


Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.

Signed:	Officer:	MC	Date:	05/06/2026	Manager:	LH	Date:	8/6/26
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Application Ref:	3/2026/0296			 Ribble Valley Borough Council <small>www.ribblevalley.gov.uk</small>				
Date Inspected:	28/04/2026	Site Notice:	28/04/2026					
Officer:	MC							
DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:					REFUSAL			

Development Description:	Prior notification for proposed installation of a 15m telegraph pole supporting 3no. antennas, 2x 0.3m dishes, 3no. equipment cabinets and ancillary development thereto including 1.2m fence with 3m double access gates and underground cabling.
Site Address/Location:	Land northeast of Cold Coates Farm, Collins Hill Lane, Chipping, PR3 2WQ

CONSULTATIONS:	Parish/Town Council
<p>The Parish Council is mindful of the visual impact of the 15m mast within the National Landscape but understand that attempts to mitigate the impact by choice of colour and position have been taken. The photo montage report was reviewed and found particularly useful from this respect.</p> <p>They note that mobile phone reception has become increasingly important to residents and visitors to the parish in the last few years. In some areas mobile reception is poor to non-existent. This is particularly of concern to those residents who have had to move to digital landlines; in the event of a power cut and without mobile signal they no means to communicate.</p> <p>On balance Chipping Parish Council is supportive of the application for a new mast on the understanding it will improve mobile reception and eliminate 'not-spots' in the parish.</p>	

CONSULTATIONS:	Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies
LCC Highways:	Lancashire County Council acting as the Highway Authority does not raise an objection regarding the proposed development and are of the opinion that the proposed development will not have a significant impact on highway safety, capacity or amenity in the immediate vicinity of the site.
RVBC Environmental Health Officer:	No comments to make as the proposal conforms with the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection Public Exposure Guidelines

CONSULTATIONS:	Additional Representations.
No representations received.	

RELEVANT POLICIES AND SITE PLANNING HISTORY:
Schedule 2 Part 16 Class A of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).
Relevant Planning History:
No relevant planning history.

ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:

Site Description and Surrounding Area:

The application site relates to a piece of land adjacent to Cold Coats Farm, located within the Forest of Bowland National Landscape. The site is accessed from Collins Hill lane and is approximately 1.3km from the village of Chipping. Public Footpath FP0312080a also runs through the farm and adjacent to the application site and the area is predominantly rural in character.

In addition, part of the access to the site is at risk of surface water flooding.

Proposed Development for which consent is sought:

The application relates to the installation of a number of pieces of telecommunications equipment, including the following:

- 1 x 15m high Telegraph Pole (colour Olive Brown RAL 8008)
- 3 x antennas
- 2 x 0.3m transmission dishes fixed under the antenna
- 1 x Wiltshire Cabinet with (colour Fir Green RAL6009)
- 1 x Weston Cabinet (colour Fir Green RAL6009)
- 1 x MK5B Link AC cabinet (colour Fir Green RAL6009)
- Proposed 1.2m fence with 3m double access gates
- Other ancillary equipment and underground cabling

The supporting statement indicates that the existing site located which is 3rd party radio tower located at E: 360506 N: 442983 EE cannot be upgraded due to technical reasons as such a replacement site is required as such providing enhanced coverage to the area by replacing old apparatus which cannot be upgraded including 5G coverage and capacity. Therefore, a new location for a replacement installation in this area is required in order to maintain and improve coverage to the area.

Whether or not permitted development:

As part of the assessment, it falls to the Local Planning Authority to verify that Permitted Development allowances would permit the development proposed. In this case, the proposal has been considered against Class A – A(a) (the installation, alteration or replacement of any electrical communications apparatus) and A.1(1) (ground based apparatus), A.1(3) (apparatus on masts), A.1(4) (antenna and supporting structures installed, replaced or altered on article 2(3) land or land which is a site of special scientific interest), and A.1(9) (radio equipment housing) of Part 16 within Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).

A.1 (1) Development consisting of the installation, alteration or replacement of electronic communications apparatus (other than on a building) is not permitted by Class A(a) if –

a) in the case of the installation of electronic communications apparatus (other than a mast) the apparatus, excluding any antenna, would exceed a height of 15 metres above ground level;

NO

b) in the case of the alteration or replacement of electronic communications apparatus (other than a mast) that is already installed, the apparatus, excluding any antenna, would when altered or replaced exceed the height of the existing apparatus or a height of 15 metres above ground level, whichever is the greater;

NO

c) in the case of the installation of a mast, the mast, excluding any antenna, would exceed a height of –

- (i) 30 metres above ground level on unprotected land; or
- (ii) 25 metres above ground level on article 2(3) land or land which is on a highway;

NO

d) in the case of the alteration or replacement of a mast, the height of the mast, excluding any antenna, would when altered or replaced exceed the greater of the height of the existing mast or a height of –

- (i) 30 metres above ground level on unprotected land; or
- (ii) 25 metres above ground level on article 2(3) land or land which is on a highway; or

The proposal site is on article 2(3) land (Forest of Bowland National Landscape); however, the mast when altered would not exceed 25 metres above ground level.

e) in the case of the alteration or replacement of a mast –

- (i) the mast is on any land which is, or is within, a site of special scientific interest; and
- (ii) the mast would, when altered or replaced, exceed the original width of the mast by more than one third.

The mast is not on land which is, or is within, a site of special scientific interest. Criterion (ii) is therefore N/A.

A.1 (3) Development consisting of the installation, alteration, or replacement of electronic communications apparatus (other than an antenna) on a mast is not permitted by Class A(a) if the height of the mast (including the apparatus installed, altered or replaced) would exceed any relevant height limit specified in paragraph A.1(1)(c) or (d) or A.1 (2)(a) or (b). For the purposes of applying the limit specified in paragraph A.1(2)(a), the words “taken by itself” in that paragraph are omitted.

The height of the mast, including the apparatus installed, altered or replaced would not exceed any relevant height limit specified.

A.1 (4) Development consisting of the installation, alteration or replacement of an antenna, a mast or any other apparatus which includes or is intended for the support of an antenna, or the replacement of an antenna or such apparatus by an antenna or apparatus which differs from that which is being replaced is not permitted by Class A(a) –

a) on any article 2(3) land unless –

- (i) the development (excluding the installation, alteration or replacement of a mast) is carried out in an emergency and is within any limitations specified in paragraph A.1 for development of the same type on unprotected land;
- (ii) the antenna or apparatus comprises or is part of a small cell system and is on a building which is not a dwellinghouse or within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse;
- (iii) the antenna is a small antenna and the development is within the limitations specified in A.1 (5) or (6); or
- (iv) where the antenna or apparatus is not a small cell system or a small antenna, the development is within the limitations specified in paragraph A.1(1)(c)(ii), A.1(1)(d)(ii) or A.1(2)(f)

The development is within the limitations specified in paragraph A.1(1)(c)(ii) and therefore complies with criterion (iv).

b) on any land which is, or is within, a site of special scientific interest unless –

- (i) the development (excluding the installation, alteration or replacement of a mast) is carried out in an emergency and is within any limitations specified in paragraph A.1 for developers of the same type on unprotected land; or
- (ii) the development is within the limitations specified in paragraph A.1 (5)

N/A

A.1 (9) Development consisting of the installation, alteration or replacement of radio equipment housing is not permitted by Class A(a) if –

- a) the development is not ancillary to the use of any other electric communications apparatus;

The development is ancillary to the use of the telecommunications tower.

- b) the cumulative volume of such development would exceed 90 cubic metres or, if located on the roof of a building, the cumulative volume of such development would exceed 30 cubic metres; or

- c) on any land which is, or is within, a site of special scientific interest, any single development would exceed 2.5 cubic metres, unless the development is carried out in an emergency.

(9A) Sub-paragraph (9)(b) and (c) does not apply where the development is carried out within a permitted compound (and accordingly the development described in that sub-paragraph is permitted by Class A(a)).

The development would be carried out within a permitted compound.

The criteria are therefore met in terms of height for the proposed mast and size for the ground-based apparatus. As such, the proposal would be permitted development, subject to the Prior Approval process.

Whether or not prior approval is needed:

In accordance with condition A.2(3) the proposal is subject to Prior Approval as to the siting and appearance.

The proposal relates to the installation of a new 15m high mast and ancillary equipment. The site is in a highly visible location, within a Public Footpath running immediately adjacent to the mast and the site is viewed in relation to the distance hills within the Forest of Bowland National Landscape.

Paragraph 189 of the National Planning Policy Framework given the sites location within the Forest of Bowland National Landscape, with Para.189 stating that:

“Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads. The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas”.

Firstly, Key Statement EN2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy states:

“The landscape and character of the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty will be protected, conserved and enhanced. Any development will need to contribute to the conservation of the natural beauty of the area. The landscape and character of those areas that contribute to the setting and character of the Forest of Bowland Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty will be protected and conserved and wherever possible enhanced. As a principle the Council will expect development to be in keeping with the character of the landscape, reflecting local distinctiveness, vernacular style, scale, style, features and building materials”.

Policy DMG1 states that:

“In determining planning applications, all development must:

DESIGN

- 1. Be of a high standard of building design which considers the 8 building in context principles (from the CABE/English Heritage building in context toolkit.*
- 2. Be sympathetic to existing and proposed land uses in terms of its size, intensity and nature as well as scale, massing, style, features and building materials.*
- 3. Consider the density, layout and relationship between buildings, which is of major importance. particular emphasis will be placed on visual appearance and the relationship to surroundings, including impact on landscape character, as well as the effects of development on existing amenities.*
- 4. Use sustainable construction techniques where possible and provide evidence that energy efficiency, as described within policy DME5, has been incorporated into schemes where possible.*
- 5. the code for sustainable homes and lifetime homes, or any subsequent nationally recognised equivalent standards, should be incorporated into schemes.”*

Policy DMG2 also states that:

“Within the open countryside development will be required to be in keeping with the character of the landscape and acknowledge the special qualities of the area by virtue of its size, design, use of materials, landscaping and siting. Where possible new development should be accommodated through the re-use of existing buildings, which in most cases is more appropriate than new build.

In protecting the designated area of Outstanding Natural Beauty the Council will have regard to the economic and social well-being of the area. However the most important consideration in the assessment of any development proposals will be the protection, conservation and enhancement of the landscape and character of the area avoiding where possible habitat fragmentation.

Where possible new development should be accommodated through the re-use of existing buildings, which in most cases is more appropriate than new build. development will be required to be in keeping with the character of the landscape and acknowledge the special qualities of the AONB by virtue of its size, design, use of material, landscaping and siting. The AONB management plan should be considered and will be used by the council in determining planning applications”.

Siting and Appearance

The application is supported by a photomontage which identifies a number of viewpoints that the proposed mast would be visible from within the vicinity of the site. The Council raise concerns with regards to the siting of the proposed mast and ancillary equipment and the harm that to the landscape and character of the Forest of Bowland National Landscape.

Notwithstanding the comments within the supporting statement that the site is screened by existing buildings at Cold Coates Farm, it is evident that the mast would be in a highly prominent position within the National Landscape. In particular, the mast would be visible from View Points 1, 2 and 4 and also from the Public Right of Way which runs immediately adjacent to the site. Whilst some mitigation measures have been put forwards to minimise the visual impact, including using an Olive Brown colour for the mast and Fir green for the associated equipment in attempt to lessen the visual impact, this would not fully mitigate the harm that would arise to views of the surrounding hills which positively contribute to the scenic beauty of the National Landscape. Whilst some views of the mast would be partially obscured by the existing buildings at Cold Coates Farm, the site remains fairly open within the landscape. It should also be noted that the existing mast is sited towards the top of Longridge Fell and is not viewed in the same context as the current proposed amended location, which would be sited in the foreground of scenic hill views within the National Landscape, constituting an incongruous addition.

The applicant has advised that the existing tower is overloaded with apparatus and they are unable to upgrade because of this and need to find a suitable replacement. The supporting statement indicates a search area has been considered and a list of sites for a new base station that were considered and the reasons why they were discounted has been provided with accompanying grid references. These sites have also been shown on a map. However, this is not accompanied by a map or plan identifying the precise area within which the new telecommunications equipment would need to be located to provide improved coverage in the area. As such, it is not considered that the applicant has demonstrated that there would not be alternative locations, sited in locations which would have less of an impact that are not available.

As such, the proposal would fail to accord with Key Statement EN2, and Policies DMG1 and DMG2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy and the aims and objectives of Para.189 of the National Planning Policy Framework and Prior Approval is required with regards to siting and appearance.

Other matters

The applicant has submitted a declaration to confirm that the proposal would be in compliance with the requirements of the radio frequency public exposure guidelines of the International Commission on Non-ionizing Radiation Protection. With regard to this declaration, it would not be reasonable to restrict consent for public health reasons.

Observations/Consideration of Matters Raised/Conclusion:

The proposal satisfies all the relevant criteria set out within Schedule 2, Part 16, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) and is therefore defined as permitted development. However, prior approval is required and refused in respect of siting and appearance as the proposal is considered to result in an incongruous development within the Forest of Bowland National Landscape that would result in harm to the landscape and character, failing to conserve or enhance the scenic beauty of the Forest of Bowland National Landscape, contrary to Key Statement EN2, and Policies DMG1 and DMG2 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy and the aims and objectives of Para.189 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

RECOMMENDATION:	Prior approval is required and refused.
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