SITE SPECIFIC SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

1. Site Details

Site Name:	Grange Lane	Site Address:	Grange Lane, Didsbury, Manchester, M20 6RW
NGR:	E: 384697, N: 390063		
Site Ref Number:	JET 152	Site Type: Macro	SW – Macro

2. Pre-Application Check List

Site Selection

Was an LPA mast register used to check for suitable sites by the operator or the LPA?	**Yes**	
If no explain why: N/A		
Was the industry site database checked for suitable sites by the operator:	**Yes**	
If no explain why: N/A		

Pre-application consultation with LPA

Written offer of pre-application consultation:	**Yes**	
Was there pre-application contact:		**No**
Date of pre-application offer/contact:	**23/06/26**	
Name of contact:	**N/A**	
Summary of outcome/Main issues raised: Pre-application letters were sent to the Council planning dept on 23/06/26. No response was received.		

Ten Commitments Consultation

Rating of Site under Traffic Light Model:		Amber		

Consultees:-	Local Ward Councillors; • Cllr Bell • Cllr Foley • Cllr Simcock • Cllr Hilal • Cllr Kilpatrick • Cllr Leech Local MP; • Jeff Smith MP

Summary of outcome/Main issues raised:	Consultation letters and drawings were sent to all the referenced contacts on 23/06/26. As a result, Cllr Leech responded on 24/06/26 to raise a question about the footpath width. The Agent responded to explain the relevant national guidance on footpath with which explains that this proposal is within that. This was supplemented with an appeal decision to reinforce that point. This detail is also included within this Statement. On 24/06/25 Cllr Kilpatrick responded thanking the Agent for consulting on something that was not mandatory and also showing appreciation for the time taken to answer the queries from Cllr Leech. Additionally Cllr Kilpatrick had raised a concern that the cabinet may be targeted for graffiti and asking if there would be a possibility to work with the local Civic Society to provide artwork on the box to avoid this happening. The agent responded to say that we would be more than happy to work with the Civic Society on this. This resulted in a Teams meeting with Cllr Kilpatrick and Mr Mike Corlett of the Civil Society to discuss the proposal in general and the potential artwork design for the cabinet. During the conversation it was acknowledged that the young professional population of Didsbury required improved mobile service and it was generally felt that this location adjacent to the filling station was a sensible location from which to provide it. Potential artwork designs were discussed with an aspiration that it was local to Disbury. Suggested designs were provided and the feedback was positive – this has advised the design submitted for approval with this application. On 07/07/26 Cllr Simcock replied asking if a site meeting was possible. The Agent explained that this would be challenging logistically but offered a Teams meeting as an alternative. This resulted in emails being exchanged where Cllr Simcock explained he would alert residents to the proposal. Subsequently there were responses from two residents whom raised concerns ranging from questioning alternative locations including why the Aldi car park could not be used (this is detailed further in this Statement), questioning impact on Didsbury Park and the Church of England Primary School Listed Building, questioning impact on residential property, potential noise of the installation and the need for the site given the feeling was that service was sufficient. On 09/07/26 the Agent followed up with all Cllrs to pass along the photomontages showing the site in practice.

	The Agent responded to all matters raised in previously reference correspondence via email on 13/07/26. On 14/07/2026 Cllr Simcock replied to say they would share this information with the two residents whom raised the queries. The residents replied again and there was further response from the Agent. This correspondence has been appended to this application for reference. Z It was agreed with Cllr Simcock that a Teams meeting would be set up with the two residents on 21/07/26.

School/College

Location of site in relation to school/college: Didsbury Church of England Primary School is circa 70m north east of the proposal.
Outline of consultation carried out with school/college: Given the distance involved and the intervening development it was not deemed necessary to consult with the school as per 'Code of Practice' guidelines.
Summary of outcome/Main issues raised: N/A

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

Will the structure be within 3km of an aerodrome or airfield?		**No**
Has the Civil Aviation Authority/Secretary of State for Defence/Aerodrome Operator been notified?		**No**
Details of response: The proposal is significantly further than 3km away from an aerodrome or airfield.		

Developer's Notice

Copy of Developer's Notice enclosed?	**Yes**	
Date served:	**16th July 2026**	

3. Proposed Development

The proposed site:

This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of Jet Infrastructure in support of a proposed telecommunications installation required to address a critical gap in network coverage within Didsbury Village, Manchester.

The proposal will deliver new and improved service for VMO2 customers and forms part of a targeted network improvement programme aimed at enhancing existing 4G service and introducing 5GSA capability to meet rising consumer demand, improve coverage and deliver increased network capacity, required to resolve a significant local service deficiency.

Currently, VM02 customers have limited coverage and capacity in this area. Network 'capacity' is an increasing challenge in densely populated urban areas where there is exponential growth in demand for data services to facilitate data hungry applications and devices required to power 'Internet of Things' and AI.

While 'coverage' may be present, the network has insufficient 'capacity' to handle the volume of user traffic and so calls are dropped and data based applications continuously buffer without being usable.

This existing site serving the local area is circa 280m north of the proposal and is shared with VodafoneThree. This site is a rooftop installation on the 'Kennedy's Irish Bar' building with shared antennas behind GRP shrouding. This can be seen on the image below where the GRP shrouding that is disguising the antennas is circled in red.



GRP (Glass Reinforced Plastic) is a similar material to fiberglass and can be transparent to lower frequency radio signals and also colored and shaped to mimic other materials so was previously very useful to disguise telecoms rooftop sites for previous generations (3G-4G).

However, given the higher frequency used with 5G spectrum, GRP is not viable as it blocks the radio signal. This means that this site is no longer suitable to host the necessary equipment needed to update and improve the service in Didsbury for the latest technology and applications.

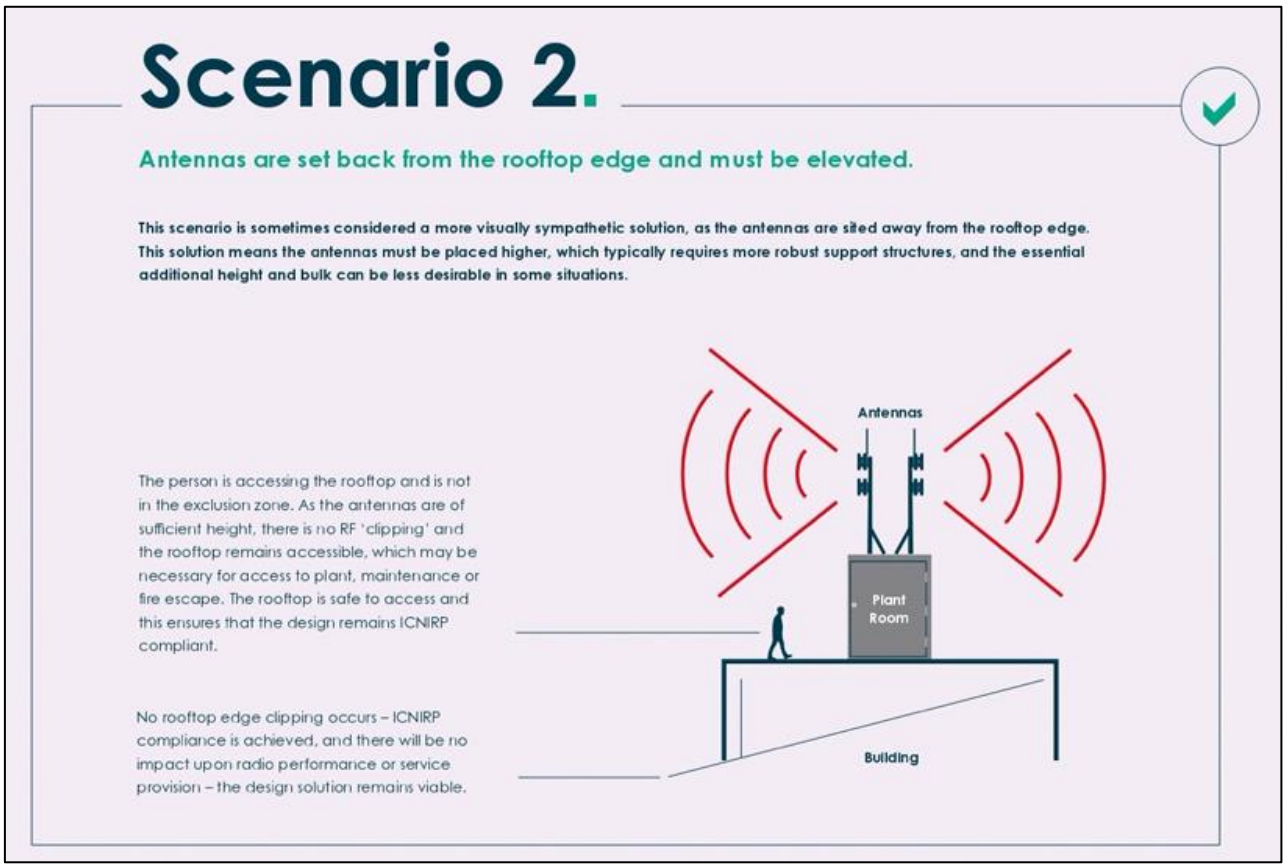
Alternative, non-GRP, means of upgrading this existing site was investigated but given the ICNIRP challenges of 5G this was not possible. Given the increased ICNIRP exclusion zone for 5G antennas must be placed higher for compliance. With additional height comes additional structural pressure, especially with windloading and the additional equipment from two operators that would have been on this site. This would have necessitated these antennas to be placed on a stub tower of circa 8m in height on this rooftop to host the antennas at a necessary height to avoid 'clipping', to gain ICNIRP compliance and to be structurally sound.

These technical challenges are discussed in Paras 42-44 of the Governments 'Code of Practice' Guidance document but quoted below for quick reference:-

"42. Mast positioning: building-based masts have to be sited to provide sufficient coverage for the surrounding area and positioned ***to avoid shadowing and antenna 'clipping'****. 'Clipping' is dealt with by locating antennas nearer the building edge or on taller structures.* ***The height of the surrounding buildings also affects the antenna height****. The mast siting should minimise the impact above the roofline, commensurate with technical constraints, and/or avoid creating unnecessary clutter on the rooftop. This includes* ***striving to preserve rooftop amenity and retain existing other uses****. When using pole mounts, operators should consider, where technically possible, the feasibility of setting apparatus away from the edge of buildings to reduce prominence and minimise the need for potentially intrusive edge protection.* ***Further considerations will need to be taken when installing equipment on structures and/or buildings located in areas where there are heritage assets*** *or within a protected landscape (including within the setting of these areas). Extra care will need to be taken when installing equipment on listed buildings, and within scheduled monuments (see section on 'Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments').*

43. Mast design: although there is no standardised rooftop design (it will ***depend upon structural integrity, accessibility, surrounding buildings, aesthetics and building-owner requirements****), masts and equipment on buildings and rooftops should, as far as practicable, be designed so as to fit and/or respect the architectural style of the building/rooftop. This could include being painted or clad to correspond with the background and/or surroundings and should minimise the impact on important views and skyline.*

44. Health and safety: ***many older buildings are not capable of taking extra weight from wireless infrastructure****. These* ***structural limitations may affect potential sites and should be considered as part of the selection process****. Building-based masts require ancillary equipment, such as handrails and rooftop grillage, to ensure access and safety compliance. All rooftop installations will be* ***subject to ICNIRP guidelines, which may restrict siting locations on the rooftop****.* ***Antennas (particularly 5G antennas which operate at higher frequencies) need to be elevated higher off building rooftops to ensure that exclusion zones can be maintained****, particularly when the rooftop is accessible to the public (see Annex C). Where these types of considerations arise, it is vital that operators and local planning authorities discuss and agree solutions to any matters that could restrict siting options."*



Given the buildings pitched roofs building rooftop would not be capable of hosting this type of structure but it is also absolutely certain that it would not be a preferable proposal – this building is within the Conservation Area while a structure like the one described would impact the setting adjacent Listed Buildings, including Didsbury Library and the Rhodes Memorial Clock Tower

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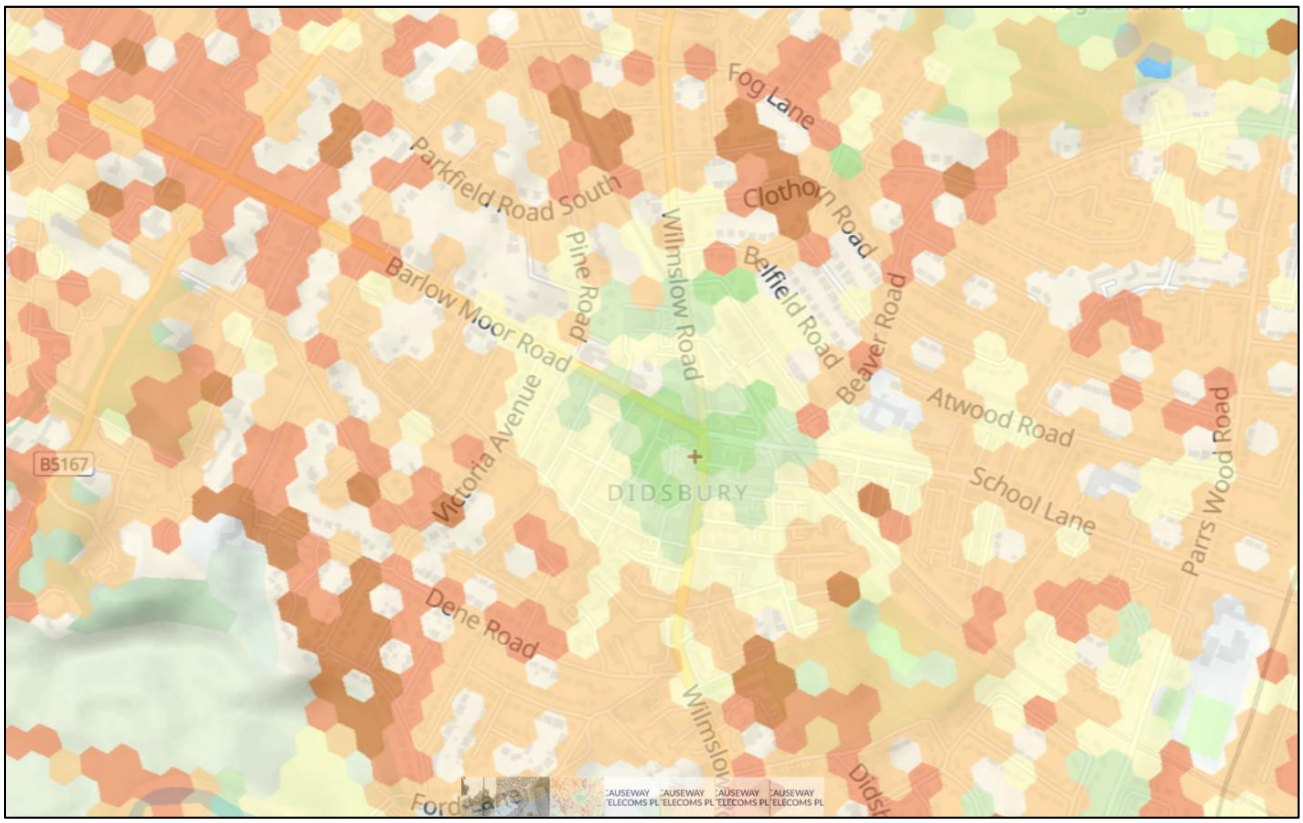
This existing site is only providing 4G service at the moment. In its current form it cannot provide new 5G connectivity and for all the reasons explained is not capable to host the necessary 5G antennas to continue delivering modern connectivity to Didsbury via this site.

As such, if VMO2 are to provide the new and most up-to-date 5G standalone service to Didsbury, as expected of their Customers and required of them (as noted later in this Statement) by Government, controlled by Ofcom via license obligations, it is imperative that a replacement is found in the local area that can fit within the existing cell network configuration (being mindful of 5G limitations in that the signal does not travel as far as previous generations).

The appended (and embedded further below) Crowdsourced network performance data map demonstrates the current issue for Didsbury service clearly.

This is crowdsourced data is taken directly from peoples phones and devices from the Village so it gives a factual representation of service quality (both coverage and capacity) for the many hundreds (if not thousands) of people (and businesses) in the Village using the VMO2 network.

As shown, there is only a small area of green immediate adjacent to the existing site on the chimneys of Kennedys Irish Pub but the whole wider area clearly has very poor network service and this is shown by the red or very dark red colouring.



Therefore, to provide additional network capacity, coverage and the most up to date technology and service to the area to meet Customer demands and Government obligations, and support IoT and AI applications, there is a requirement for VMO2 build a new base station in the area. This proposal can host the necessary equipment to deliver the required mobile broadband to Didsbury.

Site Location

The site is located on Grange Lane, just off Wilmslow Rd as the main arterial route through Didsbury Village in south Manchester. Didsbury Village is a densely developed suburban district centre within south Manchester, serving a substantial resident, worker and visitor population. It comprises a vibrant mix of commercial, retail, hospitality and community uses, together with surrounding residential neighbourhoods, generating consistently high levels of pedestrian and vehicular activity.

The village benefits from excellent transport connectivity and forms an important local destination within the wider Greater Manchester conurbation. The intensity of activity, together with the significant demand for mobile connectivity from residents, businesses and visitors, makes the provision of robust and reliable digital communications infrastructure an essential component of supporting the area's economic vitality, public services and everyday social interaction.

The proposed site occupies a position on Grange Lane just off its junction with Wilmslow Road. Grange Lane is predominantly a residential access road feeding a small number of dead-end streets of Rushton Street, Knight Street and Gillbrook Road. As such, it is a lower footfall and low traffic speed residential road.

Wilmslow Road, some 20m from the proposal, is the main commercial 'High Street' of Didsbury and is predominantly characterised by various hospitality business in the form of bars, restaurants and coffee shops with other commercial landuse such as grocery shops, clothes shops and estate agents.

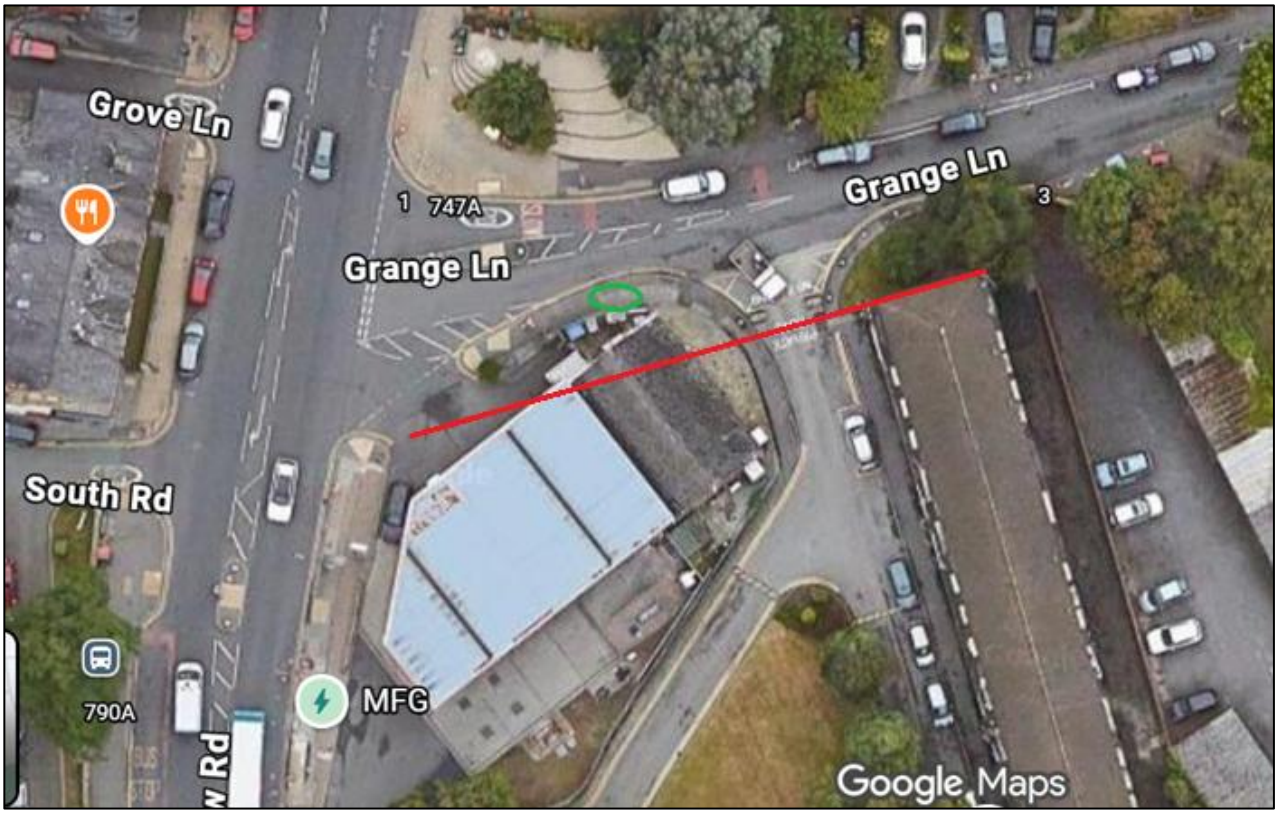
While Grange Lane is predominantly a residential access road, the site itself is on the extreme west side of Grange Lane and so is much more associated with the commercial character of Wilmslow Road and, in fact, across Grange Lane the proposal is directly opposite a coffee shop and immediately adjacent to an Esso filling station. The opposite side of Wilmslow Road is an Indian restaurant.

The immediate location of the site is adjacent to the refuse area of the filling station, which has an industrial appearing palisade fence separating it from the proposal and advertising signage. As such, it has an established commercial feel. It is felt that siting utility infrastructure immediately adjacent to a utility landuse such as a filling station is a pragmatic approach given the lack of sensitivity and where impact will be minimised.

There are large trees on the northern side of Grange Lane and further East along Grange Lane – this provide a degree of separation between the proposal and the residential part of Grange Lane further east, ensuring the context the proposal will be viewed in remains the commercial setting described. These trees can be seen in the picture below and in the photomontages appended to this application (proposal location marked in green).



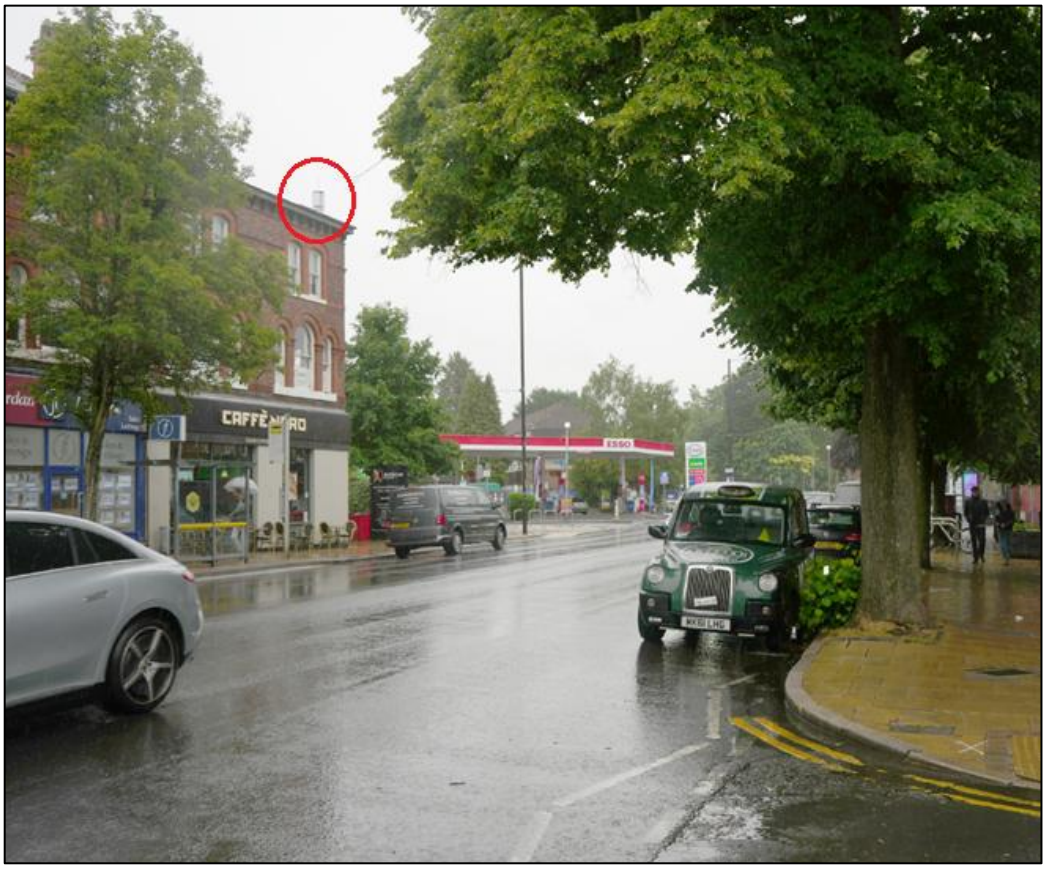
It is acknowledged that Viceroy Court is circa 20m from the proposal. However, the apartments here do not have a direct view of the proposal as it is offset from the front elevation somewhat. This is shown below. #



Visibility does not essentially equate to harm and while the proposal will be visible from these properties at Viceroy Court, views will be angled from the primary elevation so the proposal will not be overbearing. This will ensure that there is no harm to residential amenity, especially as the current outlook of this elevation is over an established and operating filling station.

As can be seen in the photo montages below, the careful and thoughtful siting of the proposal off the main thoroughfare of Wilmslow Road ensures that the pole will neither be prominent or a focal point to the main section of the Village as it will be largely screened by the buildings to the east side of Wilmslow Road from any views from the north.

This more southern part of the Village and Wilmslow Rd has numerous tall streetlighting columns and the junction with Dene Rd has numerous pieces of other street furniture like signage and traffic lights. This further de-sensitises the area and creates some vertical utility context ensuring the pole will not be incongruous or out of place. Any southern views of the proposal will be against the backdrop of trees and, critically, in the context and setting of the non-sensitive filling station landuse. This is all also demonstrated in the photomontages submitted.



Whilst residential properties are located in the surrounding area, the proposal is not situated within a predominantly residential streetscene. Instead, it occupies one of the few locations within the search area where telecommunications infrastructure can be associated with existing bordering commercial development and transport-related infrastructure rather than being experienced as an isolated feature directly within residential streets or cul-de-sacs. The proposal also avoids the main thoroughfare of Wilmslow Rd, Didsbury Garden and the Conservation Areas on the northern and southern ends of the Village.

We feel that the proposal put forward certainly minimises harm to residential and visual amenity, streetscene, heritage and the wider locale and is the best and least impactful viable option in that challenging search area.

This proposal carries significant, material, socio-economic benefit that should be balanced against any minimal residual harm. It is worth noting that Part 16 of the GPDO has not long concluded consultation to reduce restriction on this type of development, namely to make proposals like this in locations like this straight permitted development without the need for prior approval, such is the weight of support for such benefits.

Additionally, NPPF consultation has just concluded with the expectation that policy will be amended to add even more weight on material benefits for development like this and other development that contribute to a prosperous economy.

Design

Great care was given to the design to ensure that the proposal could address the technical constraints requirements so that it may serve its function while also minimising any local impacts. This included engagement with local Cllrs and the local Civic Society to advise on the design and local context art for the equipment housing cabinets. This is discussed later in this Statement.

The height of the monopole at 20 metres is the minimum height required to provide high-quality 4G and 5G coverage to the intended target area. If the mast height were any lower, it would not be able to provide sufficient coverage to the target coverage area due to radio propagation constraints and signals being blocked by surrounding 'clutter' in the form of tall buildings and trees.

Modern 5GSA service is provided via higher frequency radio spectrum. This is helpful in that it can deliver low latency, high speed and high capacity data transfer required to service modern applications, sensors and devices needed for IoT and AI. However, this spectrum does not propagate as far nor propagate through materials (like trees or buildings) as well as lower frequency spectrum utilised by previous generations. This directly impacts and advises the necessary height, design and siting to overcome that constraint.

Additionally, as alluded to when discussing the existing site, ICNIRP compliance is now a greater challenge. With the higher frequency spectrum used the ICNIRP exclusion zone is larger – this means that the proposal must be taller to ensure that the exclusion zone is not accessible.

As a result, 5G requires taller structures to achieve the same level of coverage footprint and achieve ICNIRP compliance.

It is felt that this pole type design is the most sensitive that could be used. It is necessary to have this type of design that would be structurally capable of hosting the antennas at the necessary height while also being the most slimline pole possible.

The use of this pole, capable of supporting antennas at this height to maximise radio propagation and, subsequently the coverage footprint, reduces the need for additional masts in the surrounding area that may have been required if the antennas were at a lower height.

The mast is proposed light grey (RAL 7035) colour – this was intentional to minimise contrast and ensure the simple colour does not draw the eye.

The antennas have been placed in a very narrow aperture in a stacked format (5G antennas at the top and 4G antennas below) to negate bulk and to keep the width as streamlined and slimline as possible. GRP shrouding of antennas cannot be used on modern deployments as it

obstructs 5G frequency propagation and also acts as a windsail, with the greater surface area catching the wind, putting significantly more structural pressure on the pole from wind loading.

Below the antennas are remote radio units required to maintain high quality service – these must be adjacent to the antennas as increased feeder length causes signal degradation. Between the antenna and remote radio apertures there is banding to merge the apertures and keep it appearing streamlined, unfussy and uncluttered.

There are cabinets/equipment housing at the base – these share a foundation and are tightly packed beside each other right up against the existing palisade fencing – this is done to minimise impact by negating a sprawl of cabinets in the streetscene. The are also very narrow to minimise streetscene impact.

As noted previously in this Statement, during local stakeholder consultation it was asked if the cabinets could be designed to minimise the potential of graffiti, make them more aesthetically pleasing and to 'localise' them to Didsbury Village. This resulted in engagement with the local Civil Society whom provided examples of other local art on utility cabinets and advised that they would like something similar that incorporated the Manchester worker bee, Didsbury Library, the Didsbury clock tower and a 'Welcome to Didsbury' slogan. This was agreed and the design below (also submitted on the scale drawings) was produced. It is intended to wrap the cabinets in this design.

This will be beneficial aesthetically, minimise the graffiti risk and be a significant improvement on the local streetscene from the existing industrial appearing palisade fencing around the filling station refuse area.



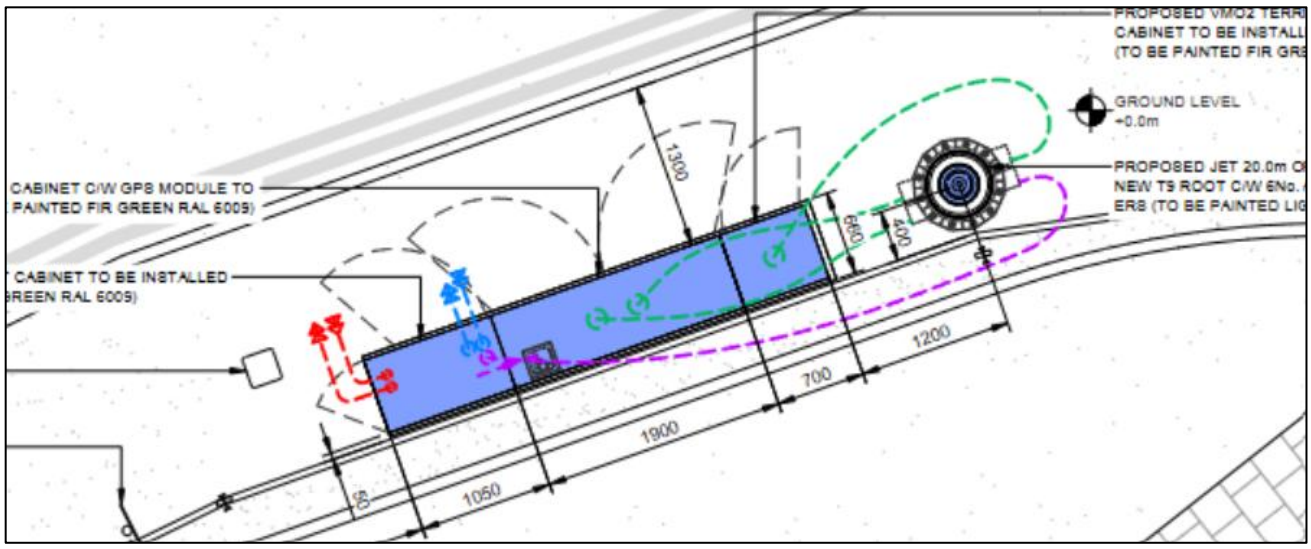
CABINET WRAP

The design also has considered inclusive mobility related to footpath width.

A more detailed drawing showing the proposal on the footpath with dimensions has been provided below.

When the doors are closed (which is all the time barring very short engineer visits maybe once or twice a year) there is 1.3m of remaining clearance on the footpath. This provides amble, safe, space to ensure continued mobility. This is especially the case as this is a very low footfall

section of pavement and, more significantly, is only a 20mph speed limit road, allowing greater scope for reduced width below the preferred width.



For context, the national guidance for 30mph roads facilitates scope for a clearance of just 1m so long as the length of the narrowed section is not more than 6m. As shown below, the length of the narrow section is just 5m.

On the matter of footpath width the Governments national Planning Guidance 'Code of Practice' which states:-

"32. Siting on highways and footways: obstructions on footways should be minimised. New, upgraded or replacement sites should be sited so that they do not have an adverse impact upon available footway width to maintain unrestricted pedestrian access. This is particularly important for disabled people, and advice on designing an accessible public realm is given in the Department for Transport's Inclusive Mobility guidance document. Where possible, cabinets should be sited parallel to the carriageway edge in order to minimise any obstruction to pedestrians. Equipment should not obstruct cycle routes, including any shared use routes. ***The Department for Transport's Manual for Streets and Manual for Streets 2 provide applicable guidance on the siting of street furniture in residential areas and on busy urban and rural streets."***

The 'Manual for Streets 2' document is appended to this application but directs the reader to the 'Inclusive Mobility (Dec '21) guidance. This guidance is attached but the most relevant section related to this type of development is quoted below for ease of reference:-

> 4.2 Width and height clearance
>
> Footways and footpaths should be made as wide as is practicable, but under normal circumstances, a width of **2000mm** is the minimum that should be provided, as this allows enough space for two wheelchair users to pass, even if they are using larger electric mobility scooters. If this is not feasible due to physical constraints, then a minimum width of **1500mm** could be regarded as the minimum acceptable under most circumstances, as this should enable a wheelchair user and a walker to pass each other. Where there is an obstacle, such as lamp columns, sign posts or electric vehicle charging points, the absolute minimum width should be **1000mm**, but the maximum length of such a restricted space should be **6 metres**.

For clarity:-

- The proposal is 0.3m away from the lowest permitted clearance
- The proposal is 1m away from the lowest permitted 'narrowed section length', and
- This is a 20mph road with a low footfall section of pavement to there is scope for reduced width

For additional clarity, this specific matter was considered in an appeal decision recently in Sheffield (which has been appended to this appeal for reference). In this the Inspector noted that a clearance of 1.25m (obviously smaller than the clearance than proposed here) would just cause a *'small degree of inconvenience for users of the footway and it would not be unusual for one person to give way to another'*.

"However, the remaining footpath width would measure approximately 1.25m, I consider that it would be possible for use, although users would not be able to pass one another easily. However, the length of the restricted space would be relatively short and it would not be unusual for one person to give way to another.

For the above reasons, the proposal would have the potential to cause a small degree of inconvenience for users of the footway. This is not the same as endangering pedestrians."

That principle is also wholly applicable to this proposal (and the proposal also has more clearance and well within the guidance tolerance). As such, this proposal aligns with the Governments 'Code of Practice', the 'Manual for Streets 2' and 'Inclusive Mobility' guidance documents, as affirmed by an Inspector during a Planning Appeal.

It is also significant to note that cabinets of this type can be deployed here as permitted development (without prior approval) using powers as statutory undertakers.

To conclude, the use of this pole, capable of supporting antennas at this height to maximise radio propagation and, subsequently the coverage footprint, reduces the need for additional masts in the surrounding area that may have been required if the antennas were at a lower

height. The design is as slim and the lowest height possible with streamlined antenna configuration that negates rooftop stub masts, open headframe poles or lattice type designs.

The design includes community art while also fits within national mobility guidance.

For all these reasons, the streetworks pole design is the most suitable design in this particular circumstance

Significantly, through careful siting, this is the only technically viable location in the search area that can ensure such minimal levels of impact upon visual, residential amenity, and streetscene.

The improved digital connectivity also aligns with the Government's Wireless infrastructure Strategy, Planning and Infrastructure Bill, 10 Year Infrastructure Strategy and the NPPF, all of which promote digital connectivity infrastructure given the significant social and economic benefits it delivers locally, regionally and nationally.

The principal aim of the development is to enhance VMO2's mobile broadband network coverage and capacity. Businesses, commuters, (home) workers, visitors and residents all depend upon high quality network service to facilitate use of data-hungry applications on their phones and other devices, especially in urban centers and transport hubs. These applications carry significant socio-economic benefit, all underpinned by the connectivity provided by infrastructure such as the proposal.

Enclose map showing the cell centre and adjoining cells:

VMO2's ongoing network improvement programme in line with Government aspirations.

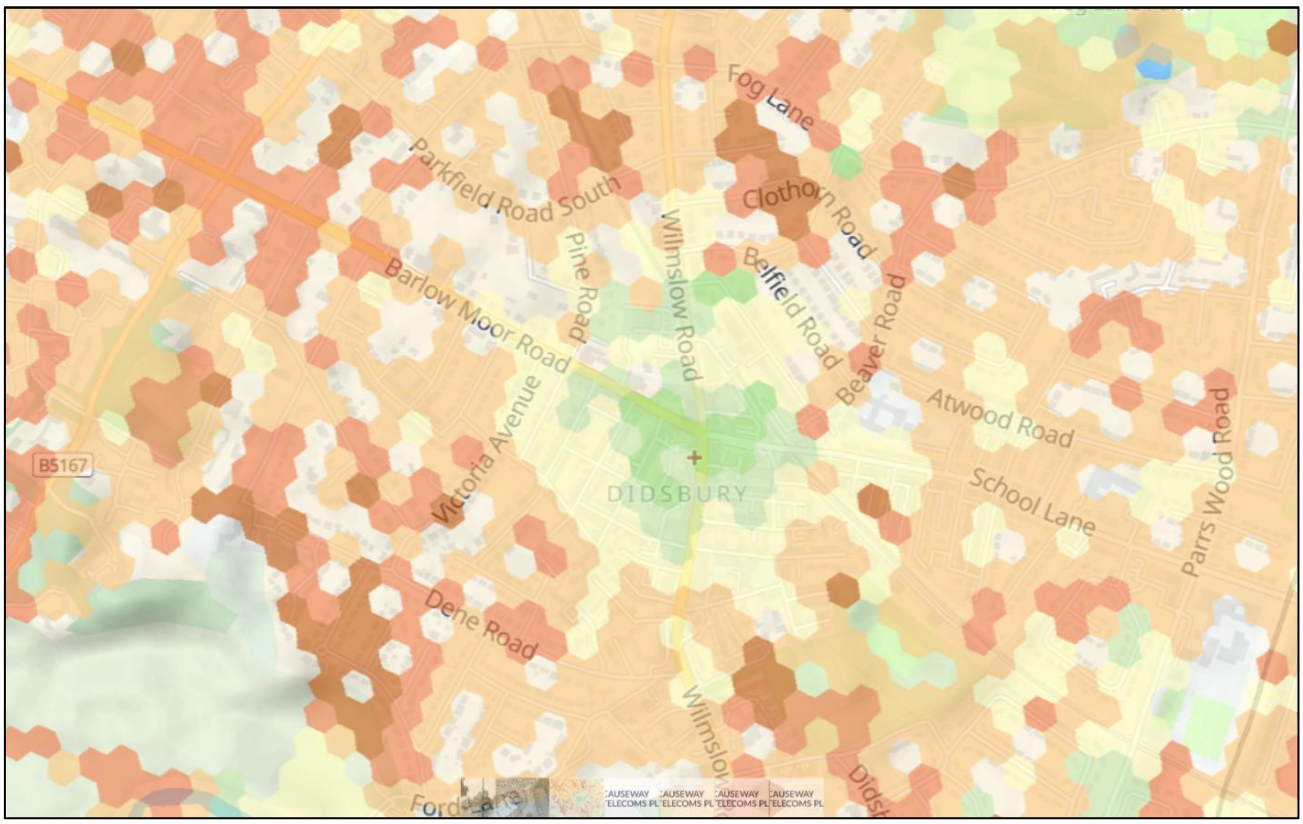
This area requires additional capacity to handle the volume of data traffic accessing the network via devices and phones. The area also requires the latest technology and service.

Currently, VM02 customers have limited coverage and capacity in this area. Network 'capacity' is an increasing challenge in densely populated urban areas where there is exponential growth in demand for data services to facilitate data hungry applications and devices. While 'coverage' may be present, the network has insufficient 'capacity' to handle the volume of user traffic and so calls are dropped and data based applications continuously buffer without being usable.

This is demonstrated by the crowdsourced network performance data shown below. Red demarks poor capacity and network performance while green is quality performance.

This is clear that there is a sizeable area with poor service in the local area, predominantly in the residential areas surrounding Wilmslow Road. There is only a very small and localized patch of good coverage, indicating that there is currently poor network performance and insufficient network capacity in the area that must be addressed.

As explained, the existing site cannot be upgraded to provide this necessary improvement so a replacement site must be identified.



Type of Structure	
Description: The proposed development comprises the installation of a new 20m high Orion streetpole hosting 6 no. antennas, 2 no. 300mm diameter dishes, 3 no. ERS, and equipment housing and other ancillary development. The installation has been designed to support both 4G and 5G technologies. For full technical specifications and layout, please refer to the enclosed drawing package.	
Overall Height:	+20m AGL
Height of existing building	N/A
Equipment Housing:	
Length:	See drawings
Width:	See drawings
Height:	See drawings
Materials	

Tower/mast etc – type of material and external colour:	Pole painted Light Grey (RAL 7035) with grey antennas.
Equipment housing – type of material and external colour:	Steel equipment cabinets with local artwork wrap.

Reasons for choice of design:
This is discussed at length in the previous section of this document – to negate unnecessary duplication this will not be repeated but please reference the detail discussed previously. The NPPF and Code of Practice encourages site sharing and the efficient use of existing telecommunications infrastructure. However, within the defined search area, there are no existing base stations that are capable of being shared to provide this new service. Policy also advocates the use of buildings where possible. None of the rooftops in this search area were suitable and this is addressed in the sequential test and discounted options below. The latest 5G service is delivered via higher frequency radio. This higher frequency is fantastic in that it can deliver high speed data services required for modern applications, however, it has the negative in that higher frequency does not propagate as far as lower frequencies used in previous generations, nor do the radio waves propagate through 'clutter' as well meaning that signal is blocked easily. ICNIRP exclusion zone is also typically larger. This necessitates antennas to be hosted higher to ensure ICNIRP compliance, so the radio frequency can propagate as far as is possible to maximise coverage footprint and so that there is line of sight above 'clutter' that would block the signal propagation. All in all it is felt that that this proposed design strikes the best balance in terms of technical necessity to overcome technical constraints and minimising visual impact by keeping the height to an operational minimum, clearing surrounding clutter to assist radio propagation (which negates the need for additional sites in the area to pick up the shortfall if the antennas are low, which would be contrary to NPPF policy in terms of keeping numbers to a minimum) while being structurally secure, providing height so antennas can be of the necessary height for ICNIRP compliance and by utilising a colour finish (Grey) that will minimise contrast when viewed against the urban backdrop while leaving antennas grey so that they also blend with what is typically a grey sky backdrop which it will be typically seen against. In summary, this proposal represents the most efficient, least visually intrusive solution for delivering critical 4G improvements and new 5G coverage. It reflects a carefully considered approach to site selection, design, and environmental integration, and responds appropriately to both national planning guidance and the Operator's legal obligations to provide robust, modern communications infrastructure. **The technical constraints that dictate and inform this siting and design are discussed at length throughout Governments 'Code of Practice for Wireless Network Development in England' Planning Guidance document.**

4. Technical Information

ICNIRP Declaration attached ICNIRP 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 the site are taken into account.	**Yes**	

5. Technical Justification

Reason(s) why site required
In the UK, mobile network operators (MNOs) such as EE, VodafoneThree and VMO2 operate under a regulatory framework primarily controlled by Ofcom on behalf of UK Government. Their obligations arise from two main legal mechanisms: ○ Wireless Telegraphy Act spectrum licences (for use of radio frequencies). ○ General Conditions of Entitlement under the Communications Act 2003 (for provision of electronic communications networks/services). Through the Spectrum Licence Obligations (Wireless Telegraphy Act 2006) mobile operators require licences from Ofcom to use radio spectrum, which is essential for operating mobile networks. Key obligations typically include the use of allocated spectrum that must be used within specific frequency bands, power limits, emission standards and interference controls. These conditions ensure efficient spectrum use and prevent interference. These radio spectrums are governed by the laws of physics but one spectrum/frequency will have different principles to another. Each Network Operator is licenced to use different spectrum and this is why what may be suitable siting for one operator may not be suitable for another. This directly influences potential siting opportunities for masts. Perhaps most significantly, these licences are issued with coverage and network performance obligations. This will include things like roll-out or coverage requirements, minimum population coverage or geographic coverage requirements for rural areas. Obligations linked to specific technologies or generations like 5G.

Operators must be provide data to Ofcom on network performance and demonstrate compliance with coverage and network performance milestones to demonstrate they have met their licence obligations.

Additionally, under the General Conditions of Entitlement (Communications Regulation) any operator providing public electronic communications networks or services must comply with Ofcom's General Conditions.

This means that, amongst other things, an Operator must enable and maintain network integrity and resilience, and ensure access to emergency services.

If an Operator does not comply with these requirements then Ofcom, on behalf of UK Government, can issue substantial fines, withdraw spectrum or even cancel an Operators licence.

This is relevant to the proposal because...

1. The spectrum allocated, and the physics associated, directly impacts the siting options for the Operators.

2. The Operators must find a means of providing this service locally through the siting of a mast. While Operators will obviously want to provide the best service they can to their Customers, it goes beyond this in there is an actual legal obligation to provide this area with the most up to date 5G service with sufficient coverage and capacity to deliver quality network performance.

The NPPF then requires that operators find either acceptable or the least impactful means of providing that service, minimising the impact while acknowledging the technical constraints. The proposal is permitted development (albeit 'with prior approval') so the principle of the development is established in law via Part 16 of the GPDO. This is an important distinction as under permitted development a solution must be found as consideration cannot be given to the principle, only that the proposal is acceptable or the most suitable option in terms of siting and appearance.

Under the terms of its licence with UK Government (controlled via Ofcom on Governments behalf), Virgin Media O2 Limited (VMO2) are required to meet strict service obligations, ensuring that the benefits of mobile connectivity are extended to all communities, including those currently underserved.

This installation is required to provide improved 4G coverage and brand new 5G coverage for VM02 in Didsbury Village addressing existing gaps in service, additional capacity and improving overall network performance in the locality.

This area of south Manchester has limited VM02 5G coverage with poor network performance and, as alluded to previously, requires an additional site to deliver improved service and extra network capacity.

Mobile base stations operate by transmitting radio signals that connect mobile devices to the wider network, allowing users to make calls, send texts, stream content, and access data services. These base stations are linked together—via fibre or wireless links—to form an interconnected network. Each base station serves a defined area known as a cell, and these cells overlap with adjacent ones to create seamless coverage. The size and shape of each cell can vary depending on local conditions, such as topography, building density, and user demand.

As low-powered radio transmitters, base stations have a limited effective range and must be located within or close to the areas they are designed to serve. Proposing this installation too far from the intended coverage area will leave parts of the target service area without essential mobile services. For this reason, the proposed location has been carefully selected to ensure the required coverage objectives can be achieved efficiently and effectively.

6. Site Selection Process – alternative sites considered and not chosen

Discounted Options

In seeking to meet growing network demand in Disbury Village, the Operator's acquisition and survey agents have made every effort to identify a site that minimises any potential impact on the character of the area. However, in order to effectively deliver improved mobile services, it is essential that the communications site is located as close as possible to the area of customer demand.

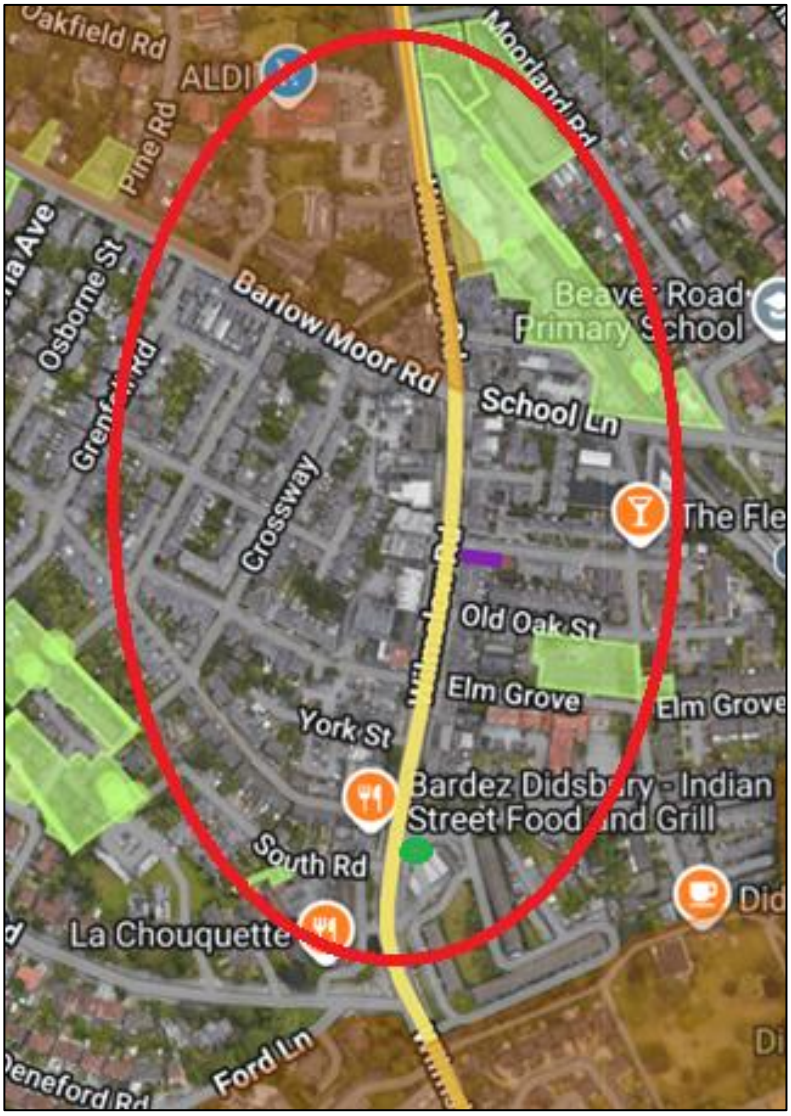
In line with the sequential site selection process outlined in best practice guidance, the following criteria were followed when identifying a suitable location:

a) *Mast and Site Sharing*
b) *Use of Existing Buildings or Structures*
c) *New Ground-Based Installation*

As required by the Operator's licence and consistent with national planning guidance, the first preference was to utilise existing telecommunications infrastructure where it represented the most environmentally sensitive solution. The Ofcom Site Finder register was consulted to identify potential mast-sharing opportunities.

As no other suitable existing telecommunications sites were identified that could accommodate the extent of equipment required for this proposal, a new installation is required. There are no existing buildings that can be used due to technical issues.

The local urban environment presented further constraints. Underground services litter the area underground that we cannot site on top of. Others were unsuitable for installations for visual amenity reasons. There are also large sections of the search area designation Conservation Area – this is shown below in relation to the search area (red circle) and the proposal (green) (Conservation Area being orange shading with TPO being marked green shading):-



The proposal negates these potential impacts and so is the best, technically viable, option in the area. With this it complies with planning policy and guidance in terms of minimising visual impact.

A detailed list of alternative sites considered is provided below, with reasons for their exclusion in favour of the proposed site.

The search area is quite small as 5G doesn't travel far and we must be close to the existing site that the operator is leaving.



Pindrop Key: **Green** = Selected Site / **Red** = Discounted Option / **Redline** = Search Area / **Blue** = Areas of Residential Streets/Cul-de-Sacs Discounted

Site	Address	NGR	Reason for discounting
D1 - Streetworks	Card Factory, 10, Whitechapel Street, Parrs Wood, Northenden, Manchester, Greater Manchester, England, M20	E: 384682 N: 391053	T his location on the northside of Whitechaple Street and Wilmslow Road is a busy and narrow area of commercial premises, with a well established and already cluttered streetscene, containing numerous pieces of furniture including a bus stop. A site in this location would block the view of approaching buses towards the stop and visa

	6UB, United Kingdom		versa, creating an unacceptable road and pedestrian safety issue. Additionally, this location is heavy in underground services, as evidenced by the many service chambers surrounding this stretch of the street. A site here would have additional design and build burdens that make the location unviable.
D2 - Streetworks	R.C. Broadbents, 23, Barlow Moor Road, Parrs Wood, Didsbury, Manchester, Greater Manchester, England, M20 6TN, United Kingdom	E: 384623 N: 391263	This site is situated directly facing the local Blackburn Park conservation area and Listed Building 694, Wilmslow Road. The location is a narrow street fronting commercial premises where the pavement contains several underground service chambers. For both amenity and practical design and build viability reasons this site has been discounted in favour of the selected site, which is away from sensitive sites and is technically viable.
D3 - Streetwork	1a, 1b, School Lane, Parrs Wood, Didsbury, Manchester, Greater Manchester, England, M20 6WD, United Kingdom	E: 384722 N: 391218	This location on the south side of School Lane and Wilmslow Road is a busy and narrow area of commercial premises, with a well-established and already cluttered streetscene, containing numerous pieces of furniture including several trees. A site in this location would block pedestrian flow, creating an unacceptable road and pedestrian safety issue. Additionally, this location is heavy in underground services, as evidenced by the many service chambers surrounding this stretch of the street. A site here would have additional design and build burdens that make the location unviable.
D4 – Streetworks	Card Factory, 10,	E: 384679 N: 391054	This location on the south side of Whitechaple Stret and Wilmslow Road is a busy and narrow

	Whitechapel Street, Parrs Wood, Northenden, Manchester, Greater Manchester, England, M20 6UB, United Kingdom		area of commercial premises, with a well-established and already cluttered streetscene, containing numerous pieces of furniture including multiple phone boxes, lampposts, a bin, traffic lights, pedestrian crossing and utilities cabinets. A site in this location would block the sight splay for traffic emerging from Whitechapel Street, creating an unacceptable road and pedestrian safety issue. Additionally, this location is heavy in underground services, as evidenced by the many service chambers surrounding this stretch of the street. A site here would have additional design and build burdens that make the location unviable.
D5 - Greenfield	Aldi Carpark, Norgate Street, Parrs Wood, Didsbury, Manchester, Greater Manchester, England, M20 2DG, United Kingdom	E: 384664 N: 391417	This site has been discounted due to the inability to secure meaningful engagement with the Site Provider despite several attempts to establish contact and progress discussions regarding the potential installation. Repeated efforts to engage with the landowner and progress commercial negotiations have not resulted in any substantive response, creating significant uncertainty over the deliverability of the site within the required project timescales and we must apply a reasonable assumption that the owners are not willing to accommodate the site. Additionally, the Aldi is within the Conservation Area and surrounded by 6 Listed Buildings so it is felt it is a more impactful option. Furthermore, much of the Aldi (certainly the most discrete locations within its ownership) is within 50m of the tramline. There are safeguarding processes in place to ensure telecoms sites within 50m of tram/railway lines do not impact their operations.

			These are known as 'BAPA' and 'Telecoms Clearance' processes. BAPA refers to physical obstruction to the track by a mast or lifting equipment and Telecoms Clearance relates to the site interfering with railway/tram line communications systems. If a site is within 50m of a track the operators must get clearance through those two processes - which takes an average of 12-18 months. Those timescales take the proposal well outside Govt obligations on service provision but, more significantly, any time site works or upgrade is needed the operators must need to go through that lengthy process everytime - it means a site within 50m of the track is just not practical. The Telecoms Clearance process may also mean that the Operator has to remove some radio spectrum from the proposal which impacts the quality of service it can provide and leads to a sub-standard proposal that can't deliver the necessary service uplift. For all these reasons the Aldi has been discounted - they are not a willing landowner, it is within 50m of the track making it not practical and it is in the Conservation Area (which we have actively tried to avoid- due to heritage sensitivity).
D6 – Rooftop	Portland Court, Moorland Road, Parrs Wood, Didsbury, Manchester, Greater Manchester, England, M20 6AZ, United Kingdom	E: 384770 N: 391351	This is a residential block of flats, with a pitched timber frame room. The site was considered and discounted due to its location in the mainly residential area. Several front facing vistas would be activated if a site was located on this rooftop and would adversely affect residential and visual amenity for those residents. Additionally, the site is not viable from a design and build perspective, pitched timber rooftops

			lack the structural capacity to hold the significant weight of telecoms development. Furthermore, the location is on land within 50 meters of the operational railway corridor was discounted from further consideration due to significant deliverability constraints associated with Network Rail ownership and control. Development within this area would require separate legal agreements, asset protection approvals, specialist access arrangements and ongoing compliance with railway operational safety requirements, resulting in increased costs, program risk and maintenance constraints. Accordingly, such locations cannot be regarded as reasonable or commercially viable alternatives to the proposed site.
D7 - Greenfield	Warburton Street, Parrs Wood, Didsbury, Manchester, Greater Manchester, England, M20 6WA, United Kingdom	E: 384750 N: 391292	The location is on land within 50 meters of the operational railway corridor was discounted from further consideration due to significant deliverability constraints associated with Network Rail ownership and control. Development within this area would require separate legal agreements, asset protection approvals, specialist access arrangements and ongoing compliance with railway operational safety requirements, resulting in increased costs, program risk and maintenance constraints. Accordingly, such locations cannot be regarded as reasonable or commercially viable alternatives to the proposed site.
D8 - Rooftop	Sterling Partners, Grove Lane, Parrs Wood, Northenden, Wythenshawe,	E: 384654 N: 390991	The location on this rooftop would be too confined and is of insufficient height to hold all of the required apparatus for the operator to meet its requirement.

	Manchester, Greater Manchester, England, M20 2DR, United Kingdom		Additionally, residential views and amenity would be affected for those dwellings opposite and along Grove Lane, as a site of sufficient height being placed here would be an incongruous addition to the general character of the residential street.
D9 - Streetworks	The Chip Shop, 671, Wilmslow Road, Parrs Wood, Didsbury, Manchester, Greater Manchester, England, M20 6RA, United Kingdom	E: 384700 N: 391247	This location on the north side of Barlow Moor Road and Wilmslow Road is a busy and narrow area fronting commercial premises, with a well-established and already cluttered streetscene, containing numerous pieces of furniture including a tree, lampposts, traffic lights, pedestrian crossing and utilities cabinets. A site in this location would create an unacceptable road and pedestrian safety issue due to the amount of footfall in relation to any remaining width post development. Furthermore, a site here would adversely affect visual amenity from views to the site from the nearby Blackburn Park conservation area which terminates at this junction. Additionally, this location is heavy in underground services, as evidenced by the many service chambers and cabinets surrounding this stretch of the street. A site here would have additional design and build burdens that make the location unviable.
D10 – Rooftop	1a, 1b, School Lane, Parrs Wood, Didsbury, Manchester, Greater Manchester, England, M20 6WD, United Kingdom	E: 384727 N: 391208	This rooftop location has been discounted as it does not have sufficient height to serve the target area. The location would require a significantly tall tower, that it would become an alien an overly prominent feature in the local area. This would adversely affect visual amenity from views to the site, particularly from the nearby Blackburn Park conservation area which terminates at the junction of Barlow Moor Road and Wilmslow Road.

D11 – Greenfield	Levant, 9, Barlow Moor Road, Parrs Wood, Didsbury, Manchester, Greater Manchester, England, M20 6TN, United Kingdom	E: 384667 N: 391213	There is insufficient space in this carpark for the required sites technical requirements. The location is also surrounded by several rear yards of residential properties, and these would have direct overlooking views of the site. The selected site is the more amenable location for both visual and residential amenity as well as containing sufficient space to meet operational requirements.
D12 – Rooftop	Co-op Food, 756, Wilmslow Road, Parrs Wood, Northenden, Manchester, Greater Manchester, England, M20 2DW, United Kingdom	E: 384655 N: 391096	This rooftop location is directly overlooking the rear yards of several residential properties and would adversely affect the visual and residential amenity of the residents of these properties. Additionally, the rooftop is not of sufficient height to serve the technical requirement of the area. A site located on this rooftop would require a substantial height and would become a prominent feature of the local area. The selected site is preferable as it has much less impact on sensitive visual receptors.
D13 - Streetworks	51, Barlow Moor Road, Parrs Wood, Didsbury, Manchester, Greater Manchester, England, M20 6TJ, United Kingdom	E: 384545 N: 391307	This site is situated directly facing the local Blackburn Park conservation area and Listed Building, Church of Emmanuel. The location is a narrow street fronting commercial premises where the pavement contains several underground service chambers. For both amenity and practical design and build viability reasons this site has been discounted in favour of the selected site, which is away from sensitive sites and is technically viable.
D14 - Streetworks	The Souvlaki, 13,11,9,7,5,3,1,	E: 384891 N: 391206	

	School Lane, Parrs Wood, Didsbury, Manchester, Greater Manchester, England, M20 6RG, United Kingdom		Whilst there appears to be plenty of space on this pavement, the location sits just 40m from the nearby rail line. The option was discounted from further consideration due to significant deliverability constraints associated with Network Rail ownership and control. Development within this area would require separate legal agreements, asset protection approvals, specialist access arrangements and ongoing compliance with railway operational safety requirements, resulting in increased costs, program risk and maintenance constraints. Accordingly, such locations cannot be regarded as reasonable or commercially viable alternatives to the proposed site. Additionally, the location is directly opposite the nearby residential apartment block and church, in a much more open area than the selected site. A site here would be much more prominent than the selected site.
D15 - Streetworks	School Lane, Parrs Wood, Didsbury, Manchester, Greater Manchester, England, M20 6WD, United Kingdom	E: 384774 N: 391209	There is insufficient pavement width along this street, to place a site here would restrict pedestrian flow along a busy footfall pavement. The evident pavement scarring and underground service chambers both point to dense underground services. For both reasons, a site here is not considered viable.
D16 – Rooftop	Kennedy's Irish Pub, 700, Wilmslow Road, Parrs Wood,	E: 384685 N: 391256	This is the existing site. As detailed at an earlier stage in this Statement this was investigated for upgrade but due to technical and structural challenges it is not possible.

	Didsbury, Manchester, M20 2DN		The rooftop would not be structurally capable of hosting the required design to deliver this upgrade here (while being ICNIRP compliant) and even if it was it would have such an impact at a prominent location in the Conservation Area it would not be acceptable. This is detailed earlier in this application so will not repeat to avoid duplication but this option was discounted for these reasons.
D17 – Streetworks (Various – circled in blue)	Various	Various	A streetworks proposal was considered in many loctaions in the areas marked. These areas are all densely packed residential streets and cul-de-sacs. Siting in any location in the blue marked areas would be directly overlooked by a high volume of residential property from all directions. As such, the proposal would impact streetscene and residential amenity. There is also less space due to on-street parking. Given the availability of the proposal site, which is significantly less impactful as it does not have the same residential overlooking, is in more of a commercial context and is immediately adjacent to and associated with a non-sensitive landuse like a filling station these options were discounted in favour of the must more suitable proposal.

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

N/A

7. Additional Relevant Information

Environmental information:

This proposal is not sited within any environmental designations.

Land use planning designations:

The site is located in the settlement limit.

There are no other relevant designations as the proposal avoids the Conservation Areas to the North and South of the Village.

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

From the outset, it is important to acknowledge that any alteration to the landscape (regardless of its function as telecommunications infrastructure) will inevitably be noticeable to nearby residents and frequent passers-by. However, visibility alone, or the siting and appearance of a development, does not inherently equate to significant or unacceptable harm.

When assessing the suitability of telecommunications development proposals, it is essential that decision-makers prioritise telecommunications-specific planning policy where such policy exists and balances the need and socio-economic benefits against perceived, or identified, harm.

In the absence of up-to-date or locally relevant guidance, the provisions of the NPPF must take precedence. It is also important to recognise that it would be unreasonable to expect specialised infrastructure, such as telecommunications equipment, to fully conform to general planning policy criteria that are not tailored to its unique requirements.

Legislation

The proposal constitutes permitted development with prior approval.

This means that the proposal is deemed acceptable in principle via Part 16 of the GPDO. As such, the principle of the development is not in question – just an assessment on the acceptability of the proposal in terms of siting and appearance.

Given the proposal is permitted development with an established principle, that is legal acknowledgement that it must go somewhere. As such, the assessment requirement is either acceptability or best viable option.

The Local Development plan can be given limited weight in the determination of an application for prior approval – it is certainly not a determinable factor.

The development plan does not have the statutory primacy it has for full planning applications. Relevant development plan policies can be material considerations, but they do not bind the decision maker and cannot be determinative - this proposal is actually permitted development where the principle of the development is accepted in law (even in designations such as public open space or green belt).

Local Policy

The adopted Manchester Local Development Plan Framework 2012, including the 2024 adopted Places for Everyone and supporting local planning policies, promote the delivery of modern digital and telecommunications infrastructure as an important component of sustainable economic growth, connectivity and urban regeneration. The planning framework recognises that high-quality digital infrastructure is essential to support businesses, residents, educational institutions and emerging employment sectors, particularly within key growth corridors and areas of regeneration.

Planning policy generally supports telecommunications development where it:

- Improves digital connectivity and network coverage;
- Supports economic growth and investment;
- Is appropriately sited and designed to minimise visual impact;
- Makes use of existing urban infrastructure and developed land where possible;
- Avoids unacceptable impacts on visual amenity, heritage assets and public safety; and
- Integrates effectively within the existing character of the surrounding area.

Saved UDP Policy DC17 – Telecommunications

Policy DC17 states that telecommunications development will normally be permitted provided that there is no unacceptable impact on visual amenity, residential amenity or environmentally sensitive locations. The policy recognises the need to balance the operational requirements of telecommunications networks against potential planning impacts and seeks to ensure that installations are appropriately sited and designed.

The proposal has been specifically developed to accord with the objectives of Policy DC17. The selected site occupies one of the few locations within the search area where telecommunications infrastructure can be associated with existing commercial and light industrial development, highway infrastructure and established vertical features rather than being located directly within predominantly residential streets. The proposal also benefits from substantial mature tree cover and an existing commercial backdrop which assist in reducing visual prominence and integrating the installation into the wider streetscape.

A comprehensive sequential assessment has demonstrated that alternative locations would result in greater impacts upon residential amenity, visual amenity, pedestrian movement, operational requirements or streetscape character. Accordingly, the proposal minimises planning impacts to the greatest extent practicable whilst delivering essential telecommunications infrastructure and is therefore consistent with the objectives of Policy DC17.

Manchester Core Strategy

The proposal also aligns with the wider objectives of the Manchester Core Strategy. Policy SP1 (Spatial Principles) seeks to promote sustainable development and investment in infrastructure necessary to support economic growth and communities. Policy EN1 (Design Principles and Strategic Character Areas) requires development to respond positively to local character and townscape, whilst ensuring that proposals are appropriately integrated into their surroundings.

The proposed installation has been carefully sited within an established urban environment adjacent to commercial development and existing infrastructure. Through its positioning, scale and relationship with surrounding built form and mature vegetation, the proposal responds appropriately to its context whilst delivering infrastructure necessary to support modern digital connectivity.

Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan
Policy JP-C1 'An Integrated Network of the Joint Development Plan' supports the provision of strategic infrastructure across Greater Manchester and specifically identifies the importance of digital connectivity. The policy states that Greater Manchester will support measures including:

"Enabling the provision of high quality digital infrastructure."

The supporting text recognises the increasingly important role digital infrastructure plays in modern society, stating:

"Digital connections are increasingly important to every aspect of our lives, from socialising and shopping to learning, business and accessing essential services."

It further recognises that:

"Any truly global city will need to have widespread, affordable, reliable, secure and future-proofed digital infrastructure that provides a competitive edge for businesses and supports high-levels of social inclusion."

The supporting text concludes that:

"Improving digital infrastructure and ensuring that new development is connected to it is therefore a high priority."

Policy JP-C2 'Digital Connectivity' develops this objective further and states:

"We support the provision of affordable, high quality, digital infrastructure."

The policy specifically supports:

"Enabling the roll-out of latest generation mobile technology and full fibre to the premises connectivity, in a way that maximises coverage whilst protecting townscape quality and ensuring an ability to respond to updated/changing technology."

The proposal directly supports the objectives of Policies JP-C1 and JP-C2 through the provision of enhanced telecommunications infrastructure that will improve network coverage and capacity within South Manchester. The proposal will facilitate the continued evolution of digital communications technology and contribute towards the provision of modern, resilient and future-proofed digital infrastructure.

Importantly, the proposal has been directed towards one of the few locations within the search area where it can be associated with existing commercial and non-sensitive landuse such as the filling station, highway infrastructure and established urban features rather than residential streets/cul-de-sacs, Conservation Areas or public open space.

The site benefits from an existing commercial backdrop, mature tree cover and surrounding street furniture which assist in integrating the proposal into the wider townscape and reducing visual prominence.

The submitted sequential assessment demonstrates that alternative locations would result in greater impacts upon residential amenity, visual amenity, pedestrian movement, operational requirements or streetscape character. Accordingly, the proposal accords with the objectives of Policies JP-C1 and JP-C2 by maximising digital connectivity whilst protecting townscape quality and minimising planning impacts to the greatest extent practicable.

The proposed streetworks pole accords with the objectives of the adopted planning framework due to its location within a well-established mixed-use area characterised by significant existing infrastructure, transport activity and urban development within a well screened locale, both adjacent to and against the backdrop of commercial development.

Furthermore, the proposal would contribute towards the continued improvement of telecommunications coverage and network capacity in accordance with local and strategic objectives to strengthen Manchester's digital infrastructure and support economic activity. Given the developed commercial context of the proposals backdrop, the absence of significant harm to the character of the area, and the operational need for enhanced connectivity, the proposed streetworks pole is considered to align with the aims of the adopted planning policy framework relating to telecommunications and digital infrastructure.

With all this considered the proposal supports the relevant local planning policy.

On review it is clear that the proposal meets all local policy requirements and this siting and design is well justified against policy and is certainly the most appropriate, least impactful, viable proposal.

Regional Policy and Strategy – Greater Manchester Combined Authority

World class Digital connectivity is a major strategic aim the Greater Manchester Combined Authority and the GMCA have numerous strategic documents that add significant evidential weight to the material socio-economic benefits of mobile connectivity and the necessary infrastructure to provide it.

One of the 7 ‘Connected Workstreams’ of the **‘Greater Manchester Strategy 2025-35’** is Digitally Connected Places and People’.

This states:-

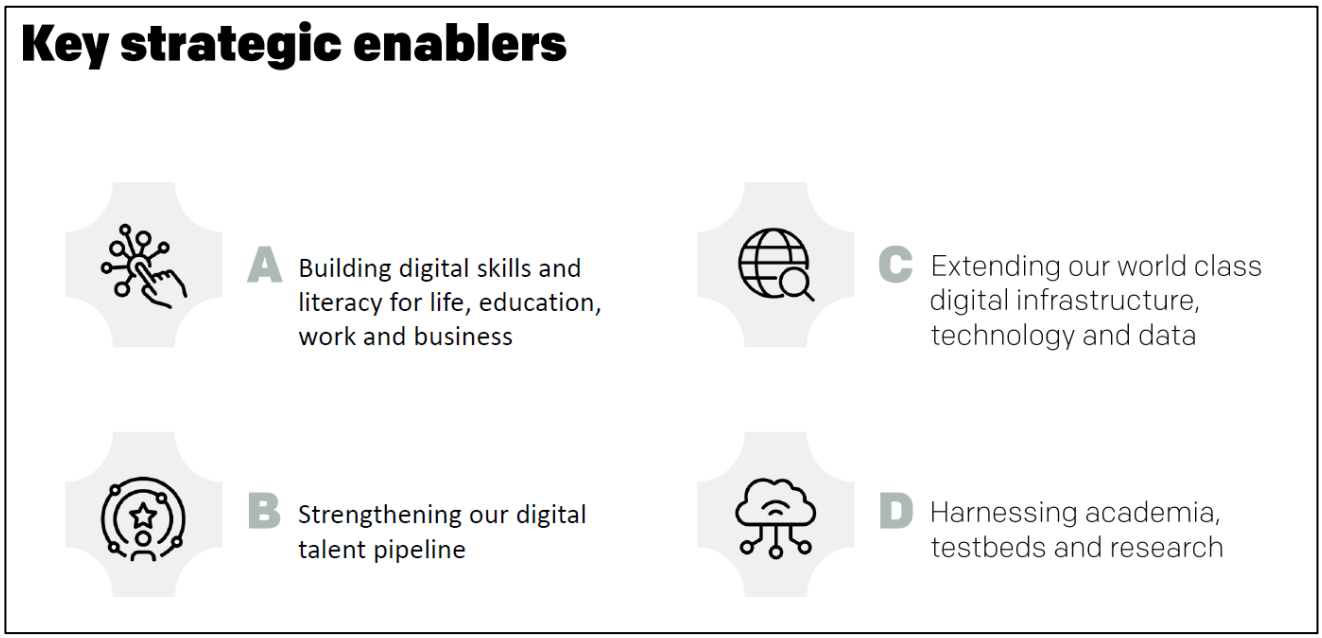
*"It's **essential** that everyone in our city region can thrive in the digital age – a new industrial revolution powered by artificial intelligence."*

The need for digital connectivity, provided by infrastructure like the proposal, is discussed consistently throughout this document as something that underpins all strategic aspirations of the city region.

Additionally, the **'Greater Manchester Digital Blueprint 2023-26'** adds further weight and context....

*"Ensure we have **world class digital infrastructure that stimulates economic growth** and enables the development of our growth zones, across sectors and localities."*

Extending the digital infrastructure such as the proposal is also noted as a 'Key Strategic Enabler':-



Finally, the '**Greater Manchester Industrial Strategy, June 2019'** adds additional support and context for the need for 5G enabling digital infrastructure as something that underpins the city regions wider economic aspirations. This aspiration is noted:-

"A top five city-region for the digital economy in Europe, with full fibre broadband and **5G coverage**, and with internationally-significant media and cyber-security clusters."
"The city-region now aims **to upgrade, integrate and future-proof its infrastructure, to create a 21st century city-region with extreme digital connectivity**, clean and inclusive growth and – through work with others – improved access to national and global markets."

*"Continue **transforming the digital connectivity of the city region to drive economic growth** and innovation, working with government to meet national targets of nationwide full fibre coverage by 2033 and **full roll-out of 5G technologies for most people by 2027**."*

There is clearly extensive weight of support for infrastruture like the proposal. This proposal is part of a network that wholly underpins these wider strategic and economic aspirations of both Manchester City Council and Greater Manchester.

Without infrastructure like the proposal those aspirations cannot be met and it is significant that no specific area is depreived of this while the rest of the city region benefits, creating a digital divide that will impact the locality.

This is particularly relevant to the proposal given it will provide network capacity to the nearby commercial and residential areas. This situation, in the context of those strategic documents and regional aspirations, weigh heavily in favour of the proposal.

National Digital Strategy, Planning Policy and Guidance:-

Code of Practice for Wireless Network Development in England
In March 2022 UK Government published their 'Code of Practice for Wireless Network Development in England' Planning Guidance document.

The document notes that...

*"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"*

This guidance document is clear that...

*"Digital connectivity is **vital to enable people to stay connected and businesses to grow. Fast, reliable digital connectivity can deliver economic, social and well-being benefits** for the whole of the UK.*

*As the demand for mobile data in the United Kingdom is increasing rapidly, it is important that **everyone has access to dependable and consistent mobile coverage** where they live, work and travel."*

The document clearly establishes the material socio-economic benefits of digital connectivity. However, from a really practical perspective, is also really useful in outlining the technical constraints associated with mobile infrastructure that dictate siting and design.

This application has gone into detail on the siting and design rationale of this proposal and this wholly aligns with the principles established within the Government guidance document. These technical constraints, and the solutions necessary to overcome them, are material considerations that should be given weight in favour of the proposal in any determination.

Paras 28 and 40 discuss how proposals should minimise impact through good design and utilise colours that minimise and reduce contrast – this is wholly the case here with the colouring of the

mast – grey pole as it will be viewed against a streetscape and mostly grey skies and grey antennas as they must clear buildings for radio propagation and will be seen against a typically grey sky.

All of these matters wholly align with the proposal. As such, the proposal wholly aligns with the Planning guidance for England provided by UK Government.

NPPF

First published in 2012 but updated as recently as December 2024 with a Government consultation just concluded, the NPPF is the central planning policy document for England. It sets out the government's expectations for how planning decisions should be made and how development should be delivered.

The golden thread of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Chapter 10 'Supporting High Quality Communications' sets out the main policy tests for telecoms proposals. It states...

"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. Policies should set out how high quality digital infrastructure, providing access to services from a range of providers, is expected to be delivered and upgraded over time; and should prioritise full fibre connections to existing and new developments (as these connections will, in almost all cases, provide the optimum solution)."*

"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. Where new sites are required (such as for new 5G networks, or for connected transport and smart city applications), equipment should be* ***sympathetically designed*** *and camouflaged where appropriate."*

The policy also notes that when applying for a new mast evidence should be provided to show how the applicant has explored the possibility of erecting antennas on an existing building, mast or other structure.

Again, the proposal wholly aligns with the policy tests required in the NPPF. It is significant to note the policy test specifically and purposefully notes 'consistent with the needs of consumers, the efficient operation of the network and providing reasonable capacity for future expansion' – this is an acknowledgement of the technical constraints associated that directly influence siting and design (also noted in the Code of Practice Guidance) and gives clear indication and direction that weight must be applied to those operational matters.

The policy concluded that sites should be designed sympathetically – it is been demonstrated throughout the document that through considered siting and design impact has been minimised

– in a commercial area which is less sensitive than surrounding residential areas and away from historical and environmental assets or designations. There are also other street furniture along Wilmslow Road and Grange Lane. This is the lowest height that will keep the site viable operationally/technically and a slimline streetworks pole design over an open headframe or lattice as it is structurally capable but more sympathetic to the locality.

Evidence has also been provided of a robust sequential test that explores many numerous siting options, including on buildings and other structures, and clearly concludes that this is the most appropriate and least impactful siting.

With all this is it clear that the proposal wholly aligns with NPPF policy tests and requirements.

Furthermore, beyond Chapter 10, NPPF Chapter 6 'Building a Strong, Competitive Economy' specifically advocates support for Digital Connectivity proposals....

"Planning policies should...

pay particular regard to facilitating development to meet the needs of a ***modern economy****, including by identifying suitable locations for uses such as laboratories, gigafactories, data centres,* ***digital infrastructure****, freight and logistics"*

"Planning policies and decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors. This includes making provision for:

a) *clusters or networks of knowledge and data-driven, creative or high technology industries; and for new, expanded or upgraded facilities and* ***infrastructure that are needed to support the growth of these industries*** *(including data centres and grid connections);*

c) *the expansion or modernisation of other* ***industries of local, regional or national importance to support economic growth*** *and resilience."*

This policy goes further in adding great weight to the material benefits of the proposal as a counterbalance to perceived harm.

Mobile connectivity will be vital for the modern economy, connecting people and AI with data centres. Connecting IoT devices in Smart Cities with numerous benefits, including carbon reduction. Mobile infrastructure is clearly the 'infrastructure that is needed to support the growth of these industries'.

Furthermore, this section of this document has gone into great detail in demonstrating how the proposal aligns with local, regional and national digital and economic aspirations – as such it also aligns with the NPPF policy supporting 'industries of local, regional or national importance to support economic growth'.

In short, the proposal wholly aligns with both Chapter 10 and Chapter 6 of the NPPF and that must be given great weight in this determination and Planning Balance assessment.

Other National Strategy and Policy
It is felt that it is unnecessary to quote all the relevant documents but it is appropriate to reference them as they clearly show the intent, rationale and of the Government in relation to development like the proposal...

- Wireless Infrastructure Strategy
- Planning and Infrastructure Bill
- 10 Year Infrastructure Strategy

It is also significant to note that, under commitments made within the 10 Year Infrastructure Strategy a consultation on a review of Part 16 of the GPDO has just been concluded – this is with a view to reduce restrictions on digital connectivity infrastructure to promote its delivery. An NPPF consultation which has also recently concluded is also expected to add even more policy support for digital communications.

Ministerial Statements
Written Ministerial Statement UIN HCWS867: Boosting growth by removing barriers to digital infrastructure deployment, made by the then Minister of State for Data Protection and Telecoms, Sir Chris Bryant (attached to this application) states:-

"Digital infrastructure ***underpins growth right across the economy****, and is also a powerful contributor to the economy in its own right, with the sector worth an estimated £50 billion to the UK.* ***It supports the adoption of new and emerging technologies including Artificial Intelligence*** *and enables citizens to participate in modern life. In an increasingly online world, growth in data consumption and increased* ***demands on the UK's digital infrastructure mean there is an urgent need to support the sector in delivering greater connectivity for local communities and businesses.***

We are committed to the rollout of gigabit-capable broadband and 5G networks, with the ultimate goal of enabling businesses, residents, and institutions to access seamless and reliable connectivity. ***These efforts are essential to building a more competitive, equitable, and digitally connected nation****."*

This clearly articulates Government's commitment to removing planning barriers, accelerating deployment and recognising digital communications infrastructure as critical to economic growth.

Similarly, Statement UIN HCWS1325 by Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for AI and Online Safety Kanishka Narayan makes clear that:

"Digital connectivity is at the foundation of our economy and society and underpins almost every part of daily life. The strength, security, and resilience of our digital infrastructure matters deeply to people, business and the economy in the UK."

Other Material Considerations – Appeals

It is wholly acknowledged that every proposal must be considered on its own merits and there is no such thing as precedent in Planning.

However, appeal decisions can be material considerations to decisions with similar characteristics and main matters. They are certainly material considerations that can be given significant weight in cases where procedural and principle matters are established.

A dominant procedural and principled feature in appeal decisions is that there is a need for balance and identifying the least impactful option. In many cases harm can be identified but that harm must be balanced against the material benefits, the technical constraints and the lack of a better viable option. When that appropriate Planning Balance occurs, especially in the context of prior approval where the principle of the development is established in law, then proposals are often deemed acceptable, on balance.

While harm associated with this proposal is minimal, significantly, it is clear that great effort and consideration has gone into identifying the technically viable siting and design with the least impact.

In that context some recent, procedural and principle establishing, appeal decisions in the Manchester City Council area have been referenced below. These procedural and 'in principle' matters are wholly relevant to the proposal:-

APP/P4605/W/25/3359736

"In conclusion, the siting and appearance of the proposed development would appear overly prominent and visually intrusive within the street scape. It would ***therefore result in harm to the character and appearance of the area due to its height and siting****. Additionally, it is for the same reasons that it would result in harm to the living conditions of neighbouring residents regarding outlook."*

"The ***Framework recognises that high quality and reliable communications infrastructure is essential for economic growth and social well-being****. Consequently, it supports the expansion of electronic communications networks, including 5G.*

The appeal scheme would provide coverage in an area which has no effective coverage. The lack of coverage would likely lead to a lack of/or very poor call set up, dropped calls and no capacity leading to no service.

The ***appellant has provided a sequential approach to site selection*** *in which approximately 32 sites were assessed. Many of the sites have been discounted due to, amongst other things, inadequate pavement widths, the presence of underground services and/or overhead lines, closer proximity to dwellings and/or education facilities, greater visibility due to both a lack of natural screening and/or requirements of a taller mast due to lower typography, proximity to access points, reduction in parking provision and /or visibility splays, as well as practical requirements to ensure no competition between the proposed 5G coverage and existing 3G and 4G cell areas and to achieve International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection*

(ICNIRP) certification. ***Various buildings and structures were also considered as part of the sequential approach however these were likewise discounted for practical reasons.***

Given all of the above, in my judgement, it has ***been adequately demonstrated that there are likely to be no other appropriate sites****, including buildings and existing masts, than the appeal site. I therefore* ***attach significant weight in favour of the appeal as a consequence****.*

In conclusion, I consider the moderate ***harm*** *the installation would cause to the character and appearance of the surrounding area and living conditions of neighbouring residents regarding outlook would be* ***outweighed by the benefits*** *of a high-quality communications network facilitated by the proposed development and* ***the lack of any more suitable alternative sites to provide this benefit****."*

APP/P4605/W/24/3349032

"I have found that the proposed development, through its siting and appearance, ***would cause harm to the character and appearance of the area*** *for the reasons given above. The other options that might be available are therefore an important consideration.*

The ***Framework supports the development of a high-quality reliable communications infrastructure as this is deemed to be essential for economic growth and social well-being****. Nonetheless, it requires sites to be kept to a minimum and encourages the reuse and adaptation of existing base stations. Paragraph 122 of the Framework expects evidence to be submitted to justify all applications. For a new mast or base station this includes evidence that the possibility of erecting antennas on an existing building, mast or other structure has been explored.*

The proposal is required to provide 5G coverage. It has been demonstrated that ***the site is within an area with demonstrable need for an additional installation in the vicinity to achieve a full and appropriate level of coverage****. The coverage map has informed the appellant's search area for the new equipment and a sequential approach has been taken. In support of the application and now appeal, the* ***appellant has undertaken an assessment of 42 alternative sites within the defined search area required to provide coverage for the target area****. This included an assessment of several alternative sites that were identified by the Council.*

The appellant has supplied a number of reasons as to why these sites should be discounted from the search *including: concerns with upgrading the existing mast nearby, interference between masts, issues with the structural suitability and wind loading requirements of buildings in the search area and the impact the surrounding buildings and topography of the area would have upon signal transmissions. Certain sites were also discounted due to concerns with highway safety and the nearby railway line and underground services. Some sites were situated within residential areas or within parks close to trees that were covered by a Tree Preservation Order as well as concerns over the effect of the mast upon the character and appearance of the area which provided reasons to discount them.*

Several of the alternative sites were located in the 'most' and 'more' sensitive locations as per the Guide. ***While the site is in a 'more sensitive location', the proposed equipment is***

required to be sited within the search area and the principal of such equipment is not in dispute. *Taking into* ***consideration the significant constraints identified for the alternative sites****; existing buildings, masts, and other structures have been explored and reasonably discounted. Furthermore, comprehensive, and reliable evidence has been given for discounting other possible ground-based mast sites.*

I conclude that the siting and appearance of the proposed installation ***would cause harm to the character and appearance of the area. However, based on the evidence before me, it is unlikely that there is a more suitable site within the search area that may reasonably be available. Therefore, any identified harm is outweighed by the need for the installation to be sited as proposed, taking into account the suitable alternatives****."*

APP/P4605/W/24/3357531

"As I have found that the ***proposal would cause harm to the character and appearance of the area, the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) requires that evidence of alternative sites is provided to justify the proposed development****. Where this is in relation to a new mast or base station, this evidence should include that the applicant has explored the possibility of erecting antennas on an existing building, mast or other structure.*

I have no reason to doubt that the cell ***search area is extremely contained****. On the basis of the evidence before me, I am* ***satisfied that the appellant has demonstrated that there is an identified need for the proposal to be located somewhere in the search area****.*

*The Council suggests that there are more suitable locations nearby. However****, the appellant has provided details of a number of alternative sites which were considered and discounted as part of the site selection process****, including detailed supporting information to fully corroborate that an exhaustive search of all possible sites was undertaken. These sites were discounted for a number of reasons including proximity to residential properties and other buildings, impact on visibility splays and proximity to underground services****. I am satisfied that there are no realistic opportunities to erect antennas on existing buildings, masts or other structures****. I consider that* ***the site selection process was robust and potential alternatives discounted on reasonable grounds and that the appellant has demonstrated that there are no clear alternatives which would be preferable. This carries significant weight in favour of the proposal.***

The ***proposal would support high-quality infrastructure, an approach which is supported by Chapter 10 of the Framework****. When* ***balancing this benefit against the harm identified in relation to the first main issue, I consider that the benefits of the proposal would outweigh the identified harm*** *to the character and appearance of the area."*

APP/P4605/W/25/3359873

"The southwest boundary of the Edgbaston ***Conservation Area (ECA) is located in close proximity to the appeal site and generally runs along Pritchatt's Road. Furthermore, the Grade II* Chamberlain Tower is located to the southwest of the appeal site*** *within the*

grounds of a Birmingham University campus. The proposed mast would be located within the setting of both, which I note is not in dispute. I have also had regard to the appellant's HIA which establishes the significance of both designated heritage assets and the potential impacts of the proposal."

"The appeal site would be clearly visible in the setting of the ECA, most notably from the junction of Pritchatt's Road and Farquhar Road. I have already concluded that ***the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area****. The modern, utilitarian appearance of the most would be compounded by its height and appear incongruous in the area as a result.* ***This would harm the setting and thereby the contribution this makes to the significance of the ECA****. Moreover, section A.2(1)(c)(i) of part 16, class A of the GPDO states that permitted development of this type is subject to the condition that the siting and appearance of any development which is visible from a site which is article 2(3) land, as in this case, must ensure that the visual impact of the development on the site is minimised so far as practicable, taking into account the nature and purposes of the site. It is unclear as to what steps have been taken to minimise the impacts of the mast and its ancillary equipment in this instance."*

"Taken together, ***the proposal would cause harm withing the setting and thereby harm the significance of both the ECA and the listed tower****. I have therefore had regard to the provisions of paragraph 212 of the Framework which advises that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is of particular importance given the Grade II* listed status of the tower."*

"Insofar as they are material considerations, the proposal would be contrary to policies DM16 of the DPD, PG3 of the BDP and advice in the SPD. These seek to ensure telecommunications equipment would not have unacceptable harm on heritage assets and their setting, among other things."

"Heritage Balance
The GPDO is clear that the only considerations should be the siting and appearance of the proposal. In granting permission under Article 3(1) those benefits have effectively been acknowledged already. However, as per paragraph 215 of the Framework, ***the harm I have identified should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal****. I agree that the* ***harm would be less than substantial****, but worthy of great weight against the proposal."*

"The mast and its equipment would evidently improve 5G coverage in a small geographical area is part of a wider network, where the network may be undermined by gaps in coverage. Whilst only users of that particular operator would be using the service, ***these aspects are recognised as public benefits****."*

"The proposed development's ***public benefits, through enhanced digital communications networks, attract significant weight in favour of the scheme****. In recognising the great weight attached to the harm caused to designated heritage assets,* ***the Government places considerable importance on the benefits of economic growth and social well-being from the expansion of the nation's electronic communications network. On this occasion, I***

consider that the benefits would outweigh harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset and its setting.”

“On the basis of the evidence before me, I see no reason to disagree with the appellant’s site selection process and while the Council was frustrated at not having this information at application stage, it has had the opportunity to comment at appeal. Nothing substantive was forwarded on this matter in their appeal statement of case. I understand that the site is close to identified sensitive locations such as heritage assets and educational institutions. I have considered these matters. However, the evidence on balance shows that ***the lack of alternative options to deliver improved coverage and capacity within the required area is a consideration which weighs strongly in favour of the appeal****.”*

“The siting and appearance of the proposal would ***result in some limited harm to the character and appearance of the area and to the setting of the ECA and a Grade II* listed building****. These attract significant weight against granting prior approval. However, in* ***the absence of a more suitable alternative site within the required area and the need for the installation, that harm would be outweighed by the benefits provided by the improved telecommunications coverage and capacity****. The proposal would therefore comply with the Framework when read as a whole with due regard to supporting high quality communications. I therefore conclude that the appeal should be allowed, and that prior approval is granted.”*

It is clear that the proposal, subject of this application, has significantly less heritage impact than the appeal example provided.

It is clear that this proposal complies with…

- Manchester Local Plan
- Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan 2022 to 2039
- Greater Manchester Strategy 2025-35
- National Planning Policy (NPPF)
- National Planning Guidance (Code of Practice for Wireless Network Development)
- Wider national economic and digital aspirations and strategies
- Meets appropriate balance tests applied in appeal decisions

Planning Assessment

In accordance with Part 16 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order, this development is to be assessed primarily in terms of its siting and appearance**.**

While the provisions of the local development plan are not determinative, they remain material considerations where relevant to matters of design and visual impact. The key issues arising from this prior approval application are whether the proposed structure would appear visually intrusive or out of keeping with the character of the area, and whether any such impact would be outweighed by the substantial social and economic benefits associated with the deployment of

5G and the enhancement of next-generation digital infrastructure in the context of the technical constraints and lack of less impactful siting options.

Siting

As previously detailed, there is an urgent requirement to enhance mobile network coverage in Didsbury Village. The siting of the installation has been carefully selected within a defined search area, ensuring the structure delivers the necessary new technology, coverage and capacity in line with the NPPF policy and guidance on minimising impact and mast proliferation.

It is important to acknowledge that it is rarely possible to introduce new telecommunications infrastructure into an area without some degree of visual impact. However, through sensitive siting and design, that impact has been minimised as far as practicable in this case.

The proposed location, adjacent commercial premises in the form of a filling station, near the commercial centre of the Village on Wilmslow Road, in the context of existing vertical street structures/furniture and lampposts so it will not appear incongruous, making use of surrounding trees to provide backdrop/screening, sited just off the main thoroughfare to negate prominence, and using existing buildings to screen from northern viewpoints is directly advocated in local and national Planning Policy and Guidance.

Crucially however, the proposal is not directly overlooked by residential property and any views will be angled or oblique – this ensures it will not be overbearing from these properties and residential amenity is protected. Any other technically viable location would be on a residential street that is directly overlooked and therefore genuinely impact both residential amenity and streetscene,

Equally crucially, the site is outside the Conservation Areas and has sufficient separation from Listed Buildings to ensure there is no impact on their setting.

An extensive sequential site search was carried out and it has been robustly demonstrated that this is the only viable location in the search that will cause no significant impact to streetscene, residential amenity, and visual amenity. There are other technically viable locations, however, they would be significantly more impactful on the local area than the proposal.

It is clear that this is the best and least impactful location to place this necessary infrastructure when taking account of the technical constraints.

Visual appearance & Design

The height of the pole is the minimum height required to provide high-quality 4G and 5G coverage to the intended target area while addressing the technical constraints alluded, and the need for ICNIRP compliance given the larger exclusion zones associated with 5G equipment. This will be fleeting glimpses as people pass by. This minimal view, in the context of existing vertical infrastructure and extensive other street furniture, ensures there is no significant harm.

The design of the pole is done to minimise impact – a pole is the most suitable design for this particular area as a lattice or open headframe tower would appear incongruous.

The grey colouring will minimise contrast and not draw the eye, as advocated in local and national planning policy and guidance. The antennas will remain grey as they need to 'see over' the nearby buildings so grey will ensure they do not contrast from the typically grey sky it will be viewed against. The height is the lowest possible that will work for radio propagation and ICNIRP compliance.

Regarding antenna design, it is technically essential that the latest 4G and 5G antennas remain unshrouded**.** Higher-frequency signals required for fast data transmission are unable to effectively propagate through materials such as Glass Reinforced Plastic (GRP), which would be used in any shrouded enclosure. This limitation applies particularly to 5G but also affects advanced 4G antennas. Shrouding the antennas would compromise their performance, necessitating additional infrastructure elsewhere, again leading to a proliferation of masts. Shrouding would also act as a wind sail and add significantly greater windloading, necessitating a significantly more bulky structure than what is currently proposed. As an alternative to shrouding, banding is added between the antenna apertures to make the pole appear less cluttered and more streamlined.

The cabinet design has been created in consolation with local Cllrs and Civic Society to match local utility artwork while also incorporating local features like the Didsbury Clock Tower, Library, Manchester Worker Bee and a 'Welcome to Didsbury' message. While this will have aesthetic benefits it will also minimise the risk of graffiti and be a significant improvement on the local streetscene from the existing industrial appearing palisade fencing around the filling station refuse area.

The proposal will introduce a very short section of narrowed footpath but the residual width is still well within national guidance parameters, especially on a slow speed, low footfall street. The principle of acceptability for this is confirmed in an appended appeal decision. It is also significant to note that cabinets of this type can be deployed here as permitted development (without prior approval) using powers as statutory undertakers.

In summary, the proposed design is the least visually intrusive whilst achieving the required level of continued coverage, providing brand new 5G coverage and capacity to the area (as well as improving the existing 4G coverage). As such the proposal development is sited and design to minimise the impact on the visual amenity, character and appearance of the surrounding areas. The structure makes the most of the existing setting and is the minimum possible height to be ICNIRP compliant, clear the urban clutter and for the antenna signal to reach the target coverage area.

As a result, the proposed development fully accords local and NPPF policy by striking a balance between visual and amenity concerns with the operators technical requirements.

Residential Amenity

The nearest residential properties are the dwellings circa 30m away further along Grange Lane and the apartments of Viceroy Court some circa 20m away. None of these properties are directly overlooking with views from habitable windows being angled or oblique. This avoids the proposal being overbearing and protects residential amenity. This is shown below with direct views shown in red with the proposal marked green.



It is acknowledged that there will be a degree of visibility from a very small number of residential properties but visibility does not essentially equate to harm. Distance and angle of visbilty aside, there is a large tree to the north side of Grange Lane which provides screening and separation between those properties the proposal and all properties will be viewing the proposal in the context of a filling station – which is their current outlook. Given all of the above additional impact before that is minimal.

The development will not result in any loss of privacy, nor will it emit any noise (barring small cooling fans in the cabinets on the most hottest days but these would only be audible from a few metres away and certainly not audible from within property or against existing background noise in this very urbanised area), odour, artificial light, or vibration that could impact residents. Site

visits for maintenance are minimal and infrequent, generally once or twice per year with handheld tools only.

This siting negate the site being in residential streets or cul-de-sacs surrounding Wilmslow Road and in doing so safeguards residential amenity.

Given these considerations, the proposed installation would have absolute minimal impact on residential amenity, with no material harm to outlook, privacy, or noise conditions. The proposal therefore complies with both national and local planning objectives for protecting amenity.

Sequential Test and Lack of Alternative Options

This is a very defined search area. This is due to the limitations of 5G discussed throughout this document and the fact that the replacement site must be in reasonably close proximity to the site it is replacing to fit within the wider cell network – simply put, the higher frequency cannot travel far or through material as well and so sites must be directly where the demand is.

The area is even more constrained by needing to be a distance from tram tracks, avoiding underground services, outside public open space, outside Conservation Areas and away from a location that would cause unacceptable impact on residential amenity.

Great effort was made to identify a location that could deliver the necessary service while minimising impact.

There were 16 specifically located alternative options discounted in this very small and defined search area, and generalisations made about further alternatives across several surrounding streets. These were discounted due to impacts on visual amenity, pedestrian obstruction, impacts on residential amenity, ICNIRP challenges, underground services and/or the unsuitability of rooftop sites.

The proposal is the least impactful, technically viable, location in the area – it is sited in a highly commercialised and urbanised setting with significant existing street furniture with which it will assimilate.

The robust sequential test with numerous discounts, and through design consideration, confirm proposal is certainly the least impactful, viable, siting and design capable to delivering the necessary service uplift. With that in mind it the proposal meets the NPPF policy test related to 'minimising harm (while taking account of the technical considerations)'. This principle also aligns with the appeal decisions referenced above.

The proposal is permitted development (albeit 'with prior approval') so the principle of the development is established in law via Part 16 of the GPDO. This is an important distinction as under permitted development a solution must be found as consideration cannot be given to the principle, only that the proposal is the most suitable option in terms of siting and appearance. Under prior approval the test is either acceptability **or** the best viable option with the least impact – it is suggested that this site and proposal is **both** acceptable and the best viable option with the least impact.

This is significant in an area as constrained as this, especially when such careful consideration has been given to siting and design to minimise impact while remaining functional and addressing the technical constraints.

Given the robust sequential test applied, and the relevant principles, this proposal is acceptable in planning terms.

Conclusion and Planning Balance

To conclude, there is a well-documented gap in mobile phone coverage and capacity Didsbury Village in south Manchester. The proposed development addresses this critical gap by delivering improved 4G coverage and brand-new 5G capability to the area.

The selected site is adjacent to a filling station in a largely commercial area – as directly advocated in national and local planning policy and guidance.

A comprehensive site search and assessment of discounted alternatives has demonstrated that this is the most suitable and sustainable location available within the defined search area. All other considered options were ruled out due to visual sensitivity, impact upon residential amenity, impact upon streetscene or lack of structural capability.

The design is the lowest height it can be to attach the antennas at the necessary height to meet technical requirements of 5G. It is the most slimline it can be while being structurally capable while hosting antennas at height for radio propagation and ICNIRP compliance. It uses suitable colouring and community art to minimise harm. All of these technical constraints align with principles noted and established in the UK Govt Planning Guidance – 'Code of Practice'.

The proposed development would not cause harm to heritage assets in the locality given separation the existing urbanised context of the site meaning the site will be congruous and additional harm will be minimised. This accords fully with the requirements of both local planning policy and the NPPF, particularly in relation to digital infrastructure provision and sustainable development. It meets the NPPF policy test to minimise harm (minimise, not invisibility) **while taking account of the technical constraints**, as noted in the Code of Practice.

The robust sequential test with numerous discounts, and through design consideration, confirm proposal is certainly the least impactful, viable, siting and design capable to delivering the necessary service uplift. With that in mind it wholly meets the necessary tests for an application for 'prior approval', where the principle of development is established in law via Part 16 of the GPDO.

In terms of Planning balance - any visual impact is considered minimal and localised. When that minimal and localised harm is weighed against the technical constraints, lack of favorable alternatives and public benefits of improved 4G and new 5G mobile connectivity, would not significantly or demonstrably outweigh the scheme's material socio-economic benefits and contribution to national, regional and local digital and economic objectives, as set out in the NPPF

and other documents referenced. This ensures this is a wholly acceptable proposal in Planning terms.

For these reasons, the proposed telecommunications installation is considered wholly appropriate in planning terms and is respectfully submitted for the local planning authority's approval under the prior approval process.

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