

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

1. Site Details

Site Name:	Grass Verge off Harton Lane	Site Address:	Grass Verge off Harton Lane/Temple Park Road, Cauldwell, South Shields, NE34 0DQ
National Grid Reference:	E: 436994 N: 564769		
Site Ref Number:	CS_309144_00	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: South Tyneside do not have a publicly accessible mast register.		
Were industry site databases checked for suitable sites by the operator:	Yes	
If no explain why: N/A		

Site Specific Pre-application consultation with local planning authority

Was there pre-application contact:	Yes
Date of pre-application contact:	03/06/2025
Name of contact:	N/A
Summary of outcome/Main issues raised: On the 03/06/2025, a pre-application consultation letter and drawings of the proposal were sent by email to The Chief Planning Officer for comment. No response has been received to date.	

¹ Macro or Micro

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Annual area wide information to planning authority

Has annual area wide information been provided?	No
If no explain why:	
Summary issues raised: Cornerstone's commercial relationship with VMO2 has changed, effectively increasing their independence to work with other companies in the deployment of mobile infrastructure. It means Cornerstone no longer have visibility of VMO2's 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 their wider rollout. If your Local Authority would like a meeting to discuss wider Cornerstone rollout plans then please advise. Cornerstone 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: Pre-application consultation was carried out with the local ward councillors for the West Park Ward (Councillors Jim Yare, Nicky Gynn and Andrew Guy) the neighbouring Cleadon Park Ward Councillors (Councillors Susan Traynor, James Foreman and Steven Harrison) and Harton Ward Councillors (Councillors Neil Maxwell, Michael Clare and Karen Myers), and Emma Lewell-Buck MP. Pre-application consultation letters and drawings of the proposals were sent to these parties by email on 03/06/2025.			
Summary of outcome/main issues raised (include copies of relevant correspondence): Councillor Harrison responded on 03/06/2025 to confirm that the site is not located in the Cleadon ward. We responded on 04/06/2025 to clarify that the consultation was sent to neighbouring ward councillors as well due to the proximity of the proposed development with the ward boundaries. No further responses were received.			

School/College

Location of site in relation to school/college (include name of school/college):
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 Cornerstone Telecommunications, Infrastructure Limited,
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 VAT No. GB142 8555 06

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St Wilfrid's RC College, Temple Park Road, South Shields, NE34 0QA Park View School, Temple Park Road, South Shields, NE34 0QA
Outline of consultation carried out with school/college (include evidence of consultation): Pre-application consultation letters and a copy of the proposal drawings were emailed to the above schools on 03/06/2025.
Summary of outcome/main issues raised (include copies of main correspondence): No responses received to date.

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

Will the proposed development be on a civil safeguarding area or a defence safeguarding area?		No
Has the Civil Aviation Authority/Secretary of State for Defence/operator of the civil safeguarding area or defence safeguarding area been notified?		No
Details of response: N/A		

Developer's Notice

Copy of Developer's Notice enclosed?	Yes
Date served:	18/06/2025
A developer's notice and copy of the proposal drawings were emailed to the relevant parties on 18/06/2025. Copy of developer's notice and proof of delivery enclosed.	

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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

Background

As part of VMO2's continued network improvement programme, there is a specific requirement for a new installation at this location to provide replacement 4G and new 5G coverage and capacity, ensuring that this area of Cauldwell has access to the latest technologies. This follows the inability of the operator to upgrade the existing site it is currently utilising on Harton Lane/Temple Park Road, Cauldwell (NGR E: 437005, N: 564740) (VF3 47380).

The existing street pole is hosted by VodafoneThree and allows both VodafoneThree and VMO2 to provide 2G/4G coverage and capacity to the area.



Image 1a: Existing site (Source: Google)

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VMO2 are seeking to upgrade and enhance their network services in the area by installing infrastructure that will allow them to fulfil their license obligations and deliver new 5G technology to the area.

In order to provide 5G to the area, separate antennas are required, and these are of a substantial weight. There are no streetworks style poles comparable to the existing that have been traditionally deployed in residential and highways locations that are capable of supporting 5G antennas for both VMO2 and VodafoneThree.

A much bulkier, larger structure would be required – typically a much wider monopole with a headframe, or lattice tower structure. There is not enough space on the grass verge where the existing site is located to house such an installation, and an installation of this nature in a predominantly residential area such as this area of Cauldwell is considered to have a much greater impact on the visual amenity of the streetscene.



Image 1b: Example of shared lattice tower with headframes

As such, VMO2 are seeking to replace their coverage currently provided by the existing site with a new replacement radio base station, as close as possible to the existing, in order to replicate its coverage in this cell area. The new installation will allow VMO2 to upgrade their 4G technology and also provide a new 5G service to this part of Cauldwell.

The existing installation will be retained for VodafoneThree service provision.

The operator is limited in siting options due to the requirement to provide equivalent replacement coverage and capacity for this area of Cauldwell. The replacement of existing coverage means that the operator has to be located as close as possible to the existing

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installation in order to maintain the provision of equivalent coverage and capacity to the surrounding local area.

The Site

The application site is located on the grass verge to the west of the Harton Lane/Temple Park Road roundabout. The surrounding area is predominantly residential in nature, with a public house on the opposite side of the roundabout to the east.

The site is not located in any Article 2(3) land.

The proposed equipment will be viewed in the context of a similar existing third party operator installation to the south east, as well as existing streetlights, road signage, telegraph poles and semi-mature/mature trees within the streetscene.

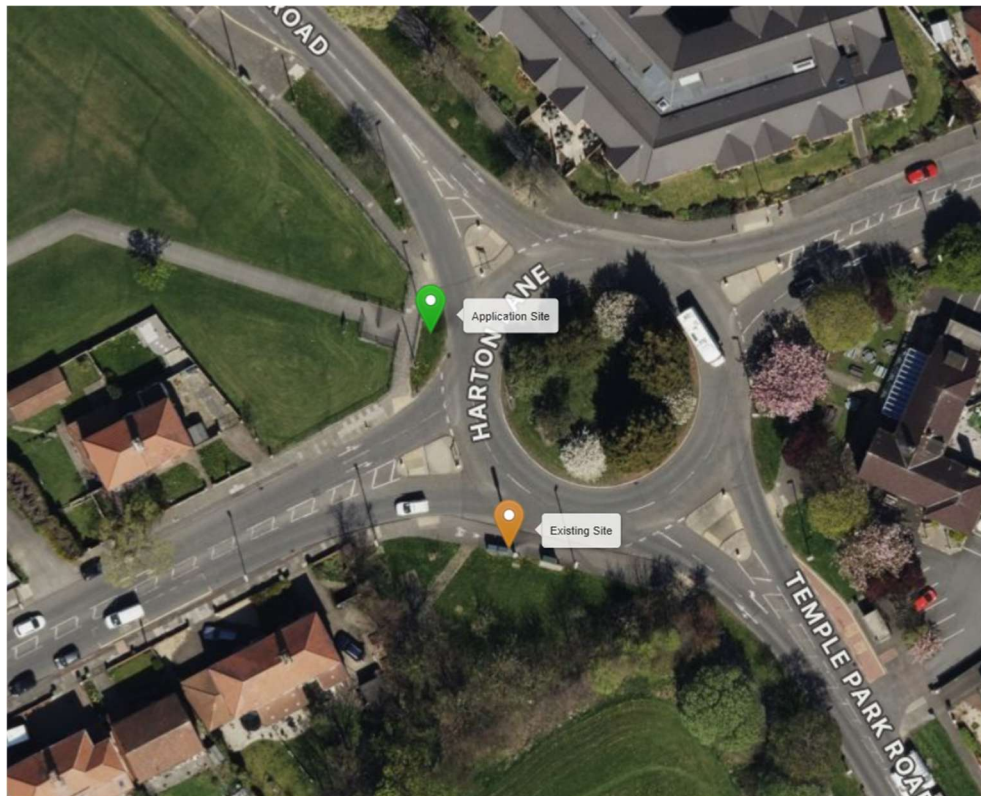


Image 1c: Aerial view of the proposed application site and the existing site (Source: Grid Reference Finder)

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Image 1d: The application site

Enclose map showing the cell centre and adjoining cells if appropriate:

The operator is seeking to replace the existing coverage provided from the radio base station at Harton Lane/Temple Park Road, to enable enhanced 4G coverage and capacity to the surrounding area, as well as new 5G services. This will help VMO2 to ensure that high quality customer experience is obtained as demands on the network increase and technologies change.

The 4G provision allows internet access, video calling, data downstreaming, accessing social media networks and emailing to name just a few of the benefits. Therefore, to maintain high quality indoor 4G services into this area would promote activity in line with the general population demand as the ownership of smart devices increases. 5G service provision brings faster, more responsive and reliable connections than ever before.

Type of Structure (e.g. tower, mast, etc): Orion Monopole

Description:

The installation of a telecommunications base station consisting of a 20m monopole supporting 6 no. antennas and 2 no. transmission dishes, together with 3 no. ground based equipment cabinets, and ancillary development thereto.

Overall Height: 20.0m Metres

Height of existing building (where applicable): N/A

Equipment Housing: 1 x York Cabinet

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Length:	0.6 Metres
Width:	1.9 Metres
Height:	1.75 Metres
Equipment Housing: 1 x Shire Cabinet	
Length:	0.6 Metres
Width:	1.05 Metres
Height:	1.75 Metres
Equipment Housing: 1 x Terrier Cabinet	
Length:	0.6 Metres
Width:	0.7 Metres
Height:	1.75 Metres
Materials (as applicable):	
Tower/mast etc – type of material and external colour:	Steel – BS00A05 Grey
Equipment housing – type of material and external colour:	Steel – Fir Green RAL 6009

Reasons for choice of design, making reference to pre-application responses:

The operator has carefully considered the design of the proposed column and is proposing the most sensitive design currently available to them which will provide the necessary replacement coverage and capacity to the surrounding area as well as new 5G services. Due to the technologies that will be available at this location, 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 lower antennas will provide enhanced 4G service provision. The upper 3 antennas will provide new 5G service provision. This makes the lower set of antennas 3.5 metres lower than the top of the pole; thus, if the column were to be any lower, the antennas would not be able to operate effectively.

The proposed height at 20 metres is essential to provide equivalent replacement coverage and new 5G services to the target coverage area of Cauldwell. This height is required to ensure that the coverage can transmit effectively over the nearby mature trees in the area, some of which measure up to 15 metres in height.

The 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 of 4G and 5G antennas are unable to operate effectively through the Glass Reinforced Plastic that a 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 technologies to be supported from this site. If the column width were to be any slimmer then the technologies would not fit on

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the same 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.

The proposed design is more visually sensitive and much easier to assimilate into a streetscene than a lattice tower with a bulky headframe. This non-stealth design is 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 other existing vertical structures within the immediate area including the streetlight columns and existing telecommunications site. These vertical structures will help the proposed installation assimilate with the surrounding area.

The design of the column represents a simple, functional, vertical structure which will not appear incongruous within the streetscene. This is especially so given its careful siting near to a number of existing perpendicular items of street furniture on and around Harton Lane/Temple Park Road which help the column assimilate with its surroundings and not appear out of place. The column is proposed to be coloured BS00A05, although it can be coloured any other colour the LPA consider appropriate if necessary. It is considered that this colour is preferable as it will allow the column to blend into the typically grey British skyline and will match the existing installation.

The proposed equipment cabinets will be located at ground level alongside the proposed monopole. They will be coloured green to blend with the grass verge and to match the other existing telecommunications cabinets at the existing site. However, they can be coloured any other colour the LPA consider appropriate if necessary. The cabinets are designed to appear like other statutory undertaker's equipment cabinets, including in the immediate streetscene. The equipment cabinets can be installed under permitted development rights but have been included on the plans and in the description in order to remain fully transparent.

The proposed transmission dishes are required in order to provide a link into the existing network. They require a clear line of sight to other dishes on the network in order to do this. As such, a centre line height of 14.69 metres is proposed. If the monopole were to be any lower, the dishes would not achieve a clear line of sight with the existing dishes in the network, and this would fail the design brief.

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 technical requirements for the site. Taking all matters into account it is considered that this proposal, to provide replacement 4G coverage, improved capacity and new 5G service provision, would not appear out of place within the street scene.

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Technical Information

Health and Safety - including ICNIRP compliance		
An ICNIRP certificate is provided as part of this application.		
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. In order to minimise interference within its own network and with other radio networks, VMO2 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	Yes	

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investigation and remedy of any reported significant interference. The telecommunications infrastructure the subject of this application accords with all relevant legislation and as such will not cause significant and irremediable interference with other electrical equipment, air traffic services or instrumentation operated in the national interest.		
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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 for a new radio base station at this location to allow VMO2 to provide replacement 4G coverage in and around this area of Cauldwell, whilst also providing improved capacity and the latest 5G service provision to the local area. This ensures high quality indoor service provision is maintained. The nearby existing site on Harton Lane/Temple Park Road is unable to be upgraded to allow both VodafoneThree and VMO2 to provide 5G service provision from the same installation. A much bigger and bulkier structure would be required in order to support all the operators' equipment. To consolidate both operators on a larger structure, in this predominantly residential area, would have a much greater detrimental visual impact than VMO2 finding another site nearby to provide their latest replacement coverage and new service provision via a slimline monopole that is designed to look similar to existing street furniture.

The National Planning Policy Framework states that local planning authorities should not question the need for the telecommunications system, which the proposed development is to support. However for the avoidance of doubt, as set out within this statement, the proposed installation is needed for VMO2, via Cornerstone, to replace the existing 4G coverage and capacity whilst also providing new 5G services to this area of Cauldwell.

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Mobile connectivity and service is required where customers live, work and play. 5G coverage and superfast mobile broadband data capacity demand will continue to increase exponentially with the introduction of IoT (Internet of Things), machine to machine connectivity, automated transport/industry and other 'smart' applications. To this end, the existing shared infrastructure within the built environment has had to be reviewed and adapted as appropriate.

In those instances where greenfield structures and rooftop installations are currently in place, in the vast majority of cases, these will remain shared base stations. These shared base stations allow for separate antennas on supporting structures that are capable of accommodating the weight, wind loading and technological requirements associated with providing four technologies (2G, 3G, 4G and 5G) for two separate operators from a single shared location, albeit sometimes via redevelopment of the existing base station.

However, to address some site specific coverage and data capacity demand, the 5G equipment upon many street furniture base station structures cannot be shared by both operators. This is due to variations in the make-up of the independent VodafoneThree and VMO2 networks. As noted, most infrastructure should be capable of sharing, however, the slim line street furniture base stations that have been inserted into the local street scene are not capable of accommodating all of the equipment that is required to meet the site specific demand of both operators and customers for this area from a single street furniture pole. To this end, many existing shared street-work installations are being removed from the 'single grid' with the necessity for additional new street furniture base stations accommodating the technological requirements of a single operator – either VodafoneThree or VMO2.

Given the maturity of the two independent networks, and the single grid consolidation over the last few years, any new street furniture base station needs to be located in close proximity to the existing site – thereby retaining customer coverage and experience within a previously shared 'cell'. The new pole will accommodate all the technologies for the single operator and the 'cell' will benefit from improved service provision from both operators, including the introduction of 5G service to the area. To continue to share an existing structure would require significant redevelopment of the existing structure to a much more structurally robust mast capable of hosting all the equipment from both operators, such as that shown in Image 1b in this statement. This would move away from the relatively uniform and slim-line street furniture poles proposed and therefore it is felt that a secondary, more slim-line, street-pole is a more appropriate and sensitive solution to 5G service provision whilst minimising impact for a street furniture setting.

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)

In accordance with the licence obligations and advice in the National Planning Policy Framework and the 'Code of Practice for Wireless Network Development in England' the

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applicant's network rollout team investigated the following siting and design options using this sequential approach to site selection:

- Upgrading their own existing base stations;
- Using existing telecommunications structures belonging to another communications operator. i.e. Mast and/ or site sharing, co-location;
- Installations on existing high buildings or structures;
- Using small scale equipment; and finally **Erecting a new ground based mast site – (1st) Camouflaging or disguising equipment.** (2nd) A conventional installation e.g. a lattice mast and compound.

The applicant's site selection strategy is to keep the overall environmental impact to a minimum. Utilising existing masts is always progressed where it is technically and legally possible and where it is the local planning authority's preferred environmental solution. New sites are only developed where there are no viable or accessible alternatives or it is the local planning authority's preferred approach. The feasibility of the acquisition, build and maintenance of the site also needs to be taken into account.

In accordance with the above sequential approach, the proposal is to install a replacement radio base station in this location to provide replacement and enhanced 2G/4G and new 5G coverage/capacity.

As stated throughout this document, the search area for the proposed site was limited due to the need to locate the proposed site as close as possible to the existing on Harton Lane/Temple Park Road. The following options were investigated and discounted.

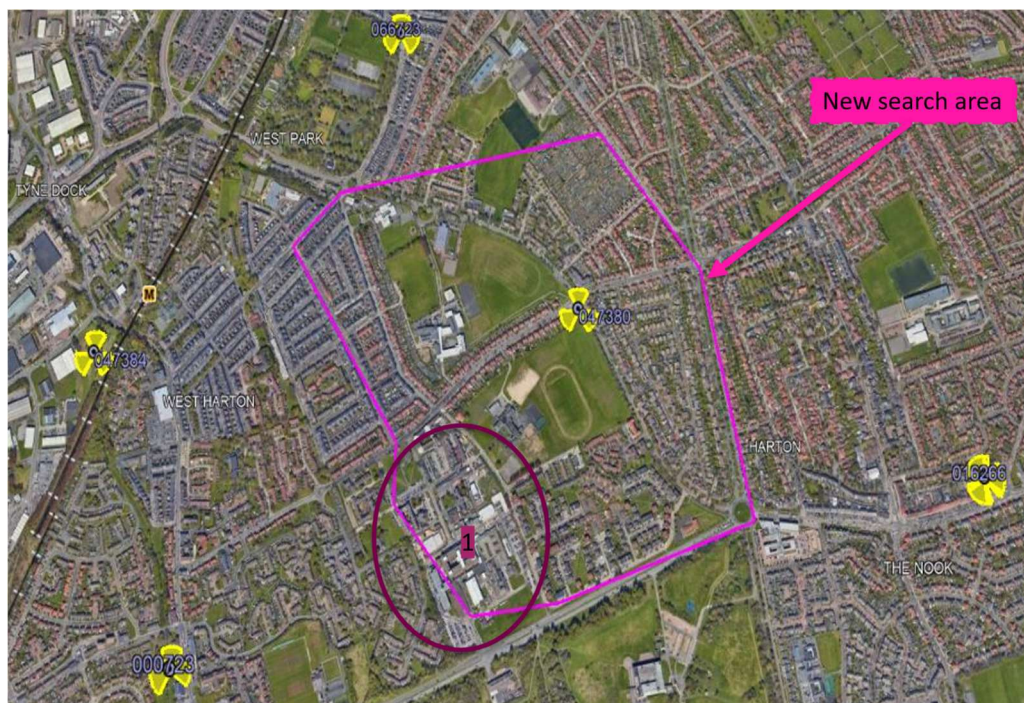


Image 2: Search area for replacement site outlined in red triangle

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Site Type	Site Address	National Grid Reference	Reason for not choosing site
D1 - Existing Telecoms Site	47380 Vodafone Mast, Harton Lane/Temple Park Road, Cauldwell, South Shields, NE34 0DQ	E: 437005 N: 564740	The operator has fully investigated upgrading this site to provide the latest technologies for 4G services as well as new 5G coverage/capacity in to both the VMO2 and VodafoneThree networks. However, the design of the existing streetworks structure is not able to support the new 5G antennas for both VodafoneThree and VMO2. This existing telecommunications site has therefore been discounted for the operators new technology requirements for this reason. A new site for VMO2 is therefore needed to provide this operator with the latest 2G, 4G and 5G technologies. The existing site will remain for VodafoneThree technologies only.
D2 - Rooftop	Brinkburn CIO, Harton Lane, Cauldwell, South Shields, NE34 0PJ	E: 436847 N: 564452	The rooftop is too low in order to deliver the required level of coverage to the target coverage area. This site has therefore been discounted for this reason.
D3 - Rooftop	South Tyneside District Hospital, Harton Lane, Cauldwell, South Shields, NE34 0PL	E: 436707 N: 564202	This location has been discounted as it is outside the optimal search area for the network.
D4 - Rooftop	Seymore Court, Ambleside Avenue, Cauldwell, South Shields, NE34 0DQ	E: 437026 N: 564802	Due to the construction of the building there is no design available to support the operator's apparatus and provide the necessary coverage to the target coverage area.
D5 - Greenfield	The Grey Hen car park, Temple Park Road, Cauldwell, South Shields, NE34 0HD	E: 437094 N: 564745	Locating the new column and cabinets in the car park of the Grey Hen would reduce the overall parking provision which is in constant demand throughout the day. Any reduction in overall car parking spaces would detrimentally affect the daily operations of the pub and would also be within close proximity to numerous residential properties. As such, this location has been discounted.

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D6 - Existing Arqiva Structure	Existing OLO Mast, Temple Park Road, Cauldwell, South Shields, NE34 0PU	E: 436969 N: 564803	It is not possible to share the existing structure as the design of the existing column would not be structurally capable of supporting another operator's equipment. Redevelopment of this structure for a taller bulkier structure would have a greater detrimental effect on the visual amenity of the surrounding area than the preferred option. This site has therefore been discounted for this reason.
D7 - Existing H3G Mast	Existing OLO Mast, Temple Park Road, Cauldwell, South Shields, NE34 0PU	E: 436583 N: 564989	It is not possible to share the existing structure as the design of the existing column would not be structurally capable of supporting another operator's equipment. Redevelopment of this structure for a taller bulkier structure would have a greater detrimental effect on the visual amenity of the surrounding area than the preferred option. This site has therefore been discounted for this reason.
D8 - Greenfield	Brinkburn CIO Recreational Ground, Hollingside Way, Cleadon Park, Cauldwell, NE34 0HY	E: 437024 N: 564593	An installation at this location is considered to be too exposed with limited screening/backdrop and other alternatives exist which are more appropriate in order to deliver the required coverage to the target area. This site has therefore been discounted for this reason.
D9 - Rooftop	St Wilfrid's RC College, Temple Park Road, Cauldwell, South Shields, NE34 0QA	E: 436673 N: 564645	The rooftop is too low in order to deliver the required level of coverage to the target coverage area. This site has therefore been discounted for this reason.
D10 - Rooftop	Park View School, Temple Park Road, Cauldwell, South Shields, NE34 0QA	E: 436647 N: 564888	Due to the construction of the building there is no design available to support the operator's apparatus and provide the necessary coverage to the target coverage area.
D11 - Rooftop	The Grey Hen, Harton Lane, Cauldwell, South Shields, NE34 0DQ	E: 437061 N: 564758	Due to the construction of the building there is no design available to support the operator's apparatus and provide the necessary coverage to the target coverage area.
D12 - Streetworks	Hollingside Way, Cauldwell, NE34 0HY	E: 437002 N: 564436	An installation at this location is considered to be too exposed with limited screening/backdrop and within close proximity

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			to numerous residential properties. This site has therefore been discounted for this reason.
D13 Rooftop	- Haven Court, Harton Lane, Cauldwell, South Shields, NE34 0PL	E: 436628 N: 564491	Due to the construction of the building there is no design available to support the operator's apparatus and provide the necessary coverage to the target coverage area.
D14 Greenfield	- South Tyneside District Hospital, Harton Lane, Cauldwell, South Shields, NE34 0PL	E: 436643 N: 564430	Locating the new column and cabinets in the car park of the hospital would reduce the overall parking provision which is in constant demand throughout the day. Any reduction in overall car parking spaces would detrimentally affect the daily operations of the hospital. As such, this location has been discounted.

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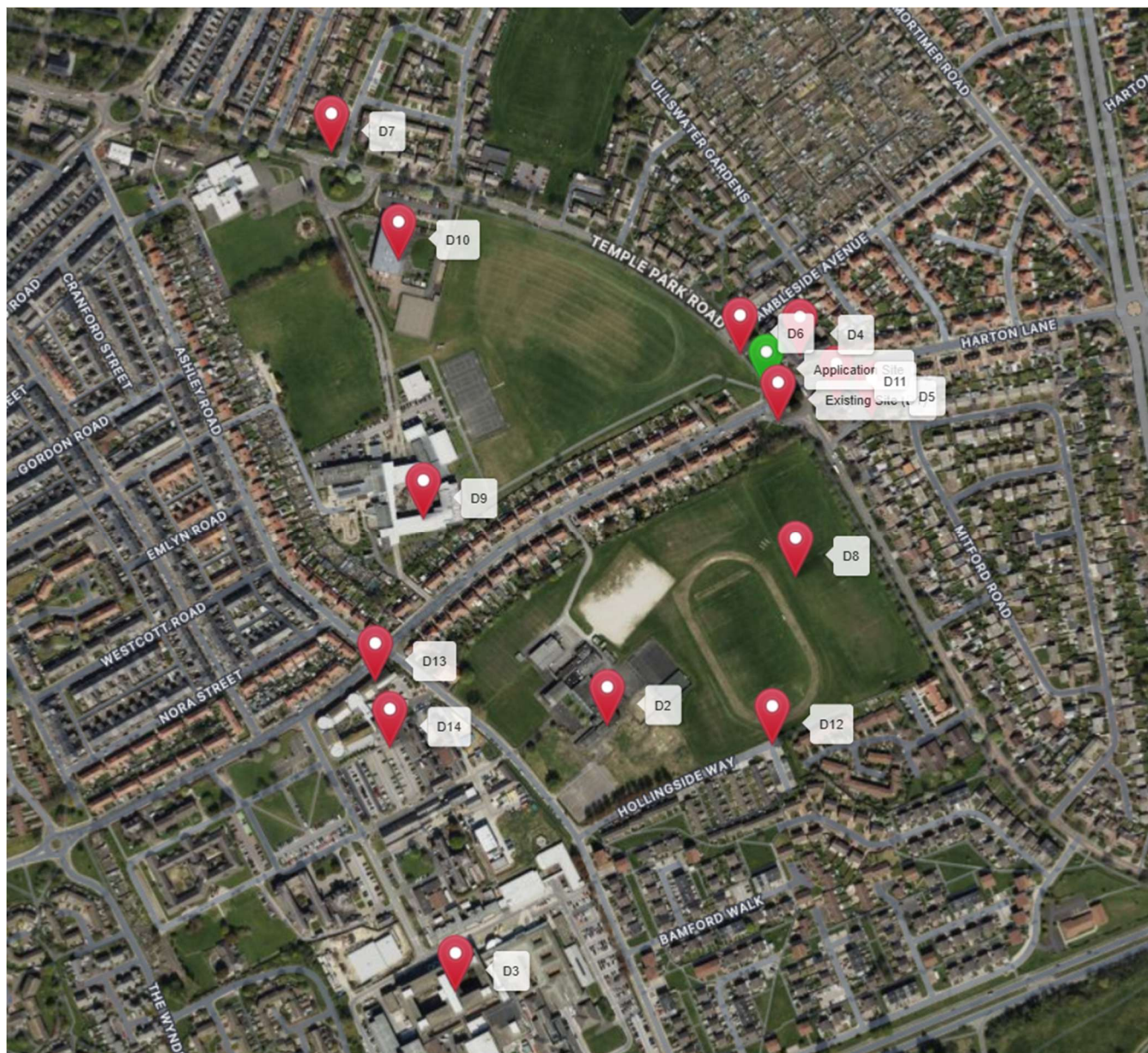


Image 3: Map of discounted sites (red pins) and application site (green pin) (Source: Grid Reference Finder)

[https://gridreferencefinder.com?gr=NZ3700564740|Existing s Site s \(D1\)|1,NZ3699464769|Application s Site |2,NZ3684764452|D2|1,NZ3670764202|D3|1,NZ3702664802|D4|1,NZ3709464745|D5|1,NZ3696964803|D6|1,NZ3658364989|D7|1,NZ3702464593|D8|1,NZ3667364645|D9|1,NZ3664764888|D10|1,NZ3706164758|D11|1,NZ3700264436|D12|1,NZ3662864491|D13|1,NZ3664364430|D14|1&v=r&labels=1](https://gridreferencefinder.com?gr=NZ3700564740|Existing%20sites%20(D1)|1,NZ3699464769|Application%20sites%20(D2)|1,NZ3670764202|D3|1,NZ3702664802|D4|1,NZ3709464745|D5|1,NZ3696964803|D6|1,NZ3658364989|D7|1,NZ3702464593|D8|1,NZ3667364645|D9|1,NZ3664764888|D10|1,NZ3706164758|D11|1,NZ3700264436|D12|1,NZ3662864491|D13|1,NZ3664364430|D14|1&v=r&labels=1)

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

N/A

Land use planning designations:

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None identified at the time of making the application.

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 (November 2024) (updated February 2025)

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. It was most recently updated again in December 2023, in relation to a number of themes including; flexibility for planning authorities in local housing need, clarification of Green Belt boundary alterations and acceptable brownfield development within the Green Belt. It strengthens the importance of building 'beautifully' and respecting the character of an area. It removes the need for annual five-year land supply updates, and protects neighbourhood plans from speculative development for five years. Also, the update encourages community-led and self-build developments and further protects agricultural land in its availability for food production. In December 2024, a further update took place, reversing a number of the previous revisions from December 2023. The update did not change any parts relating specifically to telecommunications development, other than the paragraph numbers. The amendment in February 2025 related specifically to footnotes 7/8 and paragraph 155 and did not include any changes relevant to telecommunications development.

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 119 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 119. It notes that policies should set out how high quality digital infrastructure,

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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 supports the expansion of telecommunications:

"Planning policies and decisions should support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next generation mobile technology (such as 5G)..." (para. 119).

Paragraph 120 of the NPPF sets out the requirement to minimise the number of installations consistent with the efficient operation of the network and also includes being consistent with the needs of consumers and providing reasonable capacity for future expansion.

Paragraph 123 of the NPPF retains guidance from a previous NPPF version which relates to local planning authorities 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.

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 39 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"* (emphasis added).

The NPPF builds on the aspiration to build a strong, competitive economy. Paragraph 85 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

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strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future. This is particularly important where Britain can be a global leader in driving innovation”...

Paragraph 86 highlights that Local Development Plans should include policies that facilitate development to meet the needs of a modern economy, including identifying suitable locations for uses such as digital infrastructure. It goes on to confirm that planning policies should:

“Set out a clear economic vision and strategy which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth, having regard to the national industrial strategy and any relevant Local Industrial Strategies and other local policies for economic development and regeneration.”

It also states that they should:

“Seek to address potential barriers to investment, such as inadequate infrastructure, services or housing, or a poor environment.”

Paragraph 87 states:

“Planning policies and decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors. This includes making provision for (a) clusters or networks of knowledge and data-driven, creative or high technology industries, and for new, expanded or upgraded facilities and infrastructure that are needed to support the growth of these industries.” And (c) “the expansion or modernisation of other industries of local, regional or national importance to support economic growth and resilience.”

Code of Practice for Wireless Network Development in England

The Code of Practice provides guidance to Code Operators (referred to as ‘operators’ throughout the Code of Practice), including the Mobile Network Operators and wireless infrastructure providers, their agents and contractors, local planning authorities, and all other relevant stakeholders in England on how to carry out their roles and responsibilities when installing wireless network infrastructure. It is also a useful tool for other interested stakeholders such as community groups, amenity bodies and individuals with an interest in mobile connectivity.

The aim of the Code of Practice is to support the government’s objective of delivering high quality wireless infrastructure whilst balancing these needs with environmental considerations. It also has an important role in making sure that appropriate engagement takes place with local communities and other interested parties.

The Code of Practice covers all forms of wireless infrastructure development, including mobile masts and cabinets. It is recommended that other wireless communications operators follow the principles of this Code of Practice, where appropriate.

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Unlike previous iterations this Code of Practice has been led by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and developed in collaboration with representatives of the mobile network industry, other government departments and public bodies, local planning authorities, and protected landscapes. This document replaces the previous Code of Best Practice on Mobile Network Development, which was published in 2016 and is now published by DCMS.

The CoP sets out the legal and policy framework for the delivery of wireless infrastructure development.

Paragraph 8 of the revised Code acknowledges that connectivity is vital to enable people to stay connected and 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, and that it is important that everyone has 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.

The CoP sets out 'How wireless networks function.

Para.16. states *"Cellular wireless networks use base stations to provide an area of radio coverage. Wireless technology uses the radio spectrum to broadcast radio waves between base stations and devices. Different radio frequencies have different characteristics which, along with the density of cell site locations, affect the extent of coverage and how much data can be carried over the network. Depending on the radio frequencies used, base stations can deliver coverage over a wide area or provide extra network capacity in areas where there is a high demand for network bandwidth"*.

Para. 17 sets out that *"Wireless technology continues to evolve rapidly, and mobile devices are now capable of much more. Second generation (2G) technology gave us voice calls and text messages, 3G led to the launch of smartphones, and 4G, which enabled faster browsing, allowed us to do things like watching videos on the move. 5G, the latest generation of wireless technology, is much faster than previous generations of wireless technology and can offer greater capacity and lower latency, allowing thousands of devices in a small area to be connected at the same time. 5G networks, and future mobile generations, will be vital for a range of Internet of Things uses (IoT) and Smart City applications"*.

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The CoP establishes 'Principles and commitments' by which operators should develop their networks and that Local Planning Authorities should demonstrate their support by.

Para. 18 states "Operators should develop their networks and install wireless infrastructure according to the following principles and commitments:

- **Site sharing and use of existing infrastructure:** make use of existing structures, sites and masts wherever possible to reduce the need for new development. The NPPF states that, when installing mobile infrastructure, the number of masts and sites 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.
- **Consultation with local planning authorities, local communities and other stakeholders:** participate in dialogue with local planning authorities, along with other relevant stakeholders such as the highways authorities, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty bodies, Historic England, and Natural England, including pre-application discussions, where appropriate. Maintain clear procedures, and high quality communication and consultation with local communities and other interested parties. Operators should agree community engagement with local planning authorities and share information as appropriate (see Pre-application consultation with local communities below).
- **Standardised and high-quality approach to planning applications, and the notification procedure:** provide standardised supporting documentation for planning applications (where appropriate) within the context of national and local requirements. Ensure planning submissions are of high-quality and provide the necessary evidence to support the application (as per the NPPF).
- **Prompt responses to enquiries:** respond to complaints and enquiries within a timely manner (see Review and Enquiries section below).
- **Siting and Design:** wireless infrastructure should be deployed in accordance with the guidance set out within this Code of Practice. Where appropriate, equipment should comply with the principles set out in the NPPF and consider any local planning policies, including any local and national design codes. When located in protected landscapes and other designated land, the sensitive nature of these areas must be considered.
- **Removal of redundant equipment and site restoration:** ensure that when infrastructure is upgraded, any equipment that is made redundant by the upgrade, such as brackets, is removed to benefit the local environment. Where a whole site is no longer in use, the site should be restored to its original state.
- **Compliance with guidance laid out in the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) public exposure levels guidance:** as required by spectrum licences, comply with international guidelines for limiting exposure to electromagnetic fields (EMF) - including, as set out in the NPPF, providing a statement that self-certifies that ICNIRP guidelines will be met with all applications (see Annex C).

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Paragraph 19 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)".

The added emphasis on support from Local Planning Authorities in the deployment in digital infrastructure is even more evident in the revised CoP. The CoP 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

The government's objective is to deliver high quality, reliable wireless infrastructure whilst ensuring the impact of new network development is kept to a minimum. The siting and design of wireless network infrastructure is central to achieving this. The CoP acknowledges that 'good siting and design principles should apply to all wireless network development and take into account any site specific considerations and context. Both 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. The guidance includes at Para. 22 'the choice over the site selection and design of equipment is primarily dependent upon the coverage and capacity requirements and technical constraints of a specific location, although operators should make efforts to reduce visual impacts where possible'.

Para. 23 confirms that there should be a '**presumption in favour of facilitating sustainable network development**' and, as such, operators and local planning authorities, as well as all other bodies involved in the deployment process, should work together to ensure connectivity needs are met and find viable solutions to deployment issues (emphasis added).

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Paragraphs 24 - 27 sets out general siting and site selection principles which Operators should consider. The CoP acknowledges at Para. 24 that 'Operators use a range of sophisticated, computer-based planning tools to predict levels of signal strength and coverage from sites for 2G, 3G, 4G and now 5G. Once an operator has identified a requirement for a new cell site, a suitable site needs to be found. Elements that make a site favourable include: having existing or ready access to a power supply, access to fibre optic cables, vehicular access, and, other buildings and development which may provide a level of existing screening. Operators will typically look to upgrade existing infrastructure prior to considering a new deployment, in particular for initial 5G deployment'.

Para 25 notes that 'When selecting sites for mobile infrastructure, operators should examine local plans and designations for the area, as well as carrying out an in-person site search to identify potential options which meet their requirements. Operators should follow these general siting and site selection principles:

- 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)'.

Para. 26 highlights that the installation of all wireless infrastructure requires a balanced approach between the technical needs and constraints of the proposed site and the potential impact of the development. 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.
- **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.

Para 27 requires that Local Planning Authorities consider these issues and consider the need for a site within a limited search area alongside the public benefit of improved connectivity. Para. 27 further considers that in general, it should not, therefore, be appropriate for planning authorities to seek wider evidence of alternative sites (beyond that required by the NPPF),

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unless they consider the proposed development is unacceptable having regard to the relevant material planning considerations

In respect of 'Design', the CoP at Para 28 acknowledges that the siting of wireless infrastructure will influence which design options are most appropriate for reducing the visual impact including

- Protecting visual amenity
- Mitigating visual impacts

Para. 29 acknowledges that these factors along with location and the coverage and capacity requirements can influence the type of infrastructure structure that is deployed and requires that *'planning authorities should be aware of these constraints when considering proposals. In particular:*

- *In urban areas, where there is a high level of demand for mobile data, mobile base stations are likely to need to be deployed more densely. In these settings you can expect to see more use of streetwork monopoles and rooftop installations and, in future, we are likely to see a larger number of smaller units (so-called "small cells") deployed on buildings and on street furniture.*
- *In rural areas, base stations often need to cover wider geographic areas. Operators may need to use tall masts or lattice towers to provide the required coverage. The location of masts can sometimes be dictated by access to transmission links back to the operator's main network and proximity to a power supply. Coverage in some areas can be limited because of the geography, topography and terrain'.*

The CoP establishes radio equipment housing (cabinets) principles. The CoP at Para. 30 states that *"cabinets protect radio transmitters and receivers, provide the power source for mobile equipment, and are connected to antennas via cables. Equipment cabinets are likely to be needed at most sites. The cabinets must be of sufficient size to facilitate hosting various operating equipment whilst also allowing air circulation to reduce the potential for overheating"*. The CoP establishes the planning and visual considerations for siting radio housing. These include:

- Colouring
- Siting on highways and footways:
- Highway safety:
- Listed buildings/ scheduled monuments and Conservation Areas:
- Access
- Trees

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".

The Local Plan for the South Tyneside area comprises:

- Core Strategy, 2007
- Development Management Policies, 2011

Core Strategy, 2007

The Vision states:

'Our Spatial Vision – concentrating development on our key regeneration/development areas but ensuring this is not at the expense of maintaining communities and providing full access to the major facilities and developments. Our spatial vision for the Borough seeks to ensure that:

- *Development meets the needs of our residents and businesses without compromising the ability of future generations to enjoy the same quality of life that we aspire to;*
- *We deliver the regeneration of our Borough. In doing so, we need to focus development on: - the main centres of South Shields, Jarrow and Hebburn; - major riverside sites – bringing life back to the riverside and creating sustainable communities where people choose to live;*
- *Proposals are of a sufficient scale and can deliver a major change in the perception of the Borough and have the greatest impact on the economy, opportunity for new housing, quality of life and cultural facilities;*
- *All residents have a choice of good quality and affordable housing in a variety of tenures and which meets their future needs;*
- *Our natural and built environment that is valued, protected, enhanced and capitalized on for the benefit of all;*
- *All those within the Borough can access the opportunities that are available, with reliable public transport, efficient road network and above all, focusing on delivering accessibility rather than relying on mobility; and*
- *Despite the focus on the big projects and key regeneration areas, the suburban areas and villages outside of the key regeneration hot-spots must not be ignored – ensuring appropriate levels of essential services are provided and that any local needs for development are met.'*

The principle of sustainable development is well established and must be at the centre of this Plan. The emerging Regional Spatial Strategy already sets out a clear policy for sustainable development and it is considered that sustainable development principles are being embodied throughout the Strategy. The overall spatial strategy (Policy ST1 below) will be crucial in delivering sustainable development throughout the Borough.

Policy ST1 relates to 'Spatial Strategy for South Tyneside'. It states:

'The spatial strategy for South Tyneside, as shown on the Key Diagram, is to:

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- A. Regenerate the River Tyne and coastal corridors including the Tyne Gateway at South Shields;
- B. Support development that reflects the scale and functions of the main towns of South Shields, Jarrow and Hebburn;
- C. Promote opportunities along the A19 Economic Growth Corridor;
- D. Ensure the sustainability of our settlements by reducing the emissions which cause climate change and adapting to its effects; and
- E. Maximise the re-use of previously developed land, in the built up areas. The principles of securing mixed-use development, promoting accessibility, and ensuring that development maximises the community benefits of regeneration, whilst avoiding or minimising environmental impacts and congestion and safeguarding natural and cultural assets. The use of Planning Obligations is essential in delivering this overall strategy.'

Development Management Policies, 2011

Policy DM1 relates to 'Management of Development' and states (inter-alia):

'In determining all applications under the planning Acts we will ensure that, where relevant:

- A. The development, including new buildings, extensions and alternations to existing buildings, is designed to convey sensitive consideration of its surroundings, and where possible enhance its local setting and reinforce local identity, having particular regard to scale and proportions, alignment, form, use of materials and architectural detailing;
- B. The development is acceptable in relation to any impact on residential amenity;
- C. The development protects existing soft landscaping, including trees and hedges, where possible or provides replacement planting where necessary;
- D. New development provides well-designed external spaces including streets, squares and parks, where possible linked to the wider green infrastructure network, with hard and soft landscaping to provide a high quality setting for buildings, improve visual amenity, enhance community activity and support the provision of priority natural habitats and species;
- E. The design of buildings and external spaces incorporates focal points and landmarks to aid recognition and legibility of the townscape and streetscape, including public art, where possible;
- F. The design of advertisements complements the architecture to which it relates and the local context, and is considered as an integral part of the development;
- G. The impact of the development is acceptable in relation to highway capacity and safety, or includes proposals to mitigate any adverse impacts.'

The introduction of 5G technologies to the area will demonstrably improve the social and economic condition of the local area, without unduly compromising the environmental context.

Applications are therefore determined in accordance with the NPPF and Policy DM1 of the Development Management Plan (adopted 2011).

Relevant Government Reports relating to Telecommunications Development

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Levelling Up the United Kingdom White Paper 2022

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) published the 'Levelling Up the United Kingdom White Paper' on 02 February 2022. Levelling up is a moral, social and economic programme for the whole of government. The Levelling Up White Paper sets out how the Government spread opportunity more equally across the UK.

The 'Levelling Up the United Kingdom White Paper' champions that

'the United Kingdom is an unparalleled success story – a multi-cultural, multi-national, multi-ethnic state with the world's best broadcaster; a vibrantly creative arts sector; a National Health Service which guarantees care for every citizen; charities and voluntary groups which perform a million acts of kindness daily; globally renowned scientists extending the boundaries of knowledge every year; entrepreneurs developing the products and services which bring joy and jobs to so many; and millions of citizens whose kindness and compassion has been so powerfully displayed during the COVID-19 pandemic.'

But not everyone shares equally in the UK's success. While talent is spread equally across our country, opportunity is not. Levelling up is a mission to challenge, and change, that unfairness. Levelling up means giving everyone the opportunity to flourish. It means people everywhere living longer and more fulfilling lives, and benefitting from sustained rises in living standards and well-being.

This requires us to end the geographical inequality which is such a striking feature of the UK. It needs to begin by improving economic dynamism and innovation to drive growth across the whole country, unleashing the power of the private sector to unlock jobs and opportunity for all. While there are world-leading and enterprising businesses and innovators right across the UK, economic growth and the higher productivity which drives it has been over-concentrated in specific areas, particularly the South East of England. A long tail of low-productivity businesses and places explain why UK productivity growth is too low compared to competitors. It is vital that we preserve and enhance the economic, academic and cultural success stories of the UK's most productive counties, towns and cities. But it is equally critical that we improve productivity, boost economic growth, encourage innovation, create good jobs, enhance educational attainment and renovate the social and cultural fabric of those parts of the UK that have stalled and not – so far – shared equally in our nation's success'.

The 'Levelling Up the United Kingdom White Paper' states that:

'The UK Government has made progress towards spreading opportunity around the country since 2019, alongside mitigating the worst effects of the pandemic, with: • £5bn for Project Gigabit to bring gigabit-capable broadband to 85% of

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the UK by 2025, and the £1bn Shared Rural Network deal with mobile operators delivering 4G coverage to 95% of the UK by the end of 2025; • five-year consolidated transport settlements amounting to £5.7bn in eight city regions outside London, £5bn of funding for buses and active travel over this Parliament; and £96bn for the Integrated Rail Plan delivering faster, more frequent and more reliable journeys across the North of England and the Midlands;

Levelling up is not about making every part of the UK the same or pitting one part of the country against another. Nor does it mean dampening down the success of more prosperous areas. Indeed, by extending opportunity across the UK we can relieve pressures on public services, housing and green fields in the South East. And levelling up can improve well-being in the South East by improving productivity in the North and Midlands. So, it is about the success of the whole country: realising the potential of every place and every person across the UK, building on their unique strengths, spreading opportunities for individuals and businesses, and celebrating every single city, town and village's culture. This will make the economy stronger, more equal and more resilient, and lengthen and improve people's lives. The economic prize from levelling up is potentially enormous. If underperforming places were levelled up towards the UK average, unlocking their potential, this could boost aggregate UK GDP by tens of billions of pounds each year. Levelling up skills, health, education and wellbeing would deliver similarly-sized benefits. Accumulated over time, those gains could easily surpass annual UK GDP. Success in levelling up is about growing the economic pie, everywhere and for everyone, not re-slicing it.

The United Kingdom's Geographical Disparities: Drivers and Potential Policy Approaches What does the economic and social geography of the United Kingdom look like? The UK has larger geographical differences than many other developed countries on multiple measures, including productivity, pay, educational attainment and health. Urban areas and coastal towns suffer disproportionately from crime, while places with particularly high levels of deprivation, such as former mining communities, outlying urban estates and seaside towns have the highest levels of community need and poor opportunities for the people who grow up there. These disparities are often larger within towns, counties or regions than between them. They are hyper-local and pockets of affluence and deprivation may exist in the same district. Indeed, many of the worst areas of deprivation are found in the UK's most successful cities. While change is possible, in some cases, these differences have persisted for much of the last century. And some of the UK's most successful cities – such as Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds, Glasgow and Cardiff – lag behind their international comparators when it comes to productivity and incomes. What are the current and future drivers of geographical disparities? Over the past century, many trends have combined to create the spatial patterns seen across the UK today. Globalisation, technological progress, advances in transport, logistics and power, and the shift from heavy industry to knowledge-intensive sectors, as well as the rise of foreign holidays and shift from

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technical training to university education, have had a large and lasting impact on the economic geography of the UK. These dynamics of the global economy have benefited the UK overall, improving productivity, increasing wealth and driving up living standards through more innovation and competition. These dynamics, however, have not had the same positive economic and social impacts across the UK. While London and much of the South East have benefited economically, former industrial centres and many coastal communities have suffered. This has left deep and lasting scars in many of these places, damaging skills, jobs, innovation, pride in place, health and wellbeing. What are the factors that will help drive levelling up? Levelling up requires a focused, long-term plan of action and a clear framework to identify and act upon the drivers of spatial disparity. Evidence from a range of disciplines tells us these drivers can be encapsulated in six “capitals”.

- Physical capital – infrastructure, machines and housing.
- Human capital – the skills, health and experience of the workforce.
- Intangible capital – innovation, ideas and patents.
- Financial capital – resources supporting the financing of companies.
- Social capital – the strength of communities, relationships and trust.
- Institutional capital – local leadership, capacity and capability

This White Paper sets out that the new policy regime is based on five mutually reinforcing pillars. Firstly, the UK Government is setting clear and ambitious medium-term missions to provide consistency and clarity over levelling up policy objectives. These missions will serve as an anchor for policy across government, as well as catalysing innovation and action by the private and civil society sectors. These missions are ambitions that the UK Government has for all parts of the UK. Delivering on them, while being fully respectful of the devolution settlements, will require close and collaborative work with the devolved administrations. The missions are rolling decade-long endeavours and will be reviewed periodically by the UK Government. One mission relates to:

“Digital Connectivity

Mission: By 2030, the UK will have nationwide gigabit-capable broadband and 4G coverage, with 5G coverage for the majority of the population” (my emphasis.

The White Paper notes the pivotal role that ‘Digital Connectivity’ has in boosting productivity, pay, jobs, and living standards by ‘Growing the Private Sector’.

To help drive these improvements, the UK Government is setting four core missions, spanning living standards; research and development (R&D); transport infrastructure; and digital connectivity.

Para. 3.2.4 of the White Paper states ‘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’.

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The case for 'Digital Connectivity' action states:

'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 for 'Digital Connectivity' states:

'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.'

The UK Government has also agreed a £1bn deal with mobile operators to deliver the Shared Rural Network programme. This will see operators collectively increase 4G coverage to 95% by 2025. As a result of this collaboration, the vast majority of the UK will soon benefit from improvements to digital connectivity.'

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5G has the potential to radically change the way people live and make businesses more productive and competitive. The UK Government's ambition is for the majority of the population to have access to a 5G signal by 2027. Since 2017, the UK Government has provided £200m in funding for 5G Testbeds and Trials, supporting over 200 startups and SMEs across a range of sectors – including healthcare, manufacturing, Agri-Tech and creative industries – to better understand how to use the technology to develop new solutions and services (emphasis added).

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 – including 5G – 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.

The West Midlands 5G (WM5G) Testbed started in 2018 with the mission of testing and proving the benefits of 5G to public and private sector productivity, creating jobs and boosting growth. The UK Government has invested £21m over three years, alongside investment from local government and the private sector. By working with local authorities and Mobile Network Operators (MNOs), WM5G has accelerated 5G deployment by over six months, resulting in the West Midlands being amongst the best connected places for 5G in the UK. In addition, WM5G has delivered a number of UK firsts, including a 5G road sensor network, 5G connected ambulance and capsule endoscopy trials, and a 5G application accelerator programme called 5prinG, which has already upskilled over 400 organisations on the benefits of 5G and allowed over 60 startups to develop new 5G products and services. 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 devolved administrations to consider how best to share the insights and evaluation of the programme to help build digital skills capability across the UK'.

UK Wireless Infrastructure Strategy, April 2023

In April 2023, the UK Government published the 'UK Wireless Infrastructure Strategy'¹, a plan for delivering world-class digital infrastructure which the government identifies as an essential enabler for its 5 priorities of building a better, more secure, more prosperous future for the UK,

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including growing the economy, and creating better-paid jobs and opportunity right across the country. In her foreword, the Rt Hon Michelle Donelan MP, Secretary of State for Department for Science, Innovation and Technology, provides context for the strategy:

"5G will be the cornerstone of our digital economy. With higher capacity and lower latency, standalone 5G will drive growth in the industries of today and tomorrow, including in emerging sectors like artificial intelligence where Britain leads the world. Just take smart ports, where 5G-enabled remote operation can help us to move containers more quickly, efficiently, and safely, boosting our international competitiveness. 5G can improve our public services, too, in everything from education to social care. In transport, for example, we can use 5G to power forward progress in everything from real time travel information to augmented reality navigation and self-driving buses and taxis.... This is an incredible opportunity; widespread adoption of 5G could see £159 billion in productivity benefits by 2035".

The Future Telecoms Infrastructure Review, 2018 sets out the ambition of the Government for the UK to become a world leader in 5G technology and ensuring world class connectivity for all. This ambition was reaffirmed in the 'UK Wireless Infrastructure Strategy', published in April 2023 which states in the Executive Summary:

"The next decade will see seismic changes both in terms of what wireless connectivity can deliver and how we can use it. The economic and social benefits from these changes promise to be vast, from supercharging growth to accelerating our transition to net zero. But these benefits can only be achieved with concerted action from government, industry, and others".

The Foreword of the 'UK Wireless Infrastructure Strategy' by Julia Lopez MP 'Minister of State for Department for Science, Innovation and Technology' states inter-alia:

"The more our lives are conducted online, the more access to the internet becomes critical for social and economic opportunity.

This is why delivering world-class digital infrastructure to all Britons is a fundamental mission of this government - and our efforts to build it the modern equivalent in scale and ambition to the Victorians' construction of the railways. Our plan is for every corner of our country to get lightning fast connectivity, not only to give people real choices about where to live and work today but so they will not be left out of future technological revolutions because of poor infrastructure.

It is this sense of purpose that underpins Project Gigabit, our flagship £5 billion programme to reach hard-to-reach communities across the UK with gigabit-capable broadband. It is complemented by a staggering competition now underway between commercial suppliers to supply Britons with great connectivity.

Extraordinary progress is being made on coverage. When I began my role in September 2021, gigabit coverage was just over 50%. Now, it stands at almost 75%. With £1bn of Project Gigabit's funding now available to suppliers, our contracts are not just delivering better

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internet but skilled jobs everywhere from Blandford to Berwick. By the end of next year, we hope to have every part of our country under contract.

Which is why the time is right to turn our sights to mobile connectivity, where the same sense of mission is needed to deliver the kind of wireless infrastructure that will transform how we live our lives and run our economy. This is not simply a matter of improving download speeds as people browse the internet on their phones or dial into work calls. It is far more transformative than that'.

The UK Wireless Strategy states that '4G technology revolutionised the way people use their mobile phones. What today is considered normal, a decade ago was ground-breaking. We have seen the growth of streaming services, like Netflix and Spotify, and gained constant access to high-quality, user-produced content for free on platforms like YouTube, transformed the way we shop online, travel around cities through access to apps like Uber and Bolt and use public services, such as booking NHS appointments through apps'.

The UK Government in the UK Wireless Infrastructure Strategy' recognises that 'growth in the digital sector is nearly 6 times faster than across the economy is a whole.

Connected Nations UK Report 2024

The Connected Nations UK Report 2024 was published on 5th December 2024. It provides updated data on the coverage and usage of fixed broadband and mobile networks within the UK, reporting on the further development of 4G networks and progress on the rollout of 5G networks.

The report states that "the availability of mobile 5G continues to expand, with mobile network operators (MNOs) coverage ranging between 61% to 79% outside premises. However, 5G coverage where all MNOs are present outside premises remains low, at 38% for our High Confidence level. We continue to see significant differences across the UK, with 5G deployed in 42% of sites in urban areas, compared with 16% of sites in rural areas."

In relation to 4G technology, the report states:

"4G remains the primary technology for mobile users, reaching outside more than 99% of UK premises and carries 78% of total mobile traffic data. 4G coverage where it is available from at least one MNO has now reached 95% of the UK landmass (delivering early on one of the key targets for the Shared Rural Network programme), with 4G geographic coverage across individual MNOs in the UK rising from a range of 80-87% last year to 88-89% this year. We note the 4G geographic improvements because of the Shared Rural Network programme."

The report also touches upon the phasing out of legacy mobile networks. MNOs have begun phasing out their 3G networks, with two operators having completed the process, and have committed to shutting down their 2G networks by 2033. Over 2 million devices remain reliant on 2G/3G networks, which highlights the need for mobile providers to ensure that their sites are ready for the increased traffic to the more recent 4G/5G technologies.

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The report also has an interactive version with a dataset showing geographical mobile coverage by Local Authority area. For South Tyneside, the data shows that as of September 2024, whilst 99% of the area has 5G from one operator, only 53% has 5G coverage from all the main operators. This means that 47% of the geographical area of South Tyneside is restricted when they choose which operator they would like to provide their mobile coverage if they wish to receive high quality 5G coverage.



Image 5: Data for geographical 5G coverage in South Tyneside (Source: Connected Nations 2024: Interactive Report)

Planning Issues

The main issues arising from this prior approval notification are whether the proposed mast and cabinets due to their siting and appearance would result in harm and, if so, whether any perceived harm would be outweighed by the significant social and economic benefits associated with the improvement of existing service and introduction of 5G provision attributed to the proposal to enable sustainable development and growth across the district and meeting the needs of its communities.

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The provisions of the GPDO require the local planning authority to assess the proposed development solely on its **siting and appearance**.

The principle of development has been established by the Government when the new permitted development rights came into force in November 2016 and again in April 2022, which enables sites such as this one to be built, with prior approval for siting and appearance being the only matters that the local planning authority can take into 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 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. To this end, the equipment has been located on a grass verge off the roundabout at the junction of Harton Lane and Temple Park Road. The base station will be viewed in the context of the existing vertical elements of street furniture including lighting columns, road signage and telegraph poles, as well as the existing telecommunications apparatus, and mature street trees. This is in line with the NPPF and Policy DM1 of the Development Management Plan 2011.

As explained throughout this statement, the siting of the equipment has predominantly been guided by technical restrictions. There is a technical need to locate the equipment as close as possible to the existing site on the roundabout at the junction of Harton Lane and Temple Park Road. The existing site currently provides 2G/4G coverage to the area for both VodafoneThree and VMO2. However, this site cannot be upgraded to provide 5G coverage for both operators. The narrow monopole structures typically found in urban streetscenes are not structurally capable of hosting all of the equipment required that would allow this. As such, a new site is required to allow VMO2 to upgrade its technology in the area, providing

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enhanced 4G and new 5G services. The existing structure will remain in situ to allow VodafoneThree to upgrade their service provision in the area when they are ready to do so.

In line with the requirements of NPPF, there are no existing telecommunications installations for the operator to share that would provide the necessary coverage to the target coverage area, without introducing a large shared structure into the streetscene which was not considered to be a visually acceptable option. Similarly, there are no buildings which are suitable and available that the operator could utilise to operate their equipment. The discounted options are set out above and their reasons for being discounted are fully explained.

The transmission dishes are essential to provide a link into the operator's network. They require a clear line of sight and therefore need to have a centre line of height of 14.69 metres.

Appearance

Cornerstone has carefully considered the design of the new proposed structure and are proposing the most sensitive design currently available to provide the necessary replacement coverage, enhanced capacity and new 5G services to the surrounding area. If the column were to be any lower, the antennas would not be able to operate effectively and provide the level of coverage required, and the transmission dishes would not be able to link to other dishes in the network. 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.

In order to reduce the visual impact on the surrounding area the antennas have been positioned in a dual stack formation, with 3 antennas at the top of the mast and the other 3 antennas are proposed to be located underneath. 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.

The presence of the linear structures including nearby lighting columns, road signage and telegraph poles, as well as the existing telecommunications apparatus, will ensure that the proposed tower will not appear incongruous within the street scene. It will also be viewed in the context of tall, mature trees.

The proposed height at 20 metres is essential in order to provide replacement 4G coverage and improved capacity, and new 5G coverage, to the target coverage area. This ensures that sufficient coverage can be transmitted over the tall trees in the area, which rise up to approximately 15 metres on the roundabout.

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

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that can be erected in a certain locality, nor that they cannot be located in residential areas. Given the nature of the area which contains numerous vertical structures and mature trees the proposed radio base station would not appear prominent nor out of place.

The monopole is proposed to be painted BS00A05, in order to match the existing installation off the roundabout and to allow it to blend with the typically grey British skyline. The equipment cabinets are proposed to be painted RAL6009 Fir Green, to match other equipment cabinets in the area and to blend with the grass verge. However, the equipment can be coloured any other colour should the Local Planning Authority consider that an alternative would be more appropriate.

The design of the radio base station is one of the most sensitive designs available to Cornerstone. This is in line with the requirements of NPPF which supports equipment which is sympathetically designed and camouflaged where appropriate [paragraph 120], as well as the aspirations of Policy DM1 of the Development Management Plan 2011.

Lack of Coverage – Material Consideration

The proposed installation is significant to enable continuous coverage of the telecommunication network, ensuring that Cauldwell and the wider area continues to get the mobile coverage it needs. 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.

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 not be able to access the 5G network, and due to lack of capacity as the number of users increase, would experience increasing numbers of dropped calls and buffering, leaving them unable to access the internet on their handheld devices.

The proposed installation will help improve the area's economic prosperity, strengthen the urban economy 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. The radio base station will support 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.

Economic and Social Benefits

The NPPF strongly supports sustainable development. 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

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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 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, to minimise the effects of climate change reducing the need to travel and therefore the carbon footprint.

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

Mobile connectivity is essential to the future success of the economy. 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.

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'.

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

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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 Government is determined to ensure the UK receives the coverage and connectivity it needs. To this end, the Government wants to be a world leader in 5G, the next generation of wireless connectivity, and for communities to benefit from the investments in the new technology.

The case for 5G is compelling as it brings 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.
- Industrial applications, enabling businesses to improve their productivity, for example through predictive maintenance and real-time analytics.

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

On the 29th November 2024, Sir Chris Bryant MP wrote a letter to Council Leaders and Council Chief Executives across the UK in support of digital infrastructure deployment. This letter demonstrates that the Government still consider digital infrastructure to be a high priority.

The letter, entitled '*Supporting digital infrastructure deployment in your local area*' confirms the importance of fast and reliable connectivity to our everyday life, as people increasingly rely on their devices to work, learn and stay connected with each other, demand for greater speeds and more reliable connectivity is growing. Better digital connectivity is also key to delivering faster economic growth and increasing social inclusion. The Government is committed to supporting the delivery of next-generation connectivity across the UK by driving towards nationwide 5G coverage by 2030. The letter requests help from Councils across the UK to achieve these goals by prioritising digital infrastructure and focussing on a number of areas that remain a challenge to telecoms investment.

The letter points out that 'early participation from local planning authorities can speed up telecoms deployment' and urges Councils to have early and strategic discussions with mobile operators to move applications more quickly through the planning system and help improve mobile coverage and capacity. There is a specific ask in the MP's letter that Councils 'support the deployment of communications infrastructure wherever possible'.

The manufacturing, construction and agricultural sectors were 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.

The delay in gaining planning approvals for digital infrastructure is such that the Prime Minister, Sir Keir Starmer, wrote in The Times on 5th December 2024:

*"Good homes need to be supported by good infrastructure... Every road, pylon **and mast** – which connect people to opportunity – must jump through endless hoops, only to be opposed, dragged out, before eventually, if lucky, approved."* [emphasis added]

The proposed installation in this location will allow the operator to provide replacement and improved high quality 2G/4G and new 5G coverage and capacity to the Cauldwell area,

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supporting the Government's aim of 'focusing on ensuring that everyone is connected to the information superhighway' and 'for the majority of the population to have access to a 5G signal by 2027'. This fully meets the aspirations of the NPPF.

The proposed 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.

Good connectivity allows people to access a wide range of essential services and a further explanation on some of these key benefits is provided below:

Economic benefits

- Creating more productive and cost efficiencies for businesses
- Businesses offering online services can extend their products to a broader audience
- Local areas and businesses can benefit from tourists and visitors as hotels, attractions, and restaurants can be booked online from anywhere in the world
- Business owners and services like doctors can provide a faster and more cost-effective service by offering both online appointments and ordering
- Digital connectivity facilitates economic growth, something which the Government is keen to progress and promote
- 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 facilitate learning on the job procedures, thanks to technologies such as Augmented Reality (AR) goggles, which, for example, can give the likes of engineers real-time instructions on how to fix a machine on a production line.

Social benefit

- Mobile communications can help people to stay in touch wherever and whenever, which can help improve social wellbeing
- Convenient access to online commerce or businesses
- Contacting emergency services is easier, especially in remote areas
- Giving the ability to manage our personal finances and information 24/7
- Using a mobile wherever you go can provide better personal security
- Having access to social networking sites and applications can keep people entertained with their lifestyles and interests
- Access to real-time transport information or timetables
- Smart meter reads for utilities such as gas or electric
- Contacting local authorities
- Promotion of smarter and productive ways of working. For example, working from home can help minimise commuting which can provide better work and home life balance

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Sustainability and Environmental benefits

- Facilitating remote access to services, education, and commerce, reducing the need to travel and in turn minimising carbon emissions.
- Better monitoring and control of energy consumption through climate change technology, smart metering and smart energy grids.
- 5G infrastructure requires fewer heat generating electronic components.
- 5G enabling of the Internet of Things (IOT) sensor deployment can manage and alert us to pollution risks, health hazards and flood risk.
- Provision of smart technologies within the agricultural sector will facilitate more efficient and less wasteful practices helping to limit negative impacts.
- 5G networks allow monitoring of traffic flow resulting in less congestion and better air quality. They also make driverless cars possible; a means of transport that offers better fuel efficiency.
- Smart cities and buildings can rely upon 5G networks to enable buildings and infrastructure to use automated energy saving through better and more efficient lighting, heating, cooling and other operations.

Health benefits

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

Education benefits

- Facilitates access to educational establishment databases or booking systems for securing places for the likes of school dinners, field trips, extra-curricular activities, student/teacher reviews, etc.
- Provides access to school/college/university apps for setting and submitting homework/coursework, ensuring news and notifications are delivered efficiently, and for parent/student/teacher interactions.

Practical Applications of 5G Connectivity as Example of Material Socio-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.

Summary

Cornerstone is in the process of progressing a suitable site in the Cauldwell area of South Shields for a radio base station to ensure reliable mobile digital connectivity is maintained for residents, businesses and visitors. As part of the operator's continued network improvement program, there is a specific requirement for an installation at this location to provide improved 4G coverage and capacity as well as new 5G services, ensuring that this area of Cauldwell maintains access to the latest technologies. This follows the operator's inability to upgrade their existing installation at the roundabout at Harton Lane/Temple Park Road, Cauldwell.

The proposed height at 20m is essential in order for the antennas to clear the surrounding trees/buildings and be able to reach the target coverage area, to maintain and provide replacement high quality 2G/4G and new 5G service provision to Cauldwell and the wider surrounding area. This will fully meet the national Government's aim of '*ensuring that everyone is connected to the information superhighway*' 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 operators' customers especially for the higher frequency technologies including the latest 5G technology.

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Site selection was progressed in accordance with the applicant's licence obligation, 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 continued reliable and high quality mobile broadband connections including sustainable growth meeting the needs of the population and strengthening global competitiveness. This is fully supported by the NPPF, and the South Tyneside Core Strategy and Development Management Policies. These benefits are strong material considerations which outweigh any perceived loss of visual amenity to the surrounding area.

We confirm that submitted drawings have been checked for accuracy.

Contact Details

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Signed:		Date:	20/06/2025
Position:	Consultant Town Planner	(on behalf of cornerstone)	

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