

Furious residents say 66ft telecoms mast will blight High Street Conservation Area

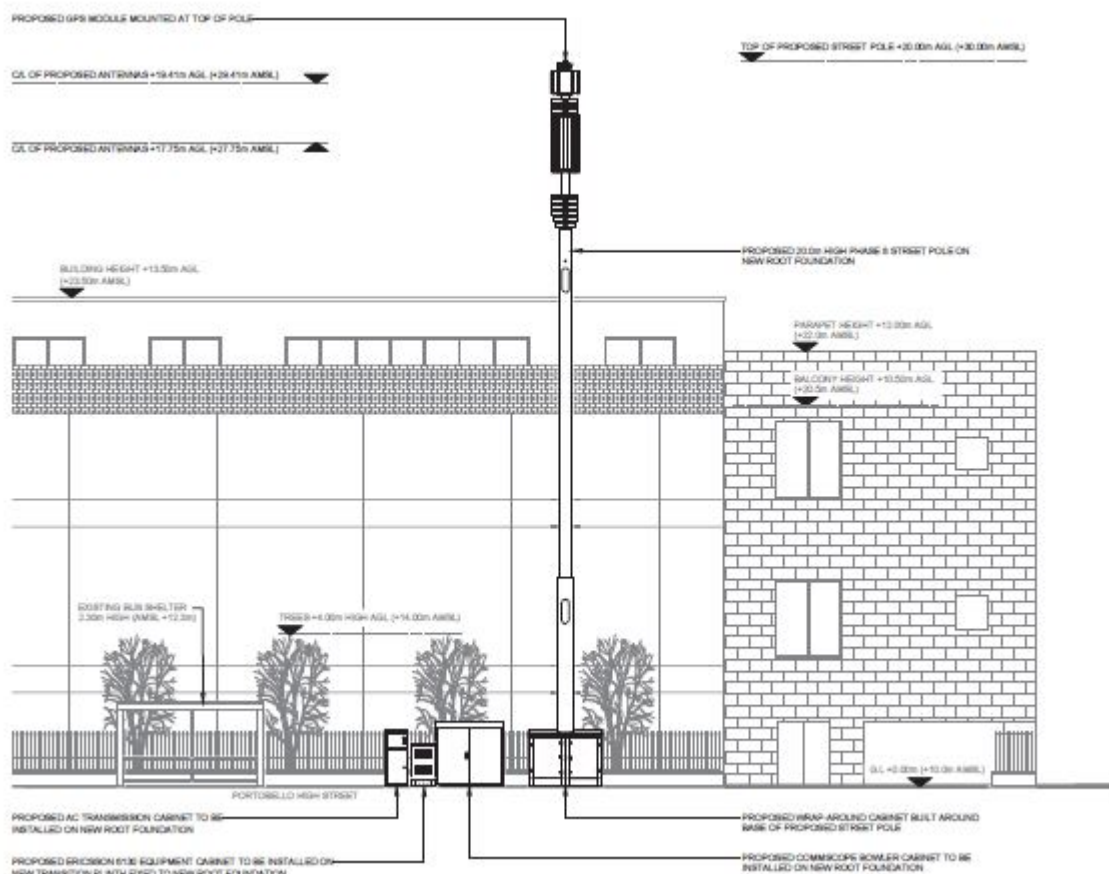
Residents are furious at plans to install a 66ft telecoms tower outside their properties in Portobello.

Almost 50 objections have been lodged with the City of Edinburgh Council against the proposal to install a 5G mast and three cabinets outside 275 and 277 Portobello High Street.

The mast would stand 23 feet higher than the apartment block and is described as a “monstrous eyesore” which would be situated less than five metres from private gardens, and some residents concerned about health issues due to potential radiation from the structure.

Local MP Tommy Sheppard has taken up the case and claims the tower would be “visually intrusive” and disputes the applicant’s position that the location is not within the Portobello Conservation Area.

Mr Sheppard said: “I remain unconvinced that all options to minimise impact have been properly explored. Of the three other sites that were considered two of these were ruled out as they are overlooked by residential properties, and yet the proposed site is also overlooked by residential properties.



The 20 metre (66ft) telecoms poles will dwarf the building at 275 Portobello High Street

“In fact, the 20 metre pole will be directly in front of a development of residential flats, all of which have large windows intended to take advantage of the view, the benefit of which will be adversely effected by the pole.

“The role of promoting health and wellbeing is increasingly at the forefront of planning policy, and I am not convinced that this proposal takes this into account. On this basis I have also submitted an objection to the proposal. Aesthetically this proposal is visually intrusive, and will directly affect residents and visitors to the area. The site is of historic and scenic importance, and alternative options must be explored.”



Local residents Morag Pendreigh and Louise Birnie are two of some 50 objectors to the plans

Residents' spokesperson, Louise Birnie, said local businesses which will overlook the mast are also against the plans which many fear will destroy the character of the High Street.

She said: "It beggars belief that this huge mast could be planted just yards from people's front doors and their must be a more appropriate and discrete location for it. Neighbours are shocked and rightly concerned about the plans and we hope councillors on the planning committee do the right thing and reject it outright.

"Portobello High Street is trying to recover after the economic damage of Covid and to attract people back to local shopping and we are fortunate to have new businesses opening up. This monstrosity would completely undermine attempts to make the High Street a welcoming place to visit and would be

so out of place that to give approval is unthinkable.

"There is also concerns about health and safety aspects of the equipment and the thought of this being stuck outside peoples homes and close to balconies and gardens is already causing a great deal of stress and anxiety to a number of residents..



Residents and businesses say the telecoms tower will blight the historic High Street

"We understand that everyone benefits from better telecom networks but there has to be a more appropriate and less obtrusive site for equipment of this size and scale and we would urge the Council to refuse this application."

Portobello Amenity Society are understood to have lodged an objection to the proposals. All four Portobello councillors have been urged to oppose the planning application but Councillors Campbell, Meagher and Mumford have yet to respond.

Objections to the plan can be lodged by visiting this link www.bit.ly/275portobellomast