



**STATEMENT IN SUPPORT
OF
APPLICATION FOR PRIOR APPROVAL
INCORPORATING THE DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT**

Site Reference UUW_M146

Arqiva Limited

26/03/2026

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This statement is submitted in support of the application made in respect of development proposed within the pavement area at the junction Sedgeborough Road and Yarburgh Street as part of United Utilities' Smart Meter Network.
- 1.2. As shown in detail in the drawings submitted, the development proposes the installation of a very slim-line 12 metres high micropole (antenna centre-line mean height 13.83m), with a small and unobtrusive antenna configuration at the top, which has been well designed to blend into the existing street scene. The mast, therefore, is similar in appearance to other forms of street furniture that are typically located within many small rural and semi-rural villages such as street lighting columns, although in this case a need to be taller to provide the necessary radio coverage to premises within the settlement. A small equipment cabinet is also proposed at ground level and again, will not be dissimilar to similar utility street apparatus such as those used by BT to provide broadband connectivity.
- 1.3. Arqiva is an Electronic Communications Code Operator and so benefits from the right set out in Paragraph 9 of the Electronic Communications Code to carry out street works. The Electronic Communications Code is found at Schedule 2 of the Telecommunications Act 1984, as amended. Arqiva also benefits from the permitted development rights set out under Part 16 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, as amended. Hence in this case, the application is made under the Prior Approval procedures set out under Conditions A.2 and A.3 of Part 16.
- 1.4. This statement includes:
- A description of the site and surrounding area
 - A description of the proposed development

- An explanation of how the proposed siting and design of the development accords with National and Local Planning policies
- A summary of the design and access considerations that have informed the proposed layout of the development.

1.5. In this statement, which incorporates the design and access statement, we go on to highlight the role of the development proposed, to explain the particular need in this case and to demonstrate compliance with planning policy. We also provide information on health and safety and related issues by way of further reassurance.

2. THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE SMART METER NETWORK

- 2.1. The development proposed forms part of Arqiva's planned smart water metering network for United Utilities. United Utilities is a water and wastewater service provider with more than seven million domestic and business customers in the North West of England. United Utilities is committed to a large-scale smart meter rollout across the North West, with a goal of installing over 900,000 smart meters during the AMP 8 period (2025-2030). This initiative aims to reduce water leakage, improve water management, and support water conservation efforts by providing real-time data. The company has partnered with Arqiva to handle the sourcing, installation, and communication network management for the project.
- 2.2. As part of this initiative, Arqiva will build and operate the smart water metering network for United Utilities drawing upon our experience in delivering smart metering networks for gas and electricity operators in the north of England and Scotland, and for Thames Water in London.
- 2.3. In summary, the major benefits of smart metering will be:
- More efficient operation: with faster leak detection and repair; better fault finding; greater network visibility; enhanced supply/demand planning; and better capital investment/maintenance targeting
 - Better customer service: providing customers with clear, detailed information on their water usage and consumption patterns, enabling them to adjust their behaviour to save water, energy and money
 - Environmental protection: lower consumption and reduced leakage enable reduced abstraction; this in turn cuts carbon emissions from water treatment and distribution processes
 - Improved water resilience: reduced danger of demand outstripping supply
 - A platform for more frequent and better-quality engagement with United Utilities' Water customers on water efficiency offers, bespoke advice and

tools for reducing consumption and bills – both water and energy – benefiting water and fuel poverty agendas.

- 2.4. In order to provide radio coverage for the smart water radio network, electronic communications base stations will need to be installed across United Utilities' supply areas, hence the development proposed in Whalley Range.

3. THE REQUIREMENT

- 3.1. Arqiva is licensed by Ofcom, the independent regulator of the UK's communications industries, to use the 412-414MHz spectrum for the development of smart metering networks. The proposed base station will operate in this frequency range, which is the same as that being used in northern England and Scotland as part of our smart metering programme for the gas and electricity companies, and in London for Thames Water's smart metering network.
- 3.2. As the network must be able to communicate with meters that are typically found in a boundary box buried in the ground at a property, or in the footpath, the base stations must be located so that they can provide an acceptable level of coverage to the properties they serve.
- 3.3. Arqiva also owns and operates the terrestrial radio and television broadcast networks and basing the smart water metering radio network on this portfolio of existing sites will be a critical element in minimising the potential visual impact associated with the deployment of a new base station infrastructure. This is also consistent with longstanding statutory and government planning policy requirements to use existing telecommunications sites, tall buildings or other high structures to minimise visual impact.
- 3.4. These main installations provide the main umbrella of coverage to larger geographical areas and premises within those areas. However, there are still smaller settlements, peripheral areas and more remote locations that cannot be met by these main installations due to coverage constraints, often related to distance, topography or other environmental related factors. Hence, in order to provide more localised coverage to these areas, a secondary layer of smaller sites is required and these are generally physically smaller. The application is in relation to a site required for this secondary layer as explained in more detail below.

Site Selection

- 3.5. The micro and repeater sites are required to provide localised indoor coverage over very specific areas and so the siting parameters for coverage reasons are narrow.
- 3.6. The sites must also satisfy a range of operational criteria, such as good fibre connectivity, an existing power supply suitably high and resilient for an electronic communications network, a reasonable level of security, vehicular or pedestrian access for ongoing maintenance and security of tenure for the life of the SMN contract. In addition, the site must be capable of being constructed without undue constraints and avoiding undue environmental disturbance, that for example, might be associated with creating new access tracks and supplying new power runs above or below ground.
- 3.7. In assessing these various requirements and looking to find an appropriate balance between operational and environmental factors, a sequential approach to site selection has been adopted. Site sharing, utilisation of existing buildings and structures have been explored to best meet the operational need whilst minimising environmental impact.
- 3.8. The following sites were investigated as possible opportunities for meeting the specific localised coverage needs to the settlement but were found to be either unsuitable and/or unavailable or comparably no better than the chosen site.

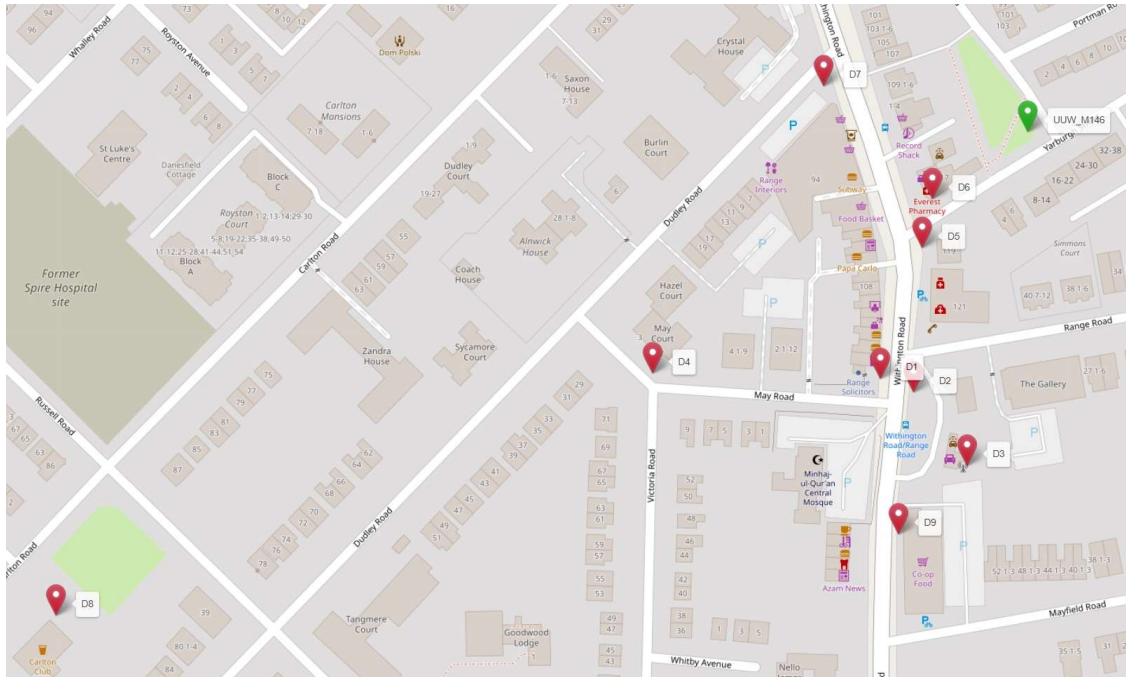


Figure 1: Discounted Options Map

Site Name and address	National Grid Reference	Reason for not choosing
D1 Streetworks Monopole at Pavement at Withington Road	E: 382991, N: 395137	Discounted from a build perspective due to limited free space within the pavement area for housing the necessary equipment without impeding pedestrian flow.
D2 Streetworks Monopole at Pavement at Withington Road	E: 383006, N: 395131	Discounted from a build perspective due to limited free space within the pavement area for housing the necessary equipment without impeding pedestrian flow.
D3 Site Share or Co-location at MBNL GMN0270 20m GF Monopole	E: 383030, N: 395098	Discounted from acquisition and radio perspectives as the site is not suitable for sharing for the hosting of Arqiva SMN equipment.

D4 Streetworks Monopole at Pavement at May Road	E: 382888, N: 395140	Discounted from a planning perspective due to the close proximity to residential properties and impact on adjacent tree roots and from a build standpoint due to limited free space within the pavement area.
D5 Streetworks Monopole at Pavement at Withington Road	E: 383010, N: 395196	Discounted from a build perspective due to issues with underground services within the pavement area and the potential for challenging and disruptive traffic management arrangements at this location.
D6 Streetworks Monopole at Pavement at Yarbrough Street	E: 383015, N: 395218	Discounted from a build perspective due to limited free space within the pavement area for housing the necessary equipment without impeding pedestrian flow.
D7 Streetworks Monopole at Pavement at Dudley Road	E: 382966, N: 395269	Discounted from a build perspective due to access constraints and the possibility for complex and disruptive traffic management arrangements at this location.
D8 Site Share at Rooftop Installation at Carlton Club	E: 382618, N: 395032	Discounted from build and radio perspectives as the existing structure is not suitable for sharing Arqiva SMN equipment.
D9 Streetworks Monopole at Pavement at Withington Road	E: 382999, N: 395067	Discounted from a radio perspective as the option that has been put forward is better placed for achieving the required coverage within the target area.

3.9. The proposed installation at Whalley Range will be well located and sufficiently close to the premises that the SMN will serve, particularly as the mast will operate as a communications hub, both transmitting radio signals but also with the need to collect data from smart meters installed within premises. The proposed development at the site seeks to ensure the height and mass of the design is sympathetic to its surrounds, having been specified with the narrowest profile and minimum height capable of delivering the required coverage. The proposed siting and design have been specified to maintain and preserve the

location's character whilst delivering the level of service needed in this location. It is therefore considered that the proposed development would accord with the principles of the Development Plan policies.

- 3.10. To help illustrate this in the context of this application, a coverage plot is provided. This tends to exaggerate true levels of coverage on the ground, because the modelling only takes into broad account general topography and manmade features. However, they are a useful tool for explaining how the new installation will fit into the SMN planned and being implemented in the wider area.
- 3.11. Our conclusion is that the best balance between environmental and operational considerations is provided by using a specially designed structure at the application site, sufficiently close to the properties that need to be served. This is the reason for the application before you.

4. PRE-APPLICATION ENGAGEMENT

- 4.1. The recently National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Code of Practice for Wireless Network Development in England, which Arqiva uses for all relevant projects, require a consultative approach to network development with the planning authority and local community. In this case, pre-application consultation for the application site was undertaken with your Authority and Ward Councillors (Angeliki Stogia, Aftab Razaq and Muqaddasah Bano) and St Bede's College (Headteacher). At the time of submission there has been no site-specific response to this pre-application consultation.

5. COMPLIANCE WITH PLANNING POLICY

5.1. The relevant planning policy framework that has been taken into account and in part already alluded to is found principally within:

- The Development Plan
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- The Code of Practice for Wireless Network Development in England

5.2. These documents provide the overall policy background for electronic communications development, site specific policies and the key considerations relevant to the siting and design of appropriate electronic communications development. As this is an application for a prior approval determination, there is no requirement in Part 16 of the GPDO to have regard to the Development Plan in reaching the Council's decision. The following information is provided as it may assist the Council to understand the public benefits, as well as matters related to the siting and appearance, of the development proposed.

The National Planning Policy Context

5.3. The general policy context can be summarised as follows:

- Government policy within the NPPF is to support high quality communications infrastructure and systems – this is especially relevant to smart metering, which is a Government initiative
- Government policy is to keep the inevitable environmental impact associated with electronic communications development to a minimum
- The best way to minimise environmental impact is to avoid the unnecessary proliferation of new radio masts and sites
- The starting point for planning new networks or the expansion of existing networks is therefore to use existing electronic communications sites

- Where new installations are required, as in this case, operators should look to develop well designed structures, such as those designed to blend in with the street scene or local setting
- 5.4. The NPPF as a whole is aimed at encouraging a more positive approach to town planning. While the NPPF builds environmental protection into the definition of sustainable development, there is also a very clear emphasis that local planning authorities should be looking for ways to help development come forward and not reject applications simply on environmental grounds. The NPPF recognises that this is especially relevant where a development might have other significantly important benefits such as being essential to meet, for example, new nationally important infrastructure such as the United Utilities' SMN.
- 5.5. The importance of the proposed development as part of United Utilities' SMN is clearly an important material planning consideration as it directly supports sustainability and is also precisely the type of new digital infrastructure that the NPPF is seeking to support.
- 5.6. The development proposed is comparatively small scale, well sited and well designed and so should be acceptable in every respect. However, for completeness we still highlight some of the key points within the NPPF as they help demonstrate why the application should be permitted:
- a. Paragraph 11 advises that authorities should:
- positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area [as part of plan making];
 - meet objectively assessed needs unless the adverse effects would *"significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits"*;
- 5.7. Paragraph 11 of the NPPF further states that the presumption in favour of sustainable development lies at the heart of the planning system and, in respect of decision-taking, this means that the Manchester Local Development

Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document and the NPPF are relevant development proposals that accord with the provisions of the Development Plan should be approved without delay. In respect of this guidance, the following sections of this statement demonstrate that the proposed development accords fully with all relevant Development Plan and NPPF policies and, therefore, permission should be granted for the development.

Section 10 - Supporting Advanced Communications Infrastructure of the NPPF

- 5.8. The proposal is supported by, and accords with, the guidance in Section 10 of the NPPF, which provides further guidance on the Government's objective of providing high quality communications networks in England.
- 5.9. The NPPF clearly acknowledges the benefits of modern electronic communications and seeks to encourage such development as being essential due to their role in supporting a modern economy, contributing to sustainable objectives, and enhancing local community access to a range of goods and services. Local planning authorities are advised to respond positively to proposals for electronic communications development and this has to include an understanding of the associated special problems and technical needs of developing communications networks such as the Smart Meter network.

Section 12 – Requiring Good Design of the NPPF

- 5.10. Government places great importance on the design of the built environment and paragraph 131 of the NPPF states that this is an integral objective of achieving sustainable development. The careful approach taken to the design and siting of the proposed development complies fully with this general policy objective.
- 5.11. More specifically, the proposal is supported by the guidance in paragraph 158 of the NPPF, which states that:

'Local Planning Authorities should not refuse planning permission for buildings or infrastructure which promote high levels of sustainability because of concerns

about incompatibility with an existing townscape, if those concerns have been mitigated by good design (unless the concern relates to a designated heritage asset and the impact would cause material harm to the asset or its setting which is not outweighed by the proposal's economic, social and environmental benefits).'

Water Resources and Climate Change Considerations

- 5.12. Government requires local planning authorities to properly consider the issue of climate change and to support necessary infrastructure central to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. Paragraph 149 of the NPPF encourages local planning authorities to take “*a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change*” taking full account of matters such as water supply and demand considerations. This will clearly include the necessary smart water metering radio communications infrastructure for United Utilities to tackle water use and demand.
- 5.13. Section 14 of the NPPF encourages a range of measures to minimise the impact of climate change and promote sustainable development. While these policies do not specifically refer to water supply infrastructure, the provision of United Utilities Smart Water Metering Network and smart meters will assist with the delivery of the Council's aspirations to adapt to the impacts of climate change by minimising the use of natural resources within the Borough.
- 5.14. In respect of this guidance, all reasonable steps have been taken through careful siting and design to minimise the visual impact of the development, so far as the technical and operational constraints allow. The proposal is an acceptable design solution that will not have any material impact on a designated heritage asset.

Site Specific Policies

- 5.15. At a local level the proposal has been assessed against the relevant policies within the Core Strategy Development Plan Document adopted in July 2012, The Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester (1995) and the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan adopted in 2024. The relevant saved policies from the Adopted Core Strategy include Policy EN3 (Heritage), Policy DM1 (Development Management), Policy SP 1 (Spatial Principles) and Policy DC17.1 - Telecommunications.

Policy EN3 - Heritage states:

Throughout the City, the Council will encourage development that complements and takes advantage of the distinct historic and heritage features of its districts and neighbourhoods, including those of the City Centre.

New developments must be designed so as to support the Council in preserving or, where possible, enhancing the historic environment, the character, setting and accessibility of areas and buildings of acknowledged importance, including scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, conservation areas and archaeological remains.

Proposals which enable the re-use of heritage assets will be encouraged where they are considered consistent with the significance of the heritage asset.

Policy DM 1 Development Management states:

Development Management

All development should have regard to the following specific issues for which more detailed guidance may be given within a supplementary planning document:-

- *Appropriate siting, layout, scale, form, massing, materials and detail.*

- *Impact on the surrounding areas in terms of the design, scale and appearance of the proposed development. Development should have regard to the character of the surrounding area.*
- *Effects on amenity, including privacy, light, noise, vibration, air quality, odours, litter, vermin, birds, road safety and traffic generation. This could also include proposals which would be sensitive to existing environmental conditions, such as noise.*
- *Accessibility: buildings and neighbourhoods fully accessible to disabled people, access to new development by sustainable transport modes.*
- *Community safety and crime prevention.*
- *Design for health.*
- *Adequacy of internal accommodation and external amenity space.*
- *Refuse storage and collection.*
- *Vehicular access and car parking.*
- *Effects relating to biodiversity, landscape, archaeological or built heritage.*
- *Green Infrastructure including open space, both public and private.*
- *The use of alternatives to peat-based products in landscaping/gardens within development schemes.*
- *Flood risk and drainage.*
- *Existing or proposed hazardous installations.*
- *Subject to scheme viability, developers will be required to demonstrate that new development incorporates sustainable construction techniques as follows (In terms of energy targets this policy should be read alongside policy EN6 and the higher target will apply):-*
- a) *For new residential development meet as a minimum the following Code for Sustainable Homes standards. This will apply until a higher national standard is required:*

Year 2010 – Code Level 3;

Year 2013 - Code Level 4;

Year 2016 - Code Level 6; and

- b) *For new commercial developments to demonstrate best practice which will include the application of the BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) standards. By 2019 provisions similar to the Code for Sustainable Homes will also apply to all new non-domestic buildings.*

Policy SP 1 - Spatial Principles states:

Spatial Principles

The key spatial principles which will guide the strategic development of Manchester to 2027 are:

- The Regional Centre will be the focus for economic and commercial development, retail, leisure and cultural activity, alongside high quality city living.*
- The growth of Manchester Airport will act as a catalyst for the regional economy, and will also provide the impetus for a second hub of economic activity in this part of the City.*
- Beyond these areas, the emphasis is on the creation of neighbourhoods of choice, providing high quality and diverse housing around district centres which meet local needs, all in a distinct environment. The majority of new residential development in these neighbourhoods will be in the Inner Areas, defined by the North Manchester, East Manchester and Central Manchester Regeneration Areas.*
- The City is covered by regeneration areas including the City Centre. All development should have regard to the character, issues and strategy for each regeneration area as described in the North, East, Central and South Manchester and Wythenshawe Strategic Regeneration Frameworks and the Manchester City Centre Strategic Plan.*
- The City's network of open spaces will provide all residents with good access to recreation opportunities. The River Valleys (the Irk, Medlock and Mersey) and City Parks are particularly important, and access to these resources will be improved.*

- *New development will maximise the potential of the City's transport infrastructure, in particular promoting walking, cycling and use of the public transport. The extension to the Metrolink network through the Oldham and Ashton lines will create key corridors for new development.*

Core Development Principles

Development in all parts of the City should:-

- *Make a positive contribution to neighbourhoods of choice including:-*
 - *creating well designed places that enhance or create character.*
 - *making a positive contribution to the health, safety and wellbeing of residents*
 - *considering the needs of all members of the community regardless of age, gender, disability, sexuality, religion, culture, ethnicity or income.*
 - *protect and enhance the built and natural environment.*
- *Minimise emissions, ensure efficient use of natural resources and reuse previously developed land wherever possible.*
- *Improve access to jobs, services, education and open space by being located to reduce the need to travel and provide good access to sustainable transport provision.*

Saved UDP Policy DC17.1 - Telecommunications states:

Applications for telecommunications developments will normally be approved if the Council can be satisfied that the development has been sited and designed to minimise its impact on residential amenity and in environmentally sensitive areas. Wherever possible, the Council will expect the potential of existing buildings and masts, including the sharing of such facilities, to be fully explored before agreeing to additional separate development.

Reasons :- The Council recognises the need for Manchester to be at the forefront in the field of telecommunications. The Council therefore starts from a presumption in favour of new development and investment in the telecommunication systems serving the City. Equally, it wishes to ensure that new developments are brought forward in a way which protects residential amenity and minimises the visual impact of such equipment, particularly in Conservation Areas and other environmentally sensitive areas in Parks and the river valleys. The Council is also concerned to make maximum possible use of existing buildings and facilities by encouraging operators to share facilities wherever possible in order to avoid unsightly duplication and clutter.

- 5.16. In accordance with the requirements set out in Policy DC17.1 in relation to protecting amenity, the site has been selected in a position benefitting from the screening effects associated with nearby mature tree planting and as far away as technically possible from the views of residential properties.
- 5.17. In accordance with Policies SP 1 and DM 1's requirements for high quality design and Policy EN3's requirement to protect the amenity of the Whalley Range Conservation Area, the height and profile of the proposed micropole installation have been kept down to the absolute minimum capable of providing the required coverage within the target area. In order to minimise visual intrusion for local residential receptors the site has been aligned with the gable end of the nearest property.
- 5.18. In line with local policy requirements the site selection proposes has also been influenced by the proximity to existing vertical elements street furniture including telegraph poles and street lighting columns along Sedgeborough Road and Yarburgh Street. The existing vertical structures with similar lines to the proposals will allow any visible elements of the micropole to assimilate with its surroundings.
- 5.19. The justification for Policy DC17.1 - Telecommunications acknowledges that technology developments and access to digital services such are critical to

Manchester's economic, environmental and social development. The proposed design of the installation at the site is required to deliver the requisite level of electronic communication service yet any visible elements of the installation would be seen in the context of the nearby vertical elements of street furniture and seeks to minimise its visual impact in this location. The change will not appear as incongruous and would assimilate with its surrounds and would not appear out of context in this location, so according with wider Development Plan policy. As such it is considered the proposed development would accord with the principles of the Development Plan policies.

- 5.20. The proposed micropole installation is the least visually intrusive coverage solution available within the Conservation Area setting and has been carefully sited and designed to respect the aesthetics of the sensitive surrounding area. It is important to note that the proposed slimline micropole installation will not have a negative impact on the Conservation Area. In this case, all reasonable steps have been taken, through careful siting and design to moderate the visual impact of the development given the specified coverage requirements.
- 5.21. In terms of assessing the planning balance, the design of the micropole installation has been specified with a view to ensuring less than substantial harm to the significance of the Conservation Area which should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. The proposed installation is required as part of an essential Smart Meter Network improving digital connectivity to the local area. The target coverage area falls within the Whalley Range Conservation Area and the associated technical constraints require the proposed installation to be situated within the designated area.
- 5.22. In summary, the sensitive way the development proposed has been conceived and brought forward accords with best practice and forms part of a national important infrastructure project to provide smart metering services to the local area. It accords with the key policy objectives at national level, which are reflected in the relevant policies at local level. The development proposed is, therefore, acceptable in principle and also accords with the more detailed guidance expressed in local policy.

6. DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1. The development proposed is exempt from the requirement to provide a design and access statement under Article 9 of The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. However, to assist your determination this section provides a description of the process adopted in the design of the proposals and explains the access considerations. The significant contribution such development makes towards sustainable development objectives have already been outlined earlier.

Physical Context

- 6.2. The proposed site is situated to the rear of the pavement area at the junction of Yarburgh Street and Sedgeborough Road adjacent to a large, grassed verge. The proposed installation is a streetworks style micropole of 12m in height supporting 3 no. small scale antennas, the largest of which has a centre line height of 13.83m. It is important to note that the proposed 3G and GPS antennas are extremely small scale and have been positioned as close to the main support pole as possible to reduce the overall antenna profile.
- 6.3. The site has been carefully selected in a position capable of providing the required essential SMN coverage whilst being situated as far away as technically possible from the views of local residential properties. The site benefits from the masking effects associated with nearby mature tree and planting and has been aligned with the gable end of the nearest residential property.
- 6.4. The visual effects have been further reduced by keeping the height and bulk of the proposed installation down to the absolute minimum capable of providing the required coverage. It is also worth stating that the ancillary equipment enclosure is of small proportions, being significantly smaller than the equipment cabinets found within the street environment.

Amount, Design, Layout and Scale of the Development

- 6.5. The scale, layout and design of the development has been guided by the special technical and operational factors affecting the need to provide an acceptable level of coverage to the local area, having regard to the need to minimise visual impact, which have been explained in the previous sections of this statement.
- 6.6. For example, the height of the mast, the numbers of antennas and their size, is the minimum amount of development required to provide coverage for the smart meter network. The mast, a very simple, slimline pole design supporting three antennas, has been chosen as this is of similar appearance to other types of man-made vertical structures such as streetlights, that are a common feature of townscapes and landscapes across the UK.
- 6.7. The same design considerations apply to the equipment cabinet, which is of similar size and design to other types of roadside cabinets commonly found in urban and rural areas. The location of the equipment cabinets, and the electronic communications equipment housed within them, reflects the technical and operational requirement to be in reasonable proximity to the antenna systems they support.

Access Considerations

- 6.8. The installation is proposed to be installed to the rear of the pavement area with sufficient space available for parking construction vehicles without requiring a total road closure or complex and disruptive traffic management measures.
- 6.9. Once constructed, the development will be unmanned requiring only periodic visits about once every two to three months for routine maintenance and servicing. The site will be easy to access for this purpose and typical visits will be by an engineer using a light vehicle that will be parked lawfully nearby.

Landscaping

- 6.10. In view of the nature of the development which already looks to best utilise existing screening benefiting from the masking effects associated with nearby mature tree planting, a scheme of hard or soft landscaping is not considered necessary or appropriate in this case. The development is similar to other man-made utility and communication structures commonly found in street locations without dedicated associated landscaping.

Appearance

- 6.11. The sensitive approach to siting and design should minimise the appearance of the development proposed. In addition, the local topography and natural features should help minimise views. Insofar as the mast and equipment cabinet may be visible, they should look straight forward in appearance and reflect their function. To that extent they should in time become accepted features of the local environment as with other forms of communications networks and essential public utility infrastructure.

7. ICNIRP COMPLIANCE

- 7.1. A certificate confirming compliance with the relevant ICNIRP guidelines on public exposure has been supplied with this application. Accordingly, as explained within the NPPF, it is not necessary, to consider further the health aspects and concerns about them, which include the perception of risk.

8. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1. The proposed development forms part of Arqiva's planned smart water metering network for United Utilities in the Whalley Range area. The smart water metering network is very important. The information provided by the smart water meters will allow United Utilities to properly understand water consumption and have greater network visibility, in turn allowing better network and resilience planning to ensure that demand does not outstrip supply. For consumers, smart water meters will allow users to better manage and reduce water consumption and potentially save money. Smart water meters will play an important role in the government's policies to achieve a transition to a sustainable economy and society.
- 8.2. The use of the application site looks to provide the best balance between operational and environmental considerations. The site is located so that it can provide the required level of coverage to the properties it needs to serve, and the use of an innovatively designed slim line structure will ensure that it appears similar to other street furniture commonly found within the street scene. The design and appearance of the structure should, therefore, be acceptable.
- 8.3. The proposed antennas will comply with all relevant health and safety requirements and will be compliant with the ICNIRP guidelines. There are no exceptional circumstances in this case and, therefore, no need to consider health effects and related concerns such as the perception of risk further.
- 8.4. This statement has demonstrated that the proposal is in accordance with national policy set out in the NPPF and its detail complies with local policy objective of minimising potential environmental impact. It is a form of development that is specifically encouraged as a matter of principle, constitutes permitted development, and in its detail complies with the policy objective of minimising potential environmental impact.
- 8.5. In conclusion, the application merits support and there are no material considerations that indicate otherwise.