

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

1. Site Details

Site Name:	Little Markfield Farm	Site Address:	Little Markfield Farm, Forest Road, Markfield, Leicester, LE67 9UN
National Grid Reference:	E: 448333 N: 309985		
Site Ref Number:	CTIL_109606	Site Type: ¹	Macro

2. Pre Application Check List

Site Selection (for New Sites only)

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

Was a local planning authority mast register available to check for suitable sites by the operator or the local planning authority?		No
If no explain why: No up to date register available.		
Were industry site databases checked for suitable sites by the operator:		No
If no explain why: Site is an upgrade of existing site.		

Site Specific Pre-application consultation with local planning authority

Was there pre-application contact:	YES
Date of pre-application contact:	10/04/2025
Name of contact:	Rudi Simpson
Summary of outcome/Main issues raised: Best Practice Pre-Application letter was submitted to the LPA on 31/03/2025. The letter was acknowledged on 08/04/2025. On 10/04/2025, a response was received from the LPA (Ref: 25/10054/PREHMO), advising that Markfield Parish Council be consulted and requesting that any existing trees and vegetation be retained. Following this, we wrote to Markfield Parish Council and can confirm that no trees or vegetation will be removed as part of this submission.	

¹ Macro or Micro

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Annual area wide information to planning authority

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

Community Consultation

Rating of Site under Traffic Light Model:	Red	Amber	Green
Outline of consultation carried out: Pre-application consultation letters and plans were sent to the MP (Peter Bedford), the local councillors for Markfield, Stanton & Field Head (Cllr Harris & Lambert) and Markfield Parish Council			
Summary of outcome/main issues raised (include copies of relevant correspondence): No comments or concerns have been received from the local MP, ward councillors or Parish Council			

School/College

Location of site in relation to school/college (include name of school/college): N/A
Outline of consultation carried out with school/college (include evidence of consultation): N/A
Summary of outcome/main issues raised (include copies of main correspondence): N/A

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Civil Aviation Authority/Secretary of State for Defence or the operator of the civil safeguarding area or defence safeguarding area notification (only required for an application for prior approval)

Will the proposed development be on a civil safeguarding area or a defence safeguarding area?		No
Has the Civil Aviation Authority/Secretary of State for Defence/operator of the civil safeguarding area or defence safeguarding area been notified?		No
Details of response: No civil safeguarding area was identified.		

Developer's Notice

Copy of Developer's Notice enclosed?	Yes	
Date served:	10/4/2025	

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3. Proposed Development

The proposed site:

Cornerstone is the UK's leading mobile infrastructure services company. They acquire, manage and own over 20,000 sites and are committed to enabling best in class mobile connectivity for over half of all the country's mobile customers. They oversee works on behalf of telecommunications providers and wherever possible aim to:

- promote shared infrastructure
- maximise opportunities to consolidate the number of base stations
- significantly reduce the environmental impact of network development

As part of Cornerstone network improvement programme, the operator is in the process of improving 4G coverage and capacity, which is fully in line with the Government's aim to ensure that everyone is connected to the superhighway.

As part of Cornerstone's continued network improvement programme, there is a specific requirement for a replacement radio base station at Little Markfield Farm to provide improved 4G coverage and capacity, ensuring that this area of Leicestershire has access to the latest technologies.

The proposed site is an established radio base station comprising a 15m monopole mast, establishing the principle that the site is acceptable for a base station. The, established site is located on Little Markfield Farm to the south of Forest Road to the west of the settlement of Markfield. It is located at the western edge of Markfield Farm itself and is adjacent to roadside tree and shrub planting. The site is surrounded to the north, south and west by agricultural fields. Further west of the site is the M1 motorway linking with the A50 to the north.

The immediate surroundings include open agricultural fields with dispersed hedgerows and trees, and strategic road infrastructure. As well as the existing, established mast there are other vertical elements within the landscape, including telegraph poles along Forest Road.

The proposed upgrade involves replacing the existing 15m monopole with a new 17.5m monopole. The new installation has been carefully designed to minimise height and width increase to the operational minimum required to achieve the upgraded service and target coverage. The same site has been used to minimise environmental impact and continue to benefit from existing tree coverage and screening.

The location of the established site with good separation from the main residential areas of Markfield and its proximity to the strategic road network including the M1 motorway to the immediate west make it an appropriate location for essential upgrades. The proposal will deliver improved coverage and capacity to the surrounding area, benefiting local residents, road users, and nearby businesses, while keeping visual and environmental impacts to a minimum.

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Southwestern elevation of site from Forest Road. Source: Google Maps



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

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

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Type of Structure (e.g. tower, mast, etc): 17.5m High CU Phosco 4.5 Monopole	
Description:	
The Installation of a replacement 17.5m monopole mast on existing concrete base to accommodate 3 no. Antenna, 12 no. RRU, 2 no. 0.3m Transmission Dish, 1 no. 0.6m Transmission Dish, 1 no. GPS Module, along with ancillary development thereto	
Overall Height: 17.5m	
Height of existing building (where applicable):	N/A
Equipment Housing: Existing Meter Cabinet	
Width:	0.9m
Depth:	0.33m
Height:	1.0m
Equipment Housing: Existing cabin	
Width:	2.5m
Depth:	3.7m
Height:	2.5m
Tower/mast etc – type of material and external colour:	Galvanised
Equipment housing – type of material and external colour:	Green (Existing Colour)

Reasons for choice of design, making reference to pre-application responses:
The existing base station has been in situ in this location for a number of years and is an established part of the area. The operator has carefully considered the design of the new proposed mast. The operator is proposing the most sensitive design currently available to provide the necessary coverage and capacity to the surrounding area. To accommodate all the technologies that will be available, the replacement structure is wider than existing which is required to support the replacement antenna. It remains a maintains its simple, functional, vertical structure with the same monopole and headframe design, as currently accommodated at the site, and will not appear incongruous within the area. The mast is also slightly higher at 17.5m representing a minor increased height of 2.5m. The latest 4G radio technologies operate in higher frequency bands than older technologies. Since they operate at higher frequencies where attenuation of the radio signal is naturally higher, and the effects of clutter are greater, it will normally require a higher structure to achieve the same coverage footprint. To increase capacity and data speeds to the user, the antenna will normally need to be mounted higher than conventional antenna. These factors drive a requirement for an increase in antenna height for the latest 4G service provision.

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The proposed height increase is also required as the site proposes the installation of 3 no. transmission dishes at 2 no. 0.3m and 1 no 0.6m. Transmission dishes need a clear line of sight to other dishes in the network to allow them to work effectively.

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

The column is proposed to be galvanised which will weather and assimilate into its rural setting; however, it can be coloured any other colour the LPA consider appropriate if necessary.

It is not considered that the slight increase in height and width will have an unacceptable visual impact on the area. The proposed width of the headframe is the minimum required to support the replacement antennas, which are much heavier than those of earlier technologies. It is therefore considered that the proposal before you strikes a good balance between environmental impact and operational considerations. The proposed height and design represents the best compromise between the visual impact of the proposal on the surrounding area and meeting the technical requirements for the site. Taking all matters into account it is considered that this proposal, to provide the latest 4G service provision and providing high quality dense coverage and capacity, would not appear out of place within the landscape.

Health and Safety - including ICNIRP compliance

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

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

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

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

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As part of Telefonica network, the radio base station that is the subject of this application will be configured to operate in this way. (For clarity, note that VMO2 is the trading name of the Mobile Network Operator where Code Powers are held under the parent company Telefonica UK Ltd).

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

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

4. Technical Justification

Enclose predictive coverage plots if appropriate, e.g. to show coverage improvement. Proposals to improve capacity will not generally require coverage plots.

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

A mobile phone transmitter is designed to cover a specific area and links its coverage to the next site in the network, creating a patchwork of overlapping coverage 'cells' across the country. So, if a person is on the move, the network will transfer their calls from one site to next. However, in certain areas there will be gaps between these cells, resulting in a loss of coverage. This can be for a variety of reasons, the most common being topography or buildings which block the path of the signal. The operator's network rollout program is designed to identify and address these gaps within their coverage and ensure that people can use their phones whenever and wherever they are.

There is a specific requirement to upgrade the existing radio base station at this location to enable VMO2 to enhance its 4G coverage and capacity in and around this area of Leicestershire.

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5. Site Selection Process

Alternative sites considered and not chosen (not generally required for **upgrades/alterations to existing sites** including redevelopment of an existing site to facilitate an upgrade or sharing with another operator)

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

The site is an existing, established site where the proposal is an upgrade, as such no alternatives sites have been considered.

Land use planning designations:

None.

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

National Planning Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024)

National Planning policy is provided by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which is a material consideration in planning decisions. The revised NPPF was published in December 2024 in which in support of this proposal, we do not rehearse all the relevant policies within the NPPF but highlight the key themes.

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The NPPF remains very supportive of high-quality communications, a whole chapter is dedicated to it, emphasising the importance that the Government attaches to digital connectivity. It recognises reliable communications infrastructure as a strategic priority, within paragraph 119 it states that:

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

Paragraph 120 retains the requirement to minimise the number of installations consistent with the efficient operation of the network but also includes being *“consistent with the needs of consumers and providing reasonable capacity for future expansion”*.

The NPPF goes on to state, within Paragraph 123 that:

“Local planning authorities must determine applications on planning grounds only. They should not seek to prevent competition between different operators, question

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the need for an electronic communications system or set health safeguards different from the International Commission guidelines for public exposure."

At the centre of NPPF is the presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11). For decision-taking this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay or where there are no relevant development plan policies or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless the application of policies within the revised Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed or any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the revised Framework taken as a whole.

Further guidance on decision-making is provided at paragraph 39: '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 NPPF supports the building a strong, competitive economy, paragraph 85 states: *'Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken, should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future. This is particularly important where Britain can be a global leader in driving innovation'.*

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

The Code of Practice provides guidance to Code Operators (referred to as 'operators' throughout the Code of Practice), including the Mobile Network Operators and wireless infrastructure providers, their agents and contractors, local planning authorities, and all other relevant stakeholders in England on how to carry out their roles and responsibilities when installing wireless network infrastructure.

The aim of the Code of Practice is to support the government's objective of delivering high-quality wireless infrastructure whilst balancing these needs with environmental considerations. It also has an important role in making sure that appropriate engagement takes place with local communities and other interested parties.

The Code of Practice covers all forms of wireless infrastructure development, including mobile towers and cabinets. It is recommended that other wireless communications operators follow the principles of this Code of Practice, where appropriate.

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Unlike previous versions the 2022 Code of Practice was led by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and developed in collaboration with representatives of the mobile network industry, other government departments and public bodies, local planning authorities, and protected landscapes. It sets out the legal and policy framework for the delivery of wireless infrastructure development, we do not rehearse the entire Code of Practice but highlight the key messages.

Principles and Commitment

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

It also emphasises the need for Local Planning Authorities to support the deployment of digital infrastructure (Paragraph 19) by:

- Supporting the expansion of telecommunications networks.
- Engaging with operators when new sites have been proposed and discuss site requirements.

Siting and Design Principles

The Code of Practice indicates that the government's objective is to deliver high quality, reliable wireless infrastructure whilst ensuring the impact of new network development is kept to a minimum. It acknowledges that the choice over the site selection and design of equipment is primarily dependent upon the coverage and capacity requirements and technical constraints of a specific location, and that operators should make efforts to reduce visual impacts where possible. It states at para 25 that operators should look to use existing structures for hosting wireless infrastructure, to reduce the environmental impact of installation.

Key Technical and Operational Considerations

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

- Coverage: wireless infrastructure needs to provide an appropriate level of coverage over the intended geographical area. This involves ensuring that antennas are elevated sufficiently (often via masts) to provide clear lines of sight for signals.
- Capacity: where existing network infrastructure can no longer meet the demand for network capacity in a particular area, additional sites may be required within that coverage area to meet the demand. This is more likely to be required in densely populated areas or areas of high footfall.

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- Backhaul: the radio access network requires a connection to the core network. Backhaul is sometimes provided by a microwave link, which requires a clear line of sight between the two ends of the link.

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

Government Policy and Strategy

Levelling Up the United Kingdom (February 2022)

Digital Connectivity is a focus area within the February 2022 White Paper with a Mission focused on improving digital connectivity. It states that, high quality digital infrastructure can deepen local labour markets through remote working, making it more attractive for both workers and companies to locate regionally. It also allows for the development of high-value sectoral clusters, which can drive growth and jobs in new areas. Existing specialisms in the UK regions have the potential to generate strong tech clusters. The sector also provides opportunities for raising living standards – median earnings for the sector are 50% higher than the UK average.

Online Nation 2024 Report

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

The latest Online Nation 2024 report (published November 2024) found that for most people in the UK, being online is a major part of daily life. Being online allows people to connect with others, sometimes in ways they may not be able to do offline.

The 2024 report found that the UK adult internet users spent just over 4 hours 0 minutes online a day in May 2024 (increasing from last year).

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

Ministerial Letter to Council Leaders and Chief Executives, November 2024

Sir Chris Bryant MP The Minister of State for Media, Tourism and Creative Industries wrote to Council Leaders and Council Chief Executives across the UK in support of digital infrastructure deployment on 29 November 2024.

The letter confirms the importance of fast and reliable connectivity and the Government's commitment to supporting the delivery of next-generation connectivity across the UK by driving towards nationwide coverage by 2030. The letter requests help from Councils across the UK to achieve these goals by prioritising digital infrastructure and specifically that

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Councils 'support the deployment of communications infrastructure wherever possible'. A copy of this letter is included within the application pack.

Social and Economic Benefits of Good Mobile Infrastructure

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

Economic benefits can include:

- Businesses offering online services can extend their products to a broader audience;
- Local areas and businesses can benefit from tourists and visitors as hotels, attractions, and restaurants can be booked online from anywhere in the world;
- Business owners and services like doctors can provide a faster and more cost-effective service by offering both online appointments and ordering;
- Digital connectivity facilitates economic growth, something which the Government is keen to progress and promote.

Social benefits will include:

- Mobile communications can help people to stay in touch wherever and whenever, which can help improve social wellbeing;
- Contacting emergency services is easier, especially in remote areas;
- Using a mobile wherever you go can provide better personal security;
- Having access to social networking sites and applications can keep people entertained with their lifestyles and interests;
- Mobile connectivity helps promote smarter and productive ways of working. For example, working from home can help minimise commuting which can provide better work and home life balance;
- Access to personal information 24/7, e.g. bank accounts, can offer efficiency and convenience.

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*".

The Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council Local Plan 2006-2026, adopted July 2016.

The Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council Local Plan 2006-2026 was adopted in July 2016. Policy DM 16, Telecommunications states:

The provision of essential infrastructure for telecommunications will be supported where it has been demonstrated that:

- a) There are no opportunities for sharing a site, mast or facility with existing telecommunications infrastructure already in the area; and*

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b) They are appropriately situated in the least visually obtrusive location available and appropriately designed to take account of their surroundings; and explored; and radiation protection.

c) Technologies to miniaturise and camouflage have been sufficiently

d) The proposal is in conformity with the latest national guidelines on

The operator will also be required to remove any telecommunications equipment when it is redundant.

The proposed replacement of the existing 15m monopole with a 17.5m structure fully aligns with this policy. The scheme seeks to upgrade an established telecommunications site, ensuring continuity of service while avoiding the need for new or additional mast locations. This directly satisfies the policy requirement to prioritise existing sites.

In accordance with the Local Plan, the design and siting of the proposal have been carefully considered to minimise visual impact. While the proposed mast is modestly taller and wider than existing, this is minimal and the design reflects the current design at the site. The upgrade of the existing, established and well located mast is the “*the least visually obtrusive*” available, with screening provided by surrounding vegetation and good separation from the main residential areas in Markfield.

The new mast represents the minimum height necessary to deliver improved digital connectivity to the area and is fully compliant with the latest ICNIRP public safety standards, satisfying the policy requirement that proposals align with “*the latest national guidelines on radiation protection*”. The development will significantly enhance mobile coverage and capacity for residents, businesses, and road users.

The proposal also supports national planning guidance outlined in the NPPF, which promotes upgrades to existing telecommunications infrastructure and calls on local authorities to support high quality digital networks. This is echoed by recent national policy messaging, including the November 2024 letter from Sir Chris Bryant MP, urging local planning authorities to enable network improvements that support next generation connectivity.

Planning Assessment

The proposed upgrade is fully compliant with both local and national policy frameworks. The replacement 17.5m monopole and associated equipment represent the most suitable design solution to deliver essential improvements in network coverage while keeping visual and environmental impacts to a minimum. The use of an existing site, located adjacent to major infrastructure and away from sensitive receptors, ensures that the proposal sits comfortably within its context. The upgrade supports national objectives for improved digital connectivity and meets all criteria outlined by Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, making it an appropriate and policy compliant development.

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The Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council Local Plan recognises the critical role of telecommunications in supporting business growth, remote working, and economic development. The improved connectivity provided by this proposal will support businesses, residents, and road users, aligning with the Council's aspirations for a strong and diverse economy with good access to modern communications.

The proposed height of 17.5m is a slight height increase over the existing mast. However, this is the absolute minimum required to provide the necessary network coverage and maintain ICNIRP compliance. Additionally, the site remains positioned away from residential properties. The authority will note that the height increase remains within the parameter of outright permitted development for this site. The prior approval is required due to the increased width of the replacement mast. The mast is wider than the existing mast as the new, replacement equipment is heavier where a wider mast and headframe is required to support the latest equipment essential for the upgraded service to the local area. The additional visual impact of the new design remains limited and appropriate in this location.

The principle of telecommunications development has been firmly established by the Government, particularly with the increased permitted development rights introduced in April 2022 including the height increase proposed. Given the strong policy support for enhanced digital infrastructure, the clear economic and social benefits of the proposal, and its sensitive design, the installation represents an essential improvement to local telecommunications services while minimising any associated visual impact.

Siting

The principle of siting a base station has already been accepted by the Council a number of years ago in this location. The presence of the existing mast is established at the site and confirms location's ability to accommodate telecommunications infrastructure. Additionally, existing boundary vegetation will continue to provide a level of natural screening and attenuation at a well located site separated from the main residential areas of Markfield.

The upgrade of the existing site minimises disruption to the surrounding environment avoiding the need for an entirely new installation elsewhere in the area while providing essential digital connectivity improvements to the local area. The upgrade of an existing mast is in line with national and local planning policy.

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

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

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

Registered Address:

Cornerstone Telecommunications, Infrastructure Limited,
Hive 2, 1530 Arlington Business Park, Theale, Berkshire, RG7 4SA.
Registered in England & Wales No. 08087551.
VAT No. GB142 8555 06

 Cornerstone, Hive 2,
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There are existing vertical elements including telegraph poles along Forest Road and is attenuated by trees which help the replacement installation to assimilate with its surroundings and minimise the additional impact on visual amenity.

The column and antennas do not emit any noise, odour, vibration, artificial light or disturbance from air. The only noise emitted is from a cooling fan within the equipment cabinets, which only operate during hot weather conditions, and this will remain as existing. The equipment cabinets remain as existing. The proposed installation will not cause any traffic generation and maintenance of the equipment cabinets is infrequent, where the engineer can walk to site with handheld tools.

Appearance

In accordance with National and Local Policy, the visual impact on the area has been minimised as far as possible. The replacement monopole mast proposed is the most sympathetic design available with the antenna located in an open headframe reflecting the design of the mast in situ and established.

It is recognised that a replacement mast will have an impact in an area, but it is an established accepted site located in a rural area, well separated from residential areas, and any impact should be considered against the social and economic benefits that the service provides. Access to a high quality, reliable superfast mobile network is no longer just desirable but is now considered as an essential part of everyday life this is demonstrated in data in the Online Nation report and acknowledged in the NPPF which sets out that modern digital infrastructure is essential to social wellbeing as well as to economic growth (paragraph 119).

Economic and Social Benefits

The economic and social benefits of high quality digital infrastructure and examples of practical application is set out above. In accordance with the NPPF, local policy and regional strategy, the proposed installation will help improve the area's economic prosperity and support the rural economy by supporting local businesses to start, grow, adapt and diversify

By providing the latest 4G technology and new service provision the proposals will support the aspirations of Central Government for everyone to have access to the superfast mobile network wherever they are.

As highlighted in the Online Nation Report 2024, access to the internet impacts every part of our lives but only benefits those who can access and use it. Being able to access the internet via a mobile device allows people to access a wide range of central and local government services buy groceries, manage finances, apply for jobs/university, and carry out school projects, send emails, download applications, send and receive instant messages, participate in social media, streaming and downloading data.

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

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

Summary

A replacement upgraded installation for VMO2 is required to provide the operator with the latest 4G coverage and capacity to the area of Leicestershire.

The proposed upgrade has been carefully sited at an existing rural site in line with National and Local Policy and in line with the CoP.

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

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

In short:

- Telecommunications and mobile technology have been proven to provide demonstratable benefits to society and communities as set out in this statement.
- The established location is set away from residential properties. The upgrade does not adversely impact the amenity of the area in a wholly unacceptable manner.
- The replacement mast proposed is the most sympathetic design available with the antenna located in an open headframe as established at this rural location.

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

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Confirmation that submitted drawings have been checked for accuracy

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Signed:		Date:	17/4/2025
Position:	Assistant Planner	(on behalf of Cornerstone)	

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