

**Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.**

<b>Signed:</b>	<b>Officer:</b>	BT	<b>Date:</b>	15/7/2021	<b>Manager:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Site Notice displayed</b>	N/A	<b>Photos uploaded</b>	Y					

<b>Application Ref:</b>	3/2021/0571	 Ribble Valley Borough Council <a href="http://www.ribblevalley.gov.uk">www.ribblevalley.gov.uk</a>	
<b>Date Inspected:</b>	1/7/2021		
<b>Officer:</b>	BT		
<b>DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:</b>		<b>Decision</b>	Approval

<b>Development Description:</b>	Proposed upgrade and minor relocation of an existing emergency services communications installation to facilitate the new Emergency Services Network (ESN).
<b>Site Address/Location:</b>	Dunsop Bridge Trout Farm, Dunsop Road, Dunsop Bridge. BB7 3AX

<b>CONSULTATIONS:</b>	<b>Parish/Town Council</b>
Bowland Forest (Higher) Parish Council consulted on 9/6/21 – no response.	

<b>CONSULTATIONS:</b>	<b>Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies</b>
None.	

<b>CONSULTATIONS:</b>	<b>Additional Representations.</b>
None.	

**RELEVANT POLICIES AND SITE PLANNING HISTORY:**

**Ribble Valley Core Strategy:**

Key Statement DS1 - Development Strategy  
 Key Statement DS2 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development  
 Key Statement EN2 – Landscape  
 Policy DMG1 – General Considerations  
 Policy DMG2 – Strategic Considerations

**NPPF**

**Relevant Planning History:**

**3/2000/0151:**

Erection of a 15m tower with associated antenna, equipment and fencing (Approved)

**3/2003/0725:**

15m geographical coverage pole (gcp) with 2no. dual polar single sector antennas and associated equipment cabin (Approved)

**ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:**

**Site Description and Surrounding Area:**

The application relates to an existing emergency services installation in Dunsop Bridge. The existing installation is situated within the curtilage of Dunsop Bridge Trout Farm approximately 240 metres to the West of Dunsop Road. The installation comprises a 15 metre high telecommunications tower, equipment cabin, meter cabinet and generator all of which are enclosed by a 2 metre high chainlink fence. The surrounding area comprises open countryside, agricultural land and woodland.

**Proposed Development for which consent is sought:**

Consent is sought for the installation of a replacement emergency services telecommunication tower and upgrades to the existing ancillary equipment. The replacement communications tower would be re-sited approximately 15 metres to the North-west of the current tower in order to accommodate the proposed upgrades.

**Principle of development:**

With regards to communications infrastructure, Paragraphs 112 and 113 of the NPPF note 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...use of existing masts, buildings and other structures for new electronic communications capability (including wireless) should be encouraged”.*

The proposed works would extend Emergency Services Network (ESN) coverage within the local area in addition to preparing the site for future compatibility with the Shared Rural Network (SRN). The proposal would also make use of the existing ancillary equipment on site.

It is not considered that any aspect of the proposed works would conflict with policy DMG2 and is therefore acceptable in principle subject to an assessment of the other material planning considerations.

The proposal site lies within the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty therefore consideration will also be given towards the effect of the proposal on the visual character of the surrounding landscape.

**Residential Amenity:**

The communications tower and associated equipment would be located approximately 230 metres from the nearest residential dwellings which front Dunsop Road therefore the proposed siting of the tower and ancillary equipment would not lead to any loss of natural light or outlook for any neighbouring residents.

**Visual Amenity / Landscape:**

The existing tower and ancillary equipment are located within an isolated rural area several hundred metres from the nearest highway and dwellings. The proposal site is also well screened by a large area of woodland to the North-west of the installation. As such, the visual impact of the existing installation is considered to be negligible.

The replacement tower and ancillary equipment would be situated within the existing site approximately 15 metres to the North-west of the existing tower and equipment. Moreover, the replacement tower would have a height of 15 metres which would be identical to the height of the existing tower. Furthermore, the replacement mast and associated equipment would maintain a relatively low visual presence by virtue of

their grey coloured external appearance. Accordingly, it is not anticipated that the proposed works would have any adverse impact upon visual amenity.

The proposal lies just within the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. With regards to development in the AONB, Key Statement EN2 of the Ribble Valley Borough Council Core Strategy states that: *'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.'*

As stated above, the replacement tower would be identical to the existing tower in terms of height and almost identical in terms of its external appearance and other design features. As such, the proposed works are considered to be in accordance with Key Statement EN2 in as much that the proposal would not detract from or have any undue impact upon the aesthetic character of the surrounding AONB landscape.

**Ecology:**

No ecological constraints were identified in relation to the proposal.

**Highways:**

Lancashire County Council Highways have not been consulted on the proposal however the existing access to the proposal site would not be affected by the proposed works therefore it is not considered that the proposal would have any undue impact upon highway safety.

**Observations/Consideration of Matters Raised/Conclusion:**

It is not considered that the proposal would have any undue impact upon residential amenity for any neighbouring residents, nor is it considered that the proposal would have an oppressive or overbearing visual presence.

Moreover, it is not considered that the proposal would have any undue impact upon the aesthetic character of the surrounding AONB landscape. Furthermore, the proposed works would improve emergency services communications coverage which would be highly beneficial to residents and visitors of the local and wider area.

It is for the above reasons and having regard to all material considerations and matters raised that the application is recommended for approval.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That planning permission be granted.