

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

1. Site Details

Site Name:	Crowle Water Tower	Site Address:	Crowle Water Tower, Highfields, Crowle, Scunthorpe, DN17 4NW
National Grid Reference:	477735, 413342		
Site Ref Number:	CS10879026	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?	Yes	No
If no explain why: This Application relates to an established site location and therefore the principle of locating a telecommunications mast in this general location has already been accepted.		
Were industry site databases checked for suitable sites by the operator:	Yes	No
If no explain why:		

Site Specific Pre-application consultation with local planning authority

Was there pre-application contact:	No
Date of pre-application contact:	N/A
Name of contact:	N/A

¹ Macro or Micro

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Cornerstone Industry Site Specific Supplementary Information (England) V.9 – 22.03.2024

Summary of outcome/Main issues raised:

A pre-application submission pack containing a description of the proposal, drawings and a consultation plan was sent to the Local Planning Authority for comment on 8th August 2024.

The Local Authority confirmed that pre-application advice is chargeable. Given the scope of the proposal and available timescales it was decided to proceed to application without pre-application advice in this instance.

Annual area wide information to planning authority

Has annual area wide information been provided?	No
If no explain why:	
<p>Summary issues raised:</p> <p>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 has visibility of VMO2's full update plan. However, Cornerstone is fully committed to working closely with Local Planning Authorities and following best practice guidance.</p> <p>Cornerstone aims to engage and work with the planning department at the earliest opportunity from when it is 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. We recognise the importance of developing long term partnerships and will always work with you to deliver improved mobile connectivity.</p>	


Community Consultation

Rating of Site under Traffic Light Model:	Red	Amber	Green
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Outline of consultation carried out:

A written description of the proposal and drawings was sent to the following persons on 8th August 2024 by email:

- Axholme North Ward Councillors – Cllr Ian Bint and Cllr Julie Reed
- Crowle and Ealand Town Council
- Lee Pitcher MP

Summary of outcome/main issues raised (include copies of relevant correspondence):

Crowle and Ealand Town Council responded on 14th August 2024 confirming they have no observations in relation to the proposal.

No other responses have been received to date.

School/College

Location of site in relation to school/college (include name of school/college):

None in proximity.

Outline of consultation carried out with school/college (include evidence of consultation):

N/A


Summary of outcome/main issues raised (include copies of main correspondence):

N/A

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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?	Yes	No
Has the Civil Aviation Authority/Secretary of State for Defence/operator of the civil safeguarding area or defence safeguarding area been notified?	Yes	No
Details of response: N/A – Full planning application		


Developer's Notice

Copy of Developer's Notice enclosed?	Yes	No
Date served:	N/A – Full Planning application. Please refer to application form.	

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3. Proposed Development

The proposed site:

The site is located in the area of Crowle on its eastern boundary. To the south of the site are two separate housing estates of low level dwellings which are accessed from Mill Road, a country lane which runs into the main settlement. To the north and far east of the site the area is characterised by agricultural fields and a number of agricultural buildings. Eastcroft Road intersects the agricultural land just north of the site (approximately 240m) and also hosts a handful of residential dwellings. To the far west is the main settlement of Crowley which is comprised mostly of low level houses arranged in housing estates. To the far south (approximately 4.5km) is the M180.

This site has been identified as a site which requires and would benefit from an upgrade to accommodate increased network demands, provide modern equipment and allow for continued consistent coverage to be provided to this area by VMO2.

This proposal is made as part of a continued network improvement program and technical requirement to future proof the network and ensure improvements in capacity for the area. A sequential approach has been taken to ensure that existing masts and equipment are used where possible. Following technical assessment however, the existing installation cannot accommodate the operators' latest technical requirements. As such new equipment is required for this upgrade at this location.

This application seeks permission for:

Removal of the existing 3 no. wall mounted antennas, 1 no. cabinet and associated ancillary equipment. Replacement with 6 no. antennas on new yoke brackets at a total height of 17.2m AGL, 2 no. 0.3m relocated dishes on wall mounted support poles, 3 no. cabinets, associated ancillary equipment and works thereto.


The proposal allows the installation to be upgraded and avoids the need for an additional installation. It is considered to be the most unobtrusive way of fulfilling the service requirement.

Please see below a photograph of the site:

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

N/A – existing rooftop site. Upgrade works to provide improved coverage and capacity.

Type of Structure (e.g. tower, mast, etc): Rooftop of water tower

Description:


Removal of the existing 3 no. wall mounted antennas, 1 no. cabinet and associated ancillary equipment. Replacement with 6 no. antennas on new yoke brackets at a total height of 17.2m AGL, 2 no. 0.3m relocated dishes on wall mounted support poles, 3 no. cabinets, associated ancillary equipment and works thereto.

Overall Height:	17.2 Metres (to top of antennas)
Height of existing building (where applicable):	10.4 Metres
Equipment Housing:	Percy outdoor PSU
Length:	0.725 Metres
Width:	0.850 Metres
Height:	2.100 Metres

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Equipment Housing: ERS Racks x 2	
Length:	0.65 Metres
Width:	0.70 Metres
Height:	2.00 Metres
<i>Materials (as applicable):</i>	
Tower/mast etc – type of material and external colour:	Mounting poles - Galvanised metal
Equipment housing – type of material and external colour:	Steel – grey RAL 7035

<p>Reasons for choice of design, making reference to pre-application responses:</p> <p>Replacement equipment is required in this location to provide upgraded coverage and capacity to the locality.</p> <p>The replacement and upgrading of an existing installation is in accordance with the sequential approach to site selection criteria set out within the Code of Practice for Wireless Network Development in England (2022) and is encouraged within the National Planning Policy Framework (2023) over the development of a, separate, new telecommunications site.</p> <p>The design and type of equipment to be deployed in this case has been chosen specifically to take account of and minimise the impact of the installation on the locality.</p> <p>The proposed development seeks to remove and replace the existing 3 no. wall mounted antennas with 6 no. replacement antennas on new yoke brackets fixed to replacement wall mounted support poles at a total height of 17.2m AGL. New ancillary equipment will also be fixed to the yoke brackets and on smaller freestanding frames on the roof of the water tower.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that the proposed development would result in the installation being more visible than the existing due to the increase in the height of the antennas and the amount of equipment the site would host. The design proposed has however been selected to meet technical requirement.</p> <p>This increase in the height of the antennas and ancillary equipment is required to provide improved coverage to the wider area and to address technical constraints. New technologies do not travel as far and are more prone to 'clipping' than lower frequencies, not passing as well through different materials and needing a clear space free of obstructions (such as trees and buildings) to deliver the signal. As such, there is a need to ensure that the antennas are able to rise above any obstructions including over buildings, trees and to account for any variations in topography. The</p>
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minimum height has been selected to ensure that the operators' antennas and equipment are free from interruption and can provide the required coverage to the target area. The height of the antennas has been informed by technical data and selected following an onsite design visit to ensure that signal is able to over-sail surrounding obstructions.

2 no. 0.3m transmission dishes are to be relocated from the existing wall mounted support poles onto the replacement wall mounted support poles. Transmission dishes are essential to ensure a link back into the wider network, they must also have a clear line of sight for effective communication.

The galvanised support poles and bracing are of relatively light weight design and of typical colouring and style for rooftop equipment. The equipment remains proportionate in scale to the water tower and will be viewed and understood in this context.

1 no. equipment cabinets at ground level will be removed and replaced with 3 no. modern cabinets in broadly the same location as the existing. The cabinets are low level structures similar in design to the existing and will be viewed against the backdrop of the water tower to prevent them from becoming isolated features. An increase in cabinets is required to support the provision of new technologies and frequencies and improved capacity to the surrounding area.

Whilst the changes proposed would be visually perceptible, the installation remains proportionate in size and scale to the water tower and will not be unduly prominent. Any small increase in visual amenity impact should be weighed against the significant benefits of providing continued and improved coverage and capacity to the Crowle Area from a location which has limited impact on wider character and amenity. The alternative would be to deliver coverage and capacity improvements from a new location which would likely be more impactful than the selected option and design.


In all aspects of the design the smallest practical components have been utilised to ensure that the visual impact of the development is kept to a minimum and to streamline the design as much as possible. It should be noted that telecommunications development is subject to a number of technical constraints and that the selected design has been chosen to balance both the technical requirements of the operator and technical performance, with the planning considerations and impact on visual amenity.

The proposal strikes an appropriate balance between operational and environmental considerations. The upgrade installation of this site shall maintain network services and provide improved coverage to this area of Bolton.

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The proposed design has therefore sought to strike an appropriate balance between operational, environmental and planning considerations. The upgrade installation of this site shall maintain network services and provide improved coverage to this area.

Health and Safety - including ICNIRP compliance

The application is supported by a declaration of ICNIRP compliance. The NPPF (2023) para 122 states 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”.

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

As part of VMO2's continued network improvement program, there is a specific requirement to upgrade the existing radio base station at this location to maintain/enhance the coverage in the area. An existing telecommunications site has been identified; however, the current equipment cannot accommodate the latest requirements. As such, the equipment needs to be replaced in order to implement this upgrade to VMO2's services.

Mobile connectivity and service is required where customers live, work and play.


The increasingly high level of mobile phone use and ownership within the UK population is a very clear indication of the public's overwhelming acceptance of the benefits of mobile communications, which requires the installation and maintenance of base stations to provide the necessary connection between the mobile phones and the UK telecommunications network.

Base stations use radio signals to connect mobile devices and phones to the network, enabling people to send and receive calls, texts, emails, pictures, web, TV and downloads. Without base stations, mobiles will not work. They are made up of three

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main elements. The cabinets which contain the equipment used to generate the radio signal. The supporting structure such as a mast, which holds the antennas in the air and the antennas themselves. Only the antennas emit radio signals.

Many other everyday items also use radio signals to send and receive information, such as television and radio broadcasting equipment and two-way radio communications. Base stations are connected to each other and telephone exchanges by cables or wireless technology such as microwave dishes, to create a network. The area each base station covers is called a cell. Each cell overlaps with its neighbouring cells to create a continuous network. The size and shape of each cell is determined by the features of the surrounding area, such as buildings, trees and hills, which can block signals. When people travel between cells, the signal is transferred between base stations without a break in service. Each base station covers a certain area only and can only handle a limited number of calls at once. As mobile phones and devices become more popular more base stations are needed to ensure continuous coverage.

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)

Site Type	Site name and address	National Grid Reference	Reason for not choosing site
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A


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

This application seeks to upgrade an existing site which has been positioned to ensure the most effective delivery of mobile phone signal to the locality. The proposed scheme is considered to be in keeping with the existing installation and considered suitable in siting and appearance terms given the context of the surrounding area. The upgrading of an existing site / installation is in accordance with the sequential approach to development set out under para 119 of the NPPF (2023). As such, no alternative site options have been investigated.

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- National Planning Policy Framework (2023) – Chapter 10, Supporting High Quality Communications Infrastructure
- National Planning Policy Guidance
- North Lincolnshire Local Plan - Saved Policy DS19 – Telecommunications Equipment
- Draft North Lincolnshire Local Plan (2022) – Draft Policy DM4 Telecommunications and Broadband
- Other: The Code of Practice for Wireless Network Development in England (2022)

Saved Policy DS19 – Telecommunications Equipment

When considering planning applications for telecommunications equipment consideration will be given to:

- i) the siting, design and visual impact of the equipment;
- ii) the impact upon the character or setting of any listed building, Conservation Area or site of archaeological importance, the open countryside, or the amenities of a residential area;
- iii) whether the operator has explored the possibility of erecting antennae on existing buildings, other structures or mast sites;
- iv) whether the operator has explored the possibility of sharing an existing mast or replacing it with one suitable for shared use;
- v) securing the removal of any telecommunications apparatus that is no longer required for its original purpose and the restoration of the site.

Draft Policy DM4 - Telecommunications and broadband

1. Proposals for telecommunications development, including consideration of appropriate prior approval applications will be permitted, or determined, provided that

- a. the development is appropriate in terms of siting and appearance, having regard to technical and operational constraints, and does not intrude into or detract from the landscape or urban character of the area;
- b. applicants demonstrate a sequential approach to show that development cannot be accommodated with less visual intrusion;


- i. on an existing building, mast or other structure; or,
- ii. on a site that already contains telecommunications equipment; before new sites can be considered; and,
- iii. adequate screening and/or landscape, measures are included; and,

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iv. provision is made for the removal of the facilities and reinstatement of the site as soon as reasonably practicable after it is no longer required for telecommunication purposes.

2. The Council will support the expansion of communications networks, including telecommunications (5G networks and smart technologies), next generation mobile technology infrastructure high - speed broadband, and the provision of gigabit - capable connectivity, especially where this addresses gaps in coverage within North Lincolnshire. Proposals for new residential and commercial development must demonstrate how they will provide future occupiers with sufficient digital connectivity.

3. Development proposals must:

- a. Demonstrate early engagement with infrastructure providers;
- b. Be accompanied by a 'Connectivity Statement' which explains the current internet connectivity in the site's locality and the potential for the site to be provided with high-speed broadband including the future provision of "ultrafast broadband" and "Full fibre" solution as and when they are made available; and,
- c. Make provision for premises to be provided with high speed (superfast) broadband or, if this is not feasible, ensure new development is broadband read through the installation of appropriate ducting and equipment.

4. On-site infrastructure should be provided from homes and premises to the public highway or other appropriate location. Where possible, viable and desirable, the provision of additional ducting will be supported, where it allows the expansion of the network.

Planning Assessment

Principle of Development

The NPPF directly addresses the need for enhanced wireless communication services, at paragraph 20, which states that an LPA's strategic policies must make sufficient provision for:


- b) infrastructure for transport, telecommunications (our emphasis), security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat)"

Chapter 10 [Para's 118-122] (Supporting High Quality Communications) is most relevant to this application.

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Paragraph 118 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”.

Paragraph 119 states that “The number of radio and electronic communications masts, and the sites for such installations, should be kept to a minimum consistent with the needs of consumers, the efficient operation of the network and providing reasonable capacity for future expansion. Use of existing masts, buildings and other structures for new electronic communications capability (including wireless) should be encouraged”.

It should be noted that **paragraph 122** states 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”.

This proposal seeks to expand the electronic communications network to provide advance, high quality and reliable communications infrastructure in accordance with para 118 of the NPPF. This installation is proposed following an identified need for a base station upgrade to meet customer demands, to ensure the efficient operation of the network and provide reasonable capacity for future expansion. The operator has taken a sequential approach to development and is able to upgrade an existing site to deliver the required levels of coverage within the target area in accordance with para 119 of the NPPF.


The proposed development will ensure the continued delivery of high-quality coverage, improved capacity and meeting future technical requirement for VMO2 (O2) supporting people to work from home and businesses to get have access to superfast internet whether on the road, in their offices or working from home. The continued provision of coverage to the area and improvements in network capacity will deliver a host of community benefits, including access to online banking and health services to name but a few. The availability of coverage and capacity ensures access to friends and family, as well as groups and activities online which can improve physical wellbeing and reduce social exclusion. With regard to climate change, the telecommunications network can assist in the roll out of smart metres and other smart technologies which will help to reduce energy consumption and build general resilience. The continued provision of and improvement to the existing telecommunications network is key to economic, social and environmental improvement.

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At a local level, the emerging local plan states “15.42 Effective telecommunications play an essential role in modern life. Mobile telecommunications and access to high speed, reliable broadband are essential to the efficient operations of modern business and to individual lifestyles. As technology advances the demand for new telecommunications infrastructure will continue to grow.. 15.46 Access to mobile telecommunications and high speed, reliable broadband is now considered essential to the efficient operation of modern business and to individual lifestyles. Much of the urban area has good access and recent investments in infrastructure have brought significant improvements to these rural settlements; connecting the village residents to the superfast broadband fibre-optic network. There is however, still a requirement to improve broadband coverage in much of the rural area. Policy DM4: Telecommunications and Broadband supports further improvements across the wider area. The Council is committed to securing a high-quality communication infrastructure. The lack of such infrastructure would potentially hold back the areas competitiveness and economic well-being. The installation of digital infrastructure can also help to mitigate air quality impacts by reducing the need to travel, through initiatives such as home working”.

Saved Policy DM19 and emerging Policy DM4, both allow telecommunications development subject to a number of siting and design criteria.

Furthermore, the regional plan “Protecting, Progressing, Prospering: Greater Lincolnshire’s Economic Plan for Growth”, proposed by the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership, puts forth strategies to support the revival of the economy in a post pandemic economic downturn. The Economic Plan identifies the need for the “Widespread adoption and Utilisation of 5G,” to aid in creating a prospering economy. An identified Priority for Years 1 – 5 for the Infrastructure sector states, “Deliver full coverage of 4G mobile to ensure no ‘not spots’ remain and encourage rollout of 5G across all of Greater Lincolnshire.” Additionally, the use of 5G to support economic activity in the Ports and Logistics and Agrifood sectors have also been identified as priorities.


The North Lincolnshire: Economic Growth Plan (the regional economic strategy) by North Lincolnshire Council, also sets out the vision to deliver increased prosperity in the area not only through economic growth but also through skills, housing, the visitor economy, and infrastructure. As such they have identified in Idea 6: Overcoming barriers to growth that, “Improved and increased connectivity to superfast broadband and 4/5G coverage” is essential, which is further to be supported through “Enable[ing] North Lincolnshire to be a rural/urban 5G pilot area.”

For these reasons, the principle of development is considered acceptable at both a national, regional and local level.

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Design and Appearance

As set out above, this is an established site which is already providing coverage for this area for VMO2. The proposed development seeks to provide improved coverage and capacity to the locality including enhanced connectivity to the area for the operator.

The upgrading of an existing site is in accordance with the sequential approach to development set out within the NPPF (2023). Para 119 states *“The number of radio and electronic communications masts, and the sites for such installations, should be kept to a minimum consistent with the needs of consumers, the efficient operation of the network and providing reasonable capacity for future expansion. Use of existing masts, buildings and other structures for new electronic communications capability (including wireless) should be encouraged”*. This also accords with the sequential approach set out under Saved Policy DM19 and Emerging Policy DM4.

The upgraded site is proposed in the same location as the existing where the principle, siting and appearance of telecommunications development has been established. The proposed scheme, which has been designed to meet both technical/operational requirements and planning considerations, has been reviewed in the context of the existing site and surrounding area, and is still considered to be appropriate in character and amenity terms for this location.

Saved Policy DS19 requires the siting, design and visual impact of the equipment to be considered. As well as the impact upon the character or setting of any listed building, Conservation Area or site of archaeological importance, the open countryside, or the amenities of a residential area.

Emerging Policy DM4 requires that development is appropriate in terms of siting and appearance, having regard to technical and operational constraints, and does not intrude into or detract from the landscape or urban character of the area.

The proposed development seeks to remove and replace the existing 3 no. wall mounted antennas with 6 no. replacement antennas on new yoke brackets fixed to replacement wall mounted support poles at a total height of 17.2m AGL. New ancillary equipment will also be fixed to the yoke brackets and on smaller freestanding frames on the roof of the water tower.


It is acknowledged that the proposed development would result in the installation being more visible than the existing due to the increase in the height of the antennas and the amount of equipment the site would host. The design proposed has however been selected to meet technical requirement.

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This increase in the height of the antennas and ancillary equipment is required to provide improved coverage to the wider area and to address technical constraints. New technologies do not travel as far and are more prone to 'clipping' than lower frequencies, not passing as well through different materials and needing a clear space free of obstructions (such as trees and buildings) to deliver the signal. As such, there is a need to ensure that the antennas are able to rise above any obstructions including over buildings, trees and to account for any variations in topography. The minimum height has been selected to ensure that the operators' antennas and equipment are free from interruption and can provide the required coverage to the target area. The height of the antennas has been informed by technical data and selected following an onsite design visit to ensure that signal is able to over-sail surrounding obstructions.

2 no. 0.3m transmission dishes are to be relocated from the existing wall mounted support poles onto the replacement wall mounted support poles. Transmission dishes are essential to ensure a link back into the wider network, they must also have a clear line of sight for effective communication.

The galvanised support poles and bracing are of relatively light weight design and of typical colouring and style for rooftop equipment. The equipment remains proportionate in scale to the water tower and will be viewed and understood in this context.

1 no. equipment cabinets at ground level will be removed and replaced with 3 no. modern cabinets in broadly the same location as the existing. The cabinets are low level structures similar in design to the existing and will be viewed against the backdrop of the water tower to prevent them from becoming isolated features. An increase in cabinets is required to support the provision of new technologies and frequencies and improved capacity to the surrounding area.


Whilst the changes proposed would be visually perceptible, the installation remains proportionate in size and scale to the water tower and will not be unduly prominent. Any small increase in visual amenity impact should be weighed against the significant benefits of providing continued and improved coverage and capacity to the Crowle Area from a location which has limited impact on wider character and amenity. The alternative would be to deliver coverage and capacity improvements from a new location which would likely be more impactful than the selected option and design given the sensitive nature of the wider area, including the built up pattern of development and presence of the conservation area and listed buildings to the far west.

In all aspects of the design the smallest practical components have been utilised to ensure that the visual impact of the development is kept to a minimum and to

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VAT No. GB142 8555 06

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streamline the design as much as possible. It should be noted that telecommunications development is subject to a number of technical constraints and that the selected design has been chosen to balance both the technical requirements of the operator and technical performance, with the planning considerations and impact on visual amenity.

Balancing siting and appearance of mobile phone masts against operational efficiency can be challenging and every effort has been made in this case to ensure that the mast is proposed in the best possible location and is of the best possible appearance given the technical and planning constraints which exist. It should be acknowledged by the LPA that operators are limited on the options for where equipment can be located and how it appears.

It is considered that the proposal utilises the most suitable design available to meet coverage demands and to provide suitable coverage. The benefits of the proposal also have to be considered. The provision of enhanced coverage, capacity and connectivity would be provided for Vodafone and VMO2 with minimal impact to the surrounding area. It is considered the public benefits of the proposal are significant in considering the acceptability of siting and appearance.

The proposed design has therefore sought to strike an appropriate balance between operational, environmental and planning considerations and is considered to accord with NPPF and Local Plan.

Other considerations:

The Importance of improved mobile connectivity and public benefits

Mobile telecoms networks are now ubiquitous throughout the UK. Individuals and businesses expect to be able to connect and use their mobile device whenever and wherever they so require. Access to quality mobile communication services is an essential utility for the residents, businesses and for commuters that travel through an area daily.


At the time of writing, the critical nature of these services has been made ever more apparent. Restrictions on travel resulting from the Coronavirus pandemic has resulted in a continued shift from office based to home working, from physical professional and social gatherings to virtual ones and to reliance on online shopping and entertainment services. Usage within suburbs and peripheral areas has therefore increased dramatically as less people travel to town and city centres.

High quality communications infrastructure is essential for sustainable economic growth. Mobile connectivity allows business to be carried out on the move, enables

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access to information and services anywhere, and opens new opportunities and markets. Telecommunications networks also play a vital role in enhancing the provision of local community facilities and services.

Restrictions on travel resulting from the Coronavirus pandemic has resulted in a continued shift from office based to home working, from physical professional and social gatherings to virtual ones and to reliance on online shopping and entertainment services. Usage within suburbs and peripheral areas has therefore increased dramatically as less people travel to town and city centres.

The recently published 'Online Nation Report' (June 2022, OFCOM) is supportive of this statement, finding that "The global pandemic since March 2020 has resulted in significant changes in online behaviour; in particular, our online shopping habits that developed during lockdown periods appear to be here to stay. Overall, online companies grew in 2021. The largest online platforms' revenues and profits increased significantly during the lockdown periods and this growth continued in 2021. The growth is being driven by UK consumers' increasing spend on e-commerce and entertainment subscription services, while advertising revenues are also increasing with the continuing brand migration to online".

In addition this report highlights that "data from Ipsos iris shows that 49.9 million UK individuals aged 15+ accessed the internet on smartphones, tablets and computers in September 2021 (our sample month), spending an average of 3 hours 59 minutes a day online. Young adults continue to spend the most time online, with 18- 24-year-olds spending a daily average of 5 hours 6 minutes, and the 55+ group spending the least time (2 hours 58 minutes). Women spent more time online (4 hours 11 minutes) than men (3 hours and 46 minutes). Online adults in Scotland spent the most time compared to the other UK nations (4 hours 18 minutes), while those in Northern Ireland spent the least (3 hours 25 minutes)".

Ofcom's 2023 communications market report (interactive data published in July 2023) reaffirms the importance of mobile technology in the UK. The average monthly data volumes per mobile data user increased by 1.2 GB (22%) to 6.6GB in 2022. The total number of mobile subscriptions also increased by 3% to 111.8 million in 2022.


It is clear therefore that data-based technologies are increasingly important to our everyday lives, even during more normal circumstances.

This importance has been reaffirmed in a letter from Matt Warman MP, the previous minister for Digital Infrastructure, to English Local Authority Chief Executives. The letter dated 24 May 2021 accompanied the 'Consultation on Changes to Permitted Development Rights for Electronic Communications Infrastructure' and states:

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“Digital connectivity is – now, more than ever – vital to enable people to stay connected and businesses to grow. The demand for mobile data is increasing rapidly, and the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted how important it is that we all have access to reliable, high quality mobile connectivity...The planning system plays a key role in delivering the infrastructure that we need as households and businesses become increasingly reliant on mobile connectivity.”

Some of the ways in which improved connectivity and coverage can provide public benefit are set out below:

Greater consumer choice – allows access to a greater range of goods and services through access to online shopping and the ability to search for the best deals on products and services

Access to online services – as business and services move more online a reliable connection is hugely important. The increased levels of connectivity allow for access to services such as online banking, public services and smart metering for utility services.

Social connectivity – Improved coverage and connectivity allows people to stay connected with family and friends even from afar.

Remote working and studying – particularly in areas where reliable superfast broadband connections are not yet established, improved mobile connectivity can give access to opportunities for remote working and studying which would otherwise not be available.

Entertainment – Improved connectivity allows for better access to news, TV, music and social media.


Supporting businesses – allowing for access to services such as cloud storage / computing, card machine services and general day to day business services.

Health and wellbeing - Through improved mobile connectivity, patients can see healthcare professionals quicker and more efficiently via online appointments and prescription services. The ability to access these services from any location will result in cost and resource savings; less time will need to be taken off work to attend appointments and there will be reductions in the amount of time travelling to and from appointments. Mobile connectivity will allow patients to access information on symptoms and medical conditions, as well as access to support groups and those with similar conditions. Family members and caregivers can benefit from mobile connectivity by providing access to information and support, helping them and those they care for, live more independently and hopefully result in less time spent in

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medical facilities. Mobile connectivity can offer access to a range of health apps which can be accessed on the go. These can include functions such as reminders for patients to take their medication, book a recurring appointment with a specialist, or renew prescriptions; and many are a source of information on diet, exercise and ways to live a healthier lifestyle. Healthcare professionals will have better access to the tools and services they need to treat patients in remote areas away from surgeries, hospitals and care centres. Improved network coverage can provide mobile connectivity, which could enable them to access patient data on the go, accelerating response time and treatment decisions. They could instantly access patients' prescriptions and other vital information, allowing them to collaborate with other medical staff and delegate care more effectively. There are also many safety benefits of having a reliable 4G connection which contribute to a better sense of wellbeing. Knowing there is a connection and the ability to communicate with others in times of need provides reassurance.

Reduce environmental impact - there are long term sustainability benefits of being better connected. Improved mobile connectivity will assist in the development of smart technologies. Smart transportation, smart buildings, smart manufacturing and smart agriculture can all help facilitate emission reductions, whilst improving quality of life and supporting economic growth.


Supporting tourism - Improved connectivity has the ability to positively influence visitor experiences through the use of mobile apps. This could be a virtual tour guide, or an app that shows local events, it could be the ability to scan QR codes, or even offer immersive content through augmented reality. Mobile connectivity is needed to make these digital offerings work and improved connectivity will make sure these options are available.

The importance of having good mobile phone coverage alongside fixed broadband, allows for flexible working away from the office. Documents and files can be accessed on the go, emails from potentially new and existing clients and customers can be received, and payments can be taken through mobile devices. Businesses can better market themselves and their services with the ability to connect with new audiences through social media; and they can reach customers and clients without needing to travel excessive distances. Administration can be streamlined by making use of online tools and services, sales and stock can be managed more effectively, and by accessing price comparison and other retailing sites there are savings to be made on stock, equipment or materials. The increased ability to have mobile connectivity on the move will allow outdoor rural businesses to work more efficiently. Whether it's improved vehicle management, the ability to track stock, or even something as simple as the ability to check weather conditions regularly, all can inform better work patterns and practices. Faster speeds delivered by 4G have led to innovation and different ways of working across business sectors. Whether it's the

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ability to use audio-visual streaming services for quality and regular communication or allowing access to cloud computing so that businesses can be based remotely, network improvements will help businesses connect better, often helping reduce traditional operating costs.

Upgrading digital telecommunications is evidently a key Government priority and one that is also set out in detail in the NPPF (2023) and summarised within the DDCMS Connected Growth Manual (2019). Providing improved coverage in this location will bring substantial public benefits which have been set out in brief above.

Furthermore, the Government wants the UK to be a world leader in 5G and has set a target for “the majority of the UK population to have access to a 5G signal by 2027” (House of Commons Library, Building Telecommunications Infrastructure, August 2021). Critical to achieving this is the ability of operators to deploy appropriate infrastructure in the places which need it most.

Summary

National planning policy is to facilitate the growth of new and existing telecommunications systems, and operators have obligations to meet customer demands for improved quality of service. This development proposes improved connectivity and capacity now and for the future by way of a replacement/upgraded telecommunications mast and equipment.

There is a clear and demonstrable requirement for improved electronic communications services. Due consideration has been given to all practicable solutions for providing the required telecommunications service and this proposal has been designed in such a way as to minimise its overall visual impact upon the local area by ensuring the services can be provided from a single site, with any minor negative impact outweighed by the benefits of providing a high quality electronic communications services which caters for coverage and capacity and allows for reasonable future expansion as acknowledged as acceptable within the NPPF.

The proposal represents an appropriate siting and design solution for this area, balancing environmental and planning considerations. A simple design solution is proposed to mitigate visual impact and prevent significant harm to the local environment. The minimal impact of replacing and upgrading the existing development would be outweighed by the significant public benefits of providing improved coverage to the area.


The proposed development is compliant with the relevant policies from the NPPF and Code of Practice for Wireless Network Development in England (2022). The proposal

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is fully compliant with ICNIRP guidelines and declaration of compliance has been provided.

As such, we respectfully ask that this Application is approved.


Confirmation that submitted drawings have been checked for accuracy

Name: (Agent)	Rowena Maslen on behalf of Matthew Silverwood	Telephone:	07867 977748
Company:	Sinclair Dalby Limited on behalf of Cornerstone		
Company Address: Signed:	3 Princes Street, Bath, BA1 1HL	Email Address:	[REDACTED]
	[REDACTED]	Date:	29 th August 2024
Position:	Director	(on behalf of Cornerstone)	Sinclair Dalby Ltd

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