

CUMBERLAND COUNCIL DELEGATED PLANNING DECISION

1.	Reference No:	4/25/2144/0F1
2.	Proposed Development:	EXTENSION OF EXISTING 15M LATTICE MAST TO 23M LATTICE MAST. ADDITION OF 2 X DISH ANTENNAS AND RELOCATION OF 2 ANTENNAS.
3.	Location:	ELECTRICITY SUBSTATION, GOSFORTH ROAD, SEASCALE
4.	Parish:	Seascale
5.	Constraints:	<p>ASC Adverts</p> <p>Safeguard Zone Coal - Off Coalfield</p> <p>Key Species - Potential areas for Natterjack Toads</p> <p>DEPZ Zone Outer Consultation Zone - Sellafield 10KM</p> <p>PROWs - Public Right of Way</p>
6.	Publicity Representations & Policy	<p>Neighbour Notification Letter: YES</p> <p>Site Notice: YES</p> <p>Press Notice: No</p> <p>Consultation Responses: See report</p> <p>Relevant Planning Policies: See report</p>
7.	Report:	
	SITE AND LOCATION	
	<p>The site is located on the periphery of Seascale in a prominent position at the start of the built development within the village. The site is set within the corner of a large field opposite the</p>	

defined settlement limits and houses an Electricity North West electricity substation and associated equipment, with the antennas on the mast used in connection with the equipment within the site.

PROPOSAL

Planning permission is sought for the installation of an 8m tower extension to the existing telecommunication mast which would increase the total height of the mast to 23m. The proposal would see the relocation of 2 dishes and relocation of two antennas to a higher point on the mast.

The development would be undertaken by Electricity North West to ensure the communication link between electricity sites can be of a sufficiently robust capacity with uninterrupted linkage.

RELEVANT PLANNING APPLICATION HISTORY

4/98/0663/0 - Refurbishment of existing sub-station – Approved

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Parish Council

No Objections

Local Highway Authority (LHA) and Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA)

No objection to the proposed development as it is considered that it will not have a material effect on existing highway conditions nor will it increase the flood risk on the site or elsewhere.

Environmental Health

There are no objections to this development from Environmental Health.

The applicant has submitted an ICNIRP Declaration that confirms that the telecommunications equipment would meet the precautionary guidelines set out by the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation (ICNIRP) regarding the exposure of the public to electromagnetic fields. Site safety is also overseen by the Health & Safety Executive.

The development should not interfere with existing telecommunications coverage in the area, though further advice and regulation is provided by Ofcom.



Cumberland Council

Planners may wish to consider if the construction works to the development may be limited to standard construction hours (pending any health & safety and network concerns otherwise).

Joint Emergency Management and Resilience Team

There are no objections to the proposed planning application.

However, it should be noted that the location of the property is situated within an area outside the site which, in liaison with Sellafield Ltd and the Office for Nuclear Regulation, special arrangements are made for residents/business premises, this area is referred to as the Detailed Emergency Planning Zone (DEPZ). As a direct result particular attention is paid to ensuring that people are aware of the appropriate action to take in the event of an incident at the Sellafield site.

I would ask that the applicant be reminded that liaising with this office is of importance to ensure that the applicant and their trades people/contractors are aware of the appropriate information and actions to take should there be an incident at the Sellafield site.

Contact: emergency.planning@westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk Webpage:

<https://www.cumberland.gov.uk/your-environment/your-community/communitysafety/emergencies/chemical-and-nuclear-sites>

Public Representation

The application has been advertised by way of site notice and neighbour notification letters issued to 40 Properties.

No objections have been received as a result of this consultation.

Planning Policy

Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Development Plan

On 1st April 2023, Copeland Borough Council ceased to exist and was replaced by Cumberland Council as part of the Local Government Reorganisation of Cumbria.

Cumberland Council inherited the local development plan documents of each of the sovereign Councils including Copeland Borough Council, which combine to form a Consolidated Planning Policy Framework for Cumberland.

The inherited local development plan documents continue to apply to the geographic area of their sovereign Councils only.

The Consolidated Planning Policy Framework for Cumberland comprises the Development Plan for Cumberland Council until replaced by a new Cumberland Local Plan.

Copeland Local Plan 2021 - 2039 (LP):

Cumberland Council continued the preparation of the LP as commenced by Copeland Borough Council.

The LP was adopted by Cumberland Council on the 5th of November 2024 replacing the Copeland Local Plan 2013-2028 and the saved policies of the Copeland Local Plan 2021-2016.

The policies relevant to this application are as follows:-

- Strategic Policy DS1 - Settlement Hierarchy
- Policy DS4 – Design and Development Standards
- Strategic Policy E1 - Economic Growth
- Strategic Policy CO1 - Telecommunications and Digital Connectivity

Other Material Planning Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (NPPF)

ASSESSMENT

The key issues raised by this proposal are the principle of development, its scale and design, the potential impacts on the amenity of the area and impacts on the setting of the landscape.

Principle of Development

The proposal relates to a modest site of industrial equipment and buildings including the existing mast.

On this basis, the principle of the development is therefore considered to be acceptable and the alterations satisfy Policies DS4, CO1 and guidance within the NPPF.

Given the site is related to ENLW internal telemetry network to ensure uninterrupted linkage between operational sites, the development would not fall under the parameters of masts and

antennas under the telecommunication code operators, nor, would it fall within the permitted development rights of electricity providers and would exceed any other parameters for other telecommunication development.

Scale and Design

CO1 of the Local Plan outlines that “The Council will support the continued provision of infrastructure that extends and improves digital connectivity across all parts of Copeland, particularly where it provides access to 5G and gigabit capable full fibre technology.

New development will be supported where it enables the enhancement of Copeland’s digital infrastructure without harming the existing street scene or amenity; mast sharing should be considered where possible. Adverse impacts on the successful functioning of existing digital infrastructure should be avoided or mitigated where possible.

This will be subject to appropriate safeguarding to protect sensitive sites, including those protected for their biodiversity value, important landscapes and heritage assets.”

The proposed increase in height is to allow the required line of sight to be achieved from the proposed Haile Moor site which is currently being considered under a separate planning application (reference 4/25/2146/0F1). The Haile Moor site would become part of the solution to overcome loss of communication function of the overhead cables by providing high-capacity microwave links within the “Cumbrian ring”. In order to keep the proposed Haile Moor site to a minimum the Seascale mast needs to have the 8m increase in height proposed.

The existing mast is within the electricity substation based in Seascale and with the extended height will provide the appropriate linkage to ensure connectivity is maintained that would not be affected by other landscape and built development factors.

In terms of mast sharing, the only other mast within the area is located to the north west of the application site and would also require an extension to the height and an upgrade to the existing infrastructure. The alternative mast is in a more detached location than the proposed site and it would be considered that an upward extension with a more substantial frame, would be more prominent as a standalone structure within the landscape than an extension to the application site.

Landscape

The site is not located within any national or local landscape designations and sits within a landscape of infrastructure associated with the existing operations undertaken by Electricity

North West and the beginning of the built development associated with Seascale. The site is located within Sub type 5b – Low Farmland with the key characteristics being:

- Undulating and rolling topography
- Intensely farmed agricultural pasture dominates
- Patchy areas of woodland provide contrast to the pasture
- Woodland is uncommon west towards the coast
- Fields are large and rectangular Physical character
- Hedges, hedgerow trees and fences bound fields and criss cross up and over the rolling landscape

There is acknowledgement that there may be required upgrades to the national grid to provide energy security and support new power generation could result in larger pylons and sub stations. The recommendations for energy infrastructure within sub type 5b highlights that development should be carefully sited and designed to prevent this sub type becoming an energy landscape and that prominent locations should be avoided and appropriate mitigation should be included to minimise adverse affects.

By its very nature a mast is difficult to screen within any landscape setting; however, the landscape has adjusted to the presence of the existing mast and although prominent in the immediate landscape, it is considered that there is capacity within the landscape for the increase in height.

Although the scale of the development is considered to be highly visible within the immediate locality and this is exacerbated by the largest antenna being 1.8m in diameter; the site would be visible in a more local context and due to the topography and screening within the wider area. There would be views of the site from the local road network which, in the main part, would be localised to the immediate area surrounding the site, any longer views would diminish with distance.

Due to the topography of the area and existing screening over longer distances, the visual impacts would be localised and not significant enough to warrant refusal on visual impacts.

There would be some degree of change to the landscape within the context of users of the nearby public footpaths in the area, but the change would not be considered to be significant when bearing in mind the existing mast.

Any harm arising from the development in terms of the landscape setting is not considered to outweigh the benefits of providing appropriate linkages serving the electricity network.

Amenity

Policy DS4 and section 12 of the NPPF seek to safeguard good levels of residential amenity of the parent property or adjacent dwellings.

The site, although prominent, would generally be viewed at an angle from the site there are no properties within close proximity which have a direct line of sight towards the mast, properties at a further distance from the proposal would not be impacted to any significant degree from within their properties.

A footpath runs along the side of the site although there will be some degree of change in terms of amenity for users, bearing in mind the existing mast the degree of change is not considered to be significant.

On balance, the development will not have an unacceptable adverse impact on residential amenity, through noise, disturbance or a loss of privacy and the proposal is considered to comply with Policy DS4 and the NPPF guidance.

Highway Conditions and Parking

There are no alterations to the existing arrangements and no increased floorspace is proposed; therefore, the existing access and parking is considered adequate. There is adequate space and access within the confines of the site to carry out the works without detriment to the surrounding area in terms of access and parking during the construction works.

Other Issues

In terms of the recommendation from the Environmental Health Officer relating to a restriction on the hours of the construction activities, in this instance given the scale of the development to increase the height of the existing mast would be limited, it is considered that the works would not create significant disturbance to the surrounding area and would be undertaken over a relatively short space period of time and therefore it would not be reasonable to impose a condition in this regard.

There are no designated heritage assets within the locality that would be affected by the proposal.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

The application seeks to upgrade the existing mast by an upwards extension, this is considered to be a finely balanced matter, but there are two important and overriding considerations. The need is unequivocal and any other location would either not meet the

	<p>need or result in substantially greater landscape and visual impacts. The lattice tower has shown that the mast has the ability to blend in with the backdrop of the existing surroundings to a satisfactory degree.</p> <p>Having examined the application against the provisions of the development plan, it is considered that the proposal is policy compliant and no significant impacts are raised in terms of its siting or appearance.</p>
8.	<p>Recommendation:</p> <p>Approve (Commence within 3 years)</p>
9.	<p>Conditions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The development hereby permitted must commence before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission. <p>Reason</p> <p>To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. This permission relates to the following plans and documents as received on the respective dates and development must be carried out in accordance with them: - <p>Application Form, received 17 April 2025 Site Location Plan, scale 1:50,000 and 1:2500, drawing reference P2407_003-GA-001-A received 17 April 2025 Proposed Site Plan, scale 1:200, drawing reference P2407_003-GA-004-B received 17 April 2025 Proposed Elevations, Scale 1:125, Plan on Tower Scale 1:50scale 1:100, drawing reference P2407_003-GA-005-C received 17 April 2025 Photomontage Report Version v1, received 17 April 2025 ICNIRP Statement, received 17 April 2025 Supporting Statement and Technical Justification – Midway and Haile Moor Mine, received 17 April 2025 Design and Access Statement, received 17 April 2025</p> <p>Reason</p> <p>To conform with the requirement of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.</p>

Informative Note

It should be noted that the location of the property is situated within an area outside the site which, in liaison with Sellafield Ltd and the Office for Nuclear Regulation, special arrangements are made for residents/business premises, this area is referred to as the Detailed Emergency Planning Zone (DEPZ). As a direct result particular attention is paid to ensuring that people are aware of the appropriate action to take in the event of an incident at the Sellafield site.

It is important that the applicant should liaise with emergency planning office to ensure that the applicant and their trades people/contractors are aware of the appropriate information and actions to take should there be an incident at the Sellafield site.

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Statement

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received, and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.

Case Officer: Sarah Smith

Date : 25/06/2025

Authorising Officer: N.J. Hayhurst

Date : 26/06/2025

Dedicated responses to:- N/A