

**DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY**  
**DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

**Friday 5 February 2021**

Present: K Ball, S Barker, A Cooper, W Dracup, G Gribble, P Harper, G Hill, J McInnes, S Morgan, D Moyse, J Nutley, N Oakley, M Renders, P Sanders, P Smerdon, P Vogel, P Woods

Officers: L James, Solicitor (acting on behalf of Devon County Council)  
C Hart, Head of Development Management

Apologies: C Pannell

Approved leave of absence from the Authority: Mr. D Webber

The Chairman welcomed the public and independent Member Nigel Tigwell, Independent Persons, and Laura James, Legal Representative.

Members were reminded that when voting consistent language should be used i.e., *For the motion, Against the motion or Abstain*

**1442 Minutes of the Meeting held on Friday 8 January 2021**

Save for the amendments as detailed below, the minutes of the meeting held on Friday 8 January were agreed and signed as a correct record.

- 1439 – second paragraph – “The Chairman stated **that** Mr Nutley had already **sent** his apologies”

Members discussed the wording in the first paragraph on page 4 of the minutes regarding the Parish Council response. Ms James stated the wording should be rephrased as “The Case Officer advised that a response had been received from the Parish Council who supported the recommendation”. But she reminded Members that the item was an enforcement case and therefore the Parish Council have no influence in the decision making process.

**1443 Minutes of the Meeting held on Friday 15 January 2021**

Save for the amendments as detailed below, the minutes of the meeting held on Friday 15 January were agreed and signed as a correct record.

1441 – “Mr Barker asked that the matrix be amended to show that he is not a District **Councillor**.”

“Ms Woods declared a personal interest in the application, having **received** correspondence.”.

“... the meeting would be paused in order for attempts to be made **to** re-connect that Member to the meeting,...”.

#### **1443 Declarations of Interest and Contact**

Members agreed to declare those interests set out in the matrix of membership of other bodies.

Mr Harper declared a personal interest in NPA/DM/21/003 due to having a multi-user telecoms mast on his land for which the operator pays a yearly rent. As EE are one of the users of the mast, Mr Harper left the meeting for this item.

Mr Nutley declared a personal interest due to receiving an email from an objector.

Mr Smerdon declared a personal interest due to receiving an email from an objector and being on the District Council for the area as stated in the matrix.

#### **1444 Applications for Determination by the Committee**

Members received the report of the Head of Development Management (NPA/DM/20/003).

**Item 1 – 0594/20 Installation of a 25m ‘DC80’ monopole with 3 no. antennas, 2 no. 0.6m transmission dishes, 1 no. 1.2m ground based satellite dish, equipment cabinets, generator within a compound enclosed with a 1.8m high ‘feather board’ fence all with ancillary development and new stone access track (Full Planning Permission), Land at Stoney Post Cross, Holne.**

Speakers: Mr John Bird, Galloway Estates on behalf of the applicant  
Ms F Browne, Objector

The Officer stated to Members that the application is for a 25m high monopole located 0.7 miles west of Holne. The pole will enhance the Emergency Services Network (ESN) as well as general telecommunications signal for the public. It will replace the existing Airwave data communications service. The pole will be situated in a field next to a plantation of trees, which will aid in the camouflage of the mast.

The applicant has been in detailed discussions with the Planning Officer and the proposed height of the mast has been reduced from 27.5m to 25m to reduce the impact of the mast on the landscape. There will be 3 antennae on the head of the mast and 2 transmission dishes. The wooden fence surrounding the mast will stand at 1.8m tall. All the equipment will be painted

in a dark grey/brown colour. The stone access track will be 55 m long, along the east side of the field. The landowner has given their permission for the applicant to have the mast on this piece of land.

The Case Officer stated that objections have been received due to the impact on the landscape and character of the area. The Authority's Trees and Landscapes Officer raised no objection as there are many other poles dotted around the landscape and this would have minimal impact on the character of the area. Concerns relating to the bat flight path in the area have been raised by objectors, the Authority's Ecologist comments state that the evidence of masts interrupting flight paths is inconclusive and therefore had no objection to the proposed mast.

The Case Officer informed Members that the public benefit outweighs the potential harm on the landscape. The mast would supply the Emergency services with network coverage over a large area, that is very heavily used by recreational users of the moor such as canoeists, in an area that currently has very poor or no signal at all.

The Chair permitted those who had registered to speak to address the committee.

Ms Browne stated to Members that she was speaking on behalf of the objectors who live in and around Holne, who have commented that the mast would not enhance or protect the area which includes Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's). It is a precious place and the emergency services have coped without this mast up until now. The Ecologist has not visited the site and therefore has not seen how close it is to an ancient woodland and no bat survey has been conducted to assess how much of an impact the mast will have on the many roosts adjacent to the site. There is also flooding in the field where the proposed mast is to be sited, so is it not a suitable location. She stated that there is another mast 500m from this site and questioned the need for another mast. The existing mast is much less visible than the proposed one will be.

Mr Bird (on behalf of the applicant) informed Members that Galloway Estates is very familiar with the challenges that arise from erecting masts in National Parks. The Heat Map that the Officer provided in the presentation indicates the wider public benefits with the massive improvement in mobile communications signal. The site was selected after discussions with DNPA Planning Officers and design changes were made after the discussions, which the clients were happy with. The landscape harm is acknowledged, but it is outweighed by the public benefits.

Following Members questions, Mr Bird stated that the mast mentioned by Ms Browne is not in the right location and is also supplying a totally different communication network (Airband – wireless broadband technology) and therefore the location would not be suitable and the mast is not technically suitable. The existing mast that supplies Airwave system is due to be switched off and decommissioned by 2022 and therefore the area would be

left with no coverage for the Emergency services or the wider public. Also, the existing mast is supplying 2G services, whereas the new mast would supply the area with 4G coverage.

The Head of Development Management clarified that the mast mentioned by Ms Browne is for a separate system that supplies wireless access to broadband internet services. It would not be suitable for the ESN communication system that will be supplied by the applicant.

In response to Members questions, the Case Officer stated that a mock tree post would not work as the height of the pole is key for ensuring the signal for communications can reach another mast and into the valley as well as clearing the tree line (20m high) without any obstruction. The design of the pole will be a tapered mono pole, with ladder rungs built in for maintenance engineers to be able to access the top of the mast. Mr Bird clarified that it was normal practice to have a built in ladder on the masts.

A Member raised concerns regarding additional modifications to the post, the Case Officer stated that Condition 4 would read: "The monopole mast, antennae, antennae support structure, equipment housing and cabinets hereby approved shall be painted RAL8019 in colour not later than 30 days after the substantial completion of the development and, along with any additional equipment added to the compound or mast in the future, shall be maintained as painted RAL8019 in perpetuity.". Any changes to the design to the fencing, for example spike on top or additional security fencing would be required an amendment or new planning permission.

Mr Sanders proposed the recommendation, with the modification of Condition 4, which was seconded by Mr McInnes.

After a short discussion, Members agreed that public safety was paramount and that the ability for the Emergency Services to have good communications on the moor is vital. The area the mast will cover is a very popular area and numbers of visitors are increasing.

Ms Moyse informed the Chairman she had briefly lost connection during the debate and had returned to the meeting. The Chair confirmed that, as a result, she would not be able to vote on the item.

**RESOLVED:** That, permission be GRANTED subject to the amended condition 4 as detailed below.

**CONDITIONS:**

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
2. The development hereby approved shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the Site Location Plan, Block Plan and approved drawings numbered EAS0545 B 103 Rev. E and EAS0545 B 104 Rev. D valid 7 December 2020

3. Upon redundancy, the telecommunications mast and equipment shall be permanently removed and the land reinstated to its former condition within a period of six months.
4. The monopole mast, antennae, antennae support structure, equipment housing and cabinets hereby approved shall be painted RAL8019 in colour not later than 30 days after the substantial completion of the development and, along with any additional equipment added to the compound or mast in the future, shall be maintained as painted RAL8019 in perpetuity.
5. Prior to first use of the development hereby permitted, the compound shall be enclosed with a 1.8m high 'feather board' fence constructed from larch or red cedar and maintained as such in perpetuity.
6. Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted, details of the construction and surfacing of the proposed stone track and turning area shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for written approval.
7. No external lighting shall be installed or used in association with the development hereby approved.
8. Notwithstanding the details submitted, prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted, details of the proposed landscaping and planting scheme shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval. The landscaping and planting shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme within twelve months of the commencement of the development, or such longer period as the Local Planning Authority shall specify in writing. The landscaping and planting shall be maintained for a period of five years from the date of the commencement of the development, such maintenance shall include the replacement of any trees or shrubs that die or are removed.