

Highfield Residents' Association

21/01702/TCC

Land adjacent to Avenue Court, The Avenue, Southampton.

Installation of telecommunications equipment including 15m high monopole, equipment cabinets and ancillary works to facilitate 5G network

Highfield Residents' Association strongly objects to this Planning Application. The land in question is a shared public footpath and cycleway (Southampton Cycle Network SCN5 Northern Cycle Freeway). It is a commuter route into the city from the north (Bassett) and for students to the university from Portswood and the city. There is high usage of this path, including school children walking to and from St Anne's Catholic School and Sixth Form in Bedford Place.

The cycleway was upgraded by SCC during 2021 with new signage, path markings and a newly constructed continuous footway crossing on Westwood Road. This is immediately adjacent to the proposed 5G monopole position. The path became even more heavily used by E-scooters riders with the introduction of the Voi trial Rental Scheme in Southampton. Two docking stations have been positioned within 50m of the proposed monopole on either side of The Avenue (north and south sides).

The proposed site of the pole, reducing the width of the path so close to the junction with Westwood Road, is potentially dangerous as the cyclists and E-scooter riders, pedestrians, including those with buggies, elderly pedestrians, wheelchairs, mobility scooters (Care homes are located in Westwood and Winn Road) all congregate at exactly this point waiting to cross Westwood Road in both directions. The path is wide for an essential purpose.

The position is also in close proximity to the A33 (The Avenue) carriageway, a Toucan Crossing and a bus stop. The large structure will be an added visual distraction on a busy section of trunk road.

The monopole will be 15m in height which is higher than surrounding trees, lampposts and Avenue Court, an apartment block on the corner of Westwood Road and The Avenue. It will significantly affect the view from the block, especially encroaching on the top floor, which at present has tree top views stretching over into The Common.

The structure is not in keeping with either residential or environmental surrounding areas and will impact the street scene. The trees are mostly deciduous and will not provide screening at all during winter months. It is not possible to ascertain from the Location Plan

Document (1593481.pdf) whether any of the trees or bushes will be removed during construction. HRA would object to the removal of any vegetation.

The colour of the pole and associated cabinets are described as galvanised/steel grey. This is in stark contrast to the surrounding vegetation and not sympathetic to the character of Southampton Common (SSSI). Other consultees have already identified that the land where the structure is planned is part of The Common and subject to a different planning process (i.e. the Planning Inspectorate).

St Andrew's Church is in proximity to the proposed mast position and is a Grade 2 listed building. Other nearby sites were discounted due to their proximity of listed buildings or historic monuments (The Cowherds and The Cut Thorn Mound). Therefore, such an obtrusive structure is not suitable to being sited so close to St Andrew's Church.

Highfield Residents Association objects to this Planning Application and requests that a thorough review of the proposal is undertaken including consideration of alternative locations.

Barbara Claridge

HRA Secretary