



**Representations** Objections received from Billinge House & Woodcock Fold Cottage:

- All the structures in the vicinity are low profile, with the exception of another telecommunications pylon/pole located near to the railway lines, away from public view;
- Street lights and telegraph poles are smaller and have a slimmer visual impact;
- Potential to set a harmful precedent for others to be sited in one of the few remaining green areas along Euxton Lane,
- The location would be unsafe (distracting drivers), and would be at odds with the consistently low profile appearance of structures in the area;
- Suggested mast sharing with an existing mast close by.

**Assessment** This is a prior notification application; therefore the issues to be assessed are the siting, design and external appearance of the proposal.

Policy PS12 of the Local Plan Review states that the Council will permit utility services development where there are no overriding environmental objections to either the siting or appearance of the installation and when all of the following criteria are satisfied:

- a) Development is part of a planned expansion;
- b) No operationally suitable alternative sites with less environmental impact are available;
- c) No reasonable possibility of sharing existing facilities;
- d) No reasonable possibility of erecting antennae on an existing building or structure;
- e) The visual impact of the development on the landscape has been minimised, subject to technical limitation.

The proposed installation is needed to provide 3G coverage to residential and commercial properties in Euxton, Buckshaw Village and surrounding new developments. The applicants have provided information in accordance with criteria (b), (c) and (d) that seven other sites were considered and discounted. These include a site share with an existing mast at Euxton Park Golf Club (discounted as the existing mast cannot accommodate a further operator and would require significant redevelopment), and new sites at Euxton Park Golf Centre, Runshaw College, Buckshaw Industrial Estate and Chorley Business & Technology Centre (all discounted as unable to obtain site owner's permission). Four additional sites have been looked at since those considered in 2007.

Regarding criteria (e) in terms of siting and visual impact the applicant argues that given the make-up of the area and lack of viable alternative sites, this proposal is the only viable solution that could provide coverage to this area of Euxton. The area is now predominantly a mixed-use area, with Urban Village status, hence the decision to locate the proposals along a major highway where lighting columns and non-residential activity is more pronounced. The applicant appreciates the site will be visible to pedestrians and road users, however feels the monopole and equipment cabinet will in time be accepted as part of the urban fabric of the area.

PPG8 advises that the sharing of masts should be a priority to keep the number of masts to a minimum. The local planning authority have consistently advised that use of an existing T- Mobile structure at the Euxton Park Golf Centre is the Council's first choice. PPG8 also advises on siting and design, stating innovative design solutions may be adopted including those which look like street furniture. This is the case here, where it is proposed to erect a slim line pole. PPG8 suggests a number of factors to consider concerning siting, such as the height of the site in relation to surrounding land, the existence of

topographical features and vegetation, the effect on the skyline, the site when observed from any side, and the site in relation to residential property and others.

The location is a largely featureless piece of highway verge and cycle track. The only significant elements are a bus shelter, a telegraph pole, lighting columns and a solitary Poplar tree. Behind the verge is a continuous 3m high brick wall. It is considered that the introduction of an additional piece of street furniture by way of this 15m mast with antennae at the top will add a prominent feature to what is already a substandard landscape. The streetscene at this point needs a scheme of enhancement, such as by way of tree planting, rather than the erection of an alien structure such as the proposed mast.

Whilst the slimline design minimalises the bulk and appearance of the mast, notwithstanding the design, the siting of the proposed mast would appear very visible in this location. The mast is located next to the public highway, including public footpath and cycleway, and the area immediately around the proposed site is open in character. This is evident by the highway width, neighbouring buildings being set back from the highway, soft landscaping and recreational land uses. Furthermore, to the north, south and east of the site, away from the settlement of Euxton, the area is washed over by Green Belt, and subsequently development is more scarce. Nearby street furniture comprises of 10m street lights and a telegraph pole, which are considerably lower in height, and one Poplar tree. These do not provide an adequate backdrop to the mast, when viewed against the sky line. The mast would dominate existing street furniture as opposed to sitting inconspicuously alongside them, making it a prominent feature in the streetscape. Euxton Lane is a wide, relatively straight road, and views of the mast would be from a good distance away, exacerbating its prominent visual impact.

The local planning authority have consistently advised that it does not consider the Euxton Lane grass verge as an acceptable location, and that it prefers sites to the east adjacent to the railway line. This was conveyed in pre-application advice given to the agent, and in correspondance to other operators in the past. It is not considered that enough alternative sites in this area with less environmental impact have been surveyed, or that enough evidence has been submitted as to why these alternative sites are not comprehensive enough.

I do not consider there to be an adverse visual impact on residential properties, which are sited over 90m away, or on highway safety.

A Declaration of Conformity with the ICNIRP Public Exposure Guidelines accompanies the application. PPG8 states it is the Government's firm view that the planning system is not the place for determining health safeguards. It remains central Governments responsibility to decide what measures are necessary to protect public health. In the Governments view, if a proposed mobile phone base station meets the ICNIRP guidelines for public exposure it should not be necessary for a local planning authority, in processing an application for planning permission or prior approval, to consider further the health aspects and concerns about them.

**Conclusion** Siting the proposal on this particular site would result in a prominent feature in the streetscape, and the mast would dominate existing street furniture. Locating a tall telecommunications mast here would worsen the existing streetscene, which is in need of enhancement. It is therefore considered that there are other sites in the locality where a mast siting would be less visually intrusive. For these reasons prior approval should be refused, as the proposed mast will not comply with the requirements of Policy PS12.

**Recommendation** Refuse Prior Notification for Telecom

**Recommendation:**

**Prior Notification for Telecom - Refusal**

**Reasons**

1. The proposed development is contrary to PPG8 and PS12 of the adopted Chorley Borough Local Plan Review in that it will be unduly prominent and intrusive within the street-scene and detrimental to the character and appearance of the area by reason of its siting and appearance. Furthermore the Council is not satisfied the applicant is seeking to meet their operational needs in a manner which minimises environmental and visual impact.

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