

# Code of Best Practice on Mobile Network Development (2016)

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# Background

- Current version is 4<sup>th</sup> iteration, each coinciding with changes to the permitted development regime in what is now Part 16 of Schedule 2 of the GPDO
- Further Part 16 changes are expected so COBP will be updated to match
- Collaboration between the LGA, POS, central government, industry and other bodies



# Who is it for?

- Mobile Network Operators, their agents and contractors
- Local planning authorities in England
- Community groups
- Amenity bodies
- Anyone with an interest in mobile connectivity



# Purpose

To ensure that:

- Government's objective of supporting high quality communications infrastructure, which is vital to continued economic prosperity and social inclusion for all, is met.
  - Timely
  - Efficient
  - Balancing exercise
- Appropriate engagement takes place with local communities and other interested parties



# What does it apply to?

- All forms of wireless development
- Most relevant to:
  - proposals for new masts or base stations
  - significant additions, extensions or replacements of existing sites



# What does it cover?

- Communications Policy and Planning Policy
- Special Operational and Technical Considerations
- The Evolution of Mobile Networks
- Mobile Connectivity in the 21st Century
- How the Mobile Networks Function
- Working Together to Deliver Connectivity
- The Planning Process in Practice
- Monitoring and Review
- Dispute Resolution

# Communications policy and planning policy

- National Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2016 – 2021: digital communications are now a crucial component of everyday life, with improvements in connectivity being key to a vibrant economy.

## NPPF:

- Role of comms networks in enhancing the provision of local community facilities and services.
- Minimise numbers of sites and use existing sites, buildings or structures
- New sites should be designed sympathetically and camouflaged where appropriate



# Special operational and technical requirements

- Radio signals operate like light and must “see” over the target coverage area.
- In assessing visual impact, greater emphasis than previously should now be placed on the radio planning requirements to achieve mobile coverage.
- If local planning authorities are concerned about proposals, they should not ‘look for problems’ but should work pro-actively with the Mobile Network Operators to find solutions, in line with paragraph 187 of the NPPF.





# Evolution of mobile networks & Mobile Connectivity in 21<sup>st</sup> Century

- Each move to new technology has put more pressure on network capacity
- Use of existing installations where possible
- Sharing sites and infrastructure where possible
- New sites are needed either for connectivity or to replace lost sites
- Economic benefits, social inclusion, delivery of public services, telehealth, sustainability agenda



# How mobile networks function

Network of base stations to provide sufficient radio coverage in any geographical area

A mobile device converts data or the human voice into radio waves. These signals are transmitted from the device to the nearest base station, where they are connected nationally and transferred to the network of the receiving device via the nearest base station

Base stations:

- are sited to maximise coverage to a locality
- cover a limited geographic area
- can only handle a finite amount of traffic at any one time

Mobile devices are relatively short range devices and so base stations need to be sited where there is customer demand for connectivity.



# Working together to deliver connectivity

## Role of central government

DCMS – communications policy; MHCLG – planning legislation; PHE – health policy

## Role of operators

- Site sharing
- Consultation with LPAs & other stakeholders
- Consultation with communities
- Standardised documentation for planning submissions
- Compliance with ICNIRP guidance
- Prompt responses to enquiries
- Workshops for planning authorities
- Design

## Role of local government

- Incentivising connectivity
- Facilitating Sites
- Pre-application
- Planning applications
- Information
- Communications
- Training



# The planning process in practice

Series of tables which set out the agreed best practice for both operators and planning authorities for the different stages of the planning process in England, for new sites and upgrades to existing sites in terms of:

- Site selection
- LPA consultation
- Identification of consultation strategy
- Community consultation
- Planning application submission

Permitted development



# Monitoring and Review

# Dispute Resolution



# Appendices

A Siting and Appearance Principles

B Traffic Light Model and Consultation Strategy

C Consultation with Schools and Colleges

D Supplementary Information Template/International  
Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection Certificate

E Guidance on Applications – Prior Approval and Full Planning

F Glossary of Terms

G Operator Contacts

The COBP is  
available here:

[https://uploads-ssl.webflow.com/5b7ab54b285dec5c113ee24d/5d5d4cd69a3f3827f30d06e9\\_Codes%20of%20Practice.pdf](https://uploads-ssl.webflow.com/5b7ab54b285dec5c113ee24d/5d5d4cd69a3f3827f30d06e9_Codes%20of%20Practice.pdf)



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Thank you

