



## Digital Connectivity

### **Policy BE10: Digital Connectivity**

- A. The Council will support the expansion of digital infrastructure to meet the needs of businesses and communities, particularly where this provides access to the most up-to-date digital infrastructure technology.
- B. All new development will be required to incorporate full fibre connections, including ducting to industry standards for efficient connections to existing networks, unless it can be proven that it is technically unfeasible.
- C. Provision of new digital infrastructure should be phased to ensure it comes forward at the same time or before the completion of new development. It will be expected that internet connections will be operational and immediately accessible to network providers when occupiers move into new properties.
- D. The Council will also support proposals which improve both access to, and increased performance of broadband in areas of the borough with poor network coverage / service provision (including the rural areas and Partington).

### **Telecommunication Masts**

- E. Proposals for masts or telecommunications development will be required to demonstrate that:
- F. There are no reasonable opportunities for sharing a site, mast or facility with existing telecommunications infrastructure in the immediate area to the proposal.
- G. The siting, height and design of the proposed equipment will not cause harm to the character and appearance of the area in which it is to be located, including the significance and setting of heritage assets.
- H. Any building-mounted installations would be located and designed to minimise their impact on the host building.
- I. No interference would be caused to air traffic services or electrical equipment.



- J. No impact would be caused to highway safety or the movement of pedestrians and cyclists, and
- K. Provision is made for the removal of the structures and reinstatement of the site as soon as reasonably practicable after it is no longer required for telecommunications purposes.

### **Places for Everyone Links**

JP-C1 and JP-C2

### **Relevant Strategic Objectives**

SO4

- 12.37. The Council is committed to securing high quality communication infrastructure that is essential for growing a sustainable economy and for social well-being. Access to high quality digital infrastructure supports productivity and new business opportunities. It also facilitates social inclusion, enables home working, and improves access to a wide range of services that are increasingly provided online.
- 12.38. The Council will work with developers to ensure that the highest quality digital infrastructure is delivered at key development locations (such as the Civic Quarter, New Carrington and Davenport Green). Developers will be encouraged to have early discussions with strategic providers to ensure that the best available infrastructure provision is provided and made accessible on occupation of new development.
- 12.39. The government is committed to extending mobile geographical coverage across the UK and providing uninterrupted mobile signal on all major roads, and to be a global leader in 5G. Part 16 of the General Permitted Development Order (1995)<sup>1</sup> (as amended) allows telecommunications operators to install and replace certain types of telecommunications

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<sup>1</sup> This can be found at:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2015/596/schedule/2/part/16/made>



equipment, provided certain criteria are met without the need for planning permission.

- 12.40. Some smaller scale masts fall within 'permitted development' but require the 'Prior Approval' of the local planning authority. In these instances, the Council can exercise control over the siting and appearance of telecommunications equipment in the interests of protecting amenity. Appearance of a mast includes its materials, colour and design, and consideration of siting will involve its impact on the ecological value of the site, the wider landscape and its proximity to buildings and housing and the availability of alternative infrastructure in the area. The criteria in the Policy TM13 will be applied in these cases and for those more significant radio and telecommunications infrastructure that do not constitute permitted development. This includes maximising the use of existing infrastructure to avoid the over proliferation of new telecommunications structures.
- 12.41. It is also important that new developments must be 'future-proofed' with appropriate digital infrastructure, that will meet existing and future communication needs. New sites (residential and non-residential) should be provided with in-built broadband infrastructure to enable the delivery of high-speed broadband services. It is essential that the Council works with developers to make sure that the appropriate digital infrastructure is incorporated, including 5G networks (or future technologies as they become available).

### **Consultation Question 12-10**

Do you support Policy BE10? Are there any changes required which would improve the policy? Please provide any supporting evidence which you think is relevant.