SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

1. Site Details

Site Name:	Off Pollard Street SW	Site Address:	POLLARD STREET, NEW ISLINGTON, MILES PLATTING, MANCHESTER, GREATER MANCHESTER, M4 7JB (E: 385839 & N: 398531).
National Grid Reference:			
Site Ref Number:	CS 30545600	Site Type:[1]	Macro – Streetworks

2. Pre Application Check List

Site Selection

Was a local planning authority mast register available to check for suitable sites by the operator or the local planning authority?	~~Yes~~	**No**
If no explain why: The industry data base is a more up to date source of information.		
Were industry site databases checked for suitable sites by the operator:	**Yes**	~~No~~
If no explain why:		

Site Specific Pre-application consultation with local planning authority

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

[1] Macro or Micro

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Summary of outcome/Main issues raised:
Prior to the submission of the application, the applicant initiates pre-consultation discussions with the local planning authority. This provides an opportunity for the Local Planning Authority (LPA) to discuss development proposals and identify site specific issues. A pre-application consultation letter was sent to Manchester City Council planning team on the 7th July 2026. This letter contained details of the proposed works at the chosen site, as well as design drawings and our consultation strategy plan. To this date there has been no response.

Annual area wide information to planning authority

Has annual area wide information been provided?	No
If no explain why:	
Summary issues raised: Cornerstones commercial relationship with VMO2 has changed, effectively increasing our independence to work with other companies in the deployment of mobile infrastructure. It means we no longer have visibility of VMO2's full update plan. However, Cornerstone is fully committed to working closely with LPAs and following best practice guidance. We aim to engage and work with the planning department at the earliest opportunity from when we are instructed to deliver new infrastructure within your Local Authority area and often conduct strategic pre-rollout engagement meetings to discuss our wider rollout. If your Local Authority would like a meeting to discuss wider Cornerstone rollout plans, then please advise. We recognise the importance of developing long term partnerships and will always work with you to deliver improved mobile connectivity.	

Community Consultation

Rating of Site under Traffic Light Model:	~~Red~~	Amber	~~Green~~

Outline of consultation carried out: Prior to the submission of the application, the agent initiated pre-consultation discussions with the Local Ward Councillors and Local MP. This provides an opportunity to discuss the siting and design of the proposed site. Pre-application consultation letters and planning drawings were sent to these parties on the 7th June 2026 via email. **Ward: Ancoats and Beswick** Councillor Alan Good Councillor Chris Northwood Councillor Hussayn Salem **Emails:** cllr.alan.good@manchester.gov.uk cllr.Chris.Northwood@manchester.gov.uk cllr.hussayn.salem@manchester.gov.uk **MP for Manchester Central** MP Lucy Powell **Email:** contact@lucypowell.org.uk
Summary of outcome/main issues raised (include copies of relevant correspondence): To date, no comments have been received. Any comments received will be passed on to the case officer during the determination of the application.

School/College

Location of site in relation to school/college (include name of school/college): There are no schools located within close proximity to the site.

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Outline of consultation carried out with school/college (include evidence of consultation): N/A
Summary of outcome/main issues raised (include copies of main correspondence): N/A

Civil Aviation Authority/Secretary of State for Defence or the operator of the civil safeguarding area or defence safeguarding area notification

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

Developer's Notice

Copy of Developer's Notice enclosed?		**Yes**	~~No~~
Date served:	21/07/2026		

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3. Proposed Development

The proposed site:
An existing Cornerstone shared VMO2 and VodafoneThree rooftop base station installation located at Spectator Mill, Spectator Street, Ancoats, Manchester, M4 7JB. The current installation comprises 3no. TEF/VF antennas fixed within a window opening behind a GRP panel located centrally within the window bay. There are three window openings in total within the Southern corners of the building that have a fixed GRP middle louvred section with glazed outer panels that each host 1no. TEF/VF antenna.

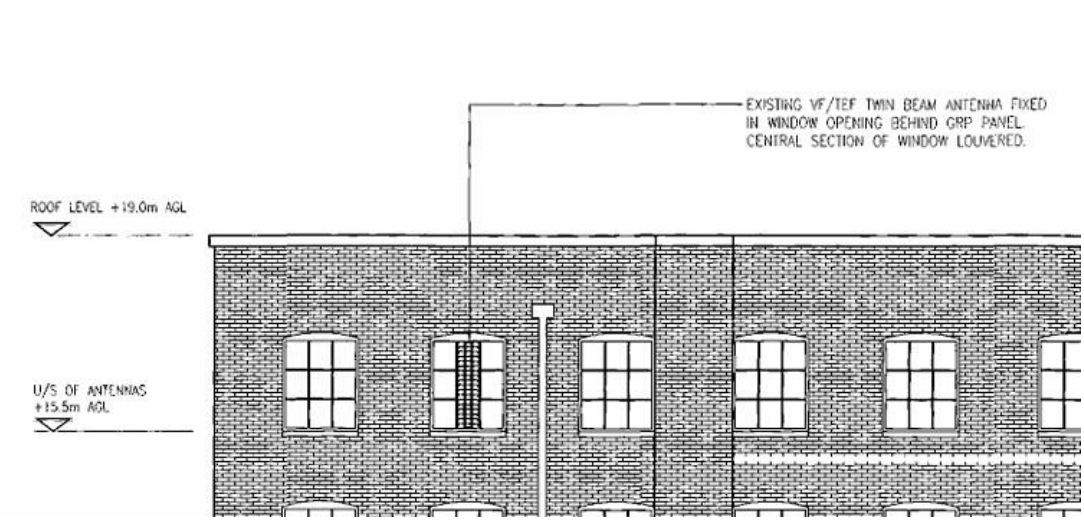


Figure 1: Existing South East Elevation (Drg No. 301) of the existing site. (Source: Manchester City Council Planning Portal, Application Reference 102381/LO/2013/N2).

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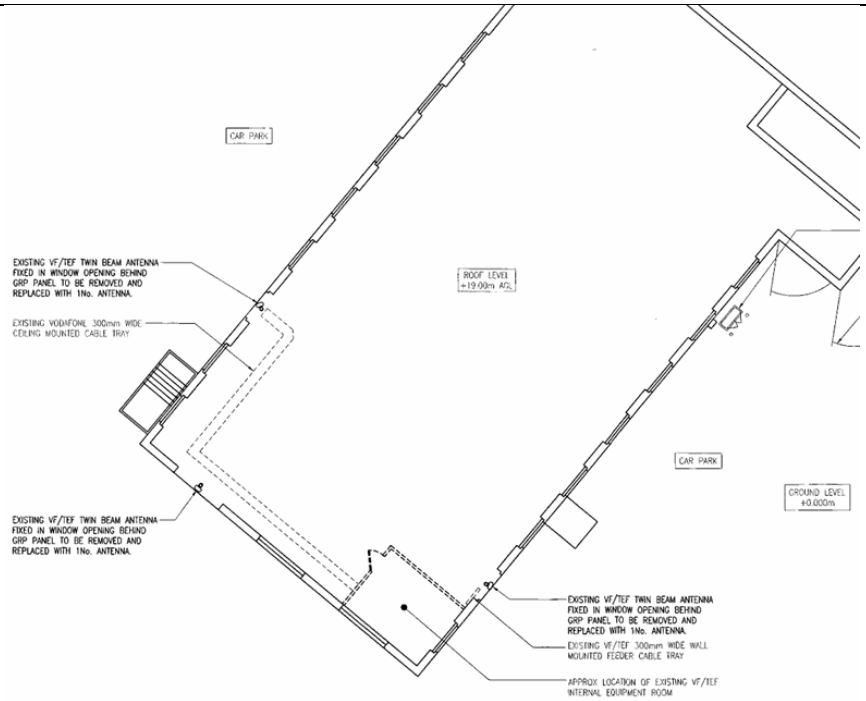


Figure 2: Proposed Site Plan from LBC Consent 102381/LO/2013/N2 showing the position of the 3no. antennas. (Source: Manchester City Council Planning Portal, Application Reference 102381/LO/2013/N2).



Figure 3: Streetview of the Existing Site looking Northwest from Pollard Street (South East Elevation) showing one of three window openings (Source: Google Maps, 2026).

In the first instance, all correspondence should be directed to the agent.

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The existing rooftop site cannot be upgraded in situ as the window openings are not placed at a sufficient height to provide meaningful and reliable 2G, 4G and 5G mobile coverage to all sectors of the cell area. More importantly, there is simply not enough room within the window openings to accommodate the upgraded antennas and associated apparatus required to introduce the latest 4G and new 5G mobile coverage to the surrounding area. Simply put, it is not feasible from a design or build perspective to upgrade the current site.

Therefore, to ensure that the desired level of coverage and capacity is met, a new location for a radio base station for VMO2 has been identified as close as practical to the existing site which currently serves the area. The existing rooftop site will be lost from VMO2's network and whilst the VodafoneThree equipment will remain, the proposed site is necessary to replicate the existing level of coverage that is provided by the existing VMO2 site whilst also introducing the latest 4G and new 5G technologies to the cell area for VMO2 customers.

Operators have committed to use existing structures for network upgrades wherever viable to reduce the need for new development and minimise visual impact. However, the existing rooftop installation is not upgradeable and other streetworks sites within the cell area are not designed to be able to support 5G antennas. In particular, the weight of the antennas, and the separation required from other items of associated equipment, is such that it cannot utilise some existing structures, without being radically redesigned and replaced with a much bulkier and bigger structure (traditional monopole or lattice tower as shown in figures 4 & 5). This would have a much greater impact on the visual amenity of the street scene and there is insufficient space to accommodate the larger, bulkier mast. In essence, in order to provide the latest 4G and 5G services in these situations, a new site is required nearby for VMO2, with no need for any further additional sites in the area and ensuring visual impact is minimised as far as practicable.

The operator is limited in siting options. The replacement of existing coverage means that the operator has to be located as close as possible to the existing installation in order to maintain the provision of equivalent coverage and capacity to the surrounding area of New Islington.

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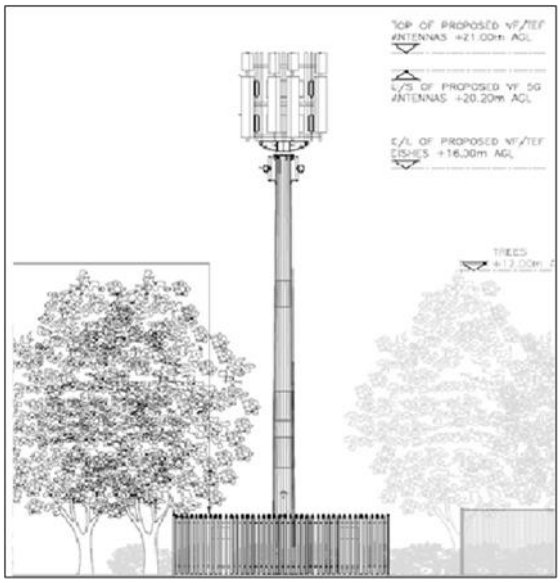


Figure 4: Traditional Monopole Design



Figure 5: Traditional Lattice Tower Design.

Prior to progressing the current option, the operators and applicant explored a potential rooftop replacement site at Hatbox B, a residential apartment block some 145.0m South of the existing Cornerstone shared site. Pre-application consultation letters and planning drawings were sent to the LPA, Ward Councillors, the local MP and one nearby school on the 12th May 2025. The development comprised 6no. VMO2 antennas and 6no. VodafoneThree antennas (12no. total) fixed to the rooftop via proposed tripods, 2no. 0.3m dishes and 6no. equipment cabinets to be installed on the proposed grillage.

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A formal planning application was never submitted for the proposed rooftop installation, as the site provider revealed that the building was undergoing remediation works required by the Building Societies Association (BSA). These works are set to take a number of years to complete and restricted the applicant's ability to carry out initial surveys. Given the constraints surrounding access to the site and the need to find a suitable replacement site promptly, the rooftop site was ruled out, and a new Streetworks option was progressed. Further details are provided within the Discounted Options table under Section 5 of this report.

Site Location

The application site is set within a grassed area bounded by Pollard Street to the West, Beswick Street to the North and Merrill Street (A662) to the East. The grassed area formerly housed a number of residential properties comprising 2 storey houses and a row of 3 storey walk-up apartment buildings located along Chesshyre Avenue. The 34 properties were demolished as part of the approved proposals for the regeneration of the Holt Town Area. The site is surrounded by a combination of industrial and commercial land uses to the North and East of the site with a small grouping of residential flats further South along Little Holme Street.

To the west of the site, immediately South of Spectator Mill, is Hope Mill, which is home to a number of creative art spaces, commercial units and industrial businesses.

Holt Town tram stop is located approximately 140.0m to the east of the proposed site. The tram stop is served by the Ashton-under-Lyne to Eccles line and the Altrincham to Etihad Campus line and provides extensive links from the New Islington area to locations across North and South Manchester.

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Figure 6: Existing Site Location and its surroundings (Source: Google Earth).

Street views of the application site are provided below to illustrate the proposed site location and visual impact.

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Figure 7: Streetview of the proposed site looking Southeast from Pollard Street (Source: Google Maps, 2026).

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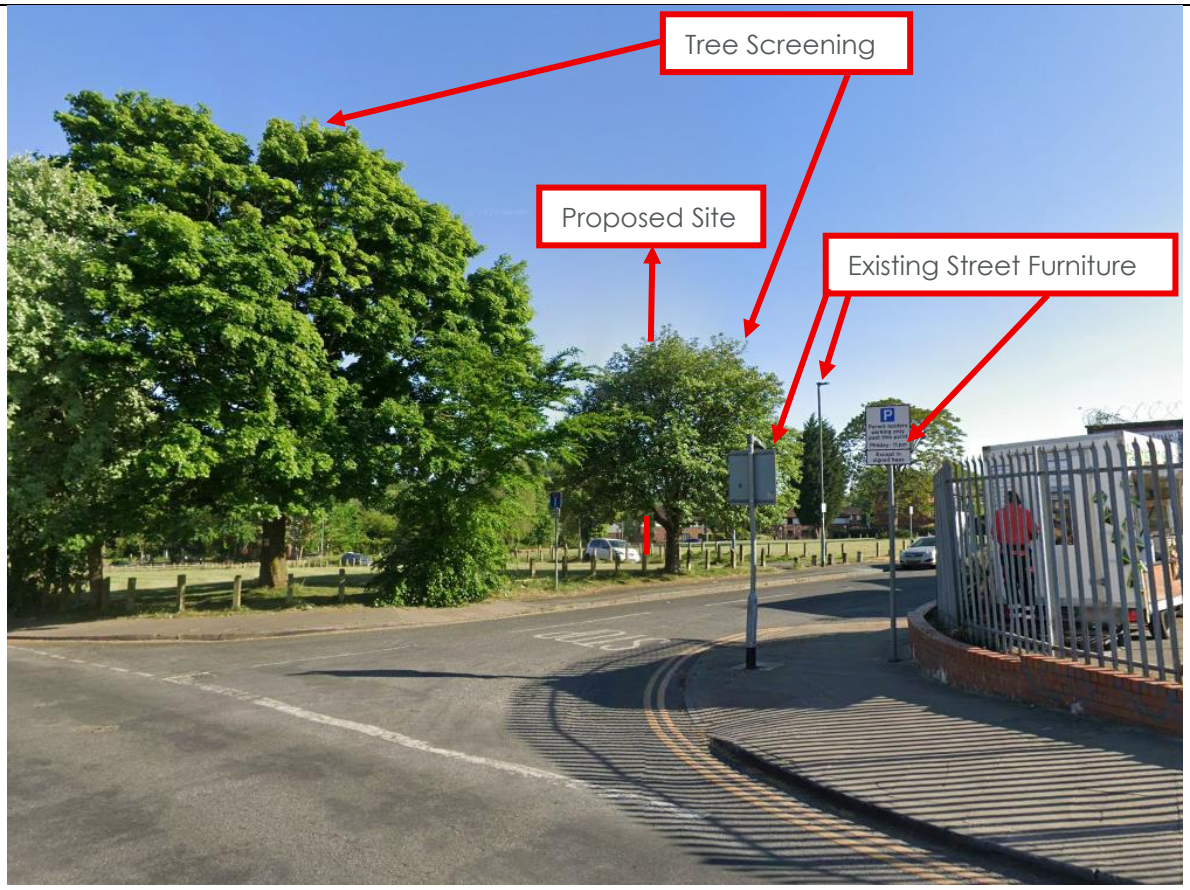


Figure 8: Streetview of the proposed site looking South from the junction of Beswick Street and Pollard Street (Source: Google Maps, 2026).

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Figure 9: Streetview of the proposed site looking North from the junction of Chesshyre Avenue and Little Holme Street (Source: Google Maps, 2026).

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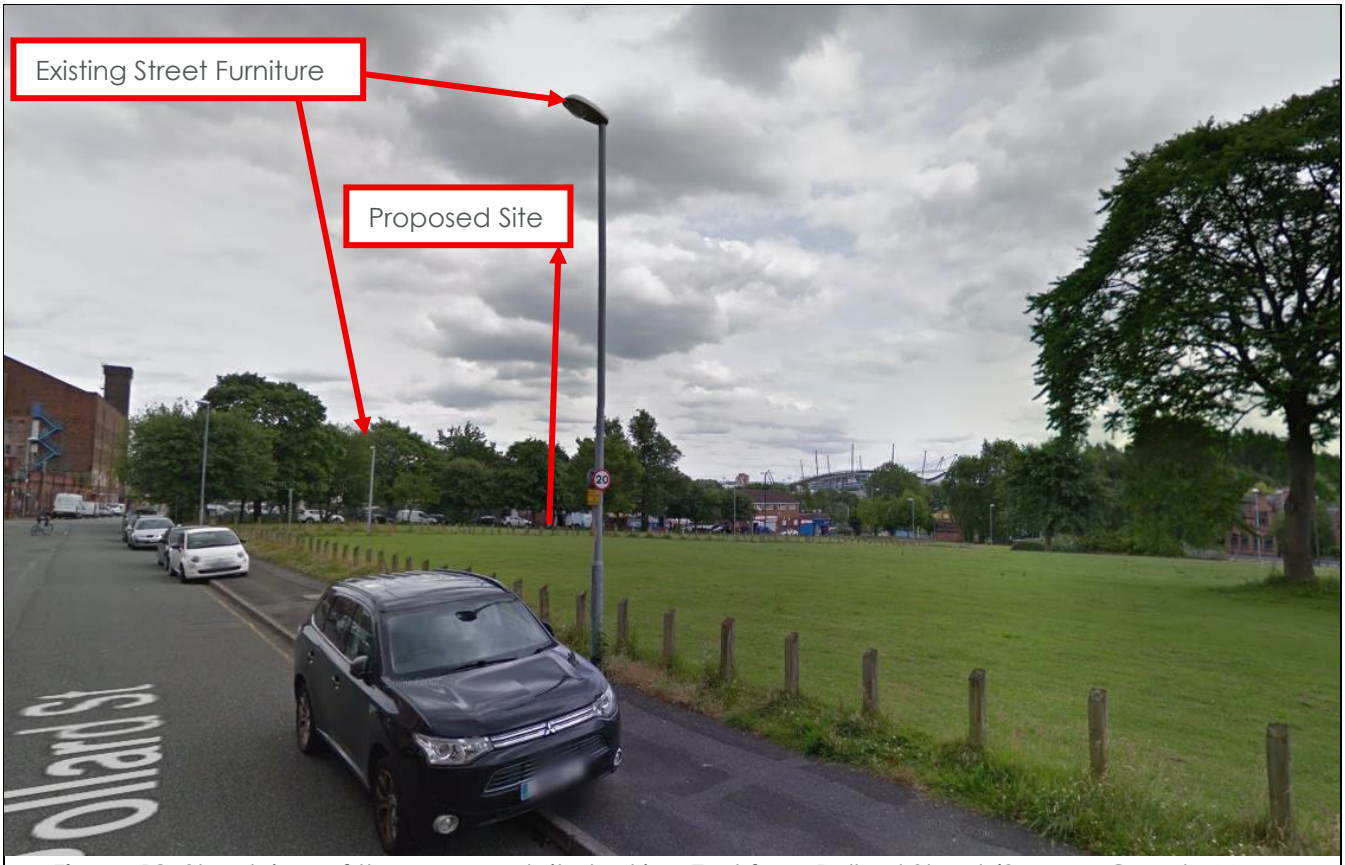


Figure 10: Streetview of the proposed site looking East from Pollard Street (Source: Google Maps, 2026).

The need for this proposal arises directly from the removal of VMO2 equipment from an existing rooftop installation located at National Grid Reference (NGR) E: 385761 & N: 398562. This installation, which is jointly operated by VodafoneThree and VMO2, is no longer capable of supporting the upgraded equipment required for the rollout of advanced mobile technologies, particularly 5G. The limitations at the existing site are primarily technical and physical. These include constraints on structural load capacity, insufficient space within the window bays and fundamental design limitations that prevent further equipment upgrades.

It is important to emphasise that the installation must remain close to the current location. Any significant relocation too far away would create a coverage gap, undermining service continuity for local residents, businesses, and public services. A careful and comprehensive assessment of potential alternative sites within the search area has been undertaken, taking into account technical feasibility, visual impact, and access constraints. A full schedule of options considered is presented in the later sections of this supporting statement, demonstrating that the proposed site represents

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the most suitable solution to balance operational requirements with environmental and community considerations.

As such, a new, purpose-sited location has been identified to accommodate VMO2's equipment, ensuring continuity of coverage in the surrounding area and facilitating the delivery of next-generation mobile services. The proposed site is situated within a grassed area off Pollard Street in New Islington. This location is well suited from a technical and planning perspective, being close enough to the original installation to maintain existing coverage levels, while also providing an opportunity to expand and improve service delivery, particularly for indoor and outdoor 5G coverage.

Notably, 5G infrastructure requires more substantial supporting structures than its predecessors due to the increased weight and dimensions of the antennas and associated equipment. Greater separation distances between antenna arrays and ancillary components are also required, making it impractical to retrofit this technology onto many older installations. The proposed monopole design and associated equipment cabinets are therefore necessary to meet modern operational and safety standards.

The proposed site is located within an established commercial and industrial area. The immediate surroundings comprise industrial premises, commercial properties, creative workspaces and significant existing vertical elements such as streetlights and advertising signage. This context provides a suitable visual backdrop for the proposed telecommunications installation, allowing it to assimilate into the built environment without appearing overly prominent or out of place. By positioning the mast within a landscape already characterised by tall structures and signage, its presence will be visually coherent and proportionate within the streetscape.

The mast is proposed to be sited within the grassed area off Pollard Street. Views from passing vehicles will be transient and minimal, lasting only a few seconds due to vehicle speed and the orientation of the installation. The equipment has been deliberately positioned and angled to avoid direct lines of sight from the nearby commercial premises, further reducing its visual impact.

The grass verge features a number of trees that provide substantial screening for the lower and middle portion of the installation. It is acknowledged that the upper section of the mast, where antennas and RRUs are located, will remain visible. This is necessary to maintain clear lines of sight for effective signal transmission, as any obstruction from trees or surrounding buildings could compromise the performance of the 5G network. The siting therefore represents a careful balance between operational requirements and visual mitigation.

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Careful consideration has been given to operational needs, local sensitivities, and safety. The mast is positioned away from pedestrian walkways to prevent obstruction, and its location ensures that it does not interfere with vehicular sightlines, maintaining road safety. Residential amenity has also been considered, with the installation placed within the commercial landscape rather than near residential areas, where visual impact could be more pronounced.

The height of the proposed monopole, 20 metres, represents the minimum necessary to provide adequate clearance above surrounding buildings, street furniture, and tree cover, all of which can interfere with signal propagation if not properly accounted for. The design and siting reflect feedback from the Local Planning Authority, which expressed concerns regarding visual impact and mast height. However, the technical requirements for reliable 5G coverage mean that any reduction in height would compromise network performance and the ability to deliver high-capacity connectivity. By locating the mast amongst existing vertical structures such as street lighting and signage, its visual impact is further mitigated, allowing it to blend into the existing environment and reduce its overall prominence.

From key public viewpoints, including the A662 and local roads bordering the grassed area, visibility of the mast will be limited to brief, transient glimpses as vehicles pass. The combination of existing and maturing vegetation provides additional natural screening, further softening the mast's presence in the landscape. Therefore, visual amenity is reduced.

Proposed Design:

The proposed development will comprise the installation of a 20-metre-high street pole designed to accommodate a range of telecommunications equipment necessary to deliver enhanced mobile network services. The installation will include six antennas, which will facilitate improved coverage and capacity for both 4G and 5G services, as well as three Remote Radio Units (RRUs) that will support efficient signal transmission and network performance. In addition, the scheme includes the provision of two 300mm transmission dishes and one GPS module.

Supporting ground-based infrastructure will consist of equipment cabinets, sited sensitively within the grass verge fronting the row of bollards immediately adjacent to the monopole. This location has been specifically chosen to minimise disruption to pedestrian and vehicular access while blending into the existing street scene. The proposed equipment will be contained within a small, clearly defined footprint, with all elements installed in a manner that adheres to the relevant health, safety, and operational standards for telecommunications infrastructure.

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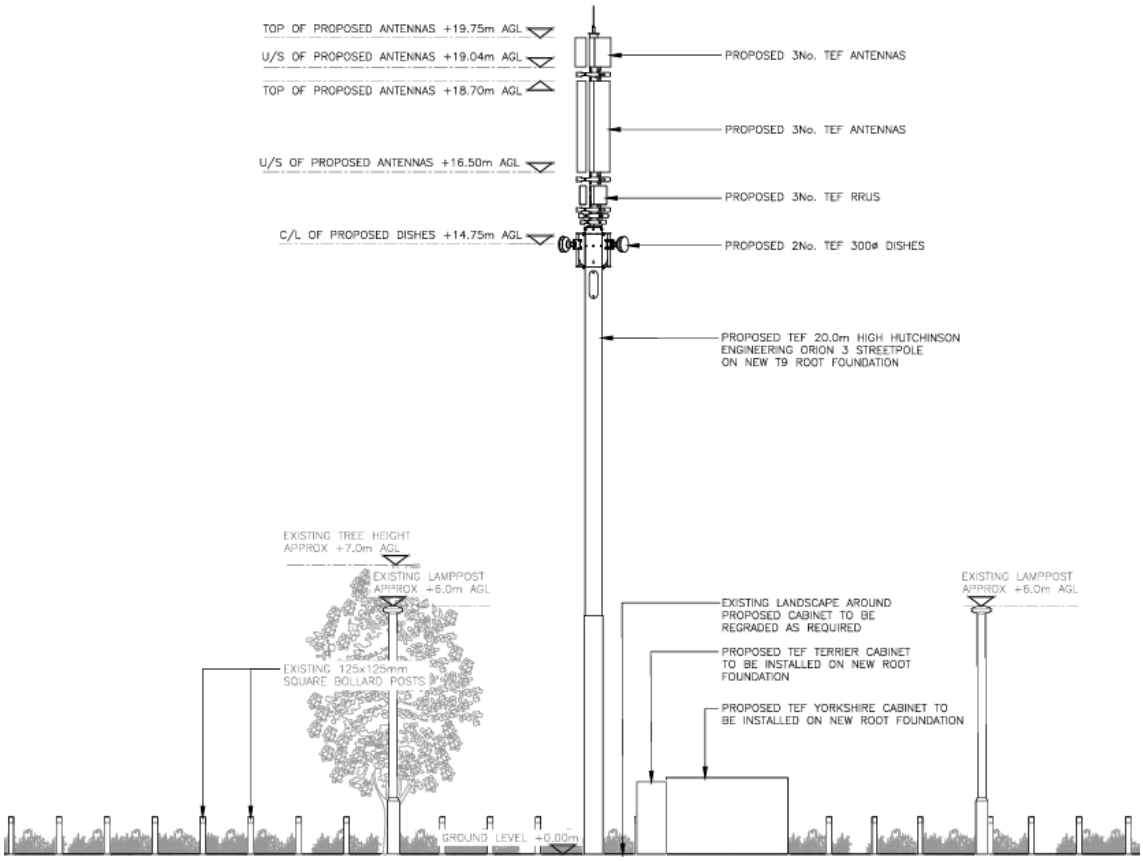


Figure 11: Equipment Layout from Proposed Northeast Elevation viewpoint (Source: Planning Drawings No. 301).

Associated Coverage:

Mobile telecommunications networks have become an indispensable part of modern life across the United Kingdom. In an increasingly connected and digitally driven society, individuals, businesses, and public services now expect fast, seamless, and reliable mobile connectivity whether at home, in the workplace, or while on the move. The widespread adoption of smartphones, cloud computing, mobile applications, video conferencing, and remote work technologies has elevated mobile coverage from a mere convenience to a critical public utility. It now underpins daily communication, economic activity, access to essential services, and social inclusion.

With the rollout of fifth generation (5G) mobile technology, the UK is entering a transformative phase of digital infrastructure development. 5G represents a significant leap forward in terms of data capacity, speed, latency reduction, and network reliability. These enhancements are not only vital for improving mobile services but also serve as a catalyst for broader technological innovation across both

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public and private sectors. Recognising this, the UK Government has identified the acceleration of 5G deployment and the enhancement of digital infrastructure as a strategic national priority. This commitment is reflected in a range of initiatives, including legislative reforms, national policy frameworks, and public funding to ensure universal, high-quality digital access.

The proposed development site represents a strategic investment in strengthening the local mobile telecommunications network. It will deliver meaningful improvements to both 4G and 5G coverage, enhancing mobile connectivity for residents, businesses, public services, and visitors alike. This upgrade is essential for supporting digital inclusion, encouraging innovation, improving access to online services, and fostering productivity across all sectors of society.

National and local policy guidance consistently emphasises the pivotal role of mobile infrastructure in fostering economic growth, supporting entrepreneurship, facilitating job creation, and bridging regional inequalities in digital access.

Unlike previous generations of mobile technology, 5G is not simply about faster internet speeds, it provides a flexible platform for future innovation. Its ability to connect a vast number of devices simultaneously is the foundation upon which the Internet of Things (IoT) and smart city applications will be built. These include real-time traffic management, intelligent public lighting systems, smart grid energy management, advanced healthcare services such as telemedicine, and even autonomous vehicles. In rural and urban areas alike, 5G has the potential to revolutionise sectors such as agriculture, logistics, education, and manufacturing by enabling more responsive, data-driven, and efficient operations.

As mobile data usage continues to rise exponentially, it is essential that the UK's telecommunications networks remain resilient, scalable, and adaptable to increasing demands. Without continued infrastructure investment, there is a tangible risk of network congestion, degraded performance, and reduced quality of service, which would ultimately constrain economic development and limit access to critical digital services. As such, ongoing enhancements like this proposed installation are not only necessary, but they are also vital to sustaining national competitiveness and technological progress.

This development will significantly enhance the quality and availability of mobile services within the local area, ensuring users enjoy reliable voice calls and high-speed data access, regardless of user volume or time of day. It will provide essential support to local businesses, improve the digital experience for residents, and enable efficient service delivery for emergency responders and public agencies.

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Ultimately, the installation represents a forward-thinking investment that ensures the community is not only served by today's mobile technologies but is also future proofed for the evolving demands of the digital age. It will enable the area to embrace the benefits of a smart, connected future, supporting economic development, enhancing social well-being, and strengthening the foundations of a resilient digital society.

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

Cornerstone is in the process of progressing a suitable new site in the New Islington area for a radio base station capable of providing the latest 4G and new 5G technologies for VMO2. The existing Rooftop site is being utilised by VMO2 and VodafoneThree, atop of Spectator Mill on Spectator Street, some 76.0m from the proposed site providing mobile coverage and capacity to the local area. There is now a requirement to upgrade this cell to provide the latest 4G and new 5G technologies for VMO2. The existing site cannot accommodate the equipment needed to provide the level of coverage and capacity that is now required. Therefore, a new site is necessary.

Coverage plots are available on request.

Type of Structure:

Description:

INSTALLATION OF 20.0M STREETWORKS MONOPOLE SUPPORTING 6NO. ANTENNAS AND 2NO. 0.3M DISHES, INSTALLATION OF 2NO. EQUIPMENT CABINETS AND ANCILLARY EQUIPMENT THERETO.

Overall Height: 20.0m

Equipment Housing:

EXISTING/ PROPOSED	OPERATOR	MANUFACTURER	MODEL	DIMENSIONS (WxDxH)	LOCATION	COLOUR/ FINISH	STATUS
ALLOCATED	TEF	–	EFF4	2950x600x1850	PAVEMENT	RAL6009	NEW
ALLOCATED	TEF	–	EFF5	700x600x1750	PAVEMENT	RAL6009	NEW

Materials:

Tower/mast etc – type of material and external colour:	Galvanised Steel – RAL 7035 – Light Grey

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Equipment housing – type of material and external colour:	Galvanised Steel – RAL 6009 – Fir Green

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

We are in the process of decommissioning our presence at the existing shared telecommunications site located at Spectator Mill, which is currently jointly operated by VMO2 and VodafoneThree. This decision has been driven by technical and structural limitations at the site, which can no longer accommodate the latest generation of mobile network equipment. Specifically, the existing infrastructure is incapable of supporting the enhanced 5G technology required by VMO2 to meet increasing user demand and to remain aligned with current and future industry standards.

The council and local residents should be aware that the progression of mobile technology, particularly the transition to 5G, necessitates significant upgrades to existing infrastructure. Unlike previous generations, 5G equipment is considerably heavier and larger. For example, the antennas used in 5G networks can be up to three times heavier than their 3G and 4G counterparts. In addition, Remote Radio Units (RRUs), which play a vital role in signal transmission and processing, now require greater spatial separation and elevated mounting positions to function effectively. These requirements place demands on infrastructure that many older sites, particularly street works-style poles, were never designed to meet.

Beyond structural challenges, the technical characteristics of 5G signal propagation impose further requirements. Unlike lower-frequency signals, 5G—particularly in its higher-frequency bands—is more susceptible to attenuation and interference from obstacles such as buildings, trees, and varied terrain. To ensure consistent and high-quality service, antennas must be installed at a minimum height that allows for clear line-of-sight coverage across the intended service area. In this instance, extensive network modelling and RF planning analysis have determined that a height of 20 metres is the minimum necessary to deliver reliable and uninterrupted 4G and 5G connectivity. This is not an arbitrary figure, but a carefully calculated specification based on signal propagation needs, population density, and anticipated data demand.

While it would be technically possible to install a greenfield mast with a large, open headframe capable of supporting two operators and their full suite of equipment, such structures are typically bulky, visually intrusive, and poorly suited to urban or mixed-use environments as shown in Figures 4 & 5. In contrast, the current proposal put forward a slimline monopole, specifically designed for use within a street scene context. It offers a streamlined appearance and a reduced visual footprint, with all

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antennas housed within a compact headframe. Equipment cabinets will be positioned at ground level, discreetly within the grass verge, and will be finished in dark green to blend with surrounding landscaping. The mast itself will be painted a neutral grey to help it recede visually against the urban backdrop. If the council wishes for a different colour scheme, we are open to further discussions.

In developing this proposal, a site-specific and function-led design approach has been adopted. This means that the location and layout have been carefully selected based on a thorough analysis of local topography, existing street furniture, nearby building heights, available natural screening, and the technical requirements of the network. The resulting design strikes a careful balance between operational efficiency and sensitivity to the built environment.

Importantly, modern telecommunications systems, particularly those delivering 4G and 5G services, operate at relatively low power and have a comparatively short effective range, especially when utilising higher frequency bands. As a result, base stations must be positioned closer to the communities they serve in order to maintain reliable signal strength and capacity. This is particularly critical in areas with dense populations, mixed land uses, and high data demand, where users rely on uninterrupted connectivity for work, education, healthcare, and everyday communication.

The proposed site meets these requirements by providing a technically suitable and strategically located position within the designated search area. This location ensures that the surrounding community benefits from consistent and high-quality mobile coverage, supporting both current and future demand. Furthermore, careful siting and orientation of the mast mean that it is highly screened from sensitive receptors. There will be little to no visibility from private residential dwellings in the area, and transient views from public vantage points are limited and minimal. In this way, the proposal achieves the dual objective of delivering essential digital connectivity while mitigating any potential visual impact on the local environment.

This development will deliver tangible benefits across a broad range of everyday activities. Enhanced mobile connectivity supports voice and video calls, real-time navigation, remote working, virtual learning, telehealth services, digital banking, and entertainment streaming. It also plays a vital role in enabling the emergency services to maintain consistent and dependable communications, particularly during critical incidents or public safety operations.

The deployment of 5G, in particular, marks a significant step forward in mobile communications. It offers ultra-low latency and the ability to support thousands of simultaneous connections, paving the way for innovations in fields such as

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autonomous vehicles, smart infrastructure, healthcare monitoring, logistics, precision farming, and more.

This proposed installation represents a critical part of that digital infrastructure evolution. It has been carefully designed to deliver the required technical performance while keeping visual and physical impacts to a minimum. While some change to the urban landscape is unavoidable, the design has been refined to be as discreet and proportionate as possible. It is consistent with both national and local planning policies which support the expansion of modern digital infrastructure and reflects the increasing role that mobile connectivity plays as an essential utility in people's lives.

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Health and Safety - including ICNIRP compliance

International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection Declaration is included with this submission.

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

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

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

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

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

The publication of the National Planning Policy Framework continues to highlight the Governments view that the planning system is not the appropriate mechanism for determining health safeguards. It sends a clear message to local planning authorities stating that they must:

> '*determine applications on planning grounds. They should not seek to prevent competition between different operators, question the need for the telecommunications system, or determine health safeguards if the proposal meets International Commission guidelines for public exposure.*'

This is reiterated in the Code of Practice.

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The telecommunication infrastructure the subject of this application accords with all relevant legislation and as such will not cause significant and irremediable interference with other electrical equipment, air traffic services or instrumentation operated in the national interest.

4. Technical Justification

Reason(s) why site required e.g. coverage, upgrade, capacity

This proposal seeks to deliver improved mobile coverage for VMO2 customers by introducing both indoor and outdoor 5G connectivity within this area of Manchester. The development of this infrastructure is a strategic step in addressing current and projected shortfalls in mobile service provision and ensuring that the area keeps pace with national standards for digital connectivity.

The rapid acceleration of mobile technology, coupled with society's growing reliance on mobile services for work, education, leisure, and public services, underscores the critical need for ongoing investment in telecommunications infrastructure. Mobile connectivity is no longer a luxury, it has become an essential utility, integral to daily life. From remote learning and video conferencing to navigation, online healthcare, and financial services, reliable mobile access is vital for ensuring social participation, economic productivity, and digital inclusion.

Under their licensing obligations with Ofcom, mobile network operators like VMO2 are required to expand and enhance their networks, particularly in areas where existing service quality is inadequate or where demand is increasing faster than the infrastructure can accommodate. As usage patterns continue to shift and data consumption surges, particularly in suburban and semi-urban areas, it becomes essential to reinforce coverage and capacity with modern, high-performance base stations.

A mobile network operates much like a patchwork quilt, with each base station forming a vital patch within a broader interconnected system. Each station is engineered to cover a specific geographic zone, seamlessly handing users off to neighbouring cells as they move. If gaps exist between these cells, or if coverage becomes overloaded in a given area, users experience dropped calls, slow data speeds, or total signal loss. Preventing these issues requires the strategic placement of new infrastructure, particularly in areas where population growth or usage intensity is creating bottlenecks. This proposal will address such a gap, helping to ensure continuous, uninterrupted service for local residents, businesses, and visitors.

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Importantly, the demand for high-speed, high-capacity mobile broadband extends beyond private use. Businesses rely on mobile services for logistics, communication, and customer engagement. Educational institutions increasingly deliver content via digital platforms. Healthcare providers are adopting mobile-based solutions for diagnostics, record-keeping, and remote consultations. Public services, from emergency response to smart transport systems, require always-on connectivity. Ensuring robust and ubiquitous mobile coverage is therefore a matter of both public utility and socio-economic resilience.

The proliferation of connected devices, from smartphones and tablets to smart TVs, IoT appliances, and wearable tech, has placed unprecedented strain on existing mobile infrastructure. Without continued investment and densification of the network, congestion and degradation in service quality are inevitable. The introduction of this site is part of a wider effort to futureproof the network and provide the foundational capacity necessary to support the next generation of digital services.

At the heart of this progression lies 5G technology, which represents a major leap forward in mobile communication standards. 5G offers:

- Ultra-fast data speeds, capable of supporting real-time streaming, large file transfers, and immersive digital experiences;
- Ultra-low latency, enabling instantaneous response times essential for applications like autonomous vehicles, industrial automation, remote surgery, and virtual reality;
- Massive device connectivity, allowing thousands of sensors and connected devices to operate within the same area, a key enabler of smart city and IoT systems.

These capabilities make 5G not only a technical upgrade but a transformational platform for innovation across nearly every sector. It will support new business models, foster the digital economy, and improve quality of life through smarter, more responsive services.

The economic and social benefits of 5G are widely recognised, with the technology poised to drive local productivity, attract inward investment, create skilled employment opportunities, and reduce digital divides. However, to realise these benefits, the physical infrastructure must be in place. This proposal directly supports that objective by enabling VMO2 to deliver next-generation services to an underserved area, ensuring that Manchester's residents and businesses are not left behind in the digital transition.

Ultimately, this development represents more than just a mast, it is a critical enabler of digital transformation. The infrastructure proposed here will serve as the backbone

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for smart homes, modern businesses, connected healthcare, and intelligent transport systems. It will underpin the transition to a smarter, more connected society, ensuring that this part of Manchester can fully participate in the 5G future. The applicant is committed to delivering this enhancement in a manner that is technically robust, operationally sound, and sensitive to the character and context of the local environment.

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5. Site Selection Process

Despite a thorough and systematic investigation, it has not been feasible to upgrade the existing installation from which VMO2 (Telefonica) is unwinding, due to operational and technical constraints associated with the operator's coverage requirements. Upgrading the existing site is simply not possible as there is no practical space within the window bays to accommodate the much larger heavier equipment associated with introducing 5G mobile coverage to the cell area.

It has also not been possible to co-locate on any other existing telecommunications infrastructure within the surrounding area, as there are no suitable existing structures within the defined search zone. The parameters of this search area have been rigorously determined by the operator's radio planners, based on detailed technical modelling to achieve the necessary improvements in coverage and network capacity. Any deviation from this defined zone would compromise service delivery, preventing the operator from meeting its network obligations and performance targets for the area.

Rooftop options within the search area were carefully assessed, but available buildings were generally incapable of hosting the proposed equipment from a structural standpoint that are therefore unable to provide effective coverage and reliable signal propagation, particularly for high capacity 5G services. Many rooftops were pitched or sloped, making them structurally unsuitable for safely supporting telecommunications equipment and further restricting access for installation and maintenance.

A wide range of alternative street works locations, and a small number of greenfield sites were also evaluated but ultimately discounted. Key reasons for rejection included adverse impacts on residential amenity, obstruction of visibility at junctions, the presence of underground services, and insufficient pavement or land space to accommodate a mast and associated equipment safely.

The accompanying figure and detailed schedule of discounted alternatives demonstrate that a comprehensive and robust assessment has been undertaken across the designated search area. This assessment confirms that the proposed installation represents the most suitable and balanced solution, providing the necessary technical performance while minimising visual and environmental impacts and aligning with relevant planning policy.

Based on this thorough site selection process, it is clear that the chosen location is the only viable option within the search area. It provides an optimal balance between the technical demands of modern telecommunications infrastructure and the need to mitigate impacts on streetscape character, residential amenity, and visual context,

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ensuring the installation is both operationally effective and appropriately integrated into its surroundings.

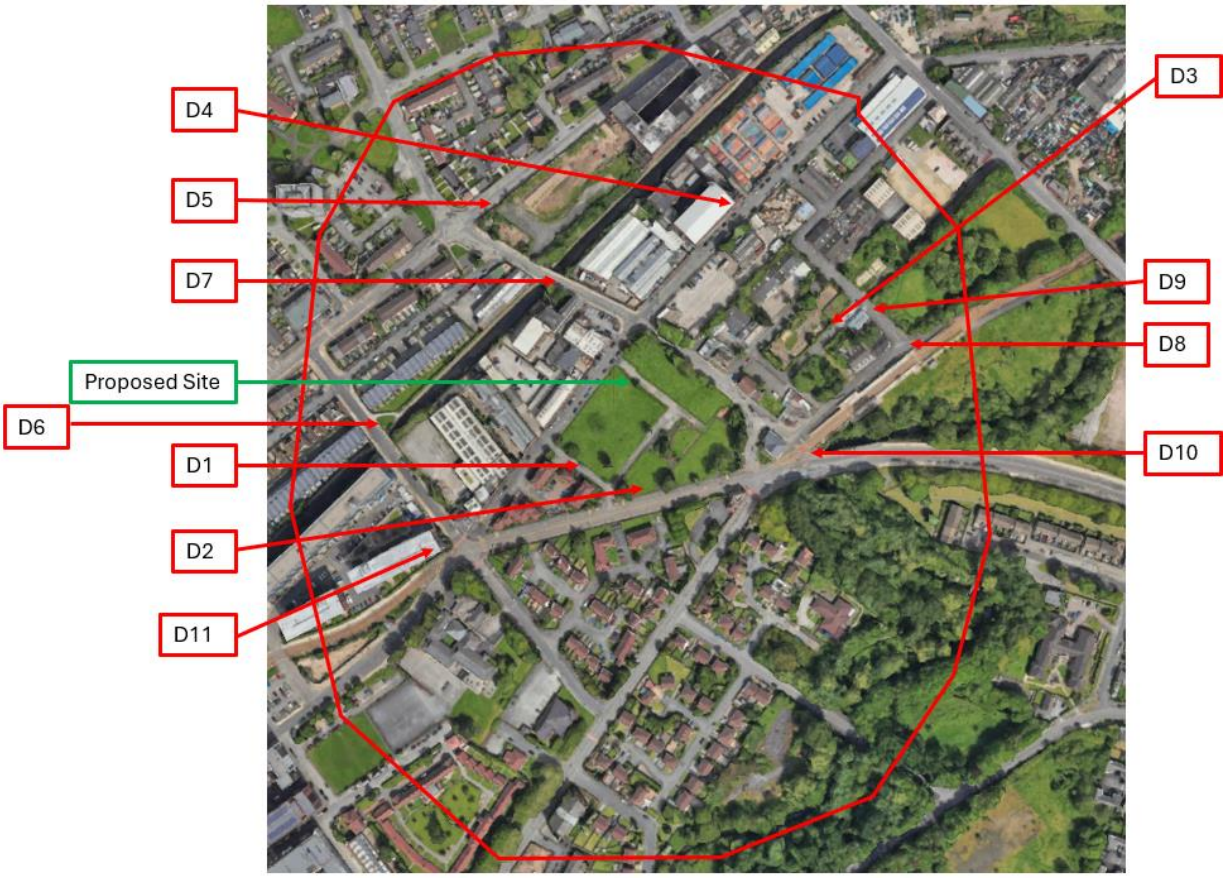


Figure 12: Discounted options maps with the designated search area in red (Source: Google Earth).

Alternative sites considered and not chosen

Site Type	Site name and address	National Grid Reference	Reason for not choosing site
D1 Streetworks	Little Holme Street SW, Little Holem Street, New Islington, Manchester, Greater Manchester, M4 7AS	E: 385797 N: 398469	A streetworks option was considered within the pavement of Little Holme Street however there is insufficient space available on this stretch of pavement as the siting and dimensions of a streetworks style mast and its associated equipment cabinets would restrict

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			pedestrian movements to unacceptable levels. Given the need to replace existing levels of coverage, the replacement site has to be situated as close to the current base station as practicable. An option at this location would be further from the current base station than the preferred site as well as being closer to sensitive visual receptors, namely the residential properties along Crossley Court. The proposed site is better situated to replace the existing level of mobile coverage as well as providing the latest 4G and new 5G coverage to target area. The proposed site also benefits from being located away from sensitive visual receptors and for these reasons, this option was discounted in favour of the proposed site.
D2 Streetworks	Merrill Street SWs, Merrill Street, New Islington, Manchester, Greater Manchester, M4 7AEX	E: 385847 N: 398450	Whilst this option benefits from ample floorspace, a streetworks installation in this location would be located adjacent to a number of mature trees. Given the height and maturity of the trees found next to this site, this natural clutter would prevent the effective propagation of radio signals towards the target area. Whilst the proposed site is also situated in close proximity to some trees, they are much smaller in height, and the antennas easily surmount this natural clutter avoiding issues with signal propagation.

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			Similar to D1, an installation here would be situated further from the existing site than the proposed location and therefore will not replicate existing coverage levels within the target area as effectively as the proposed sites. For the reasons outline above, this option was discounted in favour of the proposed site.
D3 Streetworks	Branson Street SWs Branson Street, New Islington, Manchester, Greater Manchester, M4 7HR	E: 385949 N: 398570	An option within the pavement of Branson Street was considered and later discounted due to the presence of underground services in this location. A streetworks style column could not be accommodated on this stretch of land due to the presence of underground services and the clearances that the utility company requires to be retained in order to access and maintain them. The pavement along this stretch of road is littered with scarring suggesting that there are numerous services present along the entirety of the footpath. A site in this location could therefore not be built and has to be discounted for this reason.
D4 Streetworks	Pollard Street East RT Pollard Street East, New Islington, Manchester, Greater Manchester, M40 7QX	E: 385911 N: 398669	A rooftop site was considered on top of Wellington House as it is of sufficient height to clear the surrounding built clutter and thus provide efficient levels of coverage to the target area. However, the building has not been designed to be able to

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			accommodate telecommunications equipment as it has a pitched roof. As such, there would be nothing for the apparatus to be supported by. In order to be able to attach the equipment to this roof, the whole roof would need to be totally redesigned, which would be unfeasible, impracticable and very disruptive for the operations of the businesses within the host property. The chimney at the rooftop's northeastern edge is not suitable to accommodate telecommunications equipment. The structural makeup of the chimney top would not support the weight of the proposed antennas and associated equipment. The weight of the antennas, Remote Radio Units and the feeder cables would be in the region of 2 tonnes. This would put significant stress on the host property which it was not designed to take. As such the applicant would not progress the installation of a radio base station on this rooftop. Simply put the building is not suitable from a practical and build perspective given its construction and roof shape. It was therefore discounted in favour of the proposed option.
D5 Streetworks	Bradford Rd SWs Bradford Rd, New Islington, Manchester, Greater Manchester, M40 7EY	E: 385729 N: 398660	A streetworks style installation was considered within the footpath of Bradford Road. The land immediately adjacent to this location is currently being redeveloped under planning

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			application 130395/LO/2021 that was approved in April of 2022. The proposal will create workspaces, retail and community uses at ground level as well as the creation of over 150 residential apartments. There are concerns surrounding the proximity of a site in this location to the proposed redevelopment site as the properties would prevent the effective propagation of radio signals towards the target area as it would block the signal. In addition to this, an application for installation of 20 metre high telecommunication monopole and associated equipment (LPA Ref: 126760/TEL/2020) was refused on the opposite side of Bradford Road within 10.0m of this site location. It was decided that the proposed installation by reason of its height, siting and appearance would form a visually intrusive and dominant feature which would be harmful to the visual amenity of neighbouring residential occupiers. Given this refusal decision in 2020 coupled with the introduction of further residential properties in close proximity to this site, an option in this location was avoided in light of the previous planning history and feasibility of receiving an approval decision.
D6 Streetworks	Carruthers Street SWs Carruthers Street New Islington, Manchester, Greater Manchester, M4 7HY	E: 385646 N: 398502	A streetworks style installation within the grass verge of Carruthers Street was considered however the residential properties immediately West and South of the site have open balconies which raises

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			concerns with conformity to ICNIRP Guidelines. To achieve ICNIRP compliance the operator must be certain that access to the antennas is restricted to authorised personnel only. They must also consider if the available antenna heights and orientations will ensure ICNIRP compliance with the host property. In this respect, a scheme's siting and appearance, including its overall height must cater for those persons that might be present at height, as they must not be able to encroach upon the ICNIRP exclusion zones around each antenna. A mast of considerable height, in the realm of 22.50m, would be required given the sloping gradient of the grass verge to achieve total compliance with ICNIRP guidance in this location in order to clear the balconies. A mast of this height where it is in close proximity to sensitive receptors such as the Grade II Listed Bridge over the Ashton Canal and surrounding residential properties, would have a far bigger visual impact on the local area compared to the proposed location off Pollard Street which is sited to avoid visual impact on the residential amenity of the area and nearby heritage assets. A streetworks option was therefore discounted for these reasons in favour of the proposed site.
D7 Streetworks	Beswick Street Bridge SWs	E: 385786 N: 398609	A streetworks style option on the Beswick Street Bridge was

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	Beswick Street Bridge, New Islington, Manchester, Greater Manchester, M40 7FS		considered due to its close proximity to the existing site. The bridge is a Grade II Listed Building. Section 66(1) (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) of the Planning Act emphasises that special regard should be had to the desirability of preserving listed buildings, their settings or any features of special architectural or historic interest. There are also concerns surrounding the structural integrity of the bridge and its ability to accommodate the additional weight of the proposed equipment leading to issues during the build phase of proposal. The application site is situated a considerable distance from the nearest listed building and benefits from a degree of screening provided by nearby trees. Given the imperative to preserve heritage assets, and given the application site can meet technical objectives, is buildable and results in limited impact on the nearby heritage assets, this option on a listed building was rejected.
D8 Streetworks	Holt Town SWs Holt Town, New Islington, Manchester, Greater Manchester, M40 7FE	E: 386047 N: 398565	This option is located at the Northeast boundary of the radio planner's search area some 300.0m from the existing site. The new site is required to replace and enhance existing mobile coverage currently being provided by the rooftop site at Spectator Mill. An installation in this location is too far removed from

			the existing site to fulfil the coverage and capacity issues of the target area as a whole. Only one out of three sectors would provide coverage into the target area, requiring a second site within the cell area to fill these gaps leading to the proliferation of masts in this area, contrary to the NPPF. An installation in this location would lead to a poor user experience with dropped calls and buffering issues. This would be unacceptable to the operator and not viable. Therefore, this site has to be discounted as it does not meet operator's technical requirements.
D9 Streetworks	Cavalier St SWs Cavalier St, New Islington, Manchester, Greater Manchester, M40 7FE	E: 385993 N: 398601	An option within the pavement of Cavalier Street was considered and similar to D3, later discounted due to the presence of underground services in this location. A streetworks style column could not be accommodated on this stretch of land due to the presence of underground services and the clearances that the utility company requires to be retained in order to access and maintain them. The pavement along this stretch of road is littered with scarring suggesting that there are numerous services present along the entirety of the footpath. A site in this location could therefore not be built and has to be discounted for this reason.

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D10 Streetworks	Ashton New Rd SWs Ashton New Rd, New Islington, Manchester, Greater Manchester, M4 7EU	E: 385975 N: 398478	A streetworks style installation was considered within the pavement of Ashton New Road and the adjacent tram line. Whilst the siting of telecommunications equipment in close proximity to the tramline helps the site to assimilate into the surrounding landscape, the presence of the overhead tramline cables presences build and design related issues. A site in this location is simply too close to the overhead tram cables to be safely installed and maintained in line with health and safety requirements and must therefore be discounted.
D11 Greenfield	Hatbox RT Hatbox, 7, Munday Street, New Islington, Manchester, Greater Manchester, M4 7EU	E: 385685 N: 398416	This option was initially progressed as the preferred replacement site for the cell area however planning was never submitted due to the Site Provider carrying out remedial redevelopment works that prevented access to the site. Due to the nature of the development and the need to replace existing coverage before VMO2 decommission their active equipment from the existing site, a new site is required as soon as possible in order to avoid a gap in coverage in this area. Without the replacement site, users will experience dropped calls, slow data speeds and even total signal loss. Preventing these issues requires the strategic placement of new infrastructure hence the requirement for a new site.

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If no alternative site options have been investigated, please explain why: N/A
Land use planning designations: The application site does not lie within any statutory land base designations that will be of material consideration in the determination of this application.
Additional relevant information (include planning policy and material considerations): **Planning Statement:** From the outset, it is important to recognise that any alteration to the built or natural environment, including the installation of a telecommunications mast at this specific site, will inevitably introduce some degree of visual change. The proposed mast is located within a grassed area bounded by Pollard Street to the West, Beswick Street to the North and Merrill Street (A662) to the East. The site has been carefully selected to balance technical requirements with sensitivity to its surroundings. While visible from certain viewpoints, the design and siting have been chosen to minimise intrusion and integrate with existing street furniture, mature trees, and other landscape features where possible. Any assessment of visual impact must therefore consider the broader context, recognising the potential for the development to contribute positively to the area's infrastructure, connectivity, and community objectives. In evaluating this installation, the key consideration is whether the siting, height, and appearance of the mast would result in material harm to the visual or environmental character of the locality. The mast is not only visible but has been designed to be proportionate in scale, reducing bulk and prominence through a slimline structure and the use of sympathetic materials. The potential visual impact must be weighed against the substantial public benefits delivered by improved mobile connectivity, including reliable 4G and 5G coverage for residents, businesses, and public service providers in the immediate vicinity and the wider area. The assessment considers both the immediate aesthetic effects and the long-term benefits that this infrastructure brings to the community. This evaluation extends beyond simply noting potential visual concerns. It provides a reasoned analysis of how the mast will interact with the streetscape, nearby

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residential properties, and local green spaces. The design seeks to ensure that visual changes are proportionate and do not diminish the broader improvements that enhanced connectivity enables. By siting the mast in an area that avoids sensitive negatively impacting heritage assets, conservation areas, and visually prominent landmarks, the proposal carefully balances operational requirements with the need to protect local character.

The strategic importance of the installation is considerable. Mobile telecommunications underpin modern life, enabling communication, remote work, education, and access to essential services. This specific site has been identified as critical in meeting the operator's technical requirements to deliver high-capacity, reliable coverage, particularly for 5G services. The improved connectivity will support residents, local businesses, and community services, enhance quality of life and promote digital inclusion.

Beyond everyday connectivity, the deployment of advanced 4G and 5G technologies at this site facilitates broader digital transformation in the area. Reliable mobile infrastructure supports sectors such as healthcare, education, emergency services, and local commerce. Enhanced coverage allows for faster access to digital services, improved service delivery, and greater economic resilience. The installation therefore provides measurable strategic and social benefits that extend beyond its immediate functional role.

While, the proposed mast introduces a new element into the visual environment, the potential visual change is proportionate to the significant operational, social, and economic benefits it delivers. The siting, scale, and design of the installation have been carefully considered to minimise adverse impacts, ensuring that it integrates sensitively within the streetscape. Recognising these substantial benefits demonstrates that the proposal aligns with both current and future needs, contributing meaningfully to the area's connectivity, technological advancement, and ongoing development.

Local Policy:

Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that "If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise".

Manchester Unitary Development Plan (July 1995)

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The Manchester Unitary Development Plan (UDP) was adopted in July 1995 as the strategy document which set out guidelines for all development in Manchester and provided a framework from which to base decisions about planning applications.

The Manchester Core Strategy was adopted on 11 July 2012 which is the key development plan document in the LDF. It replaces significant elements of the UDP. However, a number of policies remain extant following the adoption of the Core Strategy including Policy DC 17.1 relating to telecommunications.

Policy DC 17.1 states that:

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

In the justification to Policy DC 17.1 the Council recognises the need for Manchester to be at the forefront in the field of telecommunications. The Council therefore starts from the presumption in favour of sustainable development and investment in the telecommunication systems serving the city. Equally, it wishes to ensure that new developments are brought forward in a way which protects residential amenity and minimises the visual impact of such development particularly in conservation areas and other environmentally sensitive areas in parks and the river valleys. The Council is also concerned to make maximum possible use of existing buildings and facilities by encouraging operators to share facilities wherever possible in order to avoid unsightly duplication and clutter.

Manchester Core Strategy (2012-2027) Adopted July 2012 (Updated March 2024).

The Manchester Core Strategy was adopted in July 2012 and sets out the long term strategic policies for Manchester's future development and will form the framework that planning applications will be assessed against.

The Core Strategy Vision states that:

"'*By 2027 Manchester will be:*

- *A successful and accessible city in the front rank of cities in Europe and the world.*
- *A city with a growing economy driven by the strength of the Regional Centre and Manchester Airport which supports a successful City Region. The*

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knowledge based economy flourishes with an entrepreneurial community, characterised by a fully skilled, inclusive working population.

- *Meeting the challenge of climate change at the forefront of environmental initiatives and improvement and continuing to deliver sustainable development and a more effective green infrastructure.*
- *A city with an increased and sustainable healthy population and a community which both benefits from and drives the City's productivity upwards.*
- *A city with neighbourhoods where people choose to live all their lives."*

In order to help meet this vision the Core Strategy sets out a number of spatial objectives.

Spatial Objective SO1 relates to spatial principles and aims to provide a framework within which sustainable development of the city can contribute to halting climate change.

Spatial Objective SO2 relates to the economy and supports a significant further improvement of the City's economic performance and spread the benefits of this growth across the City to reduce economic, environmental and social disparities, and to help create inclusive communities.

Policy EM1 relates to employment and economic growth in Manchester. The policy states that the priorities for economic growth include:

- Ensuring the continued social, economic and environmental regeneration of the city.
- Ensuring the connectivity to international markets for the import and export of goods to ensure competitiveness in international markets.

Policy DM1 relates to development management. It is a general design policy which is not specifically related to telecommunications but contains some relevance for such applications. The policy states that all development should have regard to the following:

- Appropriate siting, layout, scale, form, massing, materials and detail.
- Impact on the surrounding areas in terms of design, scale and appearance of the proposed development. Development should have regard to the character of the surrounding area.
- Effects on amenity including privacy, light, noise, vibration, air quality, odours, litter, vermin, road safety and traffic generation.

The proposed 20m telecommunications installation is designed with a slimline, street furniture-style appearance, minimising bulk and visual intrusion while ensuring full

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operational functionality. By enabling modern digital connectivity, including 4G and 5G services, the installation supports sustainable socio-economic development, facilitating business growth, access to services, and improved digital infrastructure for residents. In this way, the mast aligns with the Council's objectives of raising design quality and promoting sustainable developments.

The siting of the mast has been carefully considered to avoid dominating key gateway views or transport corridors. Its placement and design ensure it integrates with existing street furniture or landscape features, maintaining the visual quality of the borough's main routes. Improved telecommunications coverage in high-traffic and public areas supports the perception of a modern, well-serviced borough, without detracting from the existing streetscape.

Site selection has also been guided by the need to protect heritage and natural assets. The installation avoids locations that could impact heritage buildings, conservation areas, or sensitive natural features, helping to preserve the character of towns, open spaces, and river valleys. Where possible, the mast has been positioned against suitable backdrops, such as mature trees and existing street furniture, minimising visual prominence and ensure the surrounding environment is respected.

As such, the 20m installation aligns with policies SO1 and DM1 by combining operational functionality with sensitive design, protecting visual amenity, heritage, and natural assets, and contributing positively to the borough's image and streetscape character.

The proposed telecommunications installation contributes to the sustainable development and economic growth of New Islington and the surrounding areas, helping it fulfil its role within the Manchester city region and the wider North West. By improving 4G and 5G coverage, the installation enhances digital connectivity, which is increasingly critical to attracting investment, supporting businesses, and improving the quality of life for residents.

Improved telecommunications infrastructure supports economic development by enabling businesses to operate efficiently, access wider markets, and implement digital technologies that enhance productivity. This directly aligns with Policy SO 2 of the Core Strategy.

The installation also supports wider accessibility objectives by enhancing digital access for local residents, businesses, and educational institutions. By enabling high-speed mobile connectivity, it complements transport and physical infrastructure improvements, providing equitable access to employment, education, cultural, and leisure opportunities in the centre and neighbouring areas.

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Finally, the installation has been designed to minimise visual and environmental impacts. Its careful siting and slimline design ensure that any effects on green infrastructure, heritage, or the local streetscape are mitigated, in line with DM1 which encourages sustainable energy and environmental stewardship while supporting regional development.

The proposed telecommunications mast has been carefully designed to meet the objectives of DM1 – General Development Requirements. The mast features a slimline, street furniture-style design to minimise visual impact and integrate sensitively with the surrounding streetscape, enhancing the quality of the area. Its location has been selected to ensure compatibility with surrounding land uses, avoiding sites where residential amenity could be compromised. The siting and design reduce visual intrusion and overbearing impact, while maintaining privacy and avoiding overshadowing of nearby properties.

Environmental impacts such as noise, dust, air, light, and odour pollution are negligible, and vehicular access is limited to construction and routine maintenance, with no adverse effect on parking or highway safety. The installation complies with national health and safety standards, ensuring there is no risk to public health, and it supports digital infrastructure that benefits local residents, businesses, and community facilities. Security measures are incorporated to prevent unauthorised access or vandalism, while sites have been assessed to avoid unstable or contaminated land, ensuring structural stability.

Where possible, natural and existing screening has been utilised to reduce visual prominence, and the mast does not place demands on water or wastewater infrastructure. Sensitive environmental areas, including European Protected Sites, have been avoided, ensuring no impact on conservation interests. Overall, the mast delivers a high-quality, safe, and visually sensitive installation that aligns with DM1's requirements while supporting the local community and infrastructure.

National Policy

The governments National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024 sets out government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. Section 2 of the NPPF confirms that sustainable development is at the heart of the Framework. Paragraph 8 states:

> *'Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways*

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- *to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;*

- *to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and*

- *to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.'*

The installation proposed will enable the operators to provide 4G and 5G services in the area, forming part of a network of high technology. These services allow home working and working on the move and can reduce the need to travel, thus contributing to the sustainability agenda.

The Government's latest thinking strongly supports communications infrastructure. Section 10 relating to *'Supporting high quality telecommunication'* paragraph 119 states that:

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

The proposed development accords with all these aspects of the NPPF in that it will provide all the operators with improved network provision within this area bringing a range of associated economic and technical benefits.

Paragraph 120 is as follows:

> *'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*

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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'.

It retains the requirement to minimise the number of installations consistent with the efficient operation of the network but also includes being consistent with the need of consumers and providing reasonable capacity for future expansion.

Section 12 of the Framework relates to *'Achieving well-designed and beautiful places.'*

Paragraph 131:

'The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process.'

Public benefits are defined within the NPPG and could be anything that delivers economic, social or environmental progress. Benefits do not always have to be visible or accessible to the public in order to be genuine public benefits.

As the NPPF has taken the following stance on decision making. At paragraph 39 it states that:

*'Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available, including…*permission in principle*, and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.'*

The following paragraph 85 touches on aspiration to build a strong and competitive economy.

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'Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken, should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future. This is particularly important where Britain can be a global leader in driving innovation.'

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

The Code of Best Practice was updated in 2022 by the Department of Digital, Culture, Media & Sport and is now even more supportive of mobile network provision in line with Government aspirations that everyone should have access to the information no matter where they are located whether that be in rural or urban areas. This Code provides guidance to mobile network operators, their agents and contractors and equally to all local planning authorities in England. It supersedes the Code of Best Practice on Mobile Phone Network Development (2016).

The principal aim of this Code is to ensure that the Government's objective of supporting high quality communications infrastructure, which is vital to continued economic prosperity and social inclusion for all, is met. The development of such infrastructure must be achieved in a timely and efficient manner, and in a way which balances connectivity imperatives and the economic, community and social benefits that this brings with the environmental considerations that can be associated with such development.

The Code acknowledges that there are special operational and technical considerations associated with mobile network development, which have changed over time due to changes in technology and associated changes in demand. The Code acknowledges that there remains a reliance on radio masts to provide the main umbrella of coverage. Typically, radio signals operate like light and must "see" over the target coverage area, they cannot be hidden and so there will always be a degree of visual impact.

It is commonly known within the industry that there is a need to continually improve mobile networks, which will not function without the necessary infrastructure on which they rely. This is confirmed within the Code of Best Practice on Mobile Network Development in England which acknowledges '*4G and 5G are likely to require further network densification in order to meet growing customer demand for data*' as well as improved coverage and capacity, together with ambitious Government aspirations.

Paragraphs 8 – 12 of the Code of Practice set out the importance of connectivity:

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8. 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.

9. 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.

10. The Future Telecoms Infrastructure Review (FTIR) and the National Infrastructure Strategy set out the government's long-term strategy for meeting its digital connectivity targets and delivering high-quality, the reliable digital infrastructure that works across the UK[2].

11. The government has committed to extending mobile coverage across the UK. The government has committed to extending mobile coverage across the UK. The government's Levelling Up White Paper has set a mission that the UK will have nationwide 4G coverage, with 5G coverage for the majority of the population by 2030. In support of this, the government and the UK's mobile network operators agreed to a £1 billion Shared Rural Network deal to extend 4G mobile geographical coverage to 95% of the UK by the end of the programme.

12. Next Generation Mobile Technologies: A 5G Strategy for the UK, and the update to this, set out the government's ambition for the UK to be a global leader in 5G to take early advantage of its potential and help to create a world-leading digital economy that works for everyone. The government also wants businesses and communities to benefit from investments in 5G as soon as possible. Through the government's 5G Testbeds and Trials programme we have seen its value to manufacturing, farming, transport networks and healthcare.

They have also set out '*How wireless networks function*'

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

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

Education:

The relationship between 5G and education is evolving at a massive rate with educators exploring the relevance of Virtual Reality (VR) technologies for education and training. Crucially, VR can support remote learning, allowing students a presence in the classroom even when working elsewhere.

5G's ability to deliver real-time information (low latency), ultra-fast speeds (critical for high-definition images and video), increased capacity and heightened security will also allow learning on the job, thanks to technologies such as Augmented Reality (AR) goggles, which can give engineers real-time instructions on how to fix a machine on a production line, for example.

Health:

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

5G will prove critical in providing the infrastructure required to deliver remote health services over the next decade. By design, 5G's ability to deliver real-time information (low latency), ultra-fast speeds (critical for high-definition images and video), increased capacity and heightened security are going to be fundamental in scaling the patient benefits of remote healthcare and keeping medical records secure and private. For instance, trials have shown that connecting ambulance crews to expert resources using 5G allows paramedics to work with doctors and conduct specialist procedures in real time whilst on the road.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the proposed 20-metre monopole represents the most appropriate and balanced solution to meet the operator's urgent requirement to deliver enhanced

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4G and 5G services within this part of Manchester. A thorough site selection exercise has been undertaken, with a range of alternative options carefully assessed and discounted due to technical, environmental, or planning constraints. The chosen site lies within an established commercial and industrial context, sufficiently separated from residential areas and free from ecological or heritage designations, ensuring that the development is both technically viable and contextually appropriate.

The proposed 20-metre telecommunications mast is considered to comply with saved UDP Policy DC.17.1. The site is located within a grassed area in a predominantly commercial and industrial setting, where the surrounding built form and land uses provide an appropriate context for telecommunications infrastructure. The mast would benefit from substantial screening by existing mature trees, which would reduce its visibility from the surrounding area and minimise its effect on the character and appearance of the locality.

The proposal has been sited to avoid unacceptable impacts on residential amenity and does not adversely affect environmentally sensitive areas. Furthermore, the location reflects the operational requirements of the telecommunications network while ensuring that the visual impact of the development is appropriately mitigated through the existing context of the surrounding area. As such, the proposal represents an appropriately sited and designed item of telecommunications infrastructure that satisfies the objectives of Policy DC.17.1 by minimising visual and environmental impacts while supporting the provision of modern communications infrastructure.

Furthermore, the scheme satisfies the requirements of Policy DM1, as it has been designed to minimise any adverse impacts on amenity, highways, or the environment. The site is set within an industrial/commercial landscape rather than a residential setting, avoiding conflict with sensitive receptors. The monopole has been carefully located to avoid interference with pedestrian movement, road safety, or access arrangements, and it does not encroach upon designated ecological or heritage sites.

While it is acknowledged that some degree of visual change will occur, this will be limited and proportionate. When balanced against the significant public benefits of providing robust, future-proofed mobile connectivity, the proposal clearly delivers net gains for the community. In this regard, the scheme accords fully with both local and national planning policy.

Accordingly, it is considered that the proposal represents essential infrastructure that is both policy-compliant and operationally necessary. On balance, the substantial public benefits decisively outweigh any limited visual impacts, and planning permission should therefore be granted.

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The development complies with both central government and local planning policy guidance where the underlying aim is to provide an advanced, high-quality, reliable communications infrastructure which is essential for economic growth and social well-being. In line with the NPPF, decisions should support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next generation mobile technology such as 5G. Therefore, there are no policy grounds on which to withhold planning permission.

Confirmation that submitted drawings have been checked for accuracy

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Position:	Town Planner	(on behalf of Cornerstone)	

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