

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

1. Site Details

Site Name:	Cuckoo Lane Sw	Site Address:	Footway of Cuckoo Lane/ Bury Old Road, Bury, Greater Manchester M45 6WD
National Grid Reference:	E: 381568 N: 404735		
Site Ref Number:	CTIL_30320000	Site Type: ¹	Macro

2. Pre Application Check List

Site Selection (for New Sites only)

(Would not generally apply to upgrades/alterations to existing site including redevelopment or replacement of an existing site to facilitate an upgrade or sharing with another operator)

Was a local planning authority mast register available to check for suitable sites by the operator or the local planning authority?		No
If no explain why: No publicly accessible up to date mast register.		
Were industry site databases checked for suitable sites by the operator:	Yes	
If no explain why:		

Site Specific Pre-application consultation with local planning authority

Was there pre-application contact:	No
Date of pre-application contact:	N/A
Name of contact:	N/A
Summary of outcome/Main issues raised: A pre-application consultation letter and a set of plans were sent to the Local Planning Authority via email, dated 16/03/2023. No comments received to date.	

Annual area wide information to planning authority

¹ Macro or Micro

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Has annual area wide information been provided?	No
If no explain why:	
Summary issues raised: Cornerstones commercial relationship with VM02 has changed, effectively increasing our independence to work with other companies in the deployment of mobile infrastructure. It means they no longer have visibility of VM02 full update plan. However, Cornerstone is fully committed to working closely with Local Planning Authorities and following best practice guidance. Cornerstone aim to engage and work with the planning department at the earliest opportunity from when they are instructed to deliver new infrastructure within your Local Authority area and often conduct strategic pre-rollout engagement meetings to discuss our wider rollout. If your Local Authority would like a meeting to discuss wider Cornerstone rollout plans, then please advise. We recognise the importance of developing long term partnerships and will always work with you to deliver improved mobile connectivity.	

Community Consultation

Rating of Site under Traffic Light Model:	Red	Amber	Green
Outline of consultation carried out: A pre-application consultation letters and a set of site plans were sent to the local ward councillors for Holyrood ward (Cllrs C Tegolo, E Moss and I Rizvi) via email, dated 16/03/2023. A pre-application consultation letter and a set of site plans were sent to the local MP for Bury South (Mr Christian Wakeford) via email, dated 16/03/2023. Summary of outcome/main issues raised (include copies of relevant correspondence): No comments received to date.			

School/College

Location of site in relation to school/college (include name of school/college):
Heaton Park Primary School, Cuckoo Lane, Prestwich, Whitefield, Manchester M45 6TE
Outline of consultation carried out with school/college (include evidence of consultation):
A pre-application consultation letter and a set of site plans were sent to the Headteacher and the Chair of Governors for Heaton Park Primary School via email, dated 16/03/2023.
Summary of outcome/main issues raised (include copies of main correspondence):
In response from School Business Manager, dated 22/03/2023, stating: "As a school our Headteacher would like assurance that, if this was to go ahead, any work would not take place during peak school times of the day so as not to cause disruption to

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our families arriving and leaving school, i.e. Work must avoid 08:30-09:30 and 14:30-15:30 Monday-Friday."

No further comments received to date.

Civil Aviation Authority/Secretary of State for Defence/Aerodrome Operator consultation (only required for an application for prior approval)

Will the structure be within 3km of an aerodrome or airfield?		No
Has the Civil Aviation Authority/Secretary of State for Defence/Aerodrome Operator been notified?		No
Details of response:		
No aerodromes within 3km of the proposed site.		

Developer's Notice

Copy of Developer's Notice enclosed?	Yes	
Date served:	Developers notice was sent to highways via Recorded Delivery on 24/05/23. Proof of deliveries and copies enclosed within the application.	

3. Proposed Development

The proposed site: Cornerstone is the UK's leading mobile infrastructure services company. They acquire, manage and own over 20,000 sites and are committed to enabling best in class mobile connectivity for over half of all the country's mobile customers. They oversee works on behalf of telecommunications providers and wherever possible aim to: • promote shared infrastructure • maximise opportunities to consolidate the number of base stations • significantly reduce the environmental impact of network development As part of Cornerstone's network improvement programme, Cornerstone is in the process of progressing a number of suitable sites for radio base stations, which will provide improved 2G, 3G and 4G coverage and new 5G service provision to current 'not spot' areas and to Grow the Grid. This is fully in line with the Government's aim to ensure that everyone is connected to the superhighway. Background The operator currently has an existing site located shared between VMO2 and Vodafone located on Bury Old Road. However, the existing site cannot be upgraded to support any additional equipment for the required technology and coverage needs, and therefore a new

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replacement site for VMO2 is required. Furthermore, the recently approved EE/ Three site which sits adjacent to the existing site would cause interference if they were to be sited so closely together.



Image 1: Existing site (Source: Google)

Cornerstone are looking to progress works which will entail the installation of a 20 metre high slim-line monopole supporting 6 no. antennas, 2 no. transmission dishes 2 no. equipment cabinets and ancillary development thereto, including 3 no. Remote Radio Units (RRU's).

The site is proposed to be installed on a footway of Cuckoo Lane, at the junction with Bury Old Road. The site will sit against a backdrop of semi-mature tree which rise up to some 16m. The immediate area is of a mixed-use. To the north-east of the site continues Cuckoo Lane with residential properties orientated 90 degrees away of the proposed installation. To the west of the proposed site continues Bury Old Road with a mixture of residential and commercial properties in a wider area. One property will be facing the proposed development from this direction; however, it is a commercial property. To the south of the proposed site is located junction of Cuckoo Lane, Bury Old Road and Guest Road with 2 residential properties on the other side of the road that will be facing the proposed installation in an acute angle. However, due to the separation provided by the road junction and semi-mature trees between the properties and the site, visual impact seen from this direction will be minimised. To the south-east of the proposed site continues Bury Old Road with residential properties orientated 90 degrees away from the proposed site.

The area contains a number of linear structures including lighting columns, traffic lights, telegraph poles, bollards and road signage that will help to assimilate the proposed radio base station with the surrounding area.

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Enclose map showing the cell centre and adjoining cells if appropriate:
The installation of this ground based installation will enable enhanced 2G, 3G and 4G coverage and capacity to the surrounding area as well as provide new 5G service provision for VM02 to ensure high quality customer experience is obtained as demands on the network increase and technologies change.

Type of Structure (e.g. tower, mast, etc): Hutchinson Orion	
Description:	
The installation of a 20 metre high slim-line monopole supporting 6no. antennas, 2no. transmission dishes 2 no. equipment cabinets and ancillary development thereto, including 3 no. Remote Radio Units (RRU's).	
Details of the proposed equipment are detailed below.	
Overall Height: 20m	
Height of existing building (where applicable):	N/A
Equipment Housing: York	
Length:	1.9 Metres
Width:	0.6 Metres
Height:	1.75 Metres
Equipment Housing: Shire	
Length:	1.05 Metres
Width:	0.66 Metres
Height:	1.75 Metres
Materials (as applicable):	
Tower/mast etc – type of material and external colour:	Steel – Fir Green – RAL 6009
Equipment housing – type of material and external colour:	Steel – Fir Green – RAL 6009

Reasons for choice of design, making reference to pre-application responses:
This proposal is for the installation of a new site to replace the one currently located on the Bury Old Road which is unable to be upgraded to provide the required technologies. As the replacement site needs to cover the same target coverage area as the existing site at Bury Old Road, it needs to be located as close to the existing site as possible. As demonstrated in the Alternative Sites section, the area surrounding the existing site has been fully investigated, and it was considered that the application site was the most viable and suitable location for the proposed equipment. The operator has carefully considered the design of the new proposed column. The operator is proposing the most sensitive design currently available to provide the necessary coverage and capacity to the surrounding area. Due to all the technologies that will be available at this location, 2G, 3G, 4G and 5G, 6 antennas need to be installed at the top of the slim-line monopole. These are split into a dual stack formation where 3 antennas will be located at the top and the other 3 will be located underneath. The 3 upper antennas will provide 2G, 3G and 4G service provision. The 3 lower antennas will provide new 5G technology for the

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operator to the surrounding area. This makes the 5G antennas 3.37m lower than the top of the pole. Thus if the column were to be any lower, the antennas would not be able to clear the buildings and urban clutter and as such would not be able to operate effectively.

The proposed height at 20m is essential in order to provide coverage to the target coverage area. 5G new radio technologies operate in higher frequency bands than older technologies. Since it operates at higher frequencies where attenuation of the radio signal is naturally higher and the effects of clutter are greater it will normally require a higher structure to achieve the same coverage footprint. To increase capacity and data speeds to the user, the antenna will normally need to be mounted higher than conventional antennae. These factors drive a requirement for an increase in antenna height in 5G.

The new antennas are all unshrouded for technical reasons. However, they have been designed to be as tight as possible and virtually the same width as the main column, to minimise their visual appearance. The higher the radio frequency the more signal attenuation there is. The higher frequency 5G antennas are unable to operate effectively through the Glass Reinforced Plastic that the shroud is made up of and as such if these antennas were to be shielded then they would not be able to provide the necessary coverage to the target coverage area. An additional installation would be needed elsewhere within the cell area, leading to the proliferation of masts.

This is the slimmest design possible which will enable all the multi technologies to be supported from this site. If the column and shroud width were to be any slimmer then the technology would not fit in the one column and another radio base station would be required, which would lead to the proliferation of masts contrary to national Government guidance set out in the NPPF and The Code of Practice. Similarly, if the column were to be a uniform width throughout then the overall width would have to increase which would appear more visually prominent in the streetscene, than the proposed design.

The proposed design is more visually sensitive and much easier to assimilate into a streetscene than lattice towers or more traditional monopoles with bulky headframes. These non-stealth designs are preferred by operators as they are structurally capable of hosting more equipment and give greater scope for antenna orientation and are thus more efficient structures. However, such designs would appear alien in this location. Therefore, the operator has compromised on obtaining maximum coverage in order to better assimilate in to the streetscene.

The design of the column resembles as closely as possible the existing telecommunications column and other vertical structures within the immediate area such as lighting columns, traffic lights, telegraph poles, bollards and road signage. These vertical structures will continue to help the proposed upgrade to this established radio base station assimilate with the surrounding area.

The design of the column maintains its simple, functional, vertical structure which will not appear incongruous within the streetscene. The presence of other linear urban structures such as lighting columns, traffic lights, telegraph poles, bollards and road signage will assist

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with assimilation in the streetscene. The column is proposed to be coloured fir green to match the surrounding trees and local foliage. Although the column can be coloured any other colour the LPA consider appropriate.

The equipment cabinets designed to appear like the existing cabinets already in situ. They are small for telecommunications apparatus and proposed to be coloured fir green to match the other cabinets already in situ. The equipment cabinets can be installed under the operators permitted development rights but have been included on the plans and in the description in order to remain fully transparent.

The RRU's are small each one about the size of a shoe box. They are designed to make the antennas more efficient and reduce the amount of ground based equipment cabinets thus minimising the visual impact on the surrounding area. Given their height 15.80m above ground level underneath the antennas they will not be overly prominent in the streetscene.

The transmission dishes are required in order to provide a link into the network. A clear line of sight is required in order for them to meet its design brief and therefore are required to have a centre line height of 15m.

The GPS module is very small; about the size of a tennis ball, located at the top of the column. It is designed to minimise the signal loss ensuring maximum service provision to the surrounding area.

It is therefore considered that the proposal before you strikes a good balance between environmental impact and operational considerations. The proposed height and design represents the best compromise between the visual impact of the proposal on the surrounding area and meeting the operator's technical requirements for the site. Taking all matters into account it is considered that this proposal, to provide the latest 2G, 3G and 4G service provision and new 5G coverage providing high quality dense coverage and capacity, would not appear out of place within the streetscene.

Health and Safety - including ICNIRP compliance

International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection Declaration attached (see below)

International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection public compliance is determined by mathematical calculation and implemented by careful location of antennas, access restrictions and/or barriers and signage as necessary. Members of the public cannot unknowingly enter areas close to the antennas where exposure may exceed the relevant guidelines.

When determining compliance, the emissions from all mobile phone network operators on or near to the site are taken into account.

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In order to minimise interference within its own network and with other radio networks, VMO2 UK Ltd operates its network in such a way the radio frequency power outputs are kept to the lowest levels commensurate with effective service provision.

As part of VMO2's network, the radio base station that is the subject of this application will be configured to operate in this way.

All operators of radio transmitters are under a legal obligation to operate those transmitters in accordance with the conditions of their licence. Operation of the transmitter in accordance with the conditions of the licence fulfils the legal obligations in respect of interference to other radio systems, other electrical equipment, instrumentation, or air traffic systems. The conditions of the licence are mandated by Ofcom, an agency of national government, who are responsible for the regulation of the civilian radio spectrum. The remit of Ofcom also includes investigation and remedy of any reported significant interference.

The telecommunication infrastructure the subject of this application accords with all relevant legislations and as such will not cause significant and irremediable interference with other electrical equipment, air traffic services or instrumentation operated in the national interest.

4. Technical Justification

Enclose predictive coverage plots if appropriate, e.g. to show coverage improvement. Proposals to improve capacity will not generally require coverage plots.

Reason(s) why site required e.g. coverage, upgrade, capacity

A mobile phone transmitter is designed to cover a specific area and links its coverage to the next site in the network, creating a patchwork of overlapping coverage 'cells' across the country. So, if a person is on the move, the network will transfer their calls from one site to the next. However, in certain areas there will be gaps between these cells, resulting in a loss of coverage. This can be for a variety of reasons, the most common being topography or buildings which block the path of the signal. The operators' network rollout programme is designed to identify and address these gaps within their coverage and ensure that people can use their phones whenever and wherever they are.

There is a specific requirement to install a radio base station at this location to enable and enhance 2G, 3G and 4G coverage and capacity to area of southeast Whitefield and provide new 5G service provision.

5. Site Selection Process

Alternative sites considered and not chosen (not generally required for **upgrades/alterations to existing sites** including redevelopment of an existing site to facilitate an upgrade or sharing with another operator)

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The existing site on Bury Old Road is unable to be upgraded as the existing site cannot support any additional equipment for the required technology and coverage needs, and therefore a new replacement site is required. Furthermore, the recently approved MBNL site which sits adjacent to the existing site would cause interference if they were to be sited so closely together.

Site Type	Site name and address	National Grid Reference	Reason for not choosing site
Greenfield	Bury Old Road, Bury, Greater Manchester, M25 2WR	E: 381774 N: 404612	The pavement in this location is immediately adjacent to a number of residential properties which overlook the site. Any streetworks site in this location would be highly prominent and likely highly contentious hence this has been discounted as an option.
Greenfield	Heywood Road, Bury, Greater Manchester, M25 2RQ	E: 381934 N: 404595	The pavement in this location is immediately adjacent to a number of residential properties which overlook the site. Any streetworks site in this location would be highly prominent and likely highly contentious hence this has been discounted as an option.
Greenfield	Heys Road, Bury, Greater Manchester, M25 1JZ	E: 381751 N: 404268	The land in this location is too far south to serve the catchment effectively hence this option has been discounted on technical grounds.
Greenfield	Bury Old Road, Bury, Greater Manchester, M45 6TA	E: 381931 N: 404533	There is very limited space within the title, moreover any greenfield site in this location is likely to be highly contentious given its roadside location and the probable high detrimental impact to the visual amenity of the area. It has been discounted on favour of those offered.
Greenfield	Bury Old Road, Bury, Greater Manchester, M25 2WR	E: 381881 N: 404537	This area was originally sought after, yet the council has refused on 31/07/2020, LPA ref: 65592, due to a proliferation of existing masts in the area already. Therefore, we have been unable to progress in this location and have discounted the option.

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Greenfield	Bury Allotments, Bury Old Road, Bury, Greater Manchester, M25 1NE	E: 381774 N: 404495	After having a meeting with the local council regarding this site on 15th September 2022, it was agreed that this option would not work. As an allocated allotment, for us to use this area an agreement would need to come from the Secretary of State. Furthermore, this land is embedded in a lease with the state, that would make this site incredibly difficult to acquire. As of this, we have moved away from the option.
Streetworks	Higher Prestwich Hebrew Congregation Synagogue, Bury Old Road, Bury, Greater Manchester, M45 6TA	E: 381929 N: 404490	This option has been discounted due to the exposed nature of the site. We have also had kick back from the SP regarding placing a mast in their premises as they use all the space in the car park.
Existing Telecom	Bury Old Road/Heywood Road (Stop A), Bury Old Road, Kirkhams, Prestwich, Bury, Greater Manchester, England, M45 6TQ	E: 381814 N: 404564	The existing site cannot support any additional equipment for the required technology and coverage needs, and therefore a new replacement site is required. Furthermore, the recently approved MBNL site which sits adjacent to the existing site would cause interference if they were to be sited so closely together.

If no alternative site options have been investigated, please explain why:

N/A

Land use planning designations:

No land-use designation identified.

Additional relevant information (include planning policy and material considerations):

National Planning Guidance

Planning policy is provided at the national level by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). It is a material consideration in planning decisions.

It is not necessary to quote extensively from this document but the following points are highlighted.

National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021)

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The government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 24 July 2018 and updates the 2012 version. In February 2019 the NPPF was revised again, with minor alterations to wording relating to housing supply and not any parts relating to telecommunications. The NPPF was updated in July 2021, in order to strengthen sections including requirements on improved design quality, a new requirement for Councils to produce local design codes or guides, an emphasis on using trees in new developments, revised policies on plan-making, removing statues and opting out of PD rights relating to residential conversions.

The Government's latest thinking continues to strongly support communications infrastructure. The NPPF remains very supportive of high quality communications. Indeed, a whole chapter is dedicated to high quality communications, emphasising the importance that the Government attaches to digital connectivity. Paragraph 114 states that advanced, high quality and reliable communications infrastructure is essential for economic growth and social well-being. This wording echoes guidance set out in paragraph 42 of the 2012 version of NPPF. However, it also includes the importance of *reliable* communications infrastructure for both economic growth and social well-being.

The NPPF continues to support the expansion of electronic communications networks at paragraph 114. It notes that policies should set out how high quality digital infrastructure, providing access to services from a range of providers, is expected to be delivered and upgraded over time. The economic and social benefits of providing high quality and reliable communications infrastructure are well documented and can be found later in this Supporting Information Statement.

The NPPF makes reference to 5G:

'Planning policies and decisions should support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next generation mobile technology (such as 5G)...

With the above in mind, the Government is already forward thinking the evolution of data networks and seeks planning decisions to take account of this. 5G technology provides increased speed of data and more capacity in the network, to ensure that handheld devices can continue to be used for the purposes in which they were purchased. This will bring even greater economic and social benefits to the area.

Paragraph 115 of the NPPF retains the requirement to minimise the number of installations consistent with the efficient operation of the network but also includes being consistent with the needs of consumers and providing reasonable capacity for future expansion.

Paragraph 118 of the NPPF retains the guidance set out in paragraph 46 of the 2012 NPPF version which relates to determining applications on planning grounds only. They should not seek to prevent competition between different operators, question the need for an electronic communications system, or set health safeguards different from the International Commission guidelines for public exposure.

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At the heart of the NPPF is the retained presumption in favour of sustainable development (para 11). For decision-taking this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay or where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless the application of policies within the revised Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed or any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the revised Framework taken as a whole.

The NPPF continues to provide guidance on decision-making. At paragraph 38 it states that:

'Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available, including...permission in principle, and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible'.

The NPPF builds on the aspiration to build a strong, competitive economy. Paragraph 81 states:

'Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking in to account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken, should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future. This is particularly important where Britain can be a global leader in driving innovation⁴²'...

Footnote 42 of the NPPF states:

'The Government's Industrial Strategy sets out a vision to drive productivity improvements across the UK, identifies a number of Grand Challenges facing all nations, and sets out a delivery programme to make the UK a leader in four of these: artificial intelligence and big data; clean growth; future mobility and catering for an ageing society. HM Government (2017) Industrial Strategy: Building a Britain fit for the future'.

Code of Practice for Mobile Network Development in England

Now, more than ever, reliable digital connectivity is essential for people and businesses. Government have committed to extending mobile geographical coverage across the UK. In order to realise these ambitions, it is essential that the planning system can effectively support the deployment of new mobile infrastructure, as well as network upgrades.

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The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities have issued an updated Code of Practice which includes changes to further support the deployment of 5G coverage nationally. This Code provides guidance to mobile network operators, their agents and contractors and equally to all local planning authorities in England. It supersedes the Code of Practice on Mobile Phone Network Development (2016).

In line with the previous revision of the Code, digital connectivity is identified as being vital to enable people to stay connected and for businesses to grow. The principal aim of this Code is to continue to ensure Government's objective of supporting high quality communications infrastructure, which is key to continued economic prosperity and social inclusion for all.

Principles and Commitment

Paragraph 8 of the revised Code reiterates that fast, reliable digital connectivity can deliver economic, social and well-being benefits for the whole of the UK. The Code continues to acknowledge that as the demand for mobile data in the United Kingdom is increasing rapidly, it is important that everyone can have access to dependable and consistent mobile coverage where they live, work and travel.

The Government recognises the role of Planning in delivering the digital infrastructure that we need, in a sustainable and well-designed way, especially as households and businesses become increasingly reliant on mobile connectivity. Paragraph 13 of the Code continues to echo the NPPF guidance in strongly supporting high quality communications infrastructure, which is seen as essential for sustainable economic growth. More specifically that planning policies and decisions should support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next generation mobile technologies (such as 5G) in order to support economic growth across the country.

Given the economic importance of mobile connectivity, the revised Code further emphasises the need for Local Planning Authorities to support the deployment of digital infrastructure. Paragraph 18 states that Local Planning Authorities should demonstrate their support by:

- **Incentivising connectivity:** support the expansion of telecommunications networks and take a 'joined-up' approach to the wireless infrastructure planning process, including ensuring that Local Plans effectively support the deployment of digital infrastructure.
- **Facilitating sites:** engage with operators when new sites have been proposed and discuss site requirements.
- **Engagement with operators:** respond positively to requests for engagement and make decisions in line with national policy and Local Plans. For planning applications, find solutions to issues and ensure timely decisions are made.
- **Information and communication:** ensure that members of the public can access information about any development proposals within their local area. Send communications promptly to an appropriate operator contact (or their representatives).

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The added emphasis on support from Local Planning Authorities in the deployment in digital infrastructure is even more evident in the revised code. The Code recognises the importance of collaboration and partnership to help drive network coverage across the country. It goes on to state that 'In all instances, it is important for all parties involved in the process to take a positive approach to consultation and engagement'.

Siting and Design Principles

In line with this, is the recognition to continue to ensure that the impact of new network development is kept to a minimum. The Code states that good siting and design principles should continue to apply to all wireless network development and take into account any site-specific considerations and context, both of which can create better places in which to live and work and help make development acceptable to communities.

The Code provides guidance on siting and appearance principles. It sets out several design principles in respect of telecommunications development and acknowledges that the options for design used by an operator will be affected by site conditions including requirements to link the site to the network, landscape features and coverage and capacity requirements.

Paragraphs 25 - 27 sets out siting and site selection principles which Operators should consider including:

- Installation on existing buildings and structures;
- Erecting new ground based masts;
- Camouflaging or disguising equipment where appropriate;
- Using small scale equipment (although small cells themselves are generally used to address capacity issues as opposed to providing coverage); and
- Mast and/or site sharing (including redevelopment of a site to enable upgrade or sharing with another operator).

Key Technical and Operational Considerations

Taking the above into consideration the Code acknowledges the need to balance technical needs and constraints of a proposed site and the potential developmental impacts (Paragraph 26). These constraints are set out in detail in the section 'Technical and Operational Considerations' of the Code. The three key technical and operational considerations for installation sites are:

- **Coverage:** wireless infrastructure needs to provide an appropriate level of coverage over the intended geographical area. This involves ensuring that antennas are elevated sufficiently (often via masts) to provide clear lines of sight for signals.

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- **Capacity:** where existing network infrastructure can no longer meet the demand for network capacity in a particular area, additional sites may be required within that coverage area to meet the demand. This is more likely to be required in densely populated areas or areas of high footfall.
- **Backhaul:** the radio access network requires a connection to the core network. Backhaul is sometimes provided by a microwave link, which requires a clear line of sight between the two ends of the link.

The Code emphasises the need for Local Planning Authorities to take account of these constraints, on network deployment and siting and design, when considering proposals. In relation to the introduction of 5G network deployment the Code acknowledges the requirement of additional equipment to provide necessary coverage and capacity.

Paragraph 66 states that 5G will require a denser network of base stations than previous generations, including more fixed line fibre optic cable for reliable and high capacity backhaul. The siting of 5G installations will be more constrained and guided by these special technical and operational considerations.

Paragraph 67 goes on to note that because of the scale and technological constraints of 5G equipment, previous camouflage design solutions, such as tree mast designs and concealing antennas in flagpoles, may not be practicable or suitable. In these cases, simple designs with particular attention to colouration and finishes may help reduce visual impacts on a site-specific basis.

The revised Code illustrates that mobile connectivity helps in the delivery of public services e.g. to access Central and Local Government via online services, acknowledging that lives are more likely to be saved when a 999 call is made from a mobile than from a landline, Telehealth is becoming increasingly important and text message reminders also improve compliance with medication and keeping NHS appointments.

Good mobile connectivity also promotes sustainability e.g. it reduces the need to travel and thus carbon emissions. The Code continues to support mobile telecommunications network as it is seen as a crucial piece of national infrastructure in economic, community and social terms.

The Code reiterates that the digital infrastructure must be achieved in a timely and efficient manner, and in a way which balances connectivity imperatives and the economic, community and social benefits that this brings with the environmental considerations that can be associated with such development. Great emphasis is placed on the need to work collaboratively between stakeholders to ensure key digital network deployment and therefore supporting economic growth.

Local Policy

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Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that "If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise".

Bury Unitary Development Plan (Adopted August 1997)

Primarily, the Strategy is a response to the changes which have taken place in the local economy over recent years and the growing concern for the environmental quality of the area. Such matters can also be seen to be at the heart of the emerging interest in the concept of "sustainability" where it is recognised that, if development is to be sustainable, its impact should not result in the irreversible or unacceptable deterioration of the environment.

The intention of the Strategy is to give direction to the Plan. This, in turn, will help the Borough to balance the need to meet the challenges and develop the opportunities of the 1990's in a positive manner, whilst at the same time enhancing the quality of the environment and ensuring that the needs of all sectors of the population are taken into account.

EN1/10 - Telecommunications

The Council will give favourable consideration to proposals for new telecommunications developments. In assessing such proposals the Council will have regard to the following:

- The operating requirements of available and new telecommunications technology, and the national telecommunications network;
- The legal requirements of telecommunications code system operators;
- siting and design - including the opportunity for sharing masts or siting on existing buildings, height, ancillary development, landscaping, screening and the type and colour of materials used;
- The visual and physical impact, especially on the Green Belt, river valleys, Special Landscape Areas, Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, ancient monuments and archaeological remains.

Justification:

Modern telecommunications are an essential and beneficial element in the life of the local community and in the national economy. Government guidance published in PPG 8 "Telecommunications", requires local planning authorities to respond positively to telecommunications development. The guidance also suggests that UDP's should take account of the 1984 Telecommunications Act; the limitations imposed by the nature of the telecommunications network and the technology; and the need to protect the best and most sensitive environments. This policy reflects this guidance and whilst endeavouring to respond to proposals for new telecommunications development the Council will seek to minimise any environmental impact. This will be particularly important in and around the Borough's more environmentally sensitive areas.'

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EN1 - BUILT ENVIRONMENT

'The Council will seek to protect, preserve and enhance the character, appearance and amenity of the Borough's built environment.

EN1/1 - Visual Amenity

'Development will not be permitted where proposals would have a detrimental effect on:

- Public views of prominent or important buildings, especially those in areas of architectural or historic interest;
- The visual amenity both within, or viewed from, areas of environmental interest such as the Green Belt, Special Landscape Areas or the river valleys.

EN1/2 - Townscape and Built Design

The Council will give favourable consideration to proposals which do not have an unacceptable adverse effect on the particular character and townscape of the Borough's towns, villages and other settlements. Factors to be considered when assessing proposals will include:

- The external appearance and design of the proposal in relation to its height, scale, density and layout;
- The relationship of the proposal to the surrounding area;
- The choice and use of materials;

EN1/4 - Street Furniture

'The Council will encourage the provision of suitably located and well-designed street furniture which satisfies the requirements of pedestrians, shoppers and other users, and enhances the character and appearance of the urban street scene, including open spaces.

In particular, the Council will seek to ensure that the siting and design of street furniture satisfies the following considerations:

- Meets the needs of all users including the mobility impaired, in terms of safety and adequacy; does not detract from highway safety;
- Does not interrupt main pedestrian flows or hinder access for emergency vehicles;
- reflects the traditional design and materials in the locality, is of robust construction and does not detract from the amenity and appearance of the street scene.

EN1/11 - Public Utility Infrastructure

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The development of operational facilities for public utility provision will be permitted where this is necessary to implement the development objectives of this Plan or to meet relevant statutory obligations and environmental standards, and is consistent with other policies and proposals of the Plan.

Bury Local Plan (October 2018)

The new Bury Local Plan will set out a long-term framework to guide and control future growth and development and help shape what the Borough will look like in the future. The Plan will comprise a series of planning policies against which future development proposals will be considered and it will also allocate sites for various types of development as well as identifying areas where development will be restricted.

The Vision for Bury:

"By 2037 the Borough will have embraced sustainable growth in a managed way and become a well-connected place with:

- *A strong and competitive local economy;*
- *Strong, vibrant and healthy communities; and*
- *A high quality natural and built environment that is resilient to the effects of climate change"*

Policy Direction OP1 - Sustainable Development

It is proposed that the Local Plan should include a policy that seeks to ensure that, in dealing with planning matters, the Council will contribute towards achieving sustainable development by considering growth and development in terms of its economic, social and environmental implications.

Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations (including policies in the NPPF) indicate otherwise.

Policy Direction IN3 - Digital and Communications Infrastructure

'High quality electronic communications infrastructure, including high speed broadband access, is essential for developing a sustainable local economy and is important for education and enhances the provision of local community facilities and services. It is also vital for home working and helps to reduce the need to travel and to create more resilient rural communities as it enables more efficient working practices and provision of online facilities and services'

'In terms of telecommunications infrastructure, it is proposed that the policy should specify that developers should aim to minimise the number of masts and explore the potential for utilising existing structures before considering the erection of a new mast. Where this is not

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possible and new equipment is required, the Council will expect this to be sympathetically designed and, where possible, camouflaged in order to minimise its visual impact.'

Digital Communications Infrastructure

'Provision of high speed quality digital infrastructure is considered a key requirement of attracting business and investment and is now a key component of everyday life.'

Bury 2030 Community Strategy

'Our vision for Bury 2030 is built upon conversations with communities and the goal is simple: to stand out as a place that is achieving faster economic growth than the national average, with lower than national average levels of deprivation.'

'Our specific priorities for 2020 – 2022 are to:

1. Deliver an economic recovery strategy including a statutory development plan and regeneration plans in Radcliffe; Ramsbottom; Whitefield, Prestwich and Bury town centres.'

'We will measure our progress to achieving this ambition by tracking seven core outcome measures which are explained in more detail later in this document: 1. Improved quality of life 2. Improved early years development 3. Improved educational attainment 4. Increased adult skill levels and employability 5. Inclusive economic growth 6. Carbon neutrality by 2038 7. Improved digital connectivity'

'Bury was at the centre of the first industrial revolution, home to entrepreneurs like John Kay, the inventor of the flying shuttle, who put the north of England at the centre of the world. Bury will also be at the forefront of the fourth industrial revolution, with the resources for our entrepreneurs and innovators to work with digital technology. This will be in the context of one of the biggest economic challenges of a generation, as we lead economic recovery from the Covid 19 pandemic. We want our borough to offer a unique blend of opportunity to prosper and for people to live well; to provide green, blue and digital infrastructure and grow the spaces for businesses to incubate and expand. Our towns will become places where businesses thrive and all our residents have the skills and aspiration to access high quality work, with a genuine prospect of progress and promotion.'

'The vision for Bury 2030 is to enable every person in the borough to fully participate in, and shape, our future by supporting people to be themselves and to speak out about ideas and concerns. Our borough should be a place where people are helped to make the best of themselves, wherever they are born and whoever they are born to. This will be achieved by: Driving digital inclusion to give everyone the platforms to get involved'

'New technology means we no longer rely solely on transport to be connected. We will invest to ensure that digital infrastructure underpins our future by: • Delivering 4/5G mobile and full-fibre broadband as part of the Greater Manchester Local Full Fibre Network Programme; the largest investment of its kind in the UK. Research shows that if just 25% of local buildings had full-fibre investment, we could add £117m to the local economy.'

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Greater Manchester Digital Strategy (2018-2020)

The foreword to this Digital Strategy states:

'We live in a world where the number of digital devices has now passed the number of people. Digital technology is now shaping every aspect of our lives in ways which were inconceivable a generation ago: how we work, travel, shop, access services, meet people, communicate and are entertained.

Greater Manchester has always been a pioneer city region, with an eye for opportunity and the drive and pragmatism to seek out new solutions to old problems with almost 80000 digital and digital-intense creative businesses in Greater Manchester employing more than 82300 people generating £4.1bn of economic growth annually.

In the Greater Manchester Strategy we set a clear ambition to be a world-leading digital city region, and committed to taking an open, innovative and connective approach to delivering that ambition.

...to be a digital City-Region with a Difference and drive real change together, from the bottom up. We can only be a world leading city-region if we bridge the digital divide. Progress must be universal; geographically, socially and economically...using digital to connect young people to opportunity or tackle homelessness...we will capitalise on Greater Manchester's unique ability to use digital to connect and enhance our other high value sectors such as creative industries, health innovation and advanced manufacturing and materials.

The GM Digital Strategy asks why it is vital for Greater Manchester to be a leading digital City-Region and quotes:

"The future vitality of cities is increasingly based on their ability to use digital networks in intelligent, strategic ways" (Aspen Institute, Washington).

The Strategy goes on to state that:

...'digital technology has catalysed the interconnection of the global economy, with the internet enabling the free exchange of goods and services, providing consumers with greater choice and businesses with access to skills, resources and customers. As a result, people are now accessing more digital content and services from outside their own country, cross-border payments increasing, and small companies are more easily becoming more "multi-national".

Digital technology is increasingly the backbone of all industries, regardless of the nature and type of business. Embracing digital technology throughout all sectors, geographies and occupations is fundamental to Greater Manchester's current and future international competitiveness'.

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"We want to be recognised as an international thought leader and do-er in digital innovation and adoption across our economy and communities"...

'This strategy is therefore founded on evidence that becoming a leading digital city-region is imperative to deliver our wider vision. We must do it to deliver the economic, social and inclusion improvements we need and want to see. We can do it because we have the vision, leadership and both the industrial and political will, coupled with strong academic, industrial and community foundations and an exciting and disruptive set of emerging activities and technology'.

The Digital Strategy sets out the Greater Manchester Vision: A city with a Difference:

"It would be fantastic if we led the country in encouraging digital innovation which supports businesses and investment, creating jobs and opportunity, but focusing on improving outcomes for people such as loneliness or homelessness in our society.

I don't want Manchester to be just a smart city – I want it to be the smartest city" (Andy Burnham Mayor of Greater Manchester).

The strategy goes on to state that the Vision for Greater Manchester is 'to be one of the best places in the world for developing and harnessing digital technology and to be recognised as being a top 5 European Digital City Region by 2020 which:

- Empowers and enables residents to have the highest quality of life; and
- Supports the creation of high quality jobs and achieves the maximum possible productivity levels'.

This strategy for Greater Manchester is an open, connected and innovative city region....

'Our Vision for Greater Manchester is holistic, with digital technology driving improvement across all areas of economy and society. A world-leading digital city is therefore, one which its businesses, public service providers and citizens are using digital technology by default and to the fullest: to grow their businesses and improve productivity to access skills, training and employment opportunities, to address global challenges that have a local impact, such as ill health, social isolation, homelessness and pollution; to improve the quality and value for money of public services'.

The Strategy sets out the Goals and Measures. Goal 6 relates to Digital Infrastructure and aims that by 2022-23 the average download speed across fibre, mobile and wireless will exceed 100Mbps.

The benefits for delivering this strategy are noted as:

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- For young people, better connected insights on children's development from the very early years right through to leaving school, a transformative range of career opportunities and a means through which they can be accessed;
- For Working Age Population, the ability to access broader range of high quality job opportunities, and set up own business more easily;
- For business owners and investors, for greater range of opportunities to access the technology and support to digitise, opportunities to physically and digitally collaborate will be readily accessible and there will be more readily available flow of talent, capital and support to new innovative ideas and a market place that defines and presents problems and commissions solutions rather than buying off the shelf products and services.
- For Older people, there will be more support and solutions to social isolation, more ease and control for you and your family in terms of managing your own health care; and
- For all residents, a city that works around you in terms of living your life, where you can move around the city more easily and safely, improvements in, for example treating illness, improving air quality due to insights from pooled data, greater control over how and when you access public services.

Greater Manchester is aiming to become a world leading digital city by 2020. Greater Manchester plays a fundamental role in driving economic growth.

The Strategy notes that in terms of mobile internet, despite good public Wi-Fi coverage in most public buildings across Greater Manchester, and on Metrolink and many buses, Wi-Fi provision is patchy in public places and there are still barriers to access (registration requirements and cost) in many parts of Greater Manchester.

The Strategy also acknowledges that digital exclusion is closely linked with social exclusion.

The Greater Manchester Action Plan for Infrastructure at 8.1 States that the connectivity which Greater Manchester requires is to increase average mobile and fixed broadband internet speeds and aims to improve call and mobile coverage including securing a national 5G test bed status thus positioning Greater Manchester at the forefront of next generation 5G mobile.

The strategy notes 5 digital enablers: Social Networks, Mobile internet/apps, digital health, infotainment and e-commerce.

Greater Manchester Local Industrial Strategy (June 2019)

This Local Industrial Strategy sets out how Greater Manchester (GM) will forge its future. It states that it will build on GM's position as a 'leading European digital city-region; enable the digitalisation of all sectors; and capitalise on the links between digital and creative industries that feed internationally significant clusters in broadcasting, content creation and media, and maximise growing assets in cyber security.

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It aims to put in place the integrated 21st century infrastructure needed for digital driven, clean and inclusive growth.

A top 5 city-region for the digital economy in Europe, with full fibre broadband and 5G coverage.

The Strategy states that GM will take a 'Made Smarter' approach to all industries, supporting firms to adopt new digital and creative techniques and enabling the digitalisation of all sectors.

The strategy has a specific section relating to infrastructure and acknowledges its importance:

'...The city-region now aims to upgrade, integrate and future-proof its infrastructure, to create a 21st century city-region with extreme digital connectivity, clean and inclusive growth and – through work with others – improved access to national and global markets.

Existing partnerships are working to improve digital infrastructure in the city-region to meet national targets of roll out of 5G technologies for most people by 2027'.

The Local Industrial Strategy sets out an objective to ensure the vision for infrastructure is met:

- World-class connectivity – digitally and through an integrated transport network within all parts of GM.

To achieve the ambitions of the GM Local Industrial Strategy it identifies actions around 5 foundations of productivity: Infrastructure, Ideas, People, Business Environment and Places. These are noted as being essential attributes of every successful economy. It also identifies opportunities grouped under 4 Grand Challenges – Artificial Intelligence and Data, the Ageing Society, Future Mobility and Clean Growth.

The Vision for the Digital, Creative and Media is set out in the Local Industrial Strategy and reproduced below:

'GM will be a leading European digital City-Region, with the infrastructure, skills and networks needed to digitise all sectors, and internationally significant clusters in broadcasting, content creation and media and cyber security'.

To help meet the vision the strategy states that GM will continue to transform the digital connectivity of the city-region to drive economic growth and innovation, working with Government to meet national targets of full roll-out of 5G technologies for most people by 2027.

The Local Industrial Strategy acknowledges that GM will aim to become one of the best digitally connected city-regions in the UK. It fully supports the development of 5G networks.

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The Greater Manchester Digital Blueprint 2023-26

The blueprint has been developed in collaboration with stakeholders from across Greater Manchester's digital sector and shares strategic commitments to put our people, our environment, and our place firmly at the heart of our plans.

The purpose of this Digital Blueprint is to better the lives of people and for them to be empowered by the opportunities a digitally fuelled city-region brings. To use technology and data better to make this a greener, fairer, more prosperous city region.

The ambition for the Greater Manchester set in the Digital Blueprint is to be world-leading digital city-region, where people, places and environment are at the heart of the plans. It sets the goal to have more inclusive and sustainable approach to build on the region's greatest assets.

Digital Blueprints aims for Greater Manchester to be a place with the fastest-growing digital economy in Europe, where communities, business, academia and public services work together to create opportunity, innovate and invent; and where growth benefits everybody. Where Greater Manchester is a world-leading digital city-region, recognised globally for its digital innovation. Just in 2022 there was £532 million invested in Greater Manchester companies, and over 69000 creative, digital and tech sector roles advertised.

The Blueprint recognises the potential for Greater Manchester for businesses growth. With the world class digital infrastructure, and existing physical infrastructure, the region can create a digital place, into which entrepreneurs and innovators from across the globe want to connect. 78% of companies in digital sector within Greater Manchester reported expansion in 2022 (source: Manchester Digital Skills Audit).

The Digital Blueprint underpins and supports the commitments in the Greater Manchester Strategy 2021-31. It has also set priorities that will help to digitally enabling a greener, fairer, more prosperous city-region for everyone, those are:

- Empowering people and communities
- Building responsible, data driven public services
- Enabling a resilient and prosperous economy
- Creating connected, inclusive, sustainable places
- Strengthening our position as a global digital influencer

Digitally enabling a resilient and prosperous economy – to achieve this we will both enable all businesses to use technology better and support the creation and scaling of digital organisations for the benefit of the UK and the people of Greater Manchester.

Creating connected, inclusive, sustainable places – to mission of this priority is to build world class digital infrastructure, ethically using technology and to create resilient, connected,

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accessible and sustainable places for everyone. As one of the steps to ensure fulfilment of this priority will be provision of world class digital infrastructure that stimulates economic growth and enables the development of our growth zones, across sectors and locations.

The key strategic enablers set in the GM Digital Blueprint are:

- Building digital skills and literacy for life, education, work and business
- Strengthening our digital talent pipeline
- Extending our world class digital infrastructure, technology and data
- Harnessing academia, testbeds and research

Greater Manchester Infrastructure Framework 2040 (GMCA)

This is a pre-cursor to the GM Infrastructure Strategy. The aim is to focus on developing infrastructure which ultimately improves the lives of all those living and working within Greater Manchester.

The Infrastructure Framework acknowledges a number of key challenges, one of which is digital and the need to provide pervasive, affordable, resilient digital connectivity. The Framework notes that 'Digital technology is increasingly the backbone of the major industries and our daily lives'.

The Framework goes on to states that approaching 2040, GM will need to be a Smart and digitally ready City Region. To achieve this, and support on-going digitalisation, the region will require resilient fixed connectivity (through fixed fibre) supported by 5G (and subsequent technologies). It will also need to streamline the process for installation of new infrastructure within the street space.

The Framework notes the vision for the GM Infrastructure Strategy:

'Develop and maintain a holistic infrastructure system that is robust, accommodates sustainable growth and supports the ambitions of the Greater Manchester Strategy to make "Greater Manchester one of the best places in the world to grow up, get on and grow old".'

The Greater Manchester Infrastructure Strategy should seek to:

- *Support the lives and well-being of people, communities and the environment within Greater Manchester.*
- *Be age-friendly and support the economic and social participation of both young and old.*
- *Support strategically identified growth for parts and communities within Greater Manchester.*
- *Be flexible, robust and met the existing and future needs of the communities and technological change.*
- *Provide world-class connections and access to opportunity for all.*

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- Provide world-class digital infrastructure which provides a platform for GM to embrace emerging technological and societal changes.
- Support a carbon-neutral GM and be economically, environmentally and socially sustainable.

The Framework identifies a key infrastructure trend to 2040 as Digital (Telecommunications Operators) including mobile infrastructure:

- As the population and employment is due to rise:
 - more people will mean more homes and businesses, and more consumers of digital services.
 - There will be a growing demand for high-speed, resilient data connectivity to facilitate changing patterns such as shopping patterns moving online, whilst flexible working becomes more prevalent.
- Changing workforce:
 - More productive, higher skilled, higher paid jobs more specialised and skill activities needs digital infrastructure to support higher skilled industries – which may require increased digital infrastructure.
- Environmental Change:
 - Improving efficiencies of buildings and appliances. The use of smarter technologies within each infrastructure sector will look to improve efficiencies further.

The Framework comments on digitalisation noting the importance of it and how it has transformed the way in which we go about our everyday lives:

'We live in an increasingly digital world. Technologies that are visionary today rapidly become part of everyday life tomorrow. In turn, people's expectations are rising constantly. "Digital" now encompasses an increasing array of technologies, from sensors, smartphones and robots, to augmented reality, cloud computing and data analytics. These technologies are changing the way in which we live and places we live in. Digital technologies are being used to make cities more smooth running, more productive, and more democratic. The pervasiveness of digital technology in our lives represents a major change. For these technologies to function effectively, it is fundamental that a robust and diverse underpinning infrastructure is installed that ensures a future-proofed platform for the development of these and many new technologies for years to come.'

As our homes, businesses and cities become more reliant on digital technology to function the robustness of these systems becomes even more critical'.

The Framework states that 'anyone in GM should be able to access resilient, seamless connectivity at a speed they need anywhere and anytime'.

- New technologies, artificial intelligence and atomisation:
 - Improvements in artificial intelligence and atomisation technologies will transform infrastructure sectors and business markets.

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- Digital infrastructure will be crucial to supporting future technology and a Smart City Region.
- Embracing digital technology throughout all sectors, geographies and occupations is fundamental to GM's current and future international competitiveness.

The Framework acknowledges that the vision of moving to a smart and digitally-ready city-region requires future digital infrastructure to be strong fixed resilient connectivity, supported by 5G (and beyond), big data systems and other nascent technologies such as Artificial Intelligence and machine learning. Without connectivity it is acknowledged that processing the sheer volumes of data necessary to create a network of communicating devices will be impossible. As such, the Framework states that big improvements are required to increase the provision of wired and wireless (through 5G or subsequent technologies and Wi-Fi provision) across GM. Without the more basic technology solutions (such as passive fibre connectivity and 5G) the smart-region solutions and value-added outcomes will struggle to be brought to fruition.

The Framework notes that 5G roll out is expected from 2020. However, the timing and costs of roll out is uncertain and international standards have yet to be agreed. It is possible that there will only be one network upon which providers deliver their services or that each provider might need to invest.

With regards to the Regional Centre if Challenge 8 is to be met to provide pervasive, affordable, resilient digital connectivity the challenge is early roll out of 5G especially in areas where mobile data use is congested such as the Regional Centre.

The Framework also states that GMCA and the Districts together with digital and telecommunication providers need to drive forward opportunities to promote connectivity and uptake in the Regional Centre.

Online Nation 2022 Report (June 2022)

Online Nation is an annual research report, published for the first time in 2019. Using research produced by Ofcom and others, it looks at what people in the UK are doing online, how they are served by online content providers and platforms, and their attitudes to and experiences of using the internet.

The latest Online Nation 2022 report (published June 2022) found that for most people in the UK, being online is a major part of daily life. Being online allows people to connect with others, sometimes in ways they may not be able to do offline. Data shows how we benefit from a range of online services, from messaging and calling platforms to gaming platforms, online news outlets and online shopping.

The Meta-Owned social media apps (Facebook, Instagram, Whatsapp and Facebook Messenger) made up the top four smartphone apps most visited daily by UK adults in September 2021. The top-reaching smartphone app was Whatsapp (88% of UK online smartphone using adults) closely followed by the Facebook app (87%).

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94% of UK adult internet users aged 16+ said they used an online communications service for making voice/video calls or sending messages in 2021, and 80% of children aged 3-15 did the same.

The 2022 report found that the UK adult internet users spent almost 4 hours online a day in September 2021, with 3 of those hours being spent on smartphones. One in five people only use a smartphone to go online compared to one in ten last year. News and government public services are among the most-visited websites and apps in the UK.

The majority (67%) of UK internet users aged 13+ feel that the benefits of being online outweigh the risks. 43% agree that being online has an overall positive impact on their mental health.

The report found that 60% of children aged 8-15 say that using social media and messaging platforms makes them feel closer to their friends. More than three-quarters of children aged 12-15 said that being online can help with their school/homework, whilst half said it can be used to learn a new skill.

The Online Nation 2022 report acknowledged that the global pandemic since March 2020 has resulted in significant changes in online behaviour. Online shopping habits developed during the lockdown periods have remained. The largest online platforms' revenues and profits increased significantly during the lockdown periods and this growth continued in 2021. The growth is being driven by UK consumers' increased spend on e-commerce and entertainment subscription services, while advertising revenues are also increasing with the continuing brand migration to online.

Figure 1.2 of the Online Nation 2022 report indicates that the percentage of UK online adults accessing the internet, by device, in 2021 was the highest by smartphone at 88%. In September 2021 73% of the time spent online by UK adults per day was on a smartphone.

Figure 1.2: Percentage of UK online adults accessing the internet, by device: 2021

Percentage of adult internet users	Smartphone	Tablet	Laptop	Smartphone only
2021	88%	43%	53%	21%

Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2021: Core survey and CATI omnibus survey. IN1. Which of these devices do you use to go online? (MULTI CODE) Base: All adults 16+ that go online (at home or elsewhere) (excluding those who did not give a response at the postal survey) (3577)

Reproduced from Online Nation 2022 Report

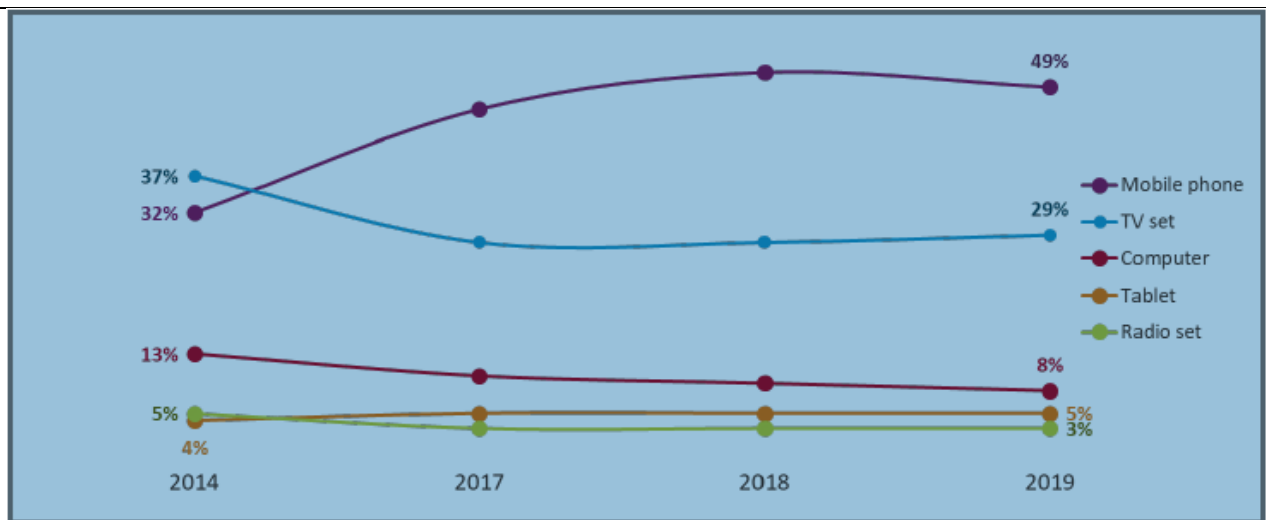
The table below indicates the most-missed device among adults were it be taken away from them, using data collected 2014-2019. As can be seen, nearly half of all adults say that their mobile device is the device they would miss the most were it taken away from them.

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Source: Ofcom Adults' Media Literacy Tracker 2014-2019

Levelling Up the United Kingdom (February 2022)

Digital Connectivity is a focus area and the mission is 'By 2030, the UK will have nationwide gigabit-capable broadband and 4G coverage, with 5G coverage for the majority of the population'. This mission is focused on improving digital connectivity.

Digital connectivity: The case for action

The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated the importance of digital infrastructure right across society, from ensuring business continuity to reducing isolation. Improved digital connectivity has the potential to drive growth and productivity across the UK and widen job opportunities through remote working. However, there are significant spatial disparities in the quality of broadband and mobile networks, with rural areas likely to experience worse digital connectivity than urban areas. Infrastructure is only part of the picture: economic benefits will only materialise if businesses and workers have the skills to take advantage of improved infrastructure.

More broadly, high quality digital infrastructure can deepen local labour markets through remote working, making it more attractive for both workers and companies to locate regionally. It also allows for the development of high-value sectoral clusters, which can drive growth and jobs in new areas. Existing specialisms in the UK regions have the potential to generate strong tech clusters, such as fintech in Scotland and Wales, e-Commerce in the North West and Northern Ireland, and Agri-Tech in Yorkshire and the Humber. The sector also provides opportunities for raising living standards – median earnings for the sector are 50% higher than the UK average.

The policy programme

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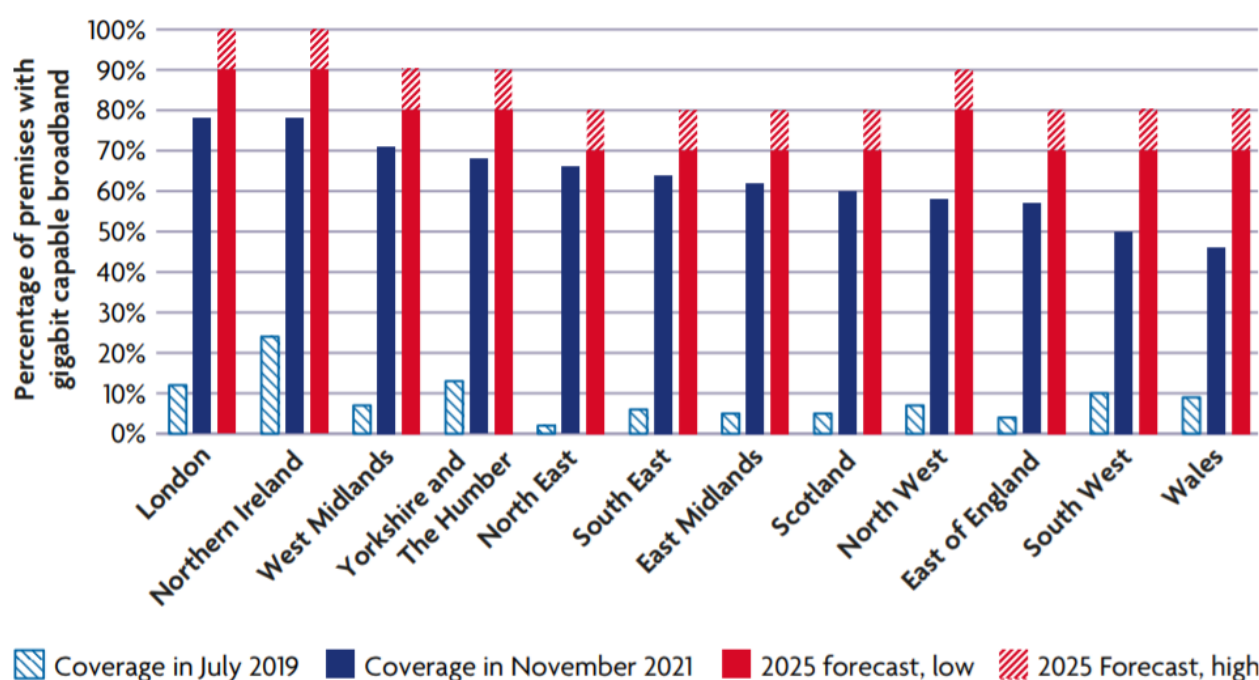
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In 2020, the UK Government published the National Infrastructure Strategy, committing to providing £5bn in public funding to roll out gigabit broadband to at least 85% of the country by 2025, and subsequently to as close to 100% as possible, working with the private sector.

Public investment will target premises that are hardest to reach and which would otherwise not be provided for by the private sector, ensuring no areas are left behind. Gigabit coverage has increased from 10% to over 60% in less than two years. Since 2019, coverage has improved across the UK, and the UK Government anticipates the following additional improvements to be delivered as a minimum by 2025, as set out below.

Figure 3.1 Gigabit coverage improvements, UK countries and regions, 2019, 2021 and 2025 (forecast)



Source: Levelling Up the United Kingdom.

In 2022, the UK Government will publish the Wireless Infrastructure Strategy. This will review how far the private sector will go to deliver wireless infrastructure across the country and determine whether there are any market failures in places that need to be addressed, and how the UK Government could tackle these.

We must ensure that people have sufficient digital skills to reap the benefits and prosperity arising from the digital economy. In 2020, the UK Government introduced a new digital skills entitlement, giving adults with low or no digital skills in England free access to new digital skills qualifications based on employer-supported national standards. The UK Government continues to work with local leaders to develop Local Digital Skills Partnerships. These collaborative partnerships are now operating in seven regions across England, with an eighth formally launching in Hull and East Yorkshire in early March. The UK Government will work with

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devolved administrations to consider how best to share the insights and evaluation of the programme to help build digital skills capability across the UK.

Planning Assessment

The main issues arising from this prior approval notification are whether the proposed mast and cabinets due to their scale and siting would be a visually obtrusive feature which would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the area. Whether any perceived harm would outweigh the significant social and economic benefits associated with the increased service provision attributed to the proposal and other valid material considerations as outlined NPPF, which fully supports the roll out of 5G and the next generation connectivity to accelerate business opportunities and growth to ensure the economy is resilient and competitive, it is also in accordance with relevant policies and objectives of the Bury Local Plan, the Bury Unitary Development Plan, the Bury 2030 Community Strategy, the Greater Manchester Digital Strategy 2018-2020, the Greater Manchester Local Industrial Strategy, Greater Manchester Digital Blueprint, the Greater Manchester Infrastructure Framework and the Greater Manchester Digital Strategy 2021-2026 which fully supports Greater Manchester's position as a leading European digital city-region and the development of 5G networks.

The monopole and associated antennas fully comply NPPF, Policy EN1/10 of the Bury Unitary Development Plan, Policy Direction IN3 of the Bury Local Plan, Bury 2030 Community Strategy, Greater Manchester Digital Strategy 2018-2020, the Greater Manchester Local Industrial Strategy, Greater Manchester Digital Blueprint, the Greater Manchester Infrastructure Framework and the Greater Manchester Digital Strategy 2021 – 2026, as it will increase overall connectivity for the area of southeast Whitefield. Access to a high quality, reliable superfast mobile network is not just 'a nice to have' but an essential part of everyday life. Indeed many, including the Minister for Digital Infrastructure Matt Warman, consider it to be the fourth utility service as important as gas, water and electricity, a lifeline for many especially during the COVID-19 pandemic where people were able to see their loved ones, speak to friends and family and arrange virtual meetings allowing some form of normality in a very abnormal situation.

The principle of development has been established by the Government when the new permitted development rights came in to force in 2022, which enabled sites such as this one to be built under the operators permitted development rights, (as the column height does not exceed 30m), with prior approval for siting and appearance being the only matters that the local planning authority can take in to consideration.

Planning Practice Guidance explains how a prior approval application differs from a planning application at paragraph 28. It states that:

'The statutory requirements relating to prior approval are much less prescriptive than those relating to planning applications. This is deliberate, as prior approval is a light-touch process which applies where the principle of the development has already been established (emphasis added). Where no specific procedure is provided in the General Permitted Development Order, local planning authorities have discretion on

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what processes they put in place. It is important that a local planning authority does not impose unnecessarily onerous requirements on developers, and does not seek to replicate the planning application system' (emphasis added).

The Planning Portal also provides Application Type Guidance. This guidance states that:

'Certain forms of telecommunication development, for example, mobile telephone masts, are known as 'permitted development' and subject to prior approval from the local planning authority. The prior approval procedure means that the principle of development is not an issue. The LPA can only consider the siting and appearance of the proposal.'

Siting

The siting of the proposed radio base station has been carefully considered. A previous application was dismissed 255m away from the proposal location on July 2020 LPA ref: 65592. The operator has taken on board the comments from the officer report and moved it away from existing masts located on Bury Old Rad. The proposed mast will be set in a context of other vertical elements of the street furniture such as lighting columns, traffic lights, telegraph poles, bollards and road signage, as well as semi-mature trees in a wider surrounding area. These perpendicular items of street furniture are similarly designed to the proposed column i.e. to be simple, functional, vertical structures. The lighting columns in the immediate area also help soften the visual impact of the proposed column in the area and reduce the overall impact. Consequently, the visual impact of the proposed radio base station will be minimised within the area as the proposed column will assimilate well with the existing vertical structures already in situ in the immediate locale as well as nearby trees providing some shielding from various vantage points. This is in full accordance with the Code of Practice, the NPPF, as well as Policies EN1/1, EN1/4, EN1/10 and EN2 of the Bury Unitary Development Plan.

Two of the main reasons for the refusal of previous application LPA ref: 65592 were Highways objection and proximity to the existing telecommunication infrastructure in the area. Highway's objection due to a possible impact on a visibility splay of a nearby junction. The new proposal will be set back of a wide footway, due to what it will not impact on a visibility splay and will not lead to highways safety issues. The other reason was a proximity to two other telecommunication masts in the area located approximately 25m and 45m from the previous proposal; it was stated in the delegates report that this would result in unacceptable streetscene clutter. The new site was moved approx. 255m northwest and is located on a junction of Cuckoo Lane and Bury Old Road. The new site is located in a mix-use area with number of vertical structures and semi-matures trees in a wider area, thanks to which it should not result in additional streetscene clutter.

The proposed column will be coloured fir green to blend in with the surrounding trees and foliage and equipment cabinets will be coloured fir green. This minimises their visual impact on the surrounding area and is in line with the Policies EN1/1, EN1/4, EN1/10 and EN2 of the Bury Unitary Development Plan.

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In line with the requirements of NPPF. There are no existing suitable telecommunications installations for the operator to share, that would provide the necessary coverage to the target coverage area. There are no other buildings which are suitable and available that the operator could utilise to operate their equipment. It is considered that the chosen location, on a footway of Cuckoo Lane, is the most favourable and the proposed equipment will be blend in given the makeup of the area. The discounted options are set out in Section 5 above and their reasons for being discounted are fully explained.

Technical requirements have dictated the siting of the proposed equipment. The operator has spent a considerable amount of time identifying a potential site and the proposed location is considered to present the best balance between operational/technical requirements and environmental impact. As explained throughout this document, the proposed site needs to be close to the existing equipment on Bury Old Road, in order to cover the same target coverage area.

3G and 4G signals by their very nature (as they carry high data rates) do not penetrate over long distances, (5G even less so), just a few hundred metres, depending on the topography of the land, building clutter and vegetation including trees in the area which can reduce their effectiveness. Therefore 3G, 4G and 5G radio base stations need to be close to their customer demand. In addition to this, the operator is unable to provide the latest 4G and new 5G technology at the existing monopole, as explained above. Therefore, they require a new site to provide new 5G service provision as well as enhance their 2G, 3G and 4G coverage to this cell area. As this is a replacement site for the operator, whose network configuration is well established in the area, the operator's search area is naturally smaller, than would otherwise be the case if the operator wasn't already providing service provision from this location. This severely limits the options for siting a new installation in the area.

As Section 5 above demonstrates there are no more suitable sites that are located within less sensitive locations than the current proposed site, and, as this is a site to continually provide existing coverage the operator is even more restricted in locating a more suitable site in which to provide new coverage to the target coverage area in this part of southeast Whitefield. A streetworks installation is the most viable option in this area due to the low-lying rooftops, varying topography and residential nature which would not suit either a rooftop or greenfield installation.

In line with Policies EN1/4 and EN1/10 of the Bury Unitary Development Plan and NPPF, the proposed installation is an item of essential infrastructure and therefore will not cause any loss of privacy nor will any occupants of nearby properties be overlooked. The column and antennas do not emit any noise, odour, vibration, artificial light or disturbance from air. The only noise emitted is from a cooling fan within the equipment cabinets, which only operate during hot weather conditions. However, within a few metres the noise is inaudible, particularly when taking into account the ambient noise levels of the area which include passing traffic. The proposed installation will not cause any traffic generation as it is not a visitor destination. Maintenance of the equipment cabinets is usually once a year, where the engineer can walk to site with handheld tools.

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Appearance

The design of the monopole has been carefully considered. To this end, it is a simple, functional slim-line monopole, this column width is essential in order to safely support the antennas at the top of the column and the feeders for all four technologies. The column is proposed to be fir green as previously stated in order to blend in within the surrounding area. However, the monopole can be painted any colour should the Local Planning Authority consider that an alternative colour would be more appropriate.

If the column were to be any lower, the antennas would not be able to clear the surrounding trees and urban clutter as such would not be able to operate effectively. A lower height would lead to a poor user experience for a large part of the target coverage area. As such, this would fail the operators design brief and an additional installation would have to be found leading to the proliferation of masts contrary to national planning guidance contained in the NPPF.

The proposed radio base fully complies with Policy EN 1/10, EN 1/2, EN 1/4 and EN 1/11 of the Bury Unitary Development Plan and Policy IN3 of the Bury Local Plan. In order to reduce the visual impact on the surrounding area the antennas have been positioned, with 6 antennas at the top of the mast at an antenna top heights of 19.73m and 16.63m. The antennas are positioned as tight as possible and will only be marginally wider than the main column width, rather than being a bulky headframe, as such will not appear dissimilar to a shrouded design.

It is essential that the 5G antennas are unshrouded. As the radio frequencies get higher, required for data carrying, the antennas are less able to propagate through immediate blockages including Glass Reinforced Plastic, which is what the shroud is made from. This affects the 5G antennas more so than any other technology. The result being they cannot operate effectively close to Glass Reinforced Plastic or any other blocking material. Therefore there is a technical reason why the 5G antennas need to be unshrouded. The latest 4G technology are also affected more so than older technologies by propagation and are therefore less efficient if they are shrouded. As such, the other antennas also need to be unshrouded to ensure that the latest technologies are provided to the surrounding area maximising their propagation.

As Section 5 above demonstrates there are no more suitable sites that are located within less sensitive locations than the current proposed site, and, as this is a replacement site the operator is even more restricted in locating a more suitable site in which to provide replacement and new coverage to the target coverage area in this part of southeast Whitefield.

NPPF states at paragraph 115 the number of radio and electronic communications masts, and the sites for such installations, should be kept to a minimum consistent with the needs of consumers, the efficient operation of the network and providing reasonable capacity for future expansion. In order to provide the latest 4G technology and 5G service in this locality, a new site is required in order to provide the latest technologies to the surrounding area. The operator has already explained above, it is unable to shroud the antennas, but the design is

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as slim as possible and will represent a simple, functional, vertical structure on an adopted highway land.

If the column and shroud were to be any slimmer, then all of the technologies would not be able to fit in the same installation and an additional radio base station would be required which would be contrary to national planning guidance. It would also not be structurally capable of supporting all the technologies including the latest 4G coverage as well as 5G service provision for VMO2. If the column were to be the same width throughout then it would have to be as wide as the antennas at the top of the column. This would appear more visually prominent in the area including the conservation area and heritage assets.

The design of the radio base station is one of the most sensitive designs available to the operators, designed using a monopole. This is in line with the requirements of NPPF which supports equipment which is sympathetically designed and camouflaged where appropriate [paragraph 115], The Code of Practice as well as Policy EN 1/10, EN 1/2, EN 1/4 and EN 1/11 of the Bury Unitary Development Plan and Policy IN3 of the Bury Local Plan.

The 2 no. 300mm transmission dishes as previously explained are required to provide link into the operator's network therefore a centre line height for clear line of sight at 15m is needed. If this height was any lower the base station would not operate to the required standard. Given their height above ground level at size of just 300mm each they will not appear prominent in the area and as such in line with Policy EN 1/10, EN 1/2, EN 1/4 and EN 1/11 of the Bury Unitary Development Plan and Policy IN3 of the Bury Local Plan.

The RRUs are designed to make the antennas more efficient and reduce the need for additional equipment cabinets at ground level. This minimises the impact on the visual amenity of the area. In order to maximise signal efficiency the RRUs need to be as close as possible to the antennas, hence they need to be located underneath the antennas towards the top of the column. Given their height above ground level and their small size, approximately that of a shoe box, they will not appear prominent in the area or of substantial harm to the area. This is in accordance with Policy EN 1/10, EN 1/2, EN 1/4 and EN 1/11 of the Bury Unitary Development Plan and Policy IN3 of the Bury Local Plan.

The proposed new site accords with NPPF and will expand the network, ensure high quality communications infrastructure is maintained whilst minimising the number of radio base stations in the area. Placing masts near similar structures such as lighting columns, utilising simple and unfussy designs is acknowledged in the Code of Practice for Mobile Network Development in England to be less likely to dominate and be in discord with the area and as a result less likely to have a detrimental impact on the visual amenity of the surrounding area.

This is a prior approval application where the principle of this type of development is already established by the Government under the Town and Country Planning (GPD) Order 2015 (as amended) which states that this type of development is permitted subject to the prior approval of the siting and appearance of the installation. This is therefore akin to an outline planning permission. There is nothing in the legislation which limits the number of installations that can be erected in a certain locality, nor that they cannot be located on transport

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corridors. Given the nature of the area which contains numerous vertical structures and several semi-mature trees the proposed radio base station would not appear prominent nor out of place.

Lack of Coverage – Material Consideration

In accordance with the NPPF the proposed installation is significant to enable continuous coverage of the telecommunication network, ensuring that this area of southeast Whitefield continues to get the mobile coverage it needs for VM02 customers as well as access to the latest 4G spectrum to ensure sufficient capacity in the network for customers handheld devices. The proposal will provide the replacement 2G, 3G and 4G as well as new 5G coverage. It will also maintain and improve coverage for the Mobile Virtual Network Operator's (MVNOs) which use the VM02 network which includes GiffGaff, Tesco Mobile, Sky Mobile, and Lyca Mobile. So, the proposal will not only provide a service for VM02 but those who buy network space off them, which is at least 4. This will provide a choice for those customers who consider the level of coverage in their area when selecting which operator, they agree future contracts with.

The current proposals will facilitate the development of an advanced broadband telecommunications infrastructure in line with National Government guidance contained within the NPPF which supports infrastructure especially where growth takes place. By providing the latest 4G technology and new 5G service provision the proposals will support the aspirations of Central Government for everyone to have access to the superfast highway network wherever they are and that all populated areas are connected to the 5G network by 2030. The proposed development fully complies with the vision and objectives set in the Bury 2030 Community Strategy, which state that digital infrastructure should be used as a part of Covid-19 recovery, the proposed development will meet this aspiration. The strategy objection is to involve more people into community shaping, this can be achieved by the use of digital platforms and new technologies such as 4/5G. The proposed development will allow to meet this aspiration. Proposed development will also be in line with the aspiration of the Greater Manchester Local Industrial Strategy to be one of the top 5 city-regions for the digital economy in Europe, with full fibre broadband and 5G coverage. It will also support the Greater Manchester Local Industrial Strategy aim to upgrade, integrate and future-proof its infrastructure to create a 21st century city-region with extreme digital connectivity, clean and inclusive growth and improved access to national and global markets.

The proposed radio base station will also fully comply with the Bury Local Plan, the Bury Unitary Development Plan, the Bury 2030 Community Strategy, the Greater Manchester Digital Strategy 2018-2020, the Greater Manchester Local Industrial Strategy, Greater Manchester Digital Blueprint, the Greater Manchester Infrastructure Framework and the Greater Manchester Digital Strategy 2021-2026 which fully supports Greater Manchester's position as a leading European digital city-region and the development of 5G networks by helping to improve employment and quality of life in the district. There is an identified need for this new installation to provide 4G coverage and to provide latest 5G technology for this area of southeast Whitefield. Providing 4G coverage and providing the latest 5G technology to the area is fully in line with the requirements of the NPPF and Central Government aspirations. It

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will also encourage sustainable economic growth which fully meets strategic aspirations, expanding and improving the connectivity in this area fully meets the vision set out in the Bury Local Plan, the Bury Unitary Development Plan, the Bury 2030 Community Strategy, the Greater Manchester Digital Strategy 2018-2020, the Greater Manchester Local Industrial Strategy, Greater Manchester Digital Blueprint, the Greater Manchester Infrastructure Framework and the Greater Manchester Digital Strategy 2021-2026 which fully supports Greater Manchester's position as a leading European digital city-region and the development of 5G networks.

Trials have already begun across the UK to demonstrate the potential of 5G and how it can improve and drive productivity and efficiency. In June 2019, West Midlands 5G partnered with BT and University Hospitals Birmingham to trial the UK's first 5G Connected Ambulance. Real-Time communications between the paramedics and the hospital doctors enabled the effective diagnosis of the patient at an early stage of care. The trial showed how a paramedic performed a remote-controlled ultra-sound scan on a patient in an ambulance over a public 5G network. These trials show how digital connectivity and technology can reduce patient waiting times and save lives (Source: WM5G).

The proposal will provide world-class connections and access to opportunity for all in this cell area, as well as providing world-class digital infrastructure which provides the platform for this area of southeast Whitefield to embrace emerging technologies and societal changes. The latest 4G and 5G infrastructure is fundamental to enable digital technologies to continue to function. The proposal will ensure that any VM02 customer and the MVNO's who buy network space off this operator in this cell area will be able to access resilient, seamless connectivity at a speed they need anywhere at any time. Without the more basic technology solutions such as 4G and 5G, smart-region solutions and value-added outcomes will struggle to be brought to fruition.

Mobiles can only work with a network of base stations in place where people want to use their mobile phones or other wireless devices. Without base stations, the mobile phones and other devices we rely on simply won't work.

Without this new radio base station, the operator's customers would experience increasing numbers of dropped calls and buffering unable to access the internet on their handheld devices. They would also not be able to access the 5G network, a demand which is increasing rapidly as customers update their handheld devices to ones that are 5G compatible. If the 5G network is not available then the customers' would not be able to utilise these handheld devices for the purposes in which they were purchased. This would be contrary to the aspirations of Central Government, which aspires to everyone having access to the superfast highway network wherever they are, and that all populated areas are connected to the 5G network by 2030.

The proposed installation will help improve the area's economic prosperity, strengthen the urban economy's by supporting local businesses to start, grow, adapt and diversify. It will support a better environment for today and tomorrow by reducing the need to travel and in turn minimise carbon emissions, in line with the local plan. The radio base station will support

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the delivery of healthcare provision and accessibility by enabling people greater access to online services, NHS appointment reminders, reminders to take medicines, make appointments etc. As well as assisting hospital outpatient appointments and emergency consultations carried out remotely via video link, connected ambulances, live streaming of CCTV footage etc.

By maintaining the 2G, 3G and 4G service provision to the surrounding area and providing new 5G coverage into the operator's network, this would fully support the aim of ending to digital disadvantage.

The way 5G works, it is closely connected with the Smart City agenda and will enable centralized control of lots of different street infrastructure owned or managed by councils, such as street lights, water meters and bus stops. As such areas need the 21st century infrastructure to enable this objective to become a reality. The proposed installation will ensure that this aspiration is fully met.

The Councillor's Guide to Digital Connectivity notes that a survey conducted by the Confederation of British Industry found that 81% of firms said that they see more reliable mobile connectivity as essential. Studies have also shown that mobile broadband is associated with positive impacts nationally, such as higher GDP and increased employment.

The Government fully supports high quality communications infrastructure, even more so with the advent of 5G. The NPPF continues to strongly support telecommunications connectivity and states at paragraph 114 that local planning authorities should support the expansion of electronic communications networks. It acknowledges that advanced, high quality and reliable communications infrastructure is essential for economic growth and social well-being.

The demand for mobile data in the UK is increasing rapidly, and as households and businesses become increasingly reliant on mobile connectivity, the infrastructure must be in place to ensure supply does not become a constraint on future demand.

The installation in this location will fill the current gap in the latest high quality service provision and enable VM02 and MVNOs who buy network space off VM02 to maintain access to their handheld devices wherever they are for the purposes in which they were purchased. This is fully in line with the Government's aspirations that everyone has access to the superfast communications network, contained within the NPPF.

Access to the internet in whatever medium now impacts every facet of our lives but only benefits those who can access and use it. The benefits of internet connectivity are key for both residents and businesses alike and an installation in this location providing the latest 2G, 3G, 4G and 5G technologies will support the Central Government objectives to improve connectivity infrastructure to speed up economic and business growth.

In line with guidance contained within the NPPF a new radio base station in this location will enable fast, reliable, secure internet accessibility wherever the user is located. The proposed installation would fully meet the latest operators' coverage and capacity requirements for

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3G and 4G provision as well as 5G provision for the operator. This would be wholly in line with the Government's latest aspirations to strongly support advanced, high quality and reliable communications infrastructure, essential for economic growth and social well-being. Where the NPPF notes that decisions should support the expansion of electronic communications networks. An installation outside this search area, regardless of whether there are existing sites, would not allow the operator to provide their desired level of coverage and therefore would not adequately maintain and provide new coverage and capacity.

As part of the operators 4G licence obligations, many customers will benefit significantly from a vastly improved service provision in this locality. They will be able to gain access to the very latest technologies and connectivity, to high speed data services. Digital technology has catalysed the interconnection of the global economy, with the internet enabling the free exchange of goods and services, providing consumers with greater choice and businesses with access to skills, resources and customers. Installing telecommunications equipment at this site will help southeast Whitefield to meet its aim of having effective and efficient infrastructure to support investment.

The Code of Practice acknowledges that upgrading and improving mobile networks will not be possible without the necessary infrastructure on which we rely. With increasing consumer demand and the Government's aspirations for high quality communications infrastructure it is ever more important to improve connectivity and capacity.

In the Code of Practice, it acknowledges 'the pressure on networks to upgrade and improve networks through changes to existing sites and the development of new sites is constant. With the increasing consumer demand and the Government's ambitious aspirations it is becoming more important to improve connectivity and capacity. This is due to the ever increasing demand for data hungry applications to be available to a range of connected devices, such as smartphones and tablet computers. However, the Code notes that upgrading and improving mobile networks will not be possible without the necessary infrastructure on which they rely'. Therefore there is a significant need to locate the equipment in this area.

It is therefore imperative that the operator continues to invest in ensuring that the latest technologies are available on its network, so that customers are able to continue to use their handheld devices wherever they are, for whatever reason, for the purposes in which they were purchased.

Economic and Social Benefits

The NPPF strongly supports sustainable development, as does the vision Policy OP1 of the Bury Local Plan. Mobile communication plays a significant role in sustainable development, being able to access the internet via a mobile device allows people to access a wide range of central and local government services buy groceries, manage finances, apply for jobs/university, and carry out school projects, send emails, download applications, send and receive instant messages, participate in social media, streaming and downloading data to name just a few of the benefits of being able to use an internet enabled handheld device. It also allows people to work from home or on the move without needing to return to the

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office. Residents and businesses will enjoy better accessibility, assisting home-base working by improving the electronic means of communication and the roll-out of high-speed broadband helping to promote live-work development. This reduces travel time, carbon emissions and increases the speed in which information is processed/shared. The proposals therefore fully comply with NPPF and Policy OP1 of the Bury Local Plan.

In such instances, as described above, the NPPF supports development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area. Ensuring that the 2G, 3G and 4G coverage and capacity in this area and providing new 5G services will fully meet this national policy objective.

Mobile connectivity is essential to the future success of the economy. The combined value of 4G and 5G mobile connectivity is estimated to add £18.5bn to the economy by 2026 (Councils and Connectivity Sept 2018). Mobile connectivity is essential to creating a better society. Digital inclusion can help people gain employment, become more financially secure and improve health and well-being. Mobile connectivity is essential to fulfilling the potential of new technologies. Innovations such as artificial intelligence and connected cars will change how we work, spend our leisure time and run our public services.

Providing the latest digital infrastructure to enable improvements in digital technology empowers and enables residents to have the highest quality of life, supports the creation of high-quality jobs and achieves the maximum productivity levels. It also helps the economy to be resilient and competitive. This is in full accordance with the vision of the local plan. It will help southeast Whitefield become an area where its businesses, public service providers and citizens are using digital technology by default and to the fullest to grow their businesses and improve productivity to access skills, training and employment opportunities to address global challenges that have a local impact such as ill health, social isolation, and pollution; to improve living standards and well-being, helping people to lead prosperous and rewarding lives; and to improve the quality and value for money of public services.

The enclosed Cornerstone Local Authority Engagement Brochure September 2020, emphasises further the benefits of high quality mobile connectivity including: promoting economic growth by attracting investment from business, which creates jobs and regional prosperity in line with national and local Economic Strategies; helps local businesses to offer a broader range of services, boosting the local economy; helps local Councils to offer online services such as school admissions and local information for residents supports local companies by facilitating working from home, offers social benefits such as being able to connect with vulnerable family and friends (a life line during COVID 19 lockdown) or contact the emergency services 24/7, and helps local councils to offer online services such as paying council tax bills which provides a more efficient service to name but a few benefits.

(Include/Delete as Appropriate) Practical Applications of 5G Connectivity as Example of Material Soci-Economic Benefit: -

Education:

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The relationship between 5G and education is evolving at a massive rate with educators exploring the relevance of Virtual Reality (VR) technologies for education and training. Crucially, VR can support remote learning, allowing students a presence in the classroom even when working elsewhere.

5G's ability to deliver real-time information (low latency), ultra-fast speeds (critical for high definition images and video), increased capacity and heightened security will also allow learning on the job, thanks to technologies such as Augmented Reality (AR) goggles, which can give engineers real-time instructions on how to fix a machine on a production line, for example.

Health:

Patients across the country are now becoming accustomed to relying on remote healthcare services such as NHS 111, virtual GP appointments, and ordering online deliveries of essential medical supplies.

5G will prove critical in providing the infrastructure required to deliver remote health services over the next decade. By design, 5G's ability to deliver real-time information (low latency), ultra-fast speeds (critical for high definition images and video), increased capacity and heightened security are going to be fundamental in scaling the patient benefits of remote healthcare and keeping medical records secure and private. For instance, trials have shown that connecting ambulance crews to expert resources using 5G allows paramedics to work with doctors and conduct specialist procedures in real time whilst on the road.

There is a demand for mobile connectivity in areas where geography, logistics or economics – or a combination of all 3, make it difficult. Mobile network capacity needs to grow to meet the demand of mobile users, who are consuming ever increasing amounts of data.

Paragraph 38 of the NPPF states that:

'Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available, including...permission in principle, and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible'.

Providing improved 3G and 4G coverage and capacity and new 5G service provision in this area will fully meet paragraph 38 of the NPPF, the Bury Local Plan, the Bury Unitary Development Plan, the Bury 2030 Community Strategy, the Greater Manchester Digital Strategy 2018-2020, the Greater Manchester Local Industrial Strategy, Greater Manchester Digital Blueprint, the Greater Manchester Infrastructure Framework and the Greater Manchester Digital Strategy 2021-2026.

The social and economic benefits are a significant material consideration which should be weighed against the visual impact associated with the proposed radio base station in this location. HM Treasury outlined such benefits in its report 'Fixing the Foundations: Creating a

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More Prosperous Nation' – July 2015. Paragraph 7.1 of the plan stated that reliable and high quality fixed and mobile broadband connections support growth in productivity, efficiency and labour force participation across the whole economy. They enable new and more efficient business processes, access to new markets and support flexible working and working from home.

Paragraph 7.2 goes on to highlight strong support for high quality communications infrastructure. It states

'by reducing red tape and barriers to investment, the Government will support the market to deliver the internationally competitive fixed and mobile digital communications infrastructure the UK's businesses need to thrive and grow, and which will enable the UK to remain at the forefront of the digital economy. The Government is working with business so that the market can play the lead role in delivering against the ambitions set out in the Digital Communications Infrastructure Strategy, published March, of near universal 4G and ultrafast broadband coverage.'

Indeed, MPs have noted in parliament that the UK's Superfast Broadband connectivity was 'relatively poor' and businesses were losing out from patchy coverage.

The Government recognises that widespread coverage of mobile connectivity is essential for people and businesses. People expect to be connected where they live, work, visit and travel. That is why the Government is committed to extending mobile geographical coverage further across the UK, with continuous mobile connectivity provided to all major roads and to being a world leader in 5G.

This will allow everyone in the country to benefit from the economic advantages of widespread mobile coverage. As well as improved mobile signal, 5G networks are also crucial to drive productivity and growth across the sectors that local areas are focusing on through their emerging Local Industrial Strategies. Enabling and planning for 5G implementation is central to achieving the Government's objective to deliver prosperity at the local level and enable all places to share in the proceeds of growth.

The case for 5G is compelling as it will bring faster, more responsive and reliable connections than ever before. More than any previous generation of mobile networks, 5G has the potential to improve the way people live, work and travel, and to deliver significant benefits to the economy and industry through the ability to connect more devices to the Internet at the same time, creating the so-called "Internet of Things". This will enable communities to manage traffic flow and control energy usage, monitor patient health remotely, and increase productivity for business and farmers, all through the real-time management of data.

The Local Government Association (LGA) has produced a Councillor's Guide to Digital Connectivity and sets out some of the benefits of 5G technology:

- Faster mobile broadband and a more consistent experience in congested areas with a very high number of devices.

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- Industrial applications, enabling businesses to improve their productivity, for example through predictive maintenance and real-time analytics.
- Internet of Things (IoT) services, many of which will help council's and businesses deliver services more efficiently including:
 - o Transport and logistics: connected parcels and fleet tracking.
 - o Health and social care.
 - o Environmental monitoring: sensors monitoring air quality and water pollution in real-time.
 - o Smart agriculture and smart animal farming, smart retailing.
 - o Connected and autonomous cars: allowing cars to communicate with each other, other road users and even the road infrastructure.

Further to the Government's commitment to improve connectivity, on 24th November 2016 the new permitted development rights for telecommunication operators came into force, designed to lift the restrictions on mobile operators such is the significance and weight the Government place upon the benefits attached to modern connectivity.

A National Needs Assessment – A Vision for UK Infrastructure was also published in October 2016 ([https://www.ice.org.uk/getattachment/media-and-policy/policy/national-needs-assessment-a-vision-for-uk-infrastr/National-Needs-Assessment-PDF-\(1\).pdf.aspx](https://www.ice.org.uk/getattachment/media-and-policy/policy/national-needs-assessment-a-vision-for-uk-infrastr/National-Needs-Assessment-PDF-(1).pdf.aspx)). It sets out the infrastructure needs for the UK which includes the importance of digital technology. An extract of this assessment can be found below:

'A lack of digital connectivity has a detrimental effect on business operations, productivity and output and hence competitiveness in the global marketplace. Securing digital connectivity is thus critical to the UK's long-term prosperity. A key challenge for the digital sector is a persistent digital divide between those who have access to the latest technologies and those who do not, with resulting social and economic exclusion, particularly as dependence on e-services and digital communications increases.'

The Assessment goes on to note that 'Universal digital connectivity would serve as an equaliser of economic opportunity in that it enables participation in a modern digital economy'. Therefore, this Needs Assessment further explains the consequences of a lack of coverage and the effects this has on social and economic prosperity. This clearly highlights the importance of maintaining and enhancing high quality 2G, 3G and 4G coverage and capacity in southeast Whitefield as well as providing new 5G in this area, where the social and economic benefits will outweigh the environmental considerations.

The Government's continued strong support for connectivity is further evidenced by the DCMS who launched their UK wide Digital Connectivity Portal on 20 December 2018. The Digital connectivity portal provides guidance for local authorities and network providers on improving connectivity in local areas. The Government wants everyone in the UK to benefit from world-class connectivity no matter where they live, work or travel. The Future Telecommunications Infrastructure Review outlines a package of measures to create the right market and policy conditions to deliver world-class connectivity for citizens and businesses.

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As a result, the pressure to provide a replacement a radio base station in this area of the region to provide 2G, 3G, 4G and 5G is significant.

On the 23 September 2020, the Digital Infrastructure Minister Matt Warman MP spoke about the ongoing work by the Government and telecoms industry to boost the UK's world class digital connectivity in his keynote speech at Connected Britain 2020:

...'I'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone in the industry for their tireless efforts at keeping us all connected through an unprecedented period of disruption.

...COVID has altered the way we live, work and most importantly, stay connected with our family and friends. The digital infrastructure that keeps us all connected was essential to our daily way of life under lockdown – and is now more important than ever as we head into recovery. Many of these changes – such as increased working from home – will stay with us for the foreseeable future.

People have referred to the internet as “the fourth utility” – and it's true. For countless people across the country, having fast and reliable broadband and a good mobile connection is as essential and vital to our daily lives as gas, water and electricity.

That's why I'm committed to working with you to ensure the entire nation has access to world-class, next generation gigabit connectivity that is secure and resilient enough to deal with all sorts of future challenges.

This Government is ambitious for the UK's digital infrastructure.

And because we know that more citizens are increasingly living their lives online, we will be one of the earliest adopters of 5G coverage, with the majority of the population able to access 5G by 2027.

...We know how important local authorities are to the delivery of digital infrastructure, which is why I have written to them, together with the Local Government Minister, to outline how they can work more effectively with the industry...

....Turning to 5G, while the commercial rollout of 5G continues at pace, we're pushing ahead with plans to make sure all sorts of industries benefit from this game-changing technology.

....since the start of the 5G Testbeds and trials programme, we've now funded 24 5G testbeds across the UK. Between them, those testbeds have trialled almost 70 different 5G technologies, products and applications. And more importantly than ever, we are investing in a range of sectors to foster, build and grow 5G cross wider industry...

...The world is in the middle of a digital revolution. COVID has accelerated this process, digitising almost every part of our everyday lives and making the infrastructure that connects us more important than ever. That's why it is at the top of the government's agenda...

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This Keynote Speech by Matt Warman MP highlights the importance that Government places on 5G and advanced, reliable, high quality 5G technology. To prevent this technology from being brought into the area would be contrary to the Government's key aims.

In a more recent letter published by the Digital Infrastructure Minister Matt Warman MP on the 24 May 2021 addressed to the local authority chief executives he spoke further about the Government's Commitment to extending mobile coverage:

'Digital connectivity is – now, more than ever – vital to enable people to stay connected and businesses to grow. The demand for mobile data is increasing rapidly, and the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted how important it is that we all have access to reliable, high quality mobile connectivity...

...The Government is committed to extending mobile network coverage across the UK and providing uninterrupted mobile signal on all major roads, and our ambition is for the majority of the population to have access to a 5G signal by 2027...

...The National Planning Policy Framework ("the Framework") for England states that planning policies and decisions should support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next generation mobile technology, such as 5G...

...In relation to electronic communications development, it also states that local planning authorities must determine applications on planning grounds only and they should not seek to prevent competition between different operators, or question the need for an electronic communications system. As set out in planning practice guidance, it is in the public interest for local planning authorities to have effective delegation arrangements in place to ensure that decisions on planning applications that raise no significant planning issues are made quickly and that resources are appropriately concentrated on the applications of greatest significance to the local area.'

On the 1 October 2020, as part of the Speed up Britain Campaign, The Centre of Policy Studies Report published 'Upwardly Mobile: How the UK can gain the full benefits of the 5G revolution'. The report identifies what the 5G opportunities are and what the Government needs to do so we can all benefit from this vital new technology. It states that delays to the rollout of 5G could cost the country tens of billions of pounds in lost economic output. The former Government advisers Alex Jackman and Nick King argue that Government's 'levelling up' agenda and the UK's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic is at risk without a faster 5G rollout – to the tune of £41 billion.

The report highlights that if delays continue at their current rate, by 2027, over 11 million households and businesses could be missing out on vital digital connectivity. Improving digital infrastructure supports the Government's 'levelling up' agenda, by helping local areas to retain and attract businesses and talent as well as by reducing regional inequalities.

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The report states that 'the UK must have a functioning network to now support the recovery from the pandemic, empowering businesses and communities with wider coverage, and preparing the ground for the services that 5G can provide'.

Using analysis by the independent consultancy Policy Points, the report estimates that if 5G coverage reaches a quarter more of the population than the Government's current target of 51%, it will produce GDP gains of £41.7 billion by 2027. It highlights that the difference between the UK being a leader and a laggard in 5G adoption could be as much as £173 billion in incremental GDP over the coming decade, as estimated by the Future Communications Challenge Group.

The manufacturing, construction and agricultural sectors have been hit particularly hard by the pandemic, and these would benefit significantly from improved connectivity. However, onerous planning rules and loopholes in existing legislation are slowing down the infrastructure upgrades needed to make the most of this mobile revolution in these much-needed industries.

Digital networks and services have underpinned our resilience to the COVID-19 pandemic and they will drive our recovery. By expanding them, we deliver not only immediate benefits but also the essential foundation stone for future prosperity.

The report highlights that while 5G promises to create economic benefits through increased capacity, reliability and speed – vastly improving business productivity and removing barriers imposed by poor digital connectivity – the system is plagued by red tape.

The report acknowledges that the gains are not just at national level. A more extensive digital infrastructure helps local areas to attract and retain businesses and talent, thereby playing a vital role in reducing regional inequalities. Providing a supportive environment for digital infrastructure is one of the few things the Government can do that costs little, boosts growth and helps level up the UK....the key is speed. **The faster a network is built, the bigger the regional gains** (emphasis added). The telecommunications industry faces challenges on this front. The COVID-19 pandemic has increased demand on networks but delayed the availability of new spectrum to provide additional capacity.

The report notes that the reliability and reach of 4G is more important than ever. It is needed both to quench immediate demand, and also to facilitate future 5G rollout, as the underlying passive infrastructure will initially support both technologies. Every failure to provide better coverage not only presents an immediate opportunity loss for local business and consumers but also has a bigger downstream economic impact. It acknowledges that productivity gains to business, equality gains for regions and economic gains for the country are only as achievable as the networks they can access.

The report recommended that the Government should reform the strategic planning framework to compel local authorities to ensure that the needs of future mobile connectivity are adequately addressed in Local Plans and that new developments are assessed on how they might impact, or could support, local connectivity.

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In April 2021 the DCMS issued a further round of consultation on the 'proposed changes to permitted development rights for electronic communications infrastructure: technical consultation'. The continuing support for high quality 5G service provision continues to be emphasised:

'Now, more than ever, people need access to dependable and consistent mobile coverage where they live, work and travel. The coronavirus pandemic has highlighted the importance of digital connectivity and ensuring that networks have sufficient capacity and resilience to meet demand. Increased connectivity will also be key to our recovery. As the UK seeks to build back better, our changes to the planning system will help to extend and improve mobile coverage, including in rural areas, to benefit communities and businesses.'

The government is committed to extending mobile geographical coverage across the UK and providing uninterrupted mobile signal on all major roads, and to be a global leader in 5G... The government is investing £200 million in a programme of 5G testbeds and trials to encourage investment in 5G so that communities and businesses can benefit from this new technology. Our ambition is for the majority of the population to have access to a 5G signal by 2027. The increased connectivity and capacity offered by 5G is opening-up the potential for new, innovative services for individuals and industry...

It is also essential that the planning system can effectively support the delivery of the mobile infrastructure that we need'...

The government response set out that, subject to a technical consultation on the detail of the proposals, including the appropriate environmental protections and other safeguards, we would take forward changes to:

- *Enable the deployment of radio equipment housing on land without the need for prior approval, up to specified limits and excluding sites of special scientific interest, to support 5G deployment;*
- *Strengthen existing masts up to specified limits to enable sites to be upgraded for 5G and for mast sharing without the need for prior approval;*
- *Enable the deployment of building-based masts nearer to highways to support deployment of 5G and extend mobile coverage, subject to prior approval and specified limits; and,*
- *Enable higher new masts to deliver better mobile coverage and mast sharing, subject to prior approval and specified limits".*

The proposed installation in this location will allow the operator to provide new and improved high quality 2G, 3G and 4G coverage and capacity and new 5G service provision supporting the Government's aim of 'focusing on ensuring that everyone is connected to the information superhighway' and help to meet its target that the all populated areas connected to the 5G network by 2030. This fully meets the aspirations of the NPPF.

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An installation in this location will ensure that the expansion of the electronic communications network is facilitated, and that high quality communications infrastructure is provided to the immediate area. This is in full accordance with the operator's 5G license obligations and the Council's aims and aspirations to expand and improve desirable infrastructure as required and to have the latest high quality 5G infrastructure, promoting and growing the digital sector and increasing digital inclusion.

Summary

The proposal is to install a radio base station in this location, consisting of the installation of a 20m high slim line monopole. The operator will be able to provide 2G, 3G and 4G coverage and capacity and new 5G coverage in this area of southeast Whitefield. This follows the inability of the operator to upgrade and share the existing site used by VMO2 and Vodafone on Bury Old Road. The existing site isn't capable of being upgraded to 5G, this is due its structure and the proximity of a MBNL site which sits adjacent to the existing site and would cause interference. The existing mast will remain to provide service to Vodafone network.

The proposed site will be able to assimilate with the existing vertical structures within the immediate area. The proposed height at 20m is essential in order for the antennas to reach the target coverage area, and provide 2G, 3G and 4G coverage and capacity and new 5G coverage for the operator to the surrounding area in and around southeast Whitefield. Thus providing a high quality service to their customers and access to the latest technologies whenever and wherever they are. Any limited harm will be outweighed by the benefits associated with providing and maintaining the latest high quality communications in line with the NPPF and the Governments strong commitment to a world leader in 5G. If the challenge is to be met to provide pervasive, affordable, resilient digital connectivity, the challenge is early roll out of 5G, especially in areas where mobile data use is congested.

Providing the 2G, 3G and 4G coverage and new 5G service provision will fully meet the national Governments aim of 'ensuring that everyone is connected to the information superhighway', that all populated areas have access to a 5G signal by 2030 and the national policies set out in the NPPF. If the height of the column were to be reduced then the antennas would not be able to operate effectively, leading to a degraded service for the operator's customers especially for the higher frequency technologies including the latest 4G technology and new 5G service provision which have lower antenna propagation. This would ultimately lead to the need for an additional installation elsewhere within the cell area causing unnecessary proliferation of masts contrary to the NPPF.

Site selection was progressed in accordance with the applicants licence obligations, advice in the NPPF and the Code of Practice and represents the least environmentally intrusive, technically suitable, available option.

The social and economic benefits of providing reliable and high quality mobile broadband connections including 5G support growth in productivity, efficiency and labour force participation across the whole economy. This is fully supported by the NPPF. These benefits

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are strong material considerations which outweigh any perceived loss of visual amenity to the surrounding area.

The applicant considers the proposed installation in terms of its siting and appearance would not cause significant harm on the street scene and any perceived harm would be outweighed by the need for the proposal when balanced against the relevant objectives and policies within the Bury Local Plan, the Bury Unitary Development Plan, the Bury 2030 Community Strategy, the Greater Manchester Digital Strategy 2018-2020, the Greater Manchester Local Industrial Strategy, Greater Manchester Digital Blueprint, the Greater Manchester Infrastructure Framework and the Greater Manchester Digital Strategy 2021-2026.

Confirmation that submitted drawings have been checked for accuracy

Name: (Agent)	<u>Michal Laskowski</u>	Telephone:	<u>0161 785 4500</u>
Company:	<u>Clarke Telecom Limited</u>		
Company Address:	<u>Clarke Telecom Limited, Unit E, Madison Place, Northampton Road, Manchester, M40 5AG</u>	Email Address:	<u>Michal.Laskowski@clarke-telecom.com</u>
Signed:	<u><i>Michal Laskowski</i></u>	Date:	<u>31/05/2023</u>
Position:	<u>Town Planner</u>	(on behalf of Cornerstone)	<u></u>

In the first instance, all correspondence should be directed to the agent.

Cornerstone Industry Site Specific Supplementary Information (England) V.5 – 21.03.2022

Registered Address:

Cornerstone Telecommunications, Infrastructure Limited,
Hive 2, 1530 Arlington Business Park, Theale, Berkshire, RG7 4SA.

Registered in England & Wales No. 08087551.

VAT No. GB142 8555 06

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