

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

1. Site Details

Site Name:	194 – 198 Crockhamwell Road SW	Site Address:	194 – 198 Crockhamwell Road, Woodley, Reading, Berkshire, RG5 3JH
National Grid Reference:	E: 476126 N: 173298		
Site Ref Number:	77574	Site Type: ¹	Macro

2. Pre Application Check List

Site Selection (for New Sites only)

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

Was a local planning authority mast register available to check for suitable sites by the operator or the local planning authority?	Yes	<u>No</u>
If no explain why: No mast register was identified in the public domain however, planning records and databases have been checked.		
Were industry site databases checked for suitable sites by the operator:	<u>Yes</u>	No
If no explain why: N/A		

Site Specific Pre-application consultation with local planning authority

Was there pre-application contact:	Yes
Date of pre-application contact:	10 February 2026
Name of contact:	The Chief Planning Officer
Summary of outcome/Main issues raised: Pre-application correspondence including a set of plans detailing the proposal and plan were emailed to the LPA (Wokingham Borough Council) on 10 February 2026. No response was received.	

¹ Macro or Micro

Community Consultation

Rating of Site under Traffic Light Model:	Red	Amber	Green
Outline of consultation carried out: The proposal was rated Amber in accordance with the traffic light model publishes within the Code of Practice for Wireless Network Development in England 2022 prior to consultation being undertaken. Pre-application correspondence was issued by email on 10 February 2026 to the South Lake Ward Councillors, Cllr Kay Gilder, Cllr Carol Jewel, and Cllr Beth Rowland. Correspondence was also sent to the adjacent ward Bulmershe & Coronation Councillors, Cllr Yusra Sulman, Cllr Alison Swaddle and Cllr Shahid Younis. The Woodley Town Council was also notified. The occupiers of properties within the area which may have a potential interest were notified of the proposal by post on 10 February 2026. 28 properties in total were notified.			
Summary of outcome/main issues raised (include copies of relevant correspondence): One response was received from the Woodley Town Council on 24 February 2026 registering their opposition due to the siting of the monopole in a prominent public location. Concern relating to nearby residential properties was also raised. The Town Council additionally recognised the importance of modern telecommunications but requested that alternative sites be explored. No other responses were received.			

School/College

Location of site in relation to school/college (include name of school/college): A search of schools and non-domestic childcare institutions was conducted via Ofsted and Department of Education databases. The nearest schools found were Beechwood Primary School and the Ambleside Centre. Both of these schools were located approx. 152m and 157m away from the application site respectively.			
Outline of consultation carried out with school/college (include evidence of consultation): Pre-application correspondence was issued by email on 10 February 2026 to the Beechwood Primary School Chair of Governors Mr R Zaragosi Gomez and Headteacher Mr C Cole. Pre-application correspondence was issued by email on 10 February 2026 to the manager of Ambleside Centre Kerrie Clifford.			
Summary of outcome/main issues raised (include copies of main correspondence): No responses were received.			

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

Will the structure be within 3km of an aerodrome or airfield?	Yes	<u>No</u>
Has the Civil Aviation Authority/Secretary of State for Defence/Aerodrome Operator been notified?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details of response: White Waltham Airfield is located approx. 3.5 km away. The site falls within the safeguarding area zone. Consultation was undertaken with this airport on 10 February 2026 with the airfield being served with a Safeguarding Area Notice and a set of drawings. No response was received.		

Developer's Notice

Copy of Developer's Notice enclosed?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Date served:	05/03/2026	

3. Proposed Development

The proposed site:

EE and H3G (known as the Operator Three) currently have a base station known as Headley Park Estate (site ref 91520) at Headley Park Industrial Estate, Reading, RG5 4SE which provides network coverage to the surrounding area. The site is due to be lost from the network for reasons beyond the operators' control. Therefore, a replacement site is required to prevent any further loss of services following the removal of the apparatus. This proposal is required to provide continued mobile coverage to the area.

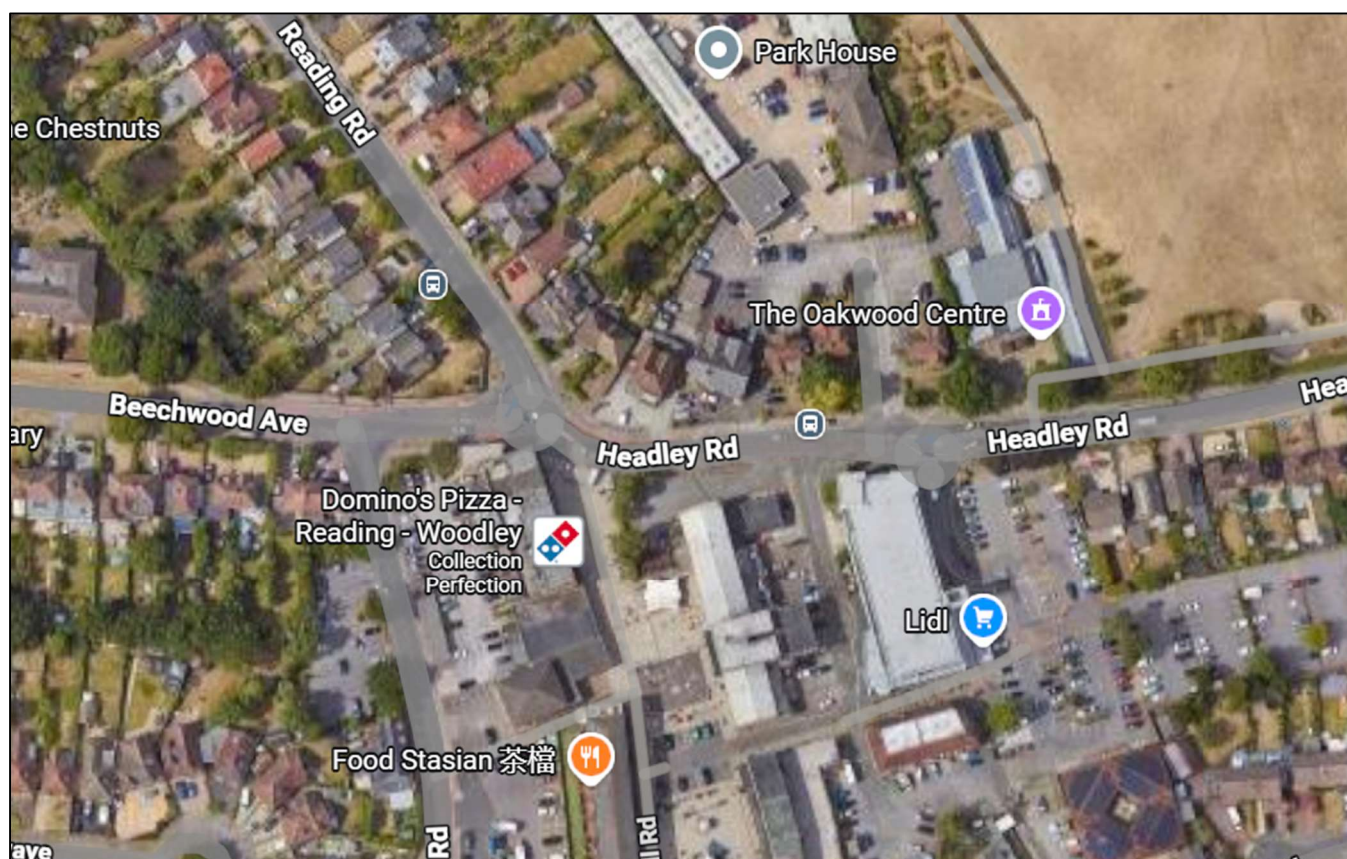


Figure 1: Aerial view of the application site and local context (site shown by red arrow) (Source: Google Maps)

The application site is located on a berm near the roundabout intersection of Headley Road, Reading Road and Beechwood Avenue. Directly to the north of the site is Headley Road which is a single carriageway. Crockhamwell Road lies adjacent to the berm to the west. To the south of the site is a three storey building with commercial use on the ground floor and residential use on the first and second storeys. Further south and directly west and east of the site (south of Headley Road) is characterised by small/medium lot commercial use. A mixture of commercial use lies to the north of the site with residential use in the wider vicinity in all directions. Woodford Park lies approx. 135 metres to the east of the site.



Figure 2: General location of proposed site (Source: Google Maps)

Figure 2 above shows the general location of the proposed site. Existing development in the surroundings includes a carpark directly west. The site is adjacent to mature trees directly to the west and north and a tall hedge directly to the north of the berm. The trees measure 12m in height at their tallest point whilst the hedge is approx. 1.5m in height. The monopole will be setback against the hedge and tree line. The associated cabinets (which do not require consent but are included in this description for completeness) will be located to the north and south of the monopole following the curvature of the hedge line and will be 1.7m in height at their tallest point.

The proposed location as part of this application has been determined following a previous prior approval for the Applicant. This approval comprised of the installation of a 20m high monopole supporting 6no. antenna apertures and 2no. 600mm transmission dishes, installation of 7no. cabinets, plus ancillary development located at 194-198 Crockhamwell Road, Berkshire, Reading RG5 3JH (app ref. 203363). The approval was issued on 11 January 2021. Following the approval, the Applicant applied to the Local Authority for a minor amendment to the scheme on 26 November 2024. The amendments included changes to the monopole type (height remaining the same) and the removal of one cabinet along with ancillary development. Planning officer Rowan Reynolds responded on 14th February 2025 stating that the changes were considered inconsequential and the minor amendment was granted.

The minor amendment did not extend the timeframe to give effect to the consent. As such, the consent timed out 11 January 2026. Therefore, the Applicant is required to reapply for prior approval to undertake the proposed works. The scheme has not changed from what was approved under the minor amendment.

The site does not fall within any sensitive land designations under the Wokingham Borough Council Local Plan. The site is also benefitted by not being located in close proximity to heritage assets or conservation areas.

The application seeks prior approval for the introduction of ground-based mobile telecommunications infrastructure at the application site. The infrastructure would comprise of the installation of a 20 metre Phase 7 monopole with wraparound cabinet supporting 9no. antennas, 2no. 300mm diameter transmission dishes and ancillary development thereto. For informative purposes, 5no. cabinets permitted by Class A(a) of Part 16 of Schedule 2 of the GPDO are shown on the accompanying drawings.

The telecommunications site at Headley Park Estate provides network coverage to the surrounding area and the loss of this site will result in a loss of communications and data services in the locality. It will also cause a wider disruption to the mobile network if a replacement site cannot be identified and integrated into the network at the earliest opportunity. This previous base station will be decommissioned, generating the need for a replacement site in the vicinity to avoid a coverage gap in the network.

The Applicant submits that the economic, environmental and social benefits which will be brought forward by the proposal will greatly outweigh any visual impact that may be caused by the installation of the scheme. The scheme is in accordance with national planning policy, and the direction of travel from Central Government in providing local communities with high-quality telecommunications networks.

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

The purpose of the development is to provide replacement coverage and capacity for 2G and 4G in the area while providing new 5G coverage and capacity. The 5G network is a unique technology and it requires a bespoke approach. While the added provision of 5G coverage and capacity will be facilitated by this development, the primary purpose is to provide replacement 2G and 4G coverage and capacity. It is not being rolled-out in this same manner as the previous 2G and 4G networks. We do appreciate that some local authorities have become accustomed to seeing a geographical coverage and capacity footprint of a new or upgraded site, where coverage and capacity plots were commonplace within applications. Unfortunately, the same is not available for the 5G network rollout. There are no 5G network coverage and capacity plots being produced for individual cell sites as this is a very fast-moving project with the 5G network constantly evolving as more and more sites are added to the Operators' networks.

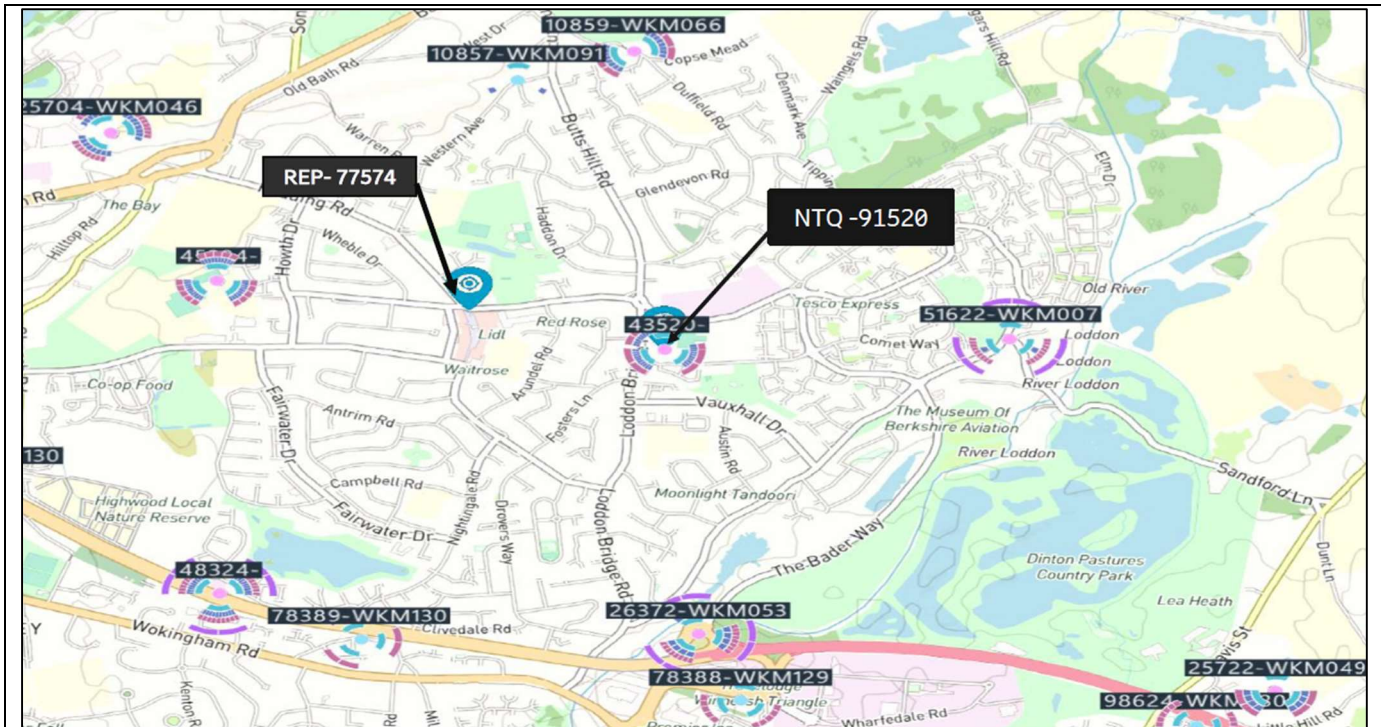


Figure 3: Map showing the location of proposed site indicated as 77574 and neighbouring cells

Coverage plots illustrate the actual and predicted coverage and capacity levels from the application site and its relationship to the neighbouring cells. This is further elaborated on and described in Section 4 below. The plots provide a visual representation of signal strength.

The 5G networks will build upon the existing 5G networks which will effectively form the infrastructure “spine” for the next generation of mobile networks. We respectfully remind all Local Authorities of the direction provided by the Government within the NPPF, i.e. that they should not seek to prevent competition between Operators or questions the need for an electronic communications system (para 123), and also that the expansion of next generation mobile technology should be supported (para 119).

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

Description:

The installation of a 20 metre Phase 7 monopole with wraparound cabinet supporting 9no. antennas, 2no. 300mm diameter transmission dishes and ancillary development thereto. For informative purposes, 5no. cabinets permitted by Class A(a) of Part 16 of Schedule 2 of the GPDO are shown on the accompanying drawings.

Prior approval is not required for the proposed cabinets, as they represent Class A(a) permitted development under Part 16 of Schedule 2 of the GPDO, however these are included in the application for transparency.

Overall Height:	20 metres
Height of existing building (where applicable):	N/A
Equipment Housing:	
Length:	Metres

Width:	Metres
Height:	Metres
Materials (<i>as applicable</i>):	
Tower/mast etc – type of material and external colour:	Monopole – Galvanised steel (RAL7035)
Equipment housing – type of material and external colour:	Cabinets – Fir green (RAL 6009)

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

The equipment's design is based on the principle of meeting operational requirements of the mobile operators EE and H3G (Three), whilst minimising the siting and appearance impacts in the surrounding area as far as technically possible.

The objective of the site is to ensure coverage to the area is replaced and enhanced, and disruption to the wider network is not caused, due to the decommissioning of the nearby telecommunications site at Headley Park Estate. An NTQ (Notice to Quit) has been issued to the Applicant by the site provider, and as such, the Applicant must vacate the site and find a replacement for this base station.

The loss of a site can cause disruption to the wider network. The loss of one site creates disconnection issues further afield that affect other users who may not be in its immediate vicinity. The need for a replacement site in this area has been established and will be further discussed in Section 4 below. Section 5 further below justifies why the proposal site is the best suited for the placement of telecommunications equipment.

In designing a radio base station, it is necessary to incorporate certain vital elements and to work around a number of technical constraints. There are three main elements to a radio base station; the cabin or cabinets which contain the equipment used to generate the radio signal(s), the supporting structure that holds the antennas in the air (or fixes them to a building or structure) and the antennas themselves, which emit the radio signals (along with any other necessary amplifier or receiver units).

Other elements necessary for the base station to function are the power source (a meter in a cabinet or a generator on sites where a REC supply cannot be utilised), feeder cables that link the equipment housing to the antennas, link dishes and the various support structures, grillages and fixings, often referred to in general terms as “ancillary development thereto” the base station.

The Applicant has regard when designing all new sites to limit the visual impact experienced as far as practicably possible. In this instance, the proposed installation is subject to technical and build constraints. That notwithstanding, it is submitted that the appropriate siting and design put forth mitigate any potential impact on the site and its surroundings to an acceptable level. The base station has been designed to accommodate replacement apparatus, allowing provision of 2G and 4G mobile connections in the surrounding area to continue. It has also been designed to accommodate new 5G technology, introducing ultra-fast mobile connectivity capable of operating the ‘Internet of Things’. This upgraded and replacement infrastructure will provide higher mobile download speeds and more reliable, quicker phone connections. There would be increased capacity to provide services to a higher number of people at the same time.

In order to achieve the required replacement coverage and capacity for EE and Three, 9no. antennas and 2no. 300mm diameter transmission dishes are required. The number and scale of proposed antennas and dishes is informed by the number of communications services being provided by the site. This base station will be providing coverage and capacity for both operators.

The antennas must be able to emit radio signals that are not shrouded or block from surrounding natural and built features. In order to achieve this, the antennas must be at an elevated position, to enable the radio signals to clear surrounding structures such as buildings and trees, with the aim of avoiding interference. The antenna height is determined by a specialist network radio engineer using specialist software which factors in the area that coverage is required, the relationship between the selected site location and existing cells in the wider network.

The above factors have informed the type and height of the antennas and the necessary supporting structures. In this case, the 9no. antennas and 2no. 300mm transmission dishes will be located onto a 20 metre monopole structure. The height of the structure is required in order to provide a like for like coverage replacement. A lower monopole could result in additional sites being required in the surrounding area to replicate coverage. The monopole design ensures that visual impact is kept to a minimum and does not cause unacceptable harm to the surrounding area.

In the same regard as the antennas, the positions of the dishes are informed by physical constraints of the site and surrounding area, and the outcome of software modelling. The dishes must connect to other base station in the wider network by microwave link. As such, they require 'line of sight' which is an unobstructed path the neighbouring base stations. As previously mentioned, 2no. 300mm dishes are proposed to be sited on the monopole structure at 13.74m above ground level, where they can have a clear connection to the core network. This ensures that seamless connection between the cells can be made above the surrounding clutter and other obstructions.

Radio signals are generated within radio equipment housing cabinets and in this case, 6no. cabinets (including wraparound cabinet) would be required to improve the network coverage and capacity. The proposed antennas must connect to the proposed equipment housing cabinets by electrical cable feeders. The equipment cabinets form an essential component of the base station and must be located as close to the antennas as possible in order to minimise electrical power losses during operation. It is proposed to install the cabinets all at ground level in a uniform line to the south of the proposed monopole.

Prior approval is not required for the proposed cabinets as they represent Class A permitted development under Part 16 of Schedule 2 of the GPDO, however these are included in this application for transparency. All cabinets will be coloured in RAL7035, steel grey. Whilst the proposed colour scheme is considered appropriate for this site, the Applicant would be willing to adhere to any colour scheme deemed more appropriate by the Local Authority and would like the opportunity to discuss this with the Local Authority during the course of the Application process should this be the case.

There is very limited scope to alter the design in order to meet the technical requirements, nonetheless it is considered the proposal put forward is appropriate to the site and its surroundings and avoids any unacceptable level of impact.

As outlined in the General Permitted Development order, the deployment of mobile phone base stations, up to a height of 25 metres (formerly 20 metres), is accepted in principle by virtue of the legislation. The position has been confirmed by the Planning Inspectorate in a number of appeal decisions.

For example, in allowing appeal APP/E2205/W/20/3261389, which proposed the installation of a 20m-high telecommunications monopole and associated ground based equipment cabinets, the Inspector included the following in their decision notice:

*“Part 16 of the Order establishes that the proposal is permitted development and therefore it is accepted in principle by virtue of the legislation. **Furthermore, there is no requirement to have regard to the development plan as there would be for any development requiring planning permission.** Nevertheless, Policies SP1, SP6 and ENV13 of the Ashford Borough Council Local Plan to 2030 are material considerations as they relate to issues of siting and appearance. In particular, they seek to secure high quality design and to avoid development that would cause loss or substantial harm to the significance of heritage assets. **Similarly, the National Planning Policy Framework is also a material consideration and this includes a section on supporting high quality communications**” (emphasis added).*

In another example, in allowing appeal APP/G4240/W/18/3201704, which proposed the installation of a 20m-high telecommunications monopole and associated ground-based equipment cabinets, the Inspector included the following in their decision notice:

*“**The permission granted under the GPDO is equal to an outline planning permission and the consideration of the proposed development is limited to its siting and appearance, not the principle of the development**” (emphasis added).*

Similar to the above referenced appeal schemes, the application proposal is for a 20m monopole. This is below the 25m height maximum as permitted under Part 16. The Applicant has proposed a 20m structure in order to reduce siting and appearance impacts. As such it is considered that the design of the monopole is appropriate. Due consideration has been given to the process and the proposal put forward in this application is the best available option. It achieves both the technical requirements and does not bring unacceptable harm to the character of the area. The guidance given by the Government on the balance Local Authorities must take between these two factors – technical achievements of telecommunications developments and visual harm – will be clarified in Section 5 of this document under ‘Policy’.

As detailed in this application, the scheme will play a vital role in the provision of enhanced 2G, and 4G network coverage, as well as brand new 5G coverage. The height, scale and size of the apparatus has been limited to the minimum required to provide this coverage. It is submitted that when the visual impact of the proposal is assessed, and weighed against the social, environmental and economic benefits associated with providing a high quality communications network to the local area, the proposal finds itself in favour.

It is therefore considered that the design is appropriate to the site, and surrounding area, and avoids any unacceptable level of impact.

Technical Information

International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection Declaration attached (see below)	Yes	No
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, EE and H3G 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 EE and H3G'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 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

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

Replacement Coverage

The principle aim of the proposal is to provide replacement communications coverage from an operational base station which is due to decommissioned due to reasons beyond the Operator's control. Everything Everywhere (EE) and Three – two of the major licensed mobile operators in the UK – provide communications from a greenfield, lattice style base station at Headley Park Industrial Estate, Reading, RG5 4SE (site ref 91520).

The proposal is required in order to allow the continued provision of 2G and 4G mobile connection to the surrounding area as well as providing new 5G technology. The consequence of not doing so is that users of the network would find that the services they previously has access to are either limited or removed. The provision of poor communication services has well recognised socio-economic impacts on communities and businesses. As noted above, apart from providing enhanced 2G and 4G coverage, 5G coverage will be deployed from the site ensuring that the surrounding area benefits from the latest technology.

Because base stations are low powered radio transmitters, they each have a limited range, meaning that they generally need to be located close to the area requiring coverage. If one moves too far away from that area, then it is likely that some areas will remain without the services they previously enjoyed. When an existing site is lost from the network, it leaves a very specific "gap" in coverage within the established network pattern which needs to be filled. The consequence of not doing so is that users of the network find that the services they previously had access to are either limited or removed.

High quality communications infrastructure is essential for sustainable economic growth and that high-speed broadband technology and other communications networks can also play a vital role in enhancing the provision of local community facilities and services.

The provision of poor communication services has economic and social impacts on communities and businesses. Importantly, the base station would provide increased network capacity, allowing quality service provision to a higher number of people at the same time. Improving cellular connectivity is largely led by demand. The very high level of mobile phone use in the UK requires the installation of additional base stations to provide the necessary connections. The insufficient coverage and capacity of these major networks at a time when reliance on connectivity services is a fundamental part of everyday life would be unacceptable.

Enhanced Services

The new base station would also provide new 5G services, introducing ultra-fast mobile connectivity capable of operating the 'Internet of Things'. This upgraded and replacement infrastructure will provide higher mobile download speeds and more reliable, quicker phone connections.

Importantly, the base station would provide increased network capacity, allowing quality service provision to a higher number of people at the same time. Improving cellular connectivity is led largely by demand. The very high level of mobile phone use in the UK requires the installation of additional/upgraded base stations to provide the necessary connections.

Coverage Plots

The following images are extracts from radio planning software which model the resulting loss in mobile coverage should the operational base station not be replaced following its decommissioning. The images show 4G indoor and outdoor coverage for H3G and 4G indoor coverage for EE, with the soon to be decommissioned site, without the soon to be decommissioned site and with the proposed application site replacement for EE and H3G. These are based on the site to be decommissioned indicated as



Figure 4: Existing 4G indoor coverage for H3G provided by Headley Park Estate (NTQ) with adjoining cells

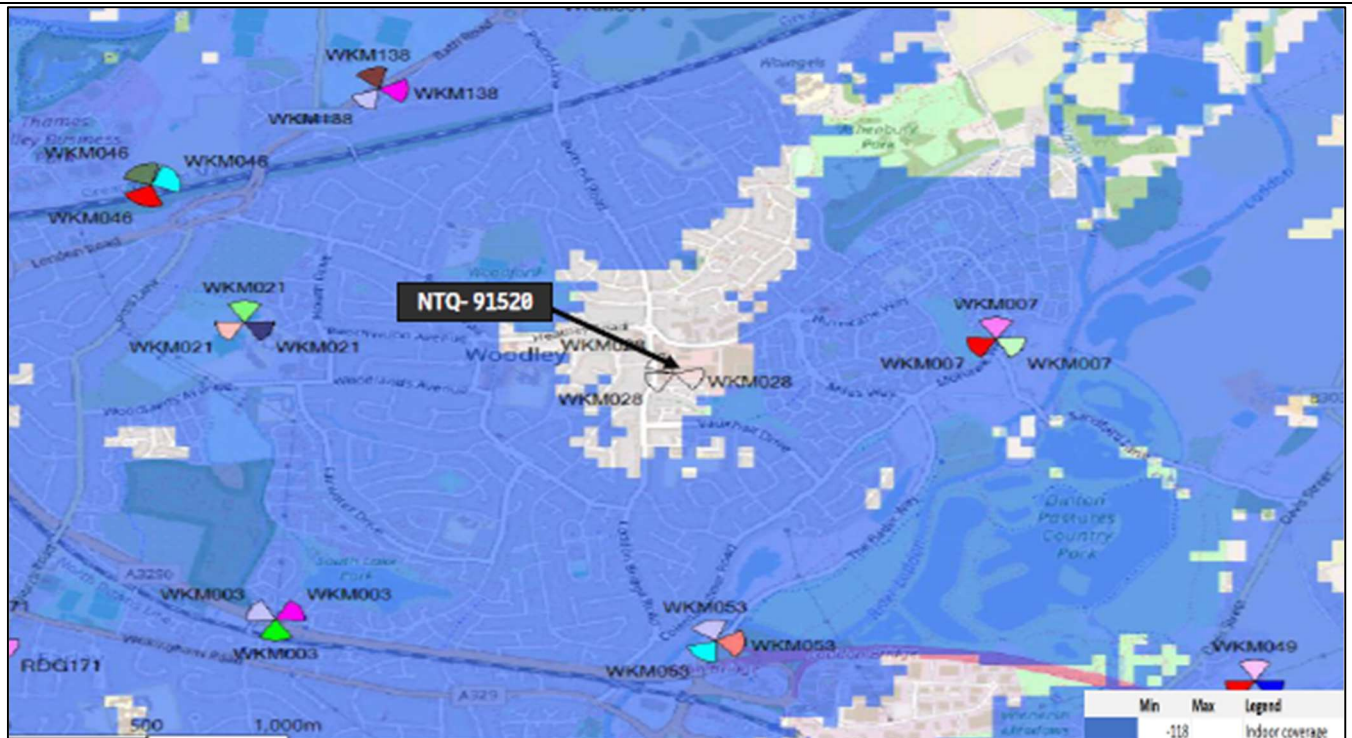


Figure 5: Predicted 4G indoor coverage loss for H3G after NTQ site is lost from the network



Figure 6: Predicted 4G indoor coverage for H3G with application site (indicated as 77574)

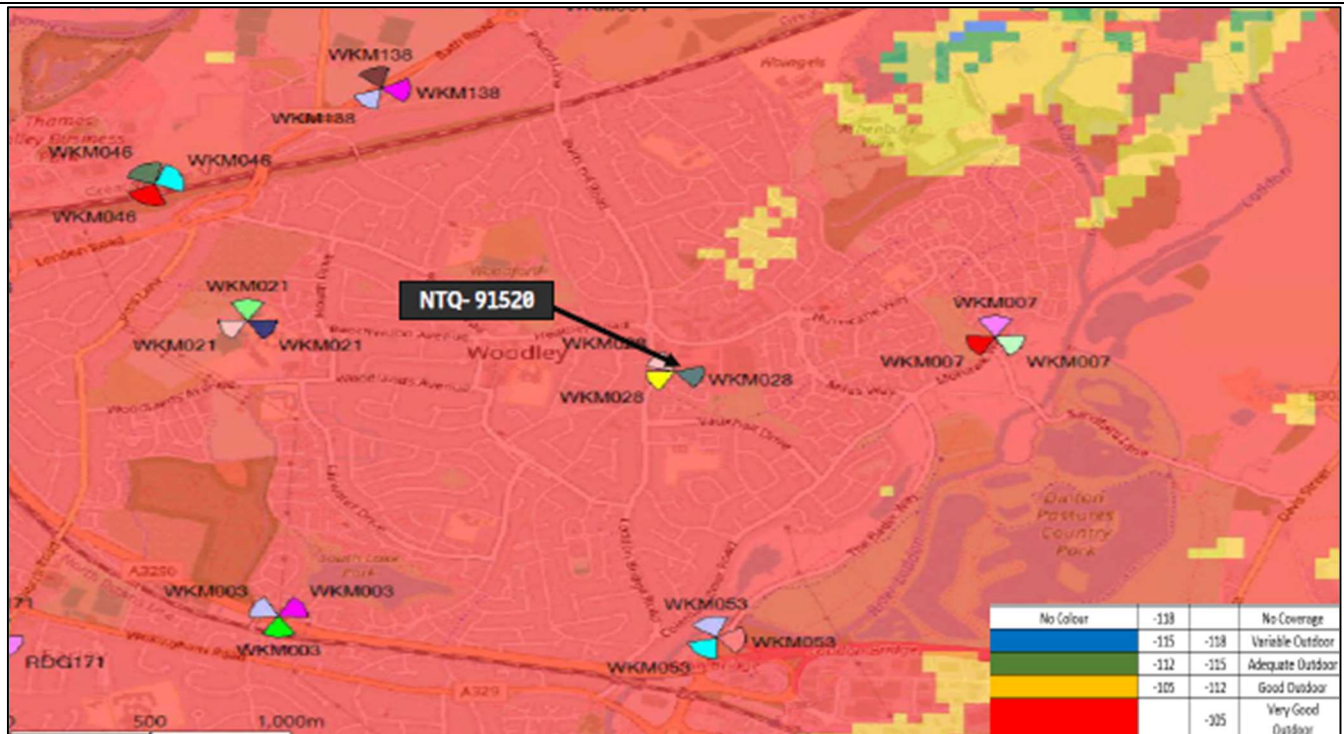


Figure 7: Existing 4G outdoor coverage provided by Headley Park Estate (NTQ) with adjoining cells

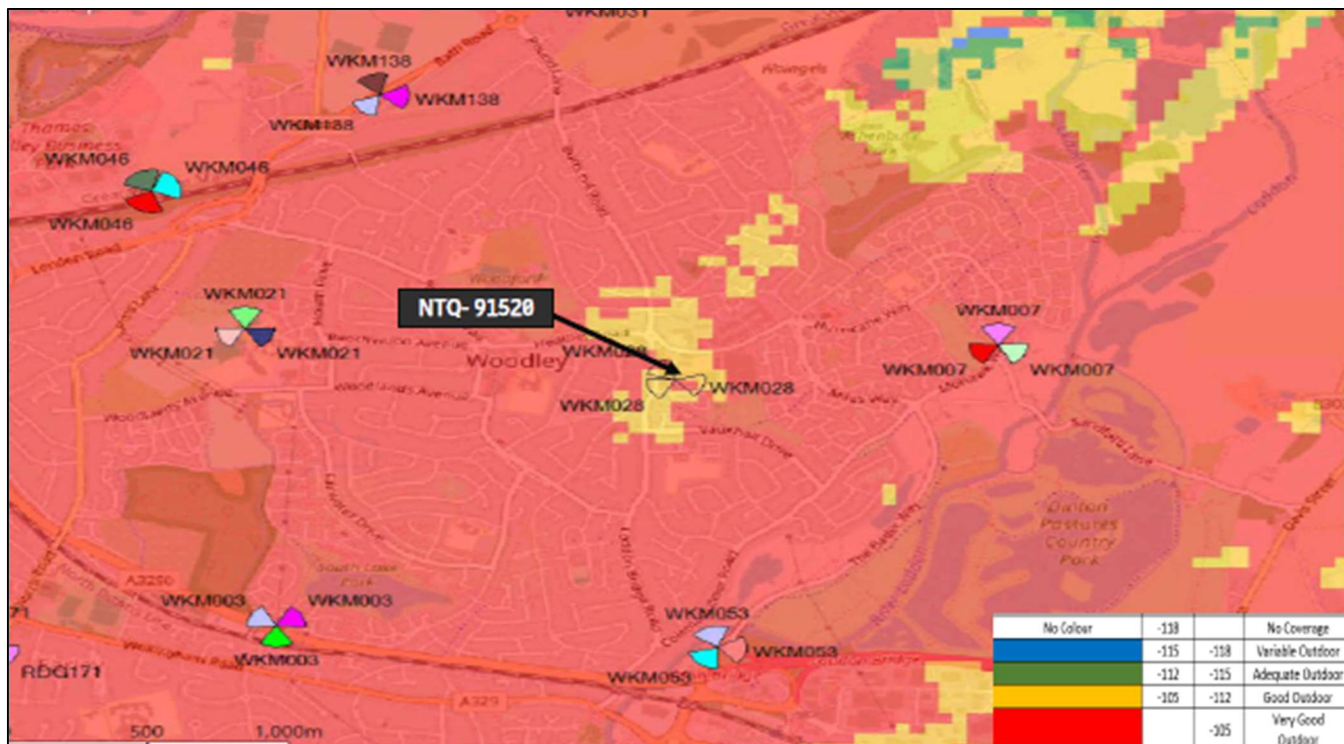


Figure 8: Predicted 4G outdoor coverage loss for H3G after NTQ site is lost from the network

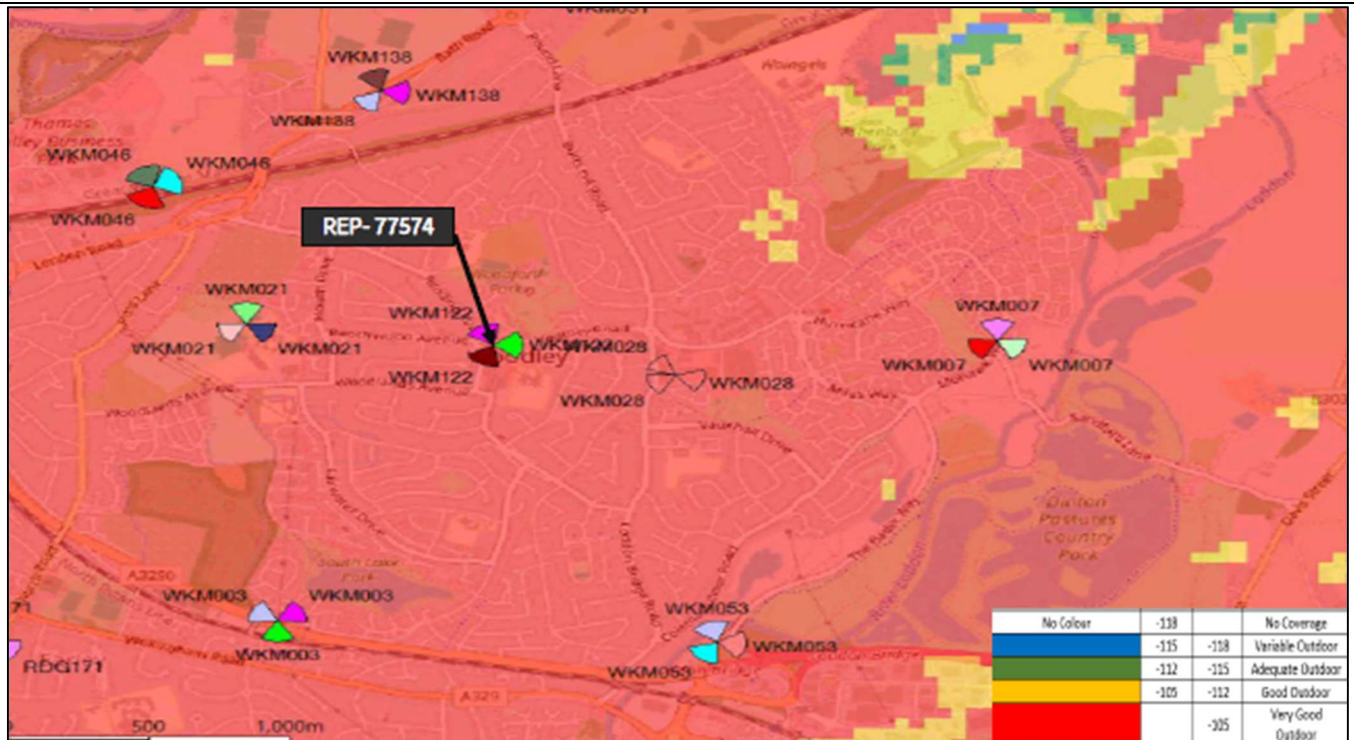


Figure 9: Predicted 4G outdoor coverage for H3G with application site (indicated as 77574)



Figure 10: Existing 4G indoor coverage for EE provided by Headley Park Estate (NTQ) with adjoining cells



Figure 11: Predicted 4G indoor coverage loss for EE after NTQ site is lost from the network

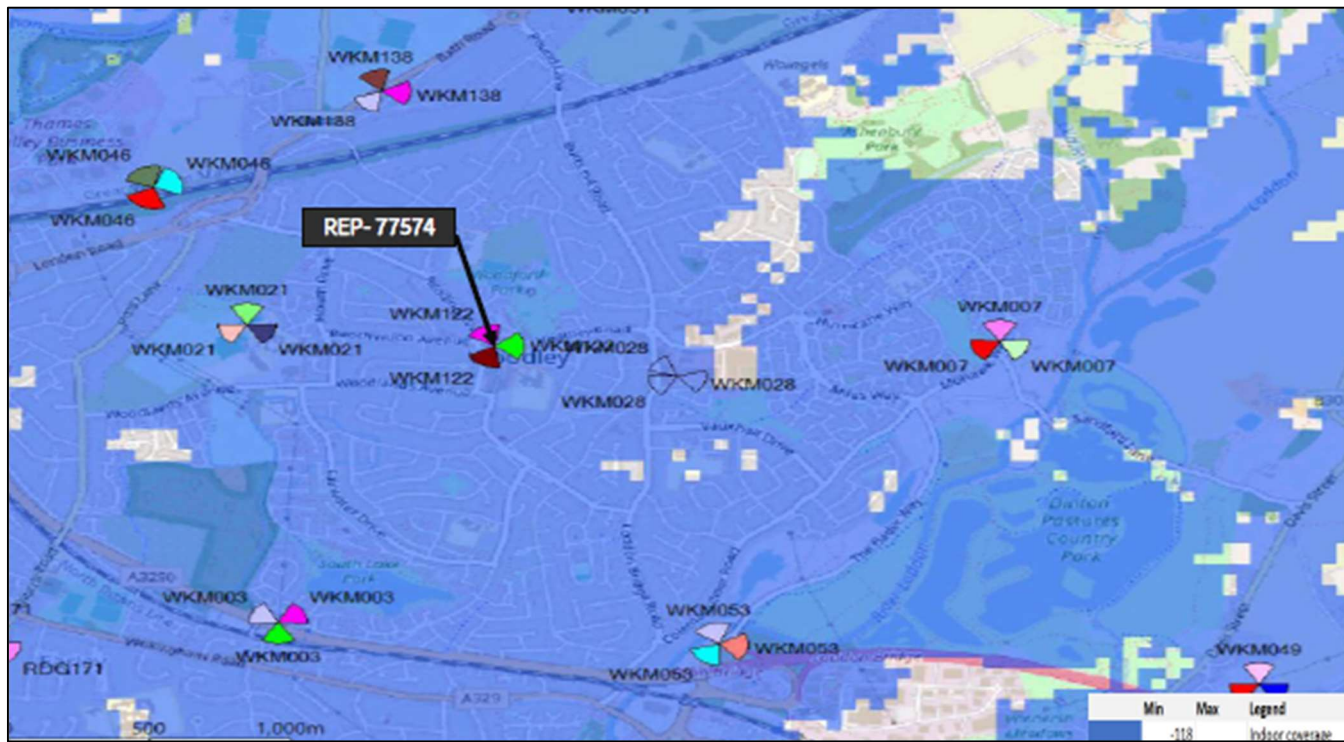


Figure 12: Predicted 4G indoor coverage for EE with application site (indicated as 77574)

As demonstrated above, the loss of the Headley Park Estate site (91520) will result in coverage gaps across a large geographical area where services would not be available or would be significantly worse for both operators. The proposal site will replicate the coverage provided by the NTQ site.

Both H3G and EE will lose indoor coverage when the existing site is decommissioned. Both H3G and EE will also lose outdoor coverage although H3G will experience more significant loss than EE. The proposal site will fill the coverage loss gap as well as increasing the capacity for which coverage can be provided to the surrounding area. It is noted that the proposed site alone is able to replace coverage without the need for additional sites, thereby keeping the number of telecommunications apparatus in the area to a minimum.

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. This is of particular relevance in this case, as rural communities have more limited access to healthcare services than metropolitan areas and rely more heavily on online options.

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.

EE has become the Emergency Services Network (ESN) Provider and their 4G network will be utilised for this purpose. It is essential to maintain all current services for not only current users and the general public but for the emergency services also.

Further details regarding the general operation of the network can be found in the accompanying document entitled 'General Background Information for Telecommunications Development'. This information is provided to assist the local planning authority in understanding any technical constraints associated with the proposed development. Further details of the benefits associated with mobile connectivity and 5G services can be found within the enclosed document titled 'Digital Public Benefit Brochure'.

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)

Prior to selecting the proposed site, a comprehensive investigation was undertaken by the Applicant's network planners, acquisition and planning agents to find a site specifically capable of replacing that at the Headley Park Estate site. Potential sites are considered in terms of their technical suitability to provide the required level of services, the effect on visual amenity and their ability to be acquired, built and maintained. The aim of site identification is to find the most technically efficient site, which has the minimum impact on visual amenity. Various options might theoretically be suitable in terms of one of these considerations, but not the other. A balance between the two must be achieved.

The search area has been determined by the radio planner. Acquisition and planning (the Agent) have undertaken a desktop study of the search area including existing telecommunications structures. This was followed by a physical survey of the search area and potential sites by the acquisition team and radio planner. The on-site investigation was undertaken via the sequential process as detailed in the Code of Practice Document from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. During the on-site investigation, the acquisition team and radio planner look at:

- Existing telecommunications sites and rooftop structures to place the proposed development, including other well-placed sites to meet technical requirements.
- The topography of the land as slopes have the potential to interfere with radio signals.
- Whether a site has enough physical space for the kit required and if there is an efficient way of accessing it for maintenance.
- Health and safety considerations are made including ICNIRP and safe access.
- In addition to the above, planning considerations are made relating to each site, including potential visual amenity effects and perceived policy alignment.

The siting of the proposed development has been carefully selected. The search area is very specific, and a location was identified which would ensure continued network provision, but which also would not encroach on the other cell sites within the Operators' network.

The area from within which a site will be capable of providing the desired coverage, the 'Directed Search Area' (DSA), is determined by network radio planners. There are no suitable building-based structures within the DSA. For a rooftop installation, the roof must be flat with suitable access. A search was undertaken for a rooftop installation within the search area. The buildings within the area are largely low level, lightweight, pitched or have no suitable access.

On the matter of alternative sites, an appeal decision by the Planning Inspectorate clarifies that it is an unreasonable expectation to consider every potential siting option when searching for a site to install communications apparatus. The reference to the superseded PP8 still stands in the replacement NPPF:

"Nor do I consider that it is realistic or reasonable to take the view that the absence of consideration of every possible option alternative would mean this element of the policy was not complied with. PPG 8 does not indicate the need to embark on an examination of

*every possible alternative in an iterative process. As accepted at the Inquiry by the Council's planning witness, the adequate analysis of feasible alternatives **is a more realistic approach, a view with which I concur**" (para. 12) (appeal ref. APP/Y3425/A/02/1084110).*

It should be noted at this juncture that within the Appeal Decision, in relation to the decision made by Oxford City Council to refuse prior approval for a telecommunications development (ref. APP/G3110/A/2028086), the Inspector commented in relation to alternative sites as follows:

"The appellants have identified a number of alternative sites which were ruled out by them for technical reasons, or because the equipment would be more visually intrusive or, more commonly, because the owners of the land concerned were unwilling to host the equipment. The Council does not dispute these explanations, but criticises the appellants for not providing documentary evidence to support their claims that alternative sites are unavailable. I attach little weight to this. The application has been submitted by a professional planner who is under a duty to act with competence, honesty and integrity. Unless the Council has any substantive reason to question the information about alternative sites, I see no reason to require documentary evidence to buttress what the appellants say about landowners being unwilling to host equipment."

The application site is in an ideal location to provide replacement coverage and capacity to the surrounding area. It will enable uninterrupted coverage and capacity to be provided to the high number of mobile users in the surrounding commercial, residential and recreational areas.

Site Type	Site name and address	National Grid Reference	Reason for not choosing site
Greenfield	D1 – Land on Woodford Park, Haddon Drive, Woodley, Reading, RG5 4LY	E: 476336 N: 173617	A ground-based installation was considered in this location. This site is associated with Woodford park, near the bowling club. Whilst there is physically enough space for the proposed equipment, this site has been discounted on planning merit given the high visibility of the monopole for nearby residents on Haddon Drive. The chosen site is better located in a commercial area where siting and appearance impacts will be minimised. As such, this site has been discounted.
Greenfield	D2 – St Dominic Savio Catholic Primary School, Western Ave, Woodley, Reading RG5 3BH	E: 476052 N: 173704	A ground-based installation was considered in this location. This site is located on a school field near the boundary of Woodford Park. This site has been discounted on radio merit. The site is located too far north-west of the search area and radio signals will not be able to reach the target search area. The chosen site is located within the search

			area and is able to provide replacement coverage. As such, this site has been discounted.
Greenfield	D3 – Land at Woodford Park Leisure Centre, Haddon Dr, Woodley, Reading RG5 4LY	E: 476171 N: 173639	A ground-based installation was considered in this location. This site is located on land between the building and pitch at the Leisure Centre. This site has been discounted on radio merit. The site is located too far north-west of the search area and radio signals will not be able to reach the target search area. The chosen site is located within the search area and is able to provide replacement coverage. As such, this site has been discounted.
Greenfield	D4 – Land at Woodley Netball Court, Haddon Dr, Woodley, RG5 4LY	E: 476288 N: 173674	A ground-based installation was considered in this location. This site is located on a grassed berm between the netball court carpark and bowling green. This site has been discounted on radio merit. The site is located too far north-west of the search area and radio signals will not be able to reach the target search area. The chosen site is located within the search area and is able to provide replacement coverage. As such, this site has been discounted.
Greenfield	D5 – Woodford Park Green, Woodley, Reading RG5 4LD	E: 476306 N: 173491	A ground-based installation was considered in this location. This site is located within the park. This site has been discounted on radio and planning merit. This site is located on the edge of the search area and is not preferred by radio as it will not provide the same level of coverage the search area that the application site will. The site is also located in a highly exposed open space which is used recreationally and will have a high public interface. It is considered that the application site will be less impactful from a siting and appearance perspective. As such, this site has been discounted.
Greenfield	D6 – Coronation Hall Carpark, Headley Rd,	E: 476360 N: 173375	A ground-based installation was considered in this location. This site is

	Woodley, Reading RG5 4JD		located within a carpark and has been discounted on design merit. There is a lack of space whereby the required equipment will not be able to be accommodated without removing many public car parking spaces. The chosen site is located on a paved berm and will not have this problem. As such, this site has been discounted.
Streetworks	D7 – Location on Headley Road, Woodley, Reading RG5 4JA	E: 476320 N: 173336	A ground-based installation was considered in this location. This site has been discounted on planning and design merit. There is not physically enough space to accommodate the equipment in this location where a feasible design solution can be found whilst still providing adequate pavement space. The site is also directly overlooked by residential development which is viewed in the context of Woodford Park. The chosen site is considered to present a less impactful solution from a siting and appearance perspective and there is adequate space. As such, this site has been discounted.
Rooftop	D8 – Woodley Town Council, The Oakwood Centre Headley Road Woodley, Reading RG5 4JZ	E: 476224 N: 173352	A building-based solution was considered in this location. This site has been discounted on design merit. The rooftop in this location is not structurally suitable to be able to accommodate the required equipment given the pitch of the roof. As such, this site has been discounted.
Rooftop	D9 – Lidl, 6 Headley Rd, Woodley, Reading RG5 4JA	E: 476196 N: 173289	A building-based solution has been investigated in this location. This site has been discounted on construction merit. There appears to be no permanent access to the rooftop which means that build and post-construction maintenance of the site would be extremely difficult. As such, this site has been discounted.
Rooftop	D10 – 160 Crockhamwell Rd, Woodley, Reading RG5 3JH	E: 476162 N: 173224	A building-based solution has been investigated in this location. This site has been discounted on radio merit. Whilst there is physically enough space for the

			required equipment, the height of the building is too low to provide adequate replacement coverage. The application site is able to provide this. As such, this site has been discounted.
Rooftop	D11 – 141 Crockhamwell Rd, Woodley, Reading RG5 3JP	E: 476098 N: 173266	A building-based solution has been investigated in this location. This site has been discounted on radio merit. Whilst there is physically enough space for the required equipment, the height of the building is too low to provide adequate replacement coverage. The application site is able to provide this. As such, this site has been discounted.
Streetworks	D12 – Grass island at Butts Hill Rd, Woodley, Reading RG5 4NY	E: 476686 N: 173371	A ground-based installation has been investigated in this location. This site has been discounted on planning merit. Whilst there is physically enough space to accommodate the equipment in this location, this island has frontage to many residential properties without providing any screening. A monopole in this location will not assimilate as well into the surrounding environment as the application site will in a commercial setting. As such, this site has been discounted.
Streetworks	D13 – Location along Butt's Hill Drive, Woodley, Reading RG5 4NR	E: 476625 N: 173720	A ground-based installation has been investigated in this location. The roadside in this location is very narrow and would not be able to accommodate the required equipment as well as allowing for the safe passage of pedestrians using pushchairs and wheelchairs. Further to this, the site is also located in proximity to residential dwellings. While this would not preclude a telecommunications site in this location, it is considered that the selected site has superior planning merit whilst being able to meet technical requirements. As such, this site has been discounted.

Streetworks	D14 – Location along Rowan Dr, Woodley, Reading RG5 4LW	E: 476442 N: 173776	A ground-based installation has been investigated in this location. The roadside in this location is very narrow and would not be able to accommodate the required equipment as well as allowing for the safe passage of pedestrians using pushchairs and wheelchairs. Further to this, the site is also located in proximity to residential dwellings. While this would not preclude a telecommunications site in this location, it is considered that the selected site has superior planning merit whilst being able to meet technical requirements. As such, this site has been discounted.
Streetworks	D15 – Location along Haddon Drive, Woodley, Reading RG5 4LY	E: 476396 N: 173597	A ground-based installation has been investigated in this location. The roadside in this location is very narrow and would not be able to accommodate the required equipment as well as allowing for the safe passage of pedestrians using pushchairs and wheelchairs. Further to this, the site is also located in proximity to residential dwellings. While this would not preclude a telecommunications site in this location, it is considered that the selected site has superior planning merit whilst being able to meet technical requirements. As such, this site has been discounted.

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



Figure 13: Locations of discounted options (search area indicated by red circle)(preferred option shown as X)

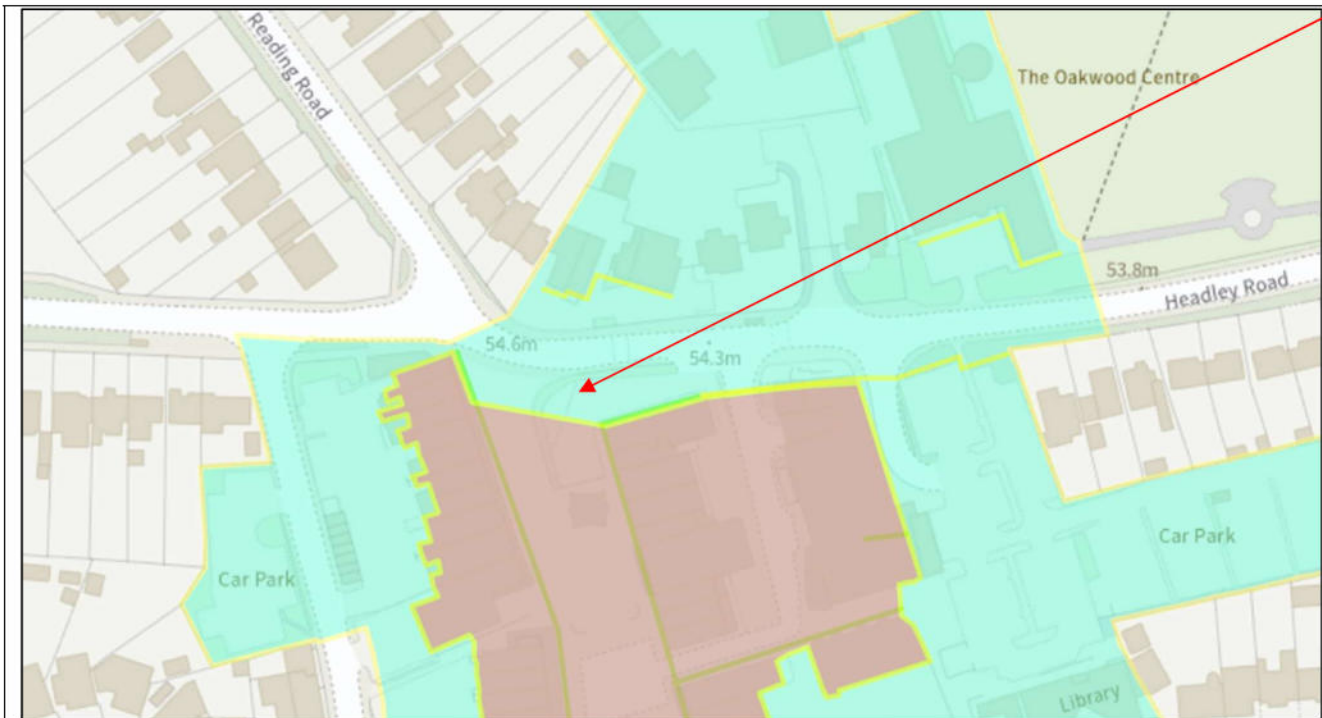
The above sites were investigated. However, it was considered that the most appropriate town planning and environmental solution has been brought forward as part of the application, and given the lack of more suitable alternatives, provides an excellent solution to ensure network coverage services continue to be provided to the local area. The chosen site is located close enough to the existing site being decommissioned meaning that the coverage and capacity to the surrounding area is able to be replicated while being in the least visually obtrusive location possible.

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

Environmental Information:

The application site does not fall within any designations and is not ecologically sensitive. The site is also located within Flood Zone 1 and as such, there is no flood risk associated with the location of the proposal.

Land use planning designations:



Legend:



Figure 14: Wokingham Borough Council Planning Policies and Constraints Map with legend (site indicated by red arrow)
(Source: Wokingham Borough Council website)

Siting and Appearance:

The proposal is permitted development subject to applying for a determination as to whether the prior approval of the authority will be required, relating to the siting and appearance of the development. This section should be read in conjunction with the preceding sections of this statement where a description of the application site, technical details and justification for the design and details of the public benefits of the proposal are provided.

The Applicant has sought to limit the visual impact of the proposal. In this instance, the proposed installation is subject to technical and build constraints. That notwithstanding, it is submitted that the siting and design put forth will mitigate any potential impact on the site and its surroundings to an acceptable level. It is considered that the proposal offers a design that is not visually intrusive and ensures suitable new and enhanced mobile coverage and capacity is provided to the wider area. It is important to keep the impact of telecommunications development in the area to a minimum. The Code of Practice for Wireless Network Development in England emphasises that *“where possible, operators should look to use existing buildings/structures for hosting wireless infrastructure, to reduce the environmental impact of installation.”* In this case, there are no existing masts or buildings in the search area that are available or suitable for this proposed installation.

The existing installation – approximately 650 metres to the east – is a 25 metre-high lattice tower which sits on the outskirts of Headley Park Industrial Area. The installation accommodates a

large headframe and numerous antennas, and can be seen on the local skyline from a number of vantage points. It could, therefore, be argued, that the existing installation is far more visible on the local skyline and within the context of the wider area, than the proposed slimline development at the application site would be. The application site itself has been carefully selected to ensure that any perceived visual intrusion associated with this installation is reduced as far as practicable. Its positioning, immediately adjacent to mature tree cover at the junction of Crockhamwell Road and Headley Road, will be suitably screened to a significant extent. Whilst this application is being brought forward as a 'replacement' cell to the one which is being decommissioned, the fact that it will be 5G-ready at the point of deployment is a significant point of note – i.e. a 25-metre-high lattice tower, with large headframe, is being replaced by a slimline 20-metre-high monopole within the wider area, and the replacement installation will provide better coverage and capacity

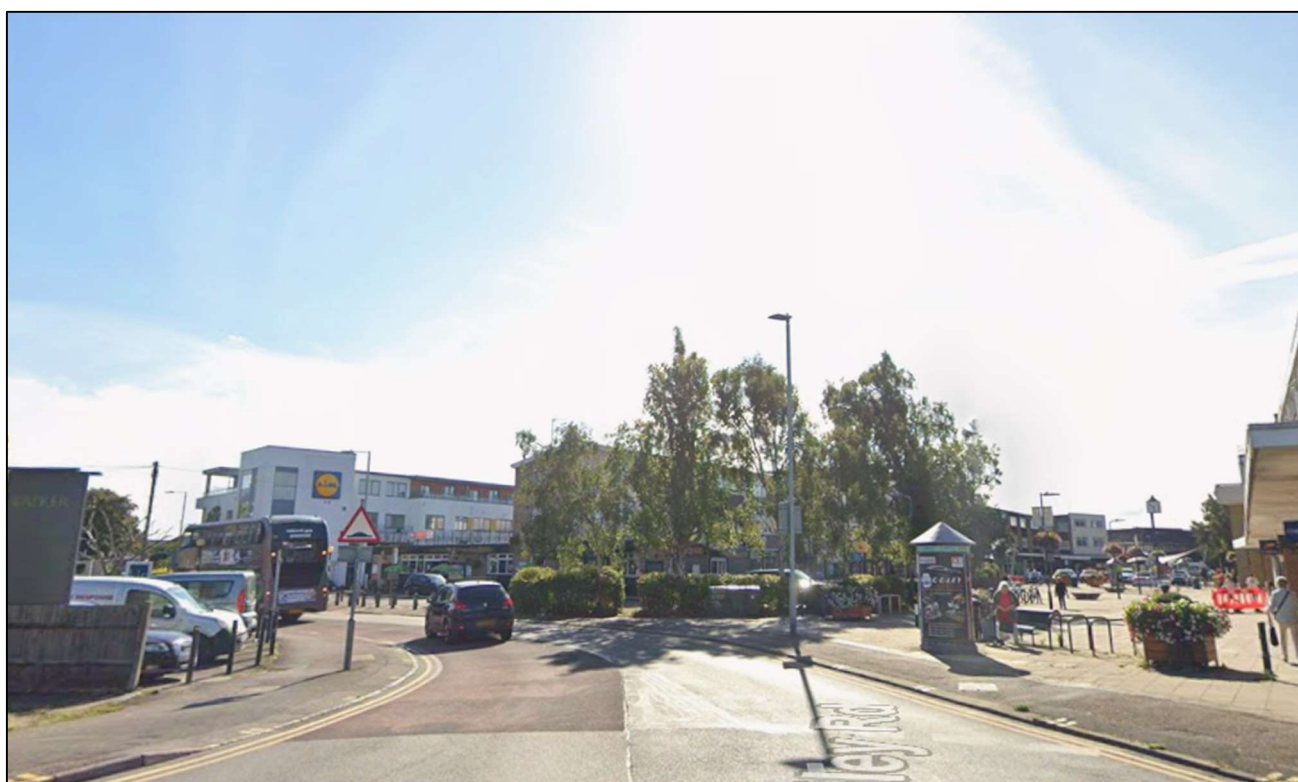


Figure 15: View towards application site facing east on Headley Road (Source: Google Maps)

Some short to mid-range views will be experienced in the vicinity of the application site. It is not considered that these views will amount to any level of harmful impact as the site is set within an area which is used primarily as a thoroughfare and commercial/shopping destination. The cabinets and lower section of the monopole will be screened from view owing to the mature trees and hedges surrounding majority of the site as shown by Figure 15 above. The site will be viewed in the context of other existing street furniture in the area and will be coloured similarly in order to allow for the monopole's assimilation into the existing environment.

The application site has been strategically positioned in close proximity to mature tree cover, and will be set to the north of a pedestrianised area (Crockhamwell Road) which already accommodates a number of existing vertically engineered structures in the form of street lighting columns. The context of the area is mainly commercial and retail, as is the case with most town centres, with the proposed apparatus positioned immediately adjacent to The Chequers Public

House car park. Given the context of the area, and the excellent screening available, it is considered that the proposed development is wholly appropriate for the area, and will result in continued and improved network coverage to the area for two major mobile Operators.

The proposed monopole is 20 metres in height. This is in order to clear the surrounding development and trees, meet the technical requirement and operate safely. Given the technical requirements of the base station, the height of the proposed development cannot be reduced. Given the very restricted geographical area, in terms of deploying the necessary base station, it is considered that the optimum town planning solution has been brought forward, which also provides the optimum site in terms of achievable operator network coverage and capacity to the surrounding area.

As discussed earlier in this application, a comprehensive search of the area has been undertaken to identify a suitable location for the necessary apparatus. The site has been selected as the most suitable option in terms of meeting the technical requirement for the area.

The government has released clear guidance on the balance that local authorities must take between these two factors – technical achievements of the telecommunications development and visual impact – and this will be clarified in the following sections of this report.

The proposed location is considered the most suitable location in terms of siting and design, with the limited/less than substantial harm it may impose on the surrounding area being outweighed by the provision of continued mobile services to the area. This has been supported by the Local Planning Authority as well given the location has not been changed since the previous approval was issued. It is considered that equilibrium will be achieved between technical requirements and environmental impact. As demonstrated above, the search area is highly constrained with much of it residing in low-lying residential areas or open space. Any telecommunications installation in these areas would result in more substantial siting and appearance impacts than the chosen location.

While the proposed development will add additional street furniture into the immediate surrounds, it is not considered that this change will amount to any adverse effect sufficient to prevent the development from occurring. The impact is limited to patrons and some residential buildings on Headley Road. The character of the surrounding area will remain unaffected given the commercial nature of the streetscape. The anticipated effect should be weighed against the environment, economic and social benefits of the replacement, which will enhance coverage and capacity and provide connectivity improvements to the surrounding area.

Planning Policy Context:

Section 70 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) requires planning applications and appeal to be determined having regard to the provisions for the Development Plan and other material considerations. Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications and appeals to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Local Policy

The application site is located within the Wokingham Borough Council Local Authority area. The Development Plan for Wokingham consists of the Core Strategy (adopted January 2010) and the Managing Development Delivery (MDD) (adopted February 2014).

It is noted that the Council is currently developing a new Local Plan: the Local Plan Update – which will put in place a new planning strategy for the period to 2040. Once adopted, it will replace the current Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery local plans. It is understood that the new Local Plan underwent examination hearings which were held in November 2025. The Inspectors have now written to confirm the examination can progress to Part 2 hearings, which are due to commence in March 2026. As the new Local Plan is still subject to changes and is not available for viewing online, no weighting is afforded and the application proposal will be assessed under the Core Strategy and MDD only. An assessment of the policies of the Core Strategy and MDD are conglomerated at the end of the Local Policy section.

Wokingham Borough Local Development Framework Adopted Core Strategy

It is noted that there is no specific policy within the Core Strategy which refers to telecommunications development. However, one policy is of relevance which generally refers to development within the borough. Relevant sections of the policy are included for ease of reference below.

Policy CP3 – General Principles for Development

Planning permission will be granted for proposals that:

- a) Are of an appropriate scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area together with a high quality of design without detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users including open spaces of occupiers and their quality of life;*
- c) Have no detrimental impact upon important ecological, heritage, landscape (including river valleys) or geological features or water courses.*
- j) Do not lead to a loss of community or recreational facilities/land or infrastructure unless suitable alternative provision is available.*

Wokingham Borough Development Plan Adopted Managing Development Delivery

It is noted that there is no specific policy within the MDD which refers to telecommunications development. However, one policy is of relevance. Relevant sections of the policy are including for ease of reference below.

Policy CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

- 2. Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise – taking into account whether:*
 - a. Any adverse impacts of planning permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) taken as a whole; or*

- b. Specific policies in the National Planning Policy Framework indicate that development should be restricted.*

As demonstrated in the preceding sections of this document, there is a technical requirement for the site. This is in order to provide replacement coverage and capacity for the Headley Park Estate site which is due to be lost from the network. Technical constraints for alternative sites have also been set out which details why the site at Otley Road has been chosen as the superior planning and technical option within the search area. The alternative site selection and sequential process undertaken has also investigated the potential for site sharing first, however there are no suitable sites within the search area that would make this a possibility.

As stated in the siting and appearance assessment above, the design of the monopole will assimilate the development with the surrounding existing street furniture and commercial/retail use well. There are requirements to locate telecommunications equipment where it is readily accessible and any foreground landscaping has the potential to impede access. However, the natural existing landscaping features provided by the existing trees and raised green is considered to adequately mitigate visual amenity effects of the development as much as possible. The site is also well separated from heritage assets and environmental assets.

The proposal has been assessed against the National Planning Policy Framework and it has been determined that any adverse impacts (of which it is considered that there are none) would not outweigh the public benefit to the surrounding area. As such, it is considered that the proposal complies with the Wokingham Borough Local Plan.

National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024

Paragraph 7 of the NPPF states: 'The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.' The NPPF set out objectives to achieve the aim of sustainable development. These are provided below for ease of reference:

- a) an economic objective – 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*
- b) a social objective – 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*
- c) an environmental objective – 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.*

It is considered that the proposal adequately achieves these three objectives. Providing mobile network coverage and capacity enables the economy to operate efficiently, supporting growth

and communication. Network coverage and capacity allows the general public to use mobile devices and mobile services without coverage and capacity loss or slow connections. From an environmental perspective, it is considered that the bulk and location of the proposed site has been minimised as far as practicably possible through limiting the size of the apparatus to that which is absolutely necessary to provide enhanced coverage and capacity. Adequate network coverage and capacity additionally supports homeworking, which is linked to a reduction in transport emissions.

Chapter 10 of the NPPF sets out supporting high quality communications. Paragraph 119 emphasises the significance of delivering the latest communications infrastructure:

‘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 communications networks, including next generation mobile technology (such as 5G) and full fibre broadband connections.’

The proposal is deemed as essential infrastructure, whereby delivering high quality and reliable mobile communications is a national policy matter that planning decisions by local authorities should support.

Additionally, the NPPF encourages the use of existing masts for new electronic equipment. The proposal therefore adheres to Paragraph 120 of the NPPF which states:

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

In this case, there is no opportunity to utilise an existing telecoms site while continuing to provide network coverage and capacity. As demonstrated in previous sections of this report, various options were investigated. It was determined that none of these were viable to continue providing network coverage to the area.

UK Digital Strategy

The UK Digital Strategy, published by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport in March 2017, provides evidence of the public benefits of communication services:

‘Broadband and mobile must be treated as the fourth utility, with everyone benefiting from improved connectivity. This will play a crucial role in ensuring that everyone, wherever they live and however they connect, can make full use of digital services and benefit from participation in the digital economy. Improved connectivity also increases innovation and productivity across the economy, bringing significant economic rewards’. ‘5G is the next generation of mobile connectivity, and is currently in development. It is expected to represent a significant upgrade: providing ultrafast, low latency, and more reliable mobile connectivity, able to handle our ever-increasing data requirements. This should present huge opportunities to boost productivity and

grow the economy. In addition to giving consumers and business users high quality connectivity, it will also support the development of the Internet of Things: the rapidly increasing number of connected devices, from connected cars to digital health applications.'

Future Telecoms Infrastructure Review

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport published its findings of the Government's Future Telecoms Infrastructure Review in 2018. The review highlights the important and far reaching role of 5G infrastructure:

'Alongside finishing the roll out of 4G networks to meet existing mobile demand, we want the UK to be a world leader in 5G to take early advantage of this new technology. We have set a target that the majority of the population will have 5G coverage and capacity by 2027.'

'The technical capabilities and performance characteristics of 5G are clear. 5G is expected to deliver faster and better mobile broadband services to consumers and businesses, and to enable innovative new services for industry sectors, including manufacturing, transport, immersive technologies and healthcare' (p 10).

Ofcom Reports

Ofcom's annual Communications Market Reports identified trends which demonstrate reliance on reliable mobile connections:

'We all need high-quality communications. In the modern world, a huge amount of our time is spent using communications services: for work, to stay in touch with family and friends, and in order to go about our daily lives. Our ability to access and use reliable mobile and broadband connections has become fundamental to the way we work and live, and to the ability of businesses of all sizes to thrive. For many people, internet connectivity is now as essential as gas or electricity, and access to traditional television, radio, fixed phone lines and postal services continue to remain important.'

Planned economic growth cannot be sustained without the provision of essential utility infrastructure, including access to reliable, resilient and high-speed electronic communications. The proposal would increase the capacity of the base station to enable it to more effectively service a higher number of people.

Summary and Conclusion

The Applicant proposes to install a 20-metre Phase 7 monopole and supporting development at Crockhamwell Road in Woodley, Reading. The need for this site is due to the imminent loss of a nearby critical base station, which will cause major gaps in mobile coverage for EE and Three (H3G), including indoor and outdoor service for residents, businesses, and emergency services.

The site was selected after alternative locations were ruled out due to unsuitability, lack of coverage, radio constraints and/or planning restrictions. The location is screened and set within a commercial area, minimising visual impact compared to alternatives.

The monopole will restore and enhance existing coverage, add new 5G capacity, and comply with all safety and planning standards. Its slimline design and neutral colouring reduces local impact, with mature trees offering further screening.

This proposal meets national and local planning policies, supports essential mobile connectivity, and delivers clear public benefit, public benefit which outweighs any adverse impact to the surrounding environment. The design and siting ensure minimal visual impact while preventing significant coverage loss—making this site the most technically and visually appropriate solution. Approval is justified in accordance with development and connectivity priorities.

Name: (Agent)	<u>Lily Conradie</u>	Telephone:	<u>N/A</u>
Operator:	<u>EE (UK) Ltd and H3G (UK) Ltd</u>		
Address:	<u>c/o Agent</u>	Email Address:	<u>Lily.Conradie@mgroupltd.com</u>
		Date:	<u>6/03/2026</u>
Signed:		Company:	<u>M Group Ltd</u>
Position:	<u>Town Planner</u>		
		(on behalf of MBNL (EE Ltd and H3G UK Ltd) and above operator)	