

<u>APPLICATION NO:</u>	24/00590/TEL	<u>CASE OFFICER:</u>	Mark Quinn
<u>WARD:</u>	Halewood South	<u>PARISH:</u>	Halewood Town Council
<u>LOCATION:</u>	Grass Verge At Junction Of Higher Road And Baileys Lane, Halewood, Knowsley		
<u>PROPOSAL:</u>	INSTALLATION OF A 20M HIGH MONOPOLE SUPPORTING 6 NO. ANTENNAS AND 2 NO. 0.3M DISHES, 2 NO. EQUIPMENT CABINETS AND ASSOCIATED ANCILLARY DEVELOPMENT.		

Site Description

The application site comprises a grassed highway verge located on southern side of Higher Road (A562) close to the roundabout with Sandhurst Road.

Proposal

This application is not an application for planning permission but an application for 'prior approval' under the Town and Country Planning General Permitted Development Order 2015 (as amended) for the 'siting' and 'appearance' of proposed telecommunications equipment. Therefore, only these matters can be considered when deciding this application.

The proposal comprises a 20m high monopole incorporating 6 antennas, a 0.3m diameter dish and two ground based equipment cabinets. The monopole would be finished in grey and the cabinets finished in dark green.

Consultations

Halewood Town Council - No Comments Received

Highway Authority – No objections in principle (see detailed comments below)

Representations

This application has been publicised by letters sent to 33 neighbours. It has also been advertised by Site Notice No representations have been received.

Relevant Policy

The development plan in Knowsley comprises the Saved Policies of the Replacement Unitary Development Plan, the Core Strategy Local Plan and the Joint Waste Local Plan. The following policies are relevant to the determination of this application.

National Planning Policy Framework – December 2024

KNOWSLEY LOCAL PLAN: CORE STRATEGY

CS2 – Development principles

CS7 - Transport Networks

CS19 - Design Quality and Accessibility in New Development

SAVED POLICIES - KNOWSLEY REPLACEMENT UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN (ADOPTED JUNE 2006)

ENV8 - Telecommunications Developments

H5 - Development within Primarily Residential Areas

National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024)

Assessment

Siting & Design

Policy CS2 in the Core Strategy states that new development in Knowsley will be expected to promote good quality design, and ensuring that development respects its setting taking into account relevant design requirements and best practice

Policy CS19 in the Core Strategy states that to enhance the local distinctiveness, identity and accessibility of places, new development within Knowsley will be expected to maintain a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.

Saved UDP policy ENV8 states that new telecommunications development will not be permitted if the development would by reason of its scale, siting or design, have an unacceptable impact on the character or appearance of the surrounding area.

Saved UDP Policy H5 states that new development within the Primarily Residential Areas which is for uses appropriate to a residential area will be permitted provided that the development would not adversely affect the character or street scene of the area.

Paragraph 120 of the NPPF (December 2024) states where new sites are required (such as for new 5G networks, or for connected transport and smart city applications), equipment should be sympathetically designed and camouflaged where appropriate.

The proposed monopole would be sited adjacent to a busy dual carriageway and would be viewed against the backdrop of an open field. There are existing 12m high lighting columns nearby along both sides of Higher Road and in the background there are several electricity pylons.

The proposed monopole at 20m high would be a prominent feature, however it would be located in a significant transport corridor and viewed in the context of the existing lighting columns and electricity pylons. Telecommunications masts are common features on busy dual carriageways, and in this context and the context of the site the proposed development would not appear out of place in this location and would not have a significant adverse impact on the visual amenity of the area.

Residential Amenity

Policy CS19 in the Core Strategy states that development proposals will be required to avoid unacceptable impacts on existing residents, business occupiers, and future occupiers.

Saved UDP Policy ENV8 states that new telecommunications development will not be permitted if the development would by reason of its scale, siting or design, have an unacceptable impact on the amenity of nearby residents."

Saved UDP Policy H5 states that new development within the Primarily Residential Areas which is for uses appropriate to a residential area will be permitted provided that the development would not have an unacceptable impact on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers by reason of noise, disturbance, overlooking, visual intrusion, smells, fumes, on-street parking or other causes.

The closest residential dwellings are located on the new development (east of Halewood) on the northern side of Higher Road approximately 52m from the proposed monopole. Given this separation distance and the fact that a busy 4 lane carriageway lies in between it is not considered that the monopole would have an adverse impact on the amenity of local residents.

There is an allocated housing sit to the south of the application site, however, this would not be a reason to refuse the application and any new development would simply have to account for the presence of the mast.

On balance the proposal would comply with saved policies CS19, ENV8 and H5.

Highway Safety

The Highways team have raised no objections in principle. However, they have advised that the developer would not be permitted to access the site and begin works until September 2025 when highway improvement works are completed. The applicant agent will be made aware of this constraint.

Health Considerations

Paragraph 122 of the NPPF states that applications for electronic communications development should be supported by the necessary evidence to justify the proposed development. With regard to health impacts the NPPF states that the evidence should include a statement that self-certifies that, when operational, International Commission guidelines will be met.

Paragraph 123 of the NPPF states that local planning authorities must determine applications on planning grounds only and must not set health safeguards different from the International Commission guidelines for public exposure.

The applicant has submitted a statement which says that the proposed development would comply with ICNIRP guidelines and therefore the development accords with Paragraphs 122 and 123 of the NPPF.

Benefits of the Development

Paragraph 119 of the NPPF states that advanced, high quality and reliable communications infrastructure is essential for economic growth and social well-being. Planning policies and decisions should support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next generation mobile technology (such as 5G) and full fibre broadband connections.

The proposed equipment will ensure that new 5G coverage can be provided at this location and the applicant states that this would address gaps in high-quality service provision because the existing sites in this area are struggling to cope with demand and an increase in capacity is required. In accordance with Paragraph 119 of the NPPF this should carry significant weight in favour of the proposed development.

Alternative Sites

The applicant has provided a list of alternative sites and the reasons for discounting them.

1. Existing Streetworks Pole – Discounted as there is no comparable street works option that can accommodate 5G antennas for both Vodafone and VMO2.
2. East side of Leathers Lane, Halewood. – Discounted as an application was refused for a similar mast on Leathers Lane in 2020 due to its size and height, combined with its prominence and open location.
3. Aldi, Halewood Shopping Centre – Discounted as a rooftop site as the building is too low to provide the required level of coverage.
4. Halewood Town Junior Football Club – Discounted as it would be closer to residential and have considerably more visual impact than a street works installation.
5. Wood Road – Discounted as located closer to houses than the proposed location.
6. Corner of Leathers Lane and Higher Rd – Discounted as this location was subject to an application from a different operator which has been refused.
7. Pavement outside Halewood Leisure Centre – Discounted as not wide enough to accommodate an installation.
8. Verge north side of Higher Road – Discounted as this area is being re-developed.
9. The Halewood Centre, Roseheath Dr - The building is too low for the antennas to achieve the required height.
10. Commercial Units next to Bus Stop – The building is too low for the antennas to achieve the required height.
11. Outside Shell Garage, Higher Road. – Discounted as there is insufficient space to accommodate a mast within the pavement.
12. Existing EE lattice mast -Discounted as it is too far to the east to provide the required signal.
13. Streetworks on Blakeacre Rd, Halewood – Discounted as it would be in very close proximity to residential dwellings.
14. Streetworks on Roseheath Dr – Pavements too narrow to accommodate and would be too close to residential dwellings.
15. Rooftop at Halewood Police Station – Building too low to provide the height required.
16. Streetworks on Higher Road (Northern side – to west of roundabout) – pavements too narrow and close to residential.
17. Streetworks at Junction of Higher Rd and Old Hutte Lane – Discounted as pavements have recently been re-developed as cycle routes. No space to accommodate an installation.

The applicant has complied with the requirements of NPPF but as the proposed development is acceptable it is not necessary to evaluate the appropriateness of these sites.

Conclusion

The proposal is considered acceptable in terms of visual and residential amenity. There are no highway safety objections in principle however the installation would not be able to take place until at least September 2025 when the current highway works to Higher Road are due for completion. Adequate details have been provided to demonstrate that alternative site have been considered and discounted prior to choosing this location.

The proposal would be in compliance with the Knowsley Local Plan and saved UDP policies listed above.

Recommendation

The Council has determined that pursuant to Part 16 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 as amended, the applicant be informed that prior approval is required and granted.

SCHEDULE 1

Date Received	Ref. No	Version	Drawing/Document Title
31/10/2024	100	A	SITE LOCATION PLAN
31/10/2024	201	A	PROPOSED SITE PLAN
31/10/2024	301	A	PROPOSED ELEVATIONS

Signed Case Officer¹: **M Quinn**

Signed Authorising Officer²: _____

Date: _____

Informatives

Access to the site will be refused by the Highway Authority whilst construction is in progress on Higher Road.

The planned completion date for the works is September 2025, the applicant is advised that access to the site would not be available until after that date.

The applicant should be aware that there is a Section 58 restriction (which restricts the execution of street works) in place at Higher Road, which will need to be considered when carrying out the work. Details of the section 58 can be found on OneNetwork (publicly accessible). A reinstatement agreement will need to be arranged with the KMBC street works inspector at the time of installation.

¹ I confirm that I do not have a personal relationship with the applicant, agent or other interested parties; I also confirm that I do not have a financial interest in the site or the development proposed

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Appendix 1 – Site Photographs











