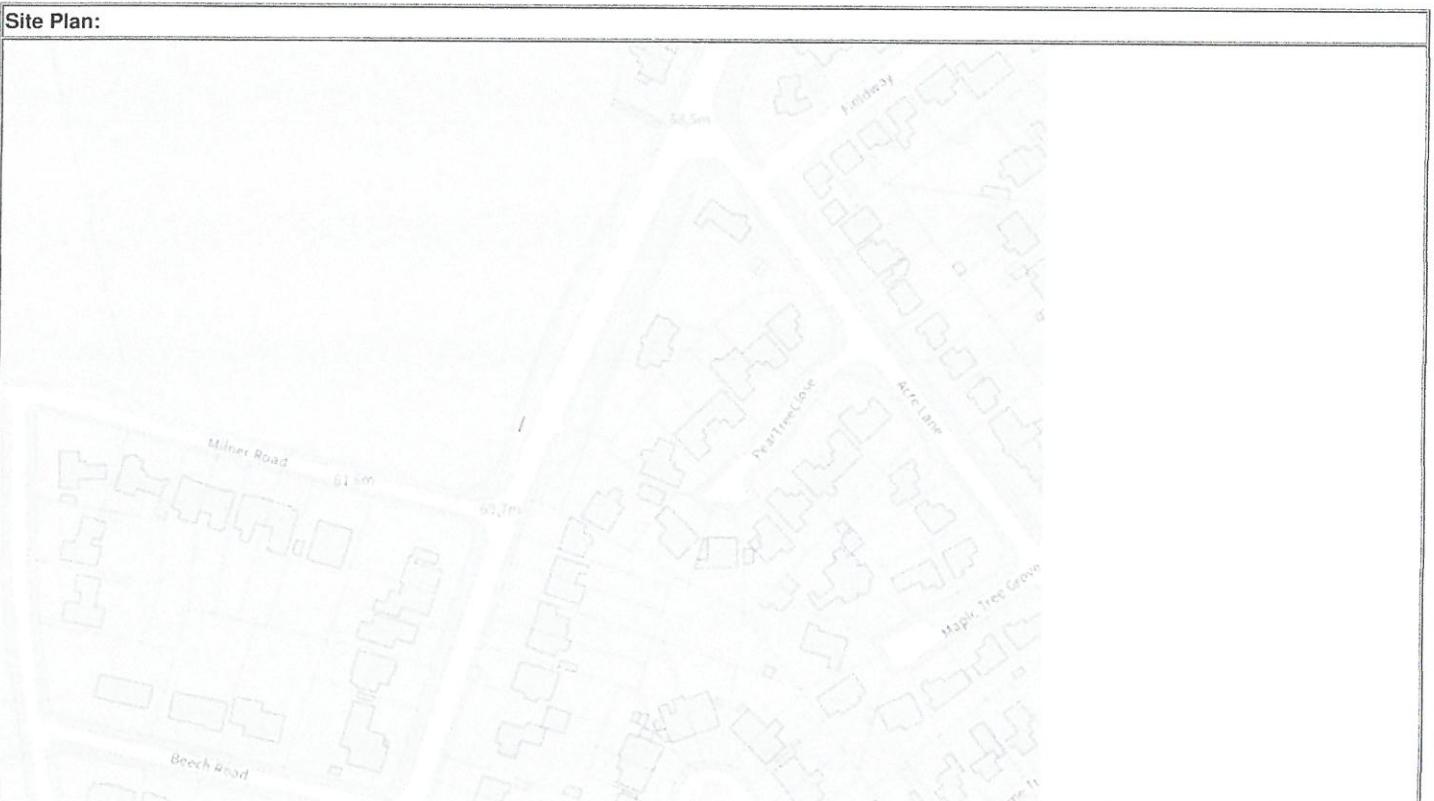


Delegated

Reference:	Area Team:	Case Officer:	Ward:
ANTX/23/00006	DM	Ms A McDougall	Heswall

Location:	Barnston Road Street Works Barnston Road, Wirral , CH60 1UE
Proposal:	Proposed 5G telecoms installation: H3G 15m street pole and additional equipment cabinets (amended height of pole and colour to be RAL 6009 Fir Green)
Applicant:	Gallivan
Agent :	Mr Tom Gallivan Dot Surveying Ltd

Qualifying Petition	No
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Development Plan designation:	Primarily Residential Area
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Planning History:	N/A
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Summary Of Representations and Consultations Received:
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1. Ward Member Comments	No comments received.
2. Summary of Representations	<p><b>REPRESENTATIONS</b></p> <p>57 neighbour notifications were sent out within a 100m radius</p> <p>Received: 1</p> <p>One objection received on the following grounds;</p> <p>1. It would have a significant adverse impact on the character and appearance of the "greenfield site" which it borders. No trees exist around the location, to help it blend into the surroundings and it will therefore dominate the view adversely. It is therefore not in keeping with the local environment and I do not believe that the risks of "visual intrusion" have been justified. The Planning Justification statement prepared by DOT surveying states "Proposed location of a new mast shown above will assimilate well into the immediate street scene and not be detrimental", this is clearly not the case.</p> <p>2. The junction between Milner Road and Barnston Road experiences a considerable number of traffic issues and visibility issues may arise due to the addition of the ground cabinet when approaching the junction from Milner Road. The pole itself will also cause a potential distraction to motorists using Barnston Road, interfering with their</p>

line of sight as they approach the Milner Road junction. Such visibility issues are cited as the reason for discounting other local sites.

3. A footpath, maintained by the council, has long existed running alongside the fields. This will be inhibited by the existence of the cabinets, making it extremely narrow. Given the high volume of traffic along Barnston Road, it is not desirable to increase the number of pedestrians having to cross the road by the junction with Milner Road. On the plan, the existence of this footpath has led to the cabinets moving forward onto the verge and hence to a position more likely to obstruct / distract the vision of motorists. I am unclear why the grass verge is suitable at this location, and not at others in the area?

4. Whilst I recognise that the radio frequency radiation is classed as non-ionising, the higher frequency used for 5G does mean each photon is more energetic than 4G and hence have more potential *biologically disruptive* risks if there is long term exposure. The mobile UK briefing notes that accompany the application, state that "In May 2011 a working group of the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) classified RF electromagnetic fields as possibly carcinogenic to humans (Group 2B). WHO explains that this is a category used when a causal association is considered credible, but when chance, bias or confounding cannot be ruled out with reasonable confidence." In 2021, the British Medical Journal ran an article titled, "Stop global roll out of 5G networks until safety is confirmed", commenting that "Transmitter density means greater population exposure to high levels of radio frequency electromagnetic fields". I note that such installations are kept away from schools and apparently from heavily residential areas.

5. I am disappointed that in the planning documentation there is no actual picture of the 20m monopole to be constructed, notably what sits on top of the mast. There is no indication of how it will appear when constructed, since it is hard to visualise what 20m looks like in-situ. Surely, a planning application, should include an easily interpreted view of what is to be constructed.

Finally, this is a residential area well served by fibre broadband, and so I question the benefits that 5G will bring to the area at this stage.

#### **CONSULTATIONS**

Received:

Highways - No objection

Environmental Health - No objection

<b>3.1 Site and Surroundings</b>	The site is located along Barnston Road close to the junction with Milner Road, the location is within the residential area however the site itself is located close to fields to the west. The siting is within a grass verge that divides the public footpath from the road, there are street light poles and a telegraph pole within the visual run along Barnston Road.
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<b>3.2 Proposed Development</b>	Prior Approval is sought under Class A of Part 16 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, as amended, for the erection of a 15 metre high galvanised steel telecommunications mast with associated antennas, and ancillary ground cabinets, designed to facilitate 5G mobile communications in the surrounding area.
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<b>3.3 Development Plan</b>	<p>The provisions of Schedule 2 Part 16 Class A of the GPDO do not require regard to be had to the development plan, however development plan policies can be a material consideration only in so far as they are relevant to the matters of siting and appearance.</p> <p>Saved policy TE1 of the Wirral Unitary Development Plan sets a presumption in favour of applications for telecommunications apparatus subject to the impact of the proposal on amenity being minimal, through siting and external appearance, amongst other considerations. The policy recognises that there are technical considerations that often limit the choice of sites and the type of apparatus used to achieve the optimum signal coverage, and this will be taken into account in the determination of applications.</p> <p>Wirral Council Supplementary Planning Document on Designing for Development by Mobile Phone Operators was adopted on 30th October 2006 and supports development plan policy by providing advice on, amongst other matters, the siting and appearance of telecommunications development. In particular it encourages the siting of equipment on existing buildings as first choice and if new masts are necessary that their siting and appearance is carefully considered in terms of relationship with surrounding buildings, existing street furniture, and colour to ensure they are as recessive as possible.</p>
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<b>3.4 Other Material Planning Considerations</b>	<p>Section 10 of the National Planning Policy Framework expects planning decisions to support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next generation mobile technology such as 5G. Paragraph 115 advises that the number of radio and electronic communications masts should be kept to a minimum consistent with the needs of consumers, the efficient operation of the network, and providing reasonable capacity for future expansion. Use of existing masts, buildings and other structures for new electronic communications capability should be encouraged. Where new sites are required, such as for new 5G networks, equipment should be sympathetically designed and camouflaged where appropriate.</p> <p>Paragraph 117 of the NPPF expects applications for electronic communications development (including applications for prior approval) to be supported by the necessary evidence to justify the proposed development. For new masts or base stations, this includes:</p> <p>a) The outcome of consultations with organisations with an interest in the proposed development, in particular with the relevant body where a mast is to be installed within a school or college, or within a statutory safeguarding zone surrounding an aerodrome, technical site or military explosives storage</p>
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area;

b) (not applicable to this case); and

c) Evidence that the applicant has explored the possibility of erecting antennas on an existing building, mast or other structure, and a statement that self-certifies that when operational, International Commission guidelines will be met.

Paragraph 130 of the NPPF sets out that planning decisions should ensure developments are visually attractive, are sympathetic to local character, and promote a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

**Emerging Wirral Local Plan and its status:**

Wirral Borough Council has submitted the Wirral Local Plan 2021-2037 for examination.

On the 21 March 2022 full council approved publication of the Draft Local Plan Under Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning Act (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 before submission to the Secretary of State. The plan was published in May 2022 and representations were available to be submitted until 25th July 2022. The Local Plan was submitted to the Secretary of State on the 26th October 2022. The local plan and supporting evidence base can be viewed online at [www.wirral.gov.uk/lpexam](http://www.wirral.gov.uk/lpexam)

As the Wirral Local Plan has been submitted for examination it (and the supporting evidence base) is a material consideration and can be afforded weight in the decision-making process. In attaching weight to individual policies, paragraph 48 of the NPPF is relevant as it states:

“Local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to:

- the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);
- the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and
- the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to this Framework (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given).”

**Relevant Policy**

WD13 -Telecommunications

**3.5 Assessment**

The main issues pertinent in the assessment of the proposal are:

- The Principle of Development
- Siting & Appearance
- Residential Amenity
- Highways
- Public Health

**3.6 Principle of Development**

Schedule 2, Part 16 Class A of the GPDO grants deemed consent for new telecommunications masts of up to and including 25 metres in height when located on the public highway or other areas covered by Article 2(3) land, subject to consideration by the local planning authority of the siting and appearance of the development. Therefore, at 20 metres in height the principle of development is accepted, and prior approval should be granted unless, in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, the requirements of the GPDO have not otherwise been met, or the siting and appearance of the development causes planning harm sufficient to outweigh the benefits of development.

**3.7 Siting and Appearance**

The proposal has been amended to show a reduced telecom mast from 20m to 15m which will be finished in RAL 6009 (fir green). The mast and associated equipment are located within a grass verge that sits between the highway and the public footpath.

The reduction in height aligns the mast itself more cohesively with the height of the street lights when approaching the site from more distant view points, the change in colour also softens the mast when viewed against the trees in particular when travelling south along Barnston Road.

**3.8 Highways**

The proposed telecommunications mast and equipment is within the adopted highway and a telecommunications permit and associated traffic management will be required prior to any works taking place within the adopted highway.

The proposal does not impact or obstruct pedestrians on Barnston Road as the positioning of the equipment is not on the footway and is located within the grass verge.

There is appropriate visibility along Barnston Road and at the nearby Milner Road junction also.

**3.9 Residential Amenity**

The proposed development is set back from residential properties, although there are houses opposite that are set at quite a distance from the siting of the structures.

The reduction in height and the revised colour scheme of the mast itself will soften the impact and is

not considered to harm residential amenity.

### 3.10 Public Health

Concerns have been raised about the potential effect of the proposal on health. However, the applicant has provided a certificate to confirm that the proposal has been designed to comply with the guidelines published by the International Commission on Non-Ionising Radiation Protection (ICNIRP). In these circumstances the National Planning Policy Framework, at paragraph 118, advises that health safeguards are not something which a Local Planning Authority should determine. No sufficiently authoritative evidence has been put forwards by contributors which would indicate that ICNIRP guidelines would not be met in this instance, or that a departure from national planning policy would be justified.

### Summary of Decision

Having regards to the individual merits of this application the decision to grant Planning Permission has been taken having regards to the relevant Policies and Proposals in the Wirral Unitary Development Plan (Adopted February 2000) and all relevant material considerations including national policy advice. In reaching this decision the Local Planning Authority has considered the following:-

Having regard to the context of the site and the visual impact of the development, the proposed 15m high mast will not cause harm to visual amenity and the character of the area sufficient to outweigh the wider public benefits of the installation. No harm has been found to living conditions at nearby dwellings and there is no harmful restriction on the passage of pedestrians or other impacts on highway safety. The application is accompanied by the necessary information to demonstrate that International Commission guidelines on non-ionising radiation will be met.

Recommended Decision:

Prior Approval Given

### Recommended Conditions and Reasons:

1 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans received by the local planning authority on 7 March 2023 and listed as follows:

WIR23137\_WIR164\_TBC\_CH0576\_GA\_REV B

2 The external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall be constructed in the materials shown on plan no. WIR23137\_WIR164\_TBC\_CH0576\_GA\_REV B notably the mast shall be RAL 6009

3 Any mast, apparatus or structure shall be removed from its site as soon as reasonably practicable after it is no longer required for the purposes hereby approved and the land shall be restored to its condition before the development took place, or to any other condition as agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Last Comments By:	22-02-2023
Expiry Date:	03-March-2023