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By email – planningapplications@southtyneside.gov.uk

Dear Sir / Madam,

Planning Application Covering Letter

BT South Shields, Claypath Lane, Crossgate, NE33 4PE

We have been instructed on behalf of British Telecom Ltd ('our client') to submit a planning application for the installation of a GRP substation on land adjacent to the Telephone Exchange building at South Shields, as part of an electricity supply capacity upgrade at telephone exchange sites.

Site Location

The site is located at Claypath Lane, Crossgate, South Shields. The site's surrounding land uses include:

- North – Commercial (furniture shop, petrol station);
- West – Derelict open space;
- South – Educational institution; and
- East – Business and services, and residential.

The Proposed Development

The GRP substation is proposed to be located to the eastern elevation of the telephone exchange building (as can be seen on the submitted proposed elevation plans), adjacent to the car park. The proposed size of the GRP substation is:

- 4m in width;
- 4m in depth; and
- 2.4m in height.

Planning Policy

National Policy

Chapter 10 of the National Planning Policy Framework (last updated in 2021) provides guidance on supporting high quality communications infrastructure. Paragraph 114 states that high quality advanced communications infrastructure is essential for social wellbeing and economic growth, and that planning decisions should support the expansion of electronic communications networks. Paragraph 117 elaborates that applications for electronic communications development should be supported by the necessary evidence to justify the proposed development.

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Local Policy

We acknowledge the following South Tyneside Local Plan documents, which are relevant to this planning application:

- Core Strategy (2007); and
- Development Management Policies (2011)

We acknowledge that the Local Plan is in the process of being updated, with a new Local Plan due to be adopted in 2024. The emerging Local Plan policies have not yet been adopted, and a review of recent appeals highlights that the emerging plan has not yet been found sound and thus carries limited weight. Therefore, we acknowledge the emerging policies, but we have considered the acceptability of the proposed development in line with the adopted planning policy, which is considered further below.

- Policy ST2 of the Core Strategy (Sustainable Urban Living) states that buildings and their settings are designed to be flexible, enabling them to adapt to future needs and to consider the needs of all users.

- Policy DM1 of the Development Management Policies document requires telecommunications development to convey sensitive consideration of its surroundings and be acceptable in relation to residential amenity, highway capacity and safety. Telecommunications installations will be resisted in sensitive areas of the borough.

- Policy SP25 of the emerging Local Plan (Infrastructure) states delivery of the infrastructure that the Borough requires will be met by ensuring that development incorporates world-class digital infrastructure.

Assessment

The proposed development would provide essential infrastructure to the area, aiding the work of British Telecom Ltd. The proposed development complies with NPPF by contributing towards social wellbeing and economic growth. Furthermore the proposed development complies with Local Plan Policy ST2 by adapting to ever changing future electrical needs, catering to all users. The proposed substation is not located in a sensitive area and does not have any relevant site constraints, thus is completely in line with local policy guidance, as it is acceptable in relation to residential amenity, highway capacity and safety. The development is thus not only necessary, but entirely appropriate.

Submission Documents

As part of the planning application submission, we include these documents in our submission:

- Application Form and Certificates;
- Site Location Plan (1:1,250);
- Proposed Layout Plan (1:500);
- Proposed Floor Plans (1:100); and
- Proposed Elevations (1:100).

Should you have any queries or require any further information concerning the application or any of the submission documents, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely



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cc Taylor Morgan, British Telecom
Conor Lapniewski, Quartzelec Ltd