

Planning Support Statement

B4RN 3 Bay Cabinet, Bolton By Bowland

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1. Introduction

This statement has been prepared by Broadband for the Rural North Ltd (B4RN) and is in support of a planning application for the erection of a 3 bay broadband cabinet.

B4RN is a non-profit Community Benefit Society providing hyperfast fibre optic broadband to rural Communities across the north of England.

The broadband services offered by B4RN are hundreds times faster than the average broadband provider, offering 1000Mbps at an affordable rate. Considering that the average broadband speeds offered in rural areas is up to 8 Mbps, the B4RN service will complete the connectivity in Bolton By Bowland.

B4RN is providing rural areas with broadband, bringing these Communities together by providing more job opportunities for home working so young people don't have to move away. More young families mean better support for local schools, post offices, village shops creating altogether a more sustainable Community. In addition to offering free connections to Community hubs.

The Broadband for the Rural North Ltd Head Offices are located in Melling and they are committed to servicing the surrounding rural localities. Since its formation in 2011, B4RN has connected over 60 rural Communities in rural Lancashire, Cumbria and the North East.

The application is part of the expansion of this network and is for a new 3 bay cabinet in Bolton By Bowland and surrounding areas which will service the surrounding area and will provide central resilience to the B4RN network and their customers.

2. Application Proposal & Location

The application is for the erection of a 3 bay broadband cabinet. The design of the cabinet is a standard model as seen by those commonly installed by mainstream broadband operators. The cabinet will be powder coated in the standard dark green colour and will blend in with the surrounding vegetation.

The 3 bay cabinet will stand at 1.84m high and have a ground base area of 1.76sqm.

It will be located on to the rear of the Bolton-By-Bowland village hall carpark, and has been agreed by the landowner – Judith Smalley. The cabinet will sit within the curtilage of the car parking area without will impacting the surrounding building.

This position will provide a key point for the service to be connected to the existing network and distributed to the individual households in the area.

3. Planning Policy - Core Strategy 2008 – 2028 A Local Plan for Ribble Valley

The Core Strategy document sets out a number of strategic objectives

3.18 Improve accessibility and service delivery to address rural isolation. Improve accessibility and service delivery to address rural isolation. In a predominantly rural area like the Ribble Valley, this is an important issue that should be given high priority. The Settlement Audit assists in highlighting the services that can be found in certain locations and as a result indicates where there may be a short fall of services. Access to services, support for local employment and affordable housing will all contribute to sustainable villages.

2.26 Ribble Valley Economic Strategy. The Ribble Valley Economic Strategy outlines the Council's economic aims and objectives to contribute to sustainable, successful businesses environment and a thriving rural economy in Ribble Valley. The document also provides a framework for partnership working, supporting and influencing the strategies, priorities and the resource allocation of others operating in the field of economic development across Ribble Valley and the wider region. The Strategy sets out desired outcomes around 5 key themes: Regeneration and Economic Development, Business Support and Development, Infrastructure and Communications, Image, Marketing and Promotion and Employment and Skills. Local action plans are being prepared for Clitheroe, Longridge and Whalley.

7.17 Employment and Retail land review Particular recommendations from the study were identified as particularly important to contribute to the future economic sustainability of the Borough, such as office premises on the A59, facilitation and delivery of land, the importance of broadband and a Masterplan for the key market town of Clitheroe. Additionally, monitoring of the Districtwide Local Plan identified employment land that has not been developed for employment purposes, where the owners have chosen not to develop the land. The overall Local Development Framework will establish a framework for local communities to identify appropriate local land and buildings for economic use.

4. Planning Considerations - The National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the governments planning policy for England and is a material consideration when determining planning applications. The Frameworks sets out three objectives for the planning system (paragraph 8).

They are:

- an economic objective
- a social objective
- an environmental objective

The NPPF also sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11) which for decision taking means approving development that accord with an up to date development plan without delay, or where there are no relevant development plan policies, granting planning permission unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits

The General Permitted Development Order 2015 (as amended)

Class A (electronic communications code operators), Part 16 of Schedule 2 (Communications) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) permits the following development:

A. Development by or on behalf of an electronic communications code operator for the purpose of the operator's electronic communications network in, on, over or under land controlled by that operator or in accordance with the electronic communications code, consisting of—

- a) the installation, alteration or replacement of any electronic communications apparatus,
- b) the use of land in an emergency for a period not exceeding 18 months to station and operate moveable electronic communications apparatus required for the replacement of unserviceable electronic communications apparatus, including the provision of moveable structures on the land for the purposes of that use, or
- c) development ancillary to radio equipment housing.

The proposed cabinets fall under sub-paragraph (a) above. Paragraph A.1 also lists where development is not permitted, and subparagraph (4) sets out that development with a ground area of over 1.5 sqm is not permitted under the GPDO.

It is also worth noting that the GPDO has relaxed the condition relating to prior approval for development which involves installing a broadband cabinet, making it easier for these developments to take place.

5. Heritage Statement

The site lies within the Bolton By Bowland Conservation Area, and is defined as a heritage asset.

We have therefore been prudent in locating the cabinet so as not to effect the surrounding conservation and listed building area.

The erection of a 3 bay broadband cabinet involves placing the cabinet on a low concrete plinth, as the cabinet will be powder coated in the standard dark green colour it will blend in with the surrounding vegetation and will be placed with the hedge as background to the rear of the village hall carpark with no view from the public and not within the curtilage of a listed building. The location of the cabinet was discussed in detail and agreed with the Judith Smalley, owner of the land and trustees of the village hall.

This position will provide a key point for the service to be connected to the existing network and distributed to the individual households in the area.

6. Summary

This Statement has been prepared in support of a planning application by Broadband for the Rural North Ltd for the erection of a 3 bay cabinet to provide hyperfast broadband for the rural village of Boton-By-Bowland. Located at the rear of the Bolton-By-Bowland village hall carpark, and has been agreed by the landowner – Judith Smalley. The cabinet will sit within the curtilage of the car parking area without will impacting the surrounding building.

The proposed broadband cabinet will bring a significant benefit to the local Community of Bolton-By-Bowland by providing a hyperfast service to improve accessibility to the internet. In addition to expanding the capacity of Bolton-By-Bowland this cabinet will be a 'Supernode' and allow connectivity to Gisburn, Grindleton, Slaidburn and other local areas.

The proposed siting of the cabinet at the Village Hall and is n an ideal location to serve the village. Furthermore, there will be no adverse impact to neighbourhood amenity as there it is set in the rear of the village hall cabinet and out of the site of public view.

Taking account of all the above, the development is in accordance with the relevant development plan documents and will bring significant benefits to the rural village community of Bolton-By-Bowland and further afield. In line with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out in paragraph 11 of the NPPF, this development should be approved without delay.