10 Utilities

Strategic Context

10.1 Under **policy GSP1 of the Core Strategy**, the National Park aims to support exemplary sustainable development, pursuing the two statutory purposes to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the National Park and to promote opportunities for enjoyment whilst seeking to foster the economic and social wellbeing of local communities. This justifies, in many cases, requiring developers to consider how they will conserve and enhance the National Park's nationally significant landscapes including for example sharing telecommunications masts, undergrounding electricity cables, using sustainable urban drainage and fully justifying the need for new development.

10.2 **Core Strategy policies GSP1, DS1 and GSP3** enable utility infrastructure provision in settlements and in the countryside outside the Natural Zone in the context of National Park purposes. Supporting text to policy GSP1 reminds developers that the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 (as amended) require all relevant authorities and public bodies (such as District Councils and utility companies) to take National Park purposes into account in their decisions and actions.

10.3 Most of the National Park has electricity and mains water supplies. However, coverage is not comprehensive. Mains gas supplies and mains sewerage are available in larger settlements but are less widespread in small villages and beyond village limits.

Development that requires new or upgraded service infrastructure

10.4 The acceptability of development is tied to the acceptability of any new infrastructure that it requires. Because infrastructure can easily harm the landscape it is vital that development is located to minimise adverse impact. Where the development of new utility service infrastructure is acceptable the new infrastructure must be provided before the new land use begins.

10.5 The Core Strategy generally directs development to areas where service provision is unlikely to be a problem. Sometimes, however, existing service infrastructure may have insufficient capacity to cope with increased demand (sewage or water supply for example). If additional development is permitted in such a case, the services should be improved beforehand to avoid excessive demands being placed upon them. The impact of the improved services on the National Park will be a factor in deciding whether to approve the development

10.6 The National Park Authority will consult the utility providers and the Environment Agency on planning applications where service provision is likely to be an issue. Wherever possible, planning controls are used to enable service infrastructure to be improved rather than refuse the development.

DMU1 Development that requires new or upgraded service infrastructure

A. New or upgraded service infrastructure will be provided to development provided that it:

(i) does not adversely affect the valued characteristics of the area; and

(ii) can be provided before any new land use begins.

10.7 The National Park landscapes are particularly sensitive to new development because much of the landscape is relatively open and treeless. In addition, the National Park's location, between large areas of power production and areas of greatest demand such as Greater Manchester, can create pressure for transmission infrastructure of far greater benefit to communities and businesses outside the Park than those inside.

10.8 The development management policies provide criteria additional to the Core Strategy that:

- restrict new utility services to those which benefit and are needed by the National Park's resident businesses and communities and that can be provided without harm to valued characteristics and established uses
- control the adverse impact on the built and natural environment requiring utility services (including those for low carbon renewable energy installations) that cause adverse visual impact to be undergrounded.

DMU2 New and upgraded utilities services

A. Development of utilities infrastructure will not be permitted unless it is to improve or extend the service to the communities and businesses of the National Park, and can be provided without harm to the valued characteristics of the area or to other established uses. Infrastructure and ancillary works or buildings should be located, designed and landscaped so as to minimise their impact on the built and natural environment, and on any other established activities.

B. Infrastructure services to new development, or improved services to existing uses should be placed underground.

Development close to utility installations

10.9 Certain utility installations may impact negatively on other land uses because of potential hazards, smell, noise or loss of amenity. High pressure gas mains and sewage treatment works or the presence of overhead power lines are examples. The potential impact of utility company infrastructure on the amenity or safety of new development will be an important consideration when assessing new planning proposals.

10.10 The Health and Safety Executive designates sites and pipelines carrying potential hazards as 'Notifiable Installations'. The National Park Authority consults the Executive about proposals within given distances of these sites (Consultation Distances). The Executive generally advises against any proposed development within these distances. Developers considering work within the Consultation Distance of a Notifiable Installation, are advised to liaise with the Health and Safety Executive at the earliest opportunity.

10.11 Around transmission pipelines, the Executive recommend 'Building Proximity Distances', within which normal domestic occupation should be avoided. British Gas high pressure transmission pipelines within the National Park are listed below with their corresponding Building Proximity Distances (BPD) and Consultation Distances (CD). The locationS of these pipelines are indicated on the Policies Map.

10.12 The water companies are concerned about incompatible land use in the vicinity of sewage treatment works. Smells and insects are unavoidable consequences of the treatment process and could result in poor standards of amenity around the installation.

HSE Reference	Pipeline	BPD (m)	CD (m)
1.1 HC/16/103-1	1.2 Scawby/Totley	1.3 3.0	1.4 6
1.5 HC/16/104-1	1.6 Warningtongue Lane/Totley	1.7 3.0	1.8 6
1.9 HC/16/105-1	1.10 18" Totley/Catshaw	1.11 8.5	1.12 17
1.13 HC/16/105-2	1.14 30" Totley/Catshaw	1.15 3.0	1.16 6
1.17 HC/16/107-1	1.18 Totley/Collingtree	1.19 8.5	1.20 17
1.21 HC/16/117-1	1.22 Beeley Moor/Rowsley	1.23 16.4	1.24 50
1.25 HC/19/111-2	1.26 Macclesfield (Paradise Farm)/Buxton	1.27 16.77	1.28 51
1.29 HC/19/114-1	1.30 14" Catshaw/Failsworth	1.31 15.5	1.32 47
1.33 HC/19/147-1	1.34 Bunsal Cob/Horwich End	1.35 16.7	1.36 50

10.13 The operational and complaints history of a sewage treatment works and other potential odour issues in the detailed consultation response from the Environmental Health Department of the relevant district council will be carefully considered by the Authority before permitting new development in the immediate vicinity.

DMU3 Development close to utility installations

Development will not be permitted in the vicinity of sewage treatment works, high pressure oil or gas pipelines or other notifiable installations where they would present an unacceptable loss of amenity or risk to those using the development.

10.14 The nature of the landscapes of the National Park makes the assimilation of telecommunications infrastructure and associated equipment very difficult without visual harm.

10.15 Modern telecommunications networks are useful in reducing the need to travel, by allowing for home working. They can be a vital aid to business and to emergency services and the management of traffic. However, as with other utility company development, the National Park Authority must carefully avoid harmful impacts arising from this type of development, including that needed to improve services within the National Park itself. Telecommunications development proposed within the National Park to meet an external national need, rather than to improve services within it may well be of a scale which would cause significant and damaging visual harm and in such circumstances alternative less damaging locations should be sought.

10.16 In exceptional circumstances where it can be demonstrated that telecommunications infrastructure is essential, rather than desirable to the industry, the National Park Authority will seek to achieve the least environmentally damaging but operationally acceptable location. It will request that the full range of technical information is supplied by the company regarding the siting, size and design of the equipment proposed to facilitate evaluation of the least obtrusive but technically feasible development in line with guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework.

10.17 New equipment should always be mounted on an existing structure if technically possible and development should be located at the least obtrusive site. Particular care is needed to avoid damaging the sense of remoteness of the higher hills, moorlands, edges or other prominent and skyline sites. Upland or elevated agricultural buildings, which are not uncommon in the National Park, may provide a suitable alternative to new structures in the landscape. If necessary, the National Park Authority will seek expert advice to help assess and minimise the impact of the design and siting of telecommunications infrastructure. Evidence will be required to demonstrate that telecommunications infrastructure will not cause significant and irremediable interference with other electrical equipment, air traffic services or instrumentation operated in the national interest. Fixed line Code Operators should refer to the Code of Practice for Cabinet siting and Pole siting, June 2013[79].

79 https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/

10.18 Mobile telephone companies may often be able to locate antennae (or any other transmitting or receiving equipment) on an existing building rather than erect a purpose built mast. The National Park Authority would support such an approach where the antennae can be mounted with minimum visual and architectural impact. Mounting antennae on a listed building will usually be inappropriate (see policy DMC7).

10.19 The Code of Best Practice on Mobile Network development in England July 2013 should be used as guidance.[80]

10.20 Some businesses and public services are developing their own telecommunication networks either for operating and monitoring equipment or to improve their communications. It is considered that such systems are desirable to the industry rather than essential and therefore major infrastructure proposals such as masts or buildings should not be allowed to detract from the valued characteristics of the National Park. Shared use of existing infrastructure or the use of the public networks should be used instead. Exceptions may occur if there are strong public safety implications. Proposals for satellite dishes on dwellings should not be detrimental to the character appearance of the building or its setting or neighbouring buildings. They should always be designed and sited where they have the least visual impact, avoiding principal elevations or street frontages.

10.21 Development proposals for radio and telecommunications masts and antenna should be supported by evidence to justify the proposed development including a landscape assessment as in policy DMC1. and:

- documentary evidence with dates and contact details and copies of responses that the possibility of erecting an antennae on an existing building, structure or mast site has been explored
- the outcome of consultations with organisations with an interest in the proposed development in particular where a mast is to be installed near a school or college within a statutory Safeguarding zone surrounding an aerodrome or technical site
- a certificate that demonstrates that cumulative exposure when operational will not exceed International Commission on Non-Ionising Radiation Protection guidelines
- use of a design that minimises the size of the telecommunications apparatus
- evidence of outcomes of consultations with the Ministry of Defence, any aerodrome or technical site.

uploads/attachment_data/file/205744/Final_Cabinet_and_Pole_Siting_COP_Issue_1_2_.pdf
https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/proposed-changes-to-siting-requirements-for-broadband-cabinets-and-overhead-lines-to-facilitate-the-deployment-of-superfast-broadband-networks

80 http://www.mobilemastinfo.com/images/stories/2013_Code_of_best_practice/Code_of_Best_Practice_on_Mobile_Network_Development_-_Published_24-07-2013.pdf

DMU4 Telecommunications infrastructure

A. Development will not be permitted if applicants fail to provide adequate or accurate detailed information to show the effect on the landscape or other valued characteristics of the National Park.

B. Development proposals for radio and telecommunications must be supported by evidence to justify the proposed development'

C. Telecommunications infrastructure will be permitted provided that:

(i) the landscape, built heritage or other valued characteristics of the National Park are not harmed;

(ii) it is not feasible to locate the development outside the National Park where it would have less impact; and

(iii) the least obtrusive or damaging, technically practicable location, size, design and colouring of the structure and any ancillary equipment, together with appropriate landscaping, can be secured.

D. Wherever possible, and where a reduction in the overall impact on the National Park can be achieved, telecommunications equipment should be mounted on existing masts, buildings and structures. Telecommunications equipment that extends above the roofline of a building on which it is mounted will only be allowed where it is the least damaging alternative.

E. Substantial new development such as a mast or building for the remote operation and monitoring of equipment or plant not part of the code-system operators' network will not be permitted.

DMU5 Restoration of utility and telecommunications infrastructure sites

A. Where the erection or installation of a building, structure or equipment for utility service and telecommunication provision is acceptable, it will be permitted provided that its removal is guaranteed when it is no longer used to meet an appropriate operational need.

B. Restoration of the site to its original (or previously agreed alternative) condition will be required to be commenced and completed within an agreed period following the end of the operational use for which the development was permitted.

C. Provided that its long-term requirement is established, water supply infrastructure that may only come into use in times of drought or high rainfall will not be subject to this policy.