

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

1. Site Details

Site Name:	Well I' th' Lane	Site Address:	Land at Well I' Th' Lane, Lower Place, Rochdale, OL11 1BL
National Grid Reference:	E 390202 N 412070		
Site Ref Number:	CS: 30651100	Site Type: ¹	Macro

2. Pre Application Check List

Site Selection (for New Sites only)

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

Was a local planning authority mast register available to check for suitable sites by the operator or the local planning authority?		No
If no explain why: No up to date register available.		
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:	No
Date of pre-application contact:	
Name of contact:	
Summary of outcome/Main issues raised: Best Practice Pre application letter sent to LPA 14/6/2024 and followed up 25/6/2024. No response received; any concerns will be dealt with during the formal submission.	

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

Community Consultation

Rating of Site under Traffic Light Model:	Red	Amber	Green
Outline of consultation carried out:			
Pre-application consultation letters and site plans were sent to the local councillors for Balderstone and Kirkholt (Cllr Blundell, Cllr Massey and Cllr Meredith) on 14/6/2024. We also wrote to residents immediately adjacent to the sites on 14/6/2024.			
Summary of outcome/main issues raised (include copies of relevant correspondence):			
No Comments or concerns have been received to date. Any received will be forwarded to case officer.			

School/College

Location of site in relation to school/college (include name of school/college):
Lowerplace Primary School is approximately 290m southeast of the proposed site
Outline of consultation carried out with school/college (include evidence of consultation):
Precon letter sent to chair of the board of governors, and headteacher on 13/06/2024.
Summary of outcome/main issues raised (include copies of main correspondence):
No Comments or concerns have been received to date. Any received will be forwarded to case officer.

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Civil Aviation Authority/Secretary of State for Defence or the operator of the civil safeguarding area or defence safeguarding area notification (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:	27/6/2024	

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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

As part of Cornerstone network improvement programme, the operator is in the process of upgrading a number of their existing sites in order to provide improved 2G, 3G and 4G coverage and capacity, and new 5G service provision. This is fully in line with the Government's aim to ensure that everyone is connected to the superhighway.

As part of Cornerstone's continued network improvement programme, there is a specific requirement for a new radio base station at Well I'th' Lane to provide improved 2G, 3G, 4G and new 5G coverage and capacity, ensuring that this area of Rochdale has access to the latest technologies.

The proposed works comprise the installation of a new 20m high street works pole on new root foundation to accommodate 6 no. antenna, 3 no. RRUs and 2 no. 0.3m dishes along with 2 no. equipment cabinets and 1 no. GPS nodule at ground level adjacent to proposed pole.

The site is located at Well I'Th Lane on a grassed verge adjacent to the access road of an Iceland Supermarket. It is located to the south west of Rochdale town centre. Rochdale canal is to the north west of the site, Oldham Road (A671) is to the east, and Queensway (A664) with the M62 motorway south.

The surrounding area is principally low rise terraced residential properties with some commercial properties. To the immediate north-east of the site is the Horse and Jockey public house and to the south east the Iceland supermarket.

The supermarket occupies a larger site which is allocated in the adopted Local Plan as a Primary Shopping Area. It is included in the emerging local plan as Queensway Neighbourhood Shopping Centre and is also included on the Brownfield Land Register, which is a register of sites suitable for redevelopment, particularly for housing.

The proposed telecommunications site is accessed via the Iceland access road from Well I'The Lane. The immediate surroundings area does accommodate some vertical linear structures, including lighting columns and telegraph poles, and there are large mature trees in the area.

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The site's location within a wider residential area is required to serve the residential customer base and is as sensitively located as possible. It is set back from the footway on a grassed verge adjacent to access to a large retail unit and opposite a public house. The site is slightly lower than Well I'Th Lane and the residential properties which will help attenuate its overall height.

Whilst there is no avoiding views of the mast, it will be viewed in context of other vertical emphasis including streetlighting and telegraph poles. Its location opposite the Horse & Jockey public house and the slightly lower position (as the access road slopes downhill from Well I'Th Lane) minimises the immediate visibility from nearby residential properties. This location represents the most suitable option available for delivering essential infrastructure to the local area including residents while minimising environmental impact.

Views from the site are illustrated below:

To North East toward public House



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To SouthEast towards Supermarket



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

The operator is seeking to improve coverage speed and capacity in this area due to increased traffic experienced by the operator's existing sites nearby. This radio base station is therefore required to enable enhanced 4G coverage and capacity to the area, as well as new 5G services for VMO2 to ensure high quality customer experience is obtained as demands on the network increase and technologies change.

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

Description:

The Installation of 20m high street works pole on new root foundation to accommodate 6 no. Antenna, 3 no. RRUs and 2 no. 0.3m dishes along with 2 no. equipment cabinets and 1 no. GPS nodule at ground level adjacent to proposed pole.

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Overall Height: 20m	
Height of existing building (<i>where applicable</i>):	N/A
Equipment Housing: York Cabinet	
Width:	1.9m
Depth:	0.7m
Height:	1.8m
Equipment Housing: Shire Cabinet	
Width:	1.0m
Depth:	0.7m
Height:	1.8m
Tower/mast etc – type of material and external colour:	Fir Green (RAL 6009)
Equipment housing – type of material and external colour:	Fir Green (RAL 6009)

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

The operator has carefully considered the design of the new proposed mast. The operator is proposing the most sensitive design currently available to provide the necessary coverage and capacity to the surrounding area, which ensures that the installation will not appear out of place within the built environment and is like other telecommunications masts found in urban locations. To accommodate all the technologies that will be available, 6 no. antennas need to be installed.

The latest 4G and 5G radio technologies operate in higher frequency bands than older technologies. Since they operate at higher frequencies where attenuation of the radio signal is naturally higher, and the effects of clutter are greater, it will normally require a higher structure to achieve the same coverage footprint. To increase capacity and data speeds to the user, the antenna will normally need to be mounted higher than conventional antenna. These factors drive a requirement for an increase in antenna height for the latest 4G and 5G service provision.

The proposed height is also required as the site proposes the installation of 2 no. transmission dishes. Transmission dishes need a clear line of sight to other dishes in the network to allow them to work effectively.

it is essential that 5G antennas are unshrouded. As the radio frequencies get higher, required for data carrying, the antennas are unable to propagate through Glass Reinforced Plastic, which is what the shroud typically seen in earlier streetworks masts. Nether less the headframe remains relatively slimline with the antenna held in apertures to provide the slimmest line possible.

The proposed equipment will be coloured green and will therefore assimilate well with the location in a grass verge in an area with a number of street trees. The equipment cabinets,

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are also proposed as green, constitute permitted development but are included in the application description and on the drawings for clarity.

The proposed ERS units are very small (approximately the size of a shoe box) and will be located beneath the antennas on the proposed monopole. Given their small size and the height of the proposed mast, it is not considered that they will be overly prominent when viewed from public vantage points at ground level.

Health and Safety - including ICNIRP compliance

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

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

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

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

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

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

The 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 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 program is designed to identify and address these gaps within their coverage and ensure that people can use their phones whenever and wherever they are.

There is a specific requirement to upgrade the existing radio base station at this location to enable VMO2 to enhance its 2G, 3G and 4G coverage and capacity in and around this area of Rochdale whilst also providing new 5G service provision to the local area. This ensures high quality service provision is maintained.

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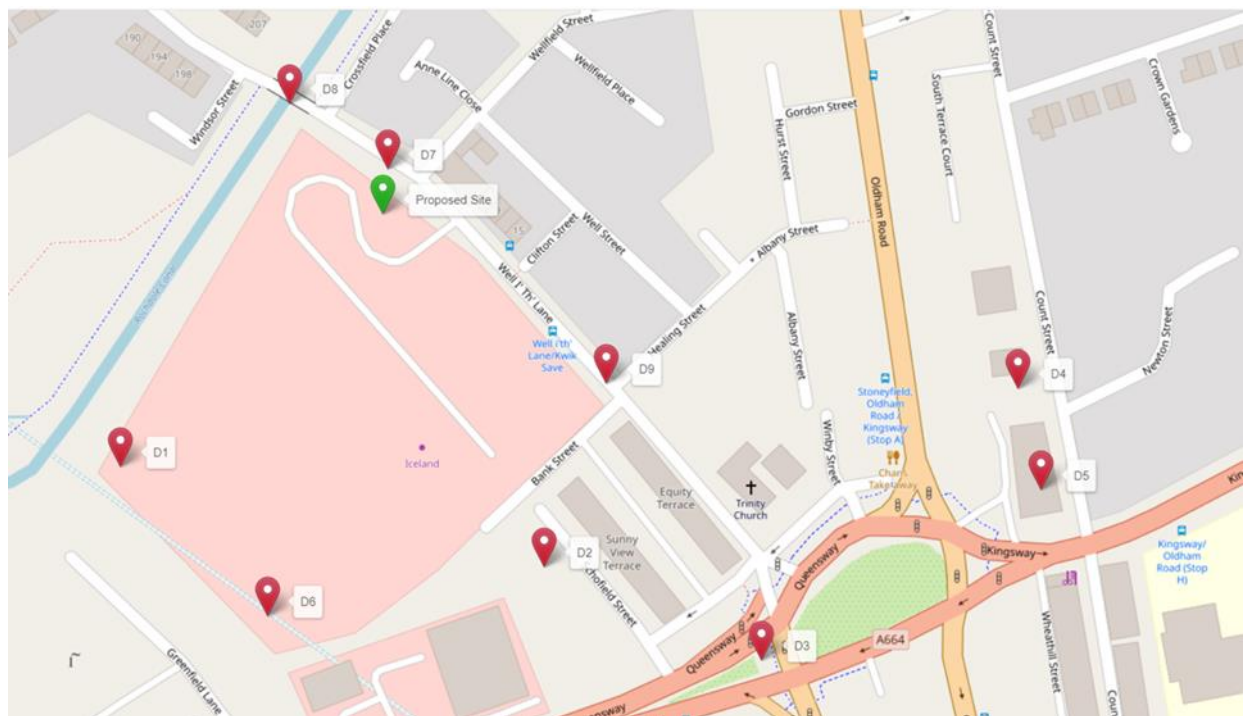
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5. Site Selection Process

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)

A comprehensive search for a site was undertaken. The site has to be able to provide the coverage required and are assessed by the Radio Planner to ensure the site will work with the existing network. Very slight topographical changes or street clutter can inhibit a signal and discount a site or area. We would refer to a recent appeal decision (APP/C5690/W/23/3334595) where the Inspector acknowledges that alternative sites may result in better visual outcomes, but that this is of little consequence if the alternative site cannot also meet the technical objectives of the network. During the site search the following sites were discounted:

Plan To show Discounted Sites



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Ref	Site Type	Site name and address	National Grid Reference	Reason for Discounting
D1	GF - Greenfield	Iceland site (western perimeter) Well I' Th' Lane, Rochdale, OL11 1BL	E: 390108 N: 411989	O - Other A mast at this location would not provide the required level of coverage to the target area due the substantial tree cover that would inhibit the signal and would not deliver the required coverage to the target area. The site has been discounted by Raio Planners.
D2	GF - Greenfield	Sheds off Schofield Street, Rochdale, OL11 1BA	E: 390258 N: 411953	P - Planning A site at this roadside location was considered but an installation at this location is too prominent in the streetscene and other alternatives exist which are more appropriate in order to deliver the required coverage to the target area.
D3	SW- Streetworks	A664 SW, Rochdale, OL11 1BA	E: 390335 N: 411920	T - Technical Difficulties The footway at this location is too narrow to accommodate the operator's equipment and is a potential highway obstruction.
D4	GF- Greenfield	Land to Rear of Kings Bingo, Count Street, Rochdale, OL16 4SZ	E: 390426 N: 412016	P - Planning An installation at this location is likely to be too prominent in the streetscene and other alternatives exist with topographical advantages that limit impact and which are more appropriate in order to deliver the required coverage to the target area.

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D5	RT-Rooftop	Rooftop Kings Bingo, Count Street, Rochdale, OL16 4SZ	E: 390434 N: 411980	RD – Redevelopment Not Possible 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.
D6	GF-Greenfield	Iceland Site, SW Perimeter Well I' Th' Lane, Rochdale, OL11 2SL	N: 390160 E: 411936	O-Other SP has plans to develop the site a mast at this location would have to be substantially taller to meet ICNIRP requirements. .
D7	GF-Greenfield	Well I' Th' Lane SW, Rochdale, OL11 1AY	E: 390203 N: 412094	T – Technical Difficulties An installation of SW site at this location is not viable, there is not sufficient space to deploy a SW site. Further overhead cables will obstruct build works.
D8	SW-Streetworks	Milkstone Road SW Rochdale, OL11 1AY	E: 390168 N: 412117	T – Technical Difficulties An installation of SW site at this location on the bridge is unbuildable.
D9	SW-Streetworks	Well I' Th' Lane SW 2, Rochdale OL11 1BB	E: 390280 N: 412018	T – Technical Difficulties Insufficient space to deploy SW site on the pavement causing potential highway obstruction.

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

N/A

Land use planning designations:

None.

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

National Planning Guidance

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National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023)

National Planning policy is provided by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which is a material consideration in planning decisions. The revised NPPF was published on 19th December 2023.

In support of this proposal, we do not rehearse all the relevant policies within the NPPF but highlight the key themes.

The NPPF remains very supportive of high-quality communications, a whole chapter is dedicated to it, emphasising the importance that the Government attaches to digital connectivity. It recognises reliable communications infrastructure as a strategic priority, within paragraph 118 it states that:

"Advanced, high-quality and reliable communications infrastructure is essential for economic growth and social well-being. Planning policies and decisions should support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next generation mobile technology (such as 5G) and full-fibre broadband connections."

This is a policy retained from the 2012 version but now includes the importance of reliable communications infrastructure for both economic growth and social well-being.

Paragraph 119 retains the requirement to minimise the number of installations consistent with the efficient operation of the network but also includes being *"consistent with the needs of consumers and providing reasonable capacity for future expansion"*.

The NPPF goes on to state, within Paragraph 122 that:

"Local planning authorities must determine 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 centre of national planning policy 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.

Further guidance on decision-making is provided at para 38: '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,

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social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible'.

The NPPF supports the building a strong, competitive economy, para 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 into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken, should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future. This is particularly important where Britain can be a global leader in driving innovation'.

Code of Best Practice on Mobile Network Development in England (March 2022)

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.

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 towers and cabinets. It is recommended that other wireless communications operators follow the principles of this Code of Practice, where appropriate.

Unlike previous versions the 2022 Code of Practice was 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. It sets out the legal and policy framework for the delivery of wireless infrastructure development, we do not rehearse the entire Code of Practice but highlight the key messages.

Principles and Commitment

Paragraph 8 of the revised Code reiterates that Digital connectivity is vital to enable people to stay connected and businesses to grow and that fast, reliable digital connectivity can deliver economic, social and well-being benefits for the whole of the UK.

The revised Code emphasises the need for Local Planning Authorities to support the deployment of digital infrastructure (Para 19) by:

- Supporting the expansion of telecommunications networks.

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- Engaging with operators when new sites have been proposed and discuss site requirements.

Siting and Design Principles

The Code indicates that 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. It acknowledges that 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, and that operators should make efforts to reduce visual impacts where possible.

Key Technical and Operational Considerations

The code sets out the key technical and operational considerations for installation sites as:

- 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.

These constraints, on network deployment and siting and design, must be taken into account when considering proposals at planning.

In relation to the introduction of 5G network deployment the Code acknowledges the requirement of additional equipment to provide necessary coverage and capacity. Paragraph 66 states that 5G will require a denser network of base stations than previous generations, including more fixed line fibre optic cable for reliable and high capacity backhaul. The siting of 5G installations will be more constrained and guided by these special technical and operational considerations.

Government Policy and Strategy

Levelling Up the United Kingdom (February 2022)

Digital Connectivity is a focus area within the February 2022 White Paper with a Mission focused on improving digital connectivity. It states that, high quality digital infrastructure can deepen local labour markets through remote working, making it more attractive for

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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. The sector also provides opportunities for raising living standards – median earnings for the sector are 50% higher than the UK average.

5G has the potential to radically change the way people live as well as 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.

Online Nation 2023 Report

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

The latest Online Nation 2022 report (published November 2023) found that for most people in the UK, being online is a major part of daily life. Being online allows people to connect with others, sometimes in ways they may not be able to do offline.

The 2023 report found that the UK adult internet users spent just over 3 hours 40 minutes online a day in May 2023 (increasing from last year), with 2 hours 47 minutes being spent on smartphones, 20 minutes more than last year.

The report highlights the importance of accessing the internet to all aspects of daily life including social media, internet search and shopping.

Social and Economic Benefits of Good Mobile Infrastructure

The economic and social benefits of good mobile infrastructure including 5G is set out in the supporting paper "*General Background Information for Telecommunications Development*".

Economic benefits can include:

- 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.

Social benefits will include:

- Mobile communications can help people to stay in touch wherever and whenever, which can help improve social wellbeing;
- Contacting emergency services is easier, especially in remote areas;

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- 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;
- Mobile connectivity helps promote smarter and productive ways of working. For example, working from home can help minimise commuting which can provide better work and home life balance;
- Access to personal information 24/7, e.g. bank accounts, can offer efficiency and convenience.

Councillor's Guide to Digital Connectivity

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

Examples of practical application of 5G include:

Education:

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.

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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.

The social and economic benefits are a significant material consideration which should be weighed against the visual impact associated with the proposed installation.

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

Local Policy

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"*.

Rochdale Core Strategy (adopted October 2016)

The Rochdale Core Strategy was adopted in October 2016 and forms the lead document on the Borough's Local plan setting out spatial strategy for the Borough. There are no policies relating to telecommunications in the Core Strategy. It deletes Policy CF/6 of the adopted UDP. There is no replacement specific telecommunications policy.

There are general design policies within SO3 including P1 which requires high quality design in new developments and P3 which sets out design principles of new development including to *"Ensure a development is easy to move through and get around, especially for pedestrians, cyclists, public transport, disabled people and emergency service vehicle"*.

There are relevant policies within SO1 – To Deliver a More Prosperous Economy particularly E2 Increasing Jobs and Prosperity which states that the authority will support the creation and retention of successful businesses and increase the number and quality of jobs to create a more prosperous lower carbon economy including *"Promote the delivery of infrastructure, such as improved transport, housing, education, energy (including decentralised energy networks), water and wastewater, and information and communications technology"*.

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Policy DM1 includes General development Requirements and includes a number of criteria including *“to not adversely affect the amenity of residents or users through visual intrusion, overbearing impact.”*

Rochdale Borough Unitary Development Plan 1996-2016 (Adopted June 2006)

Some Policies within the Unitary Development Plan adopted 2006 remain extant following the adoption of the Core Strategy, however, Policy CF/6 relating to telecommunications is deleted. There is no replacement policy.

There is no specific local policy relating to telecommunications.

Digital Links - Rochdale Development Agency (2024)

The Rochdale Development Agency (RDA) is an economic development company managed by the Rochdale BC which focuses on attracting investment, promoting economic development, and driving regeneration in Rochdale, Heywood, Middleton, and the surrounding areas. It acknowledges that modern businesses depend on digital connectivity just as much as physical infrastructure, and promotes that Rochdale stands out as one of the best-connected areas in the North of England.

Greater Manchester Local Industrial Strategy (June 2019)

This Local Industrial Strategy states that it will build on GM's position as a leading European digital city-region. It aims to put in place the integrated 21st century infrastructure needed for digital driven, clean and inclusive growth to be a top 5 city-region for the digital economy in Europe, with full fibre broadband and 5G coverage.

It states that existing partnerships are working to improve digital infrastructure in the city-region to meet national targets of roll out of 5G technologies for most people by 2027. It states that GM will continue to transform the digital connectivity of the city-region to drive economic growth and innovation, working with Government to meet national targets of full roll-out of 5G technologies for most people by 2027 and goes on to state that it fully supports the development of 5G networks.

The Greater Manchester Digital Blueprint (April 2020)

The GM Digital Blueprint states that Greater Manchester remains committed to being a digital city-region and that the ambition remains for Greater Manchester to be a top 5 European Digital City-Region and recognised globally for its digital innovation.

The digital priorities include:

- Empowering people
- Enabling innovative public services
- Digitally enabling all businesses
- Creating and scaling digital businesses
- Being a global digital influencer

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To meet these priorities, it states that it's aims to include "Deliver ubiquitous high speed digital connectivity over full fibre and 4G and 5G mobile across the whole city region by 2025".

Greater Manchester Infrastructure Framework 2040 (GMCA)

The aim is to focus on developing infrastructure which ultimately improves the lives of all those living and working within Greater Manchester. The Infrastructure Framework acknowledges a number of key challenges, one of which is digital. The Framework notes that 'Digital technology is increasingly the backbone of the major industries and our daily lives'.

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

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

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

As our homes, businesses and cities become more reliant on digital technology to function the robustness of these systems becomes even more critical'. The Framework states that 'anyone in GM should be able to access resilient, seamless connectivity at a speed they need anywhere and anytime'.

The Framework acknowledges that the vision of moving to a smart and digitally ready city region requires future digital infrastructure to be strong fixed resilient connectivity, supported by 5G (and beyond). As such, the Framework states that big improvements are required to increase the provision of wired and wireless (through 5G or subsequent technologies and Wi-Fi provision) across GM.

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Planning Assessment

The proposed installation is entirely in accordance with National Policy and Local Policy and contributes to the aspirations of the City Region. The proposed mast is the best design option available to provide the required coverage and services to the area at the minimum height required. It is set away from the footway and will not adversely affect the movement of road users thus in accordance with design policies. It provides significant social and economic benefits and contributes to the economic development aspirations of the Borough and City Region and thus in accordance with economic development policies to deliver a more prosperous region.

The main issues are whether the proposed mast would be a visually obtrusive feature which would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the area and whether any perceived harm would outweigh the significant social and economic benefits associated with the increased service provision attributed to the proposal and other valid material considerations. Whilst any development will have an impact, this proposal will provide a demonstrable benefit to the area which outweighs the impact.

The proposed height of 20m is acknowledged as being higher than existing lighting columns and street furniture, but the height is at the absolute minimum required to provide the service and coverage required. Further, the height is required to ensure that the safety exclusion zone is maintained and therefore ICNIRP compliance, which is a specific requirement for any telecommunications site. We appreciate that this is higher than the surrounding properties, but this is attenuated by its slightly lower location as the land drops away from Well I'Th Lane. Further, where taller masts have been installed in residential areas they quickly assimilate into the urban fabric and become accepted infrastructure. They can be less impactful than the lower masts with shrouded headframes. This form of infrastructure is required if enhanced digital infrastructure is to be provided to the local area.

The principle of development has been established by the Government with the increased permitted development rights of April 2022 where siting and appearance are the only matters that the local planning authority can take into consideration.

Siting

The siting of the proposed radio base station has been carefully considered, whilst it is within a wider residential area the site selected is the best available minimising immediate impact on neighbours by its siting, on the edge of a large, underdeveloped brownfield site on grass verge adjacent to the access road of a supermarket as it falls away from Well I'Th Lane and opposite a public house.

We note that the brownfield land has previously benefitted from planning permission for mixed use redevelopment and the landowner has plans to develop the site out for housing supported by its inclusion in the Authority's brownfield land register. This proposed mast is

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sited with full regard to this proposed development, adjacent to the access to the proposed scheme.

In line with Best Practice, the operator has carefully identified the potential site and the proposed location remains the best balance between operational/technical requirements and environmental impact. 3G and 4G signals by their very nature (as they carry high data rates) do not penetrate over long distances, (5G even less so), just a few hundred metres, depending on the topography of the land, building clutter and vegetation including trees in the area which can reduce their effectiveness. Therefore 3G, 4G and 5G radio base stations need to be close to their customer demand.

There are existing vertical elements including streetlights, telegraph poles and mature trees which help the installation to assimilate with its surroundings and minimise the impact on residential amenity.

Radio base stations need to be close to their customer demand and this necessitates them being located within residential areas. In considering the proposed location we recap comments from Section 3 that whilst there are no avoiding views of a telecommunications mast, it is sensitively sited locally opposite a pub, and adjacent to access road of a supermarket (development site) and set off the footway.

In line with the requirements of the NPPF we can confirm that there are no suitable telecommunications installations for the operator to share, that would provide the necessary coverage to the target coverage area. Similarly, there are no buildings which are suitable and available that the operator could utilise. Therefore, a new installation is required. The discounted options are set out above at section 5 and their reasons for being discounted are fully explained. We do wish to highlight that the search for a suitable site is difficult as sites must meet the requirements of the network and are assessed by Radio Planners to assess that a potential site can work with the existing network and provide the coverage needed. Topographical changes or buildings can inhibit a signal and discount a site or area.

The proposal site is the only suitable option for the essential local provision.

The column and antennas do not emit any noise, odour, vibration, artificial light or disturbance from air. The only noise emitted is from a cooling fan within the equipment cabinets, which only operate during hot weather conditions. However, within a few metres the noise is inaudible, particularly when considering the ambient noise levels of the area which include passing traffic. The proposed installation will not cause any traffic generation and maintenance of the equipment cabinets is infrequent, where the engineer can walk to site with handheld tools.

It should be noted that the proposed equipment cabinets, discreetly placed in the verge, do not require planning permission or Prior Approval, as they can be installed under the operator's permitted development rights. To remain fully transparent, they have been included on the plans and in the description.

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Appearance

In accordance with National and Local Policy, the visual impact on the area has been minimised as far as possible. The monopole mast proposed is the most sympathetic design available with the antenna located in a relatively slimline headframe within apertures. The mast is coloured green. Further the area accommodates lighting columns, telegraph poles and mature trees which will help assimilate the mast.

With regard to the design, it is essential that 5G antennas are unshrouded. As the radio frequencies get higher, required for data carrying, the antennas are unable to propagate through Glass Reinforced Plastic, which is what the shroud typically seen in earlier streetworks masts.

It is recognised that a new mast will have an impact in a residential area, but Policy requires that the impact is weighed against the social and economic benefits that the service provides. Access to a high quality, reliable superfast mobile network is no longer just desirable but is now considered as an essential part of everyday life this is demonstrated in data in the Online Nation report and acknowledged in the latest NPPF which sets out that modern digital infrastructure is essential to social wellbeing as well as to economic growth (para 118).

Balancing Impact with Economic and Social Benefits

The economic and social benefits of high-quality digital infrastructure and examples of practical application of 5G is set out above. In accordance with the NPPF, local policy and regional strategy, the proposed installation will help improve the area's economic prosperity and strengthen the urban economy by supporting local businesses to start, grow, adapt and diversify. The 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. As well as assisting hospital outpatient appointments and emergency consultations carried out remotely via video link, connected ambulances, live streaming of CCTV footage etc.

By providing the latest 4G technology and new 5G service provision the proposals will support the aspirations of Central Government for everyone to have access to the superfast mobile network wherever they are, and that the majority of the population have access to a 5G service by 2027. This is also in line with the ambitions of the Greater Manchester Digital Strategy, which recognise that the future vitality of cities is increasingly based on their ability to use digital networks in intelligent, strategic ways.

As highlighted in the Online Nation Report 2023, access to the internet impacts every part of our lives but only benefits those who can access and use it. 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

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out school projects, send emails, download applications, send and receive instant messages, participate in social media, streaming and downloading data.

The benefits of internet connectivity are key for both residents and businesses alike and a radio base station in this location providing the latest technologies is entirely in line with policy and will support Central and Local Government objectives to improve connectivity infrastructure to speed up economic and business growth.

Further, the NPPF and Local Policy supports sustainable development. Mobile communication plays a significant role in sustainable development. It allows people to work from home or on the move. 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 proposal therefore fully complies with sustainability policies in the NPPF and the local Development Plan.

Summary

A new installation for VMO2 is required to provide the operator with the latest 2G, 3G, 4G coverage and capacity and new 5G service provision to the area of Rochdale.

As indicated site selection was progressed in accordance with the applicant's licence obligations, advice in the NPPF and the Code of Practice and represents the least environmentally intrusive, technically suitable, available option to meet this requirement.

The proposed scheme has been carefully sited on brownfield land adjacent to an access road to a retail supermarket set away from immediate proximity to residential properties but positioned to offer the benefits of enhanced digital connectivity to the surrounding residential area.

The installation benefits from permitted development, like outline planning permission, with just the details of siting and appearance to be considered.

It is recognised that an impact in any residential area is unavoidable, but we consider that the extensive benefits highlighted in this statement and included throughout National Policy would outweigh this. Access to a high quality, reliable superfast mobile network is no longer just desirable but is now considered as an essential part of everyday life.

In short:

- Telecommunications and mobile technology have been proven to provide demonstratable benefits to society and communities as set out in this statement.
- The location has been carefully chosen away from immediate proximity to residential properties adjacent to a local retail facility / redevelopment site. It does not adversely impact the amenity of the area in a wholly unacceptable manner.

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- The mast proposed is the most sympathetic design available with the antenna located in a relatively slimline headframe within apertures and coloured green.
- The discounted options illustrate that the optimum location has been chosen with no other more suitable locations being available.

The proposed development is therefore considered to strike the best balance between meeting the specific network requirements for the operator and the demand for modern communications infrastructure in the local area whilst minimising environmental impact and is in accordance with National and Local Policy and Prior Approval should be granted.

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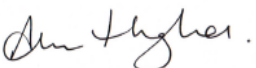
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Confirmation that submitted drawings have been checked for accuracy

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