



Telecoms approval process

Over the last decade, digital connectivity including 4G, smartphones and apps have transformed the way most people live and work. The current COVID-19 crisis has highlighted the importance of digital connectivity during lock down ranging from working from home to reducing isolation through maintaining contact with friends and families. The upgrade to 5G will prove fundamental to fulfilling the potential of digital connectivity and will help drive the economy after the COVID-19 outbreak. The broader benefits of 5G include Healthcare, Connectivity, Education and Manufacturing

Process

Mobile Network Operators (MNOs) identify masts to be upgraded or constructed under permitted development

MNOs hold pre-application discussions with Planners

Planners feedback on proposed locations whether they are likely to be acceptable or not.

If rejected, MNOs identify alternative locations with lesser visual impact for review by planners including joint meetings where required.

A site notice is posted and/or neighbours are notified of the proposal. Approval is granted if the siting and appearance is acceptable.

MNOs will submit traffic management permits to allow work to proceed once approved.

Comments

Currently the focus is on upgrading masts. These will be built alongside existing 4G masts in order to keep the service live during construction.

The ability of councils to influence the roll-out of mobile technology is limited by central government regulations.

As a Planning Authority, we encourage pre-application discussions with Mobile Network Operators to agree locations considering factors affecting the siting and appearance of new electronic communications infrastructure.

The Planning authority can only take account of siting and appearance in determining applications. Perceived health risks, loss of value of property etc are not material considerations.

As part of the consultation, Highways will review to ensure that there will not be a visual impact relating to highways safety