Consequently, the harm that the proposal would cause to the character and appearance of the area is not outweighed by the need for it to be sited as proposed.

Other Matters

19. Reference has been made to various social and economic benefits, but these have not been taken into account in considering the matters of siting and appearance.

Conclusion

20. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Nick Davies

INSPECTOR