

Appendix 15 – Broadband and Electronic Communications

Broadband and Electronic Communication

- 1) Proposals for the installation of electronic communications equipment should:
 - a) Have no significant adverse effect on the external appearance of the building on which, or space in which, they are to be located
 - b) Fully explore the possibility of sharing facilities, such as masts, cabinet boxes and satellite dishes, and erecting antennae on existing buildings or other structures
 - c) Fully explore technologies to miniaturise and camouflage any electronic communications apparatus
 - d) Be appropriately designed, coloured and landscaped to take account of their setting;
- 2) All residential, employment and commercial developments should be served by or be capable of being served by super-fast full-fibre broadband through the integration of appropriate measures such as open access ducting to industry standards.

Reasoned Justification

15.1 The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Governments policy on full fibre broadband connections and electronic communications networks which include next generation mobile technology (such as 5G). It recognises that high quality and reliable communications infrastructure is essential for economic growth and social well-being.

15.2 The Council recognises that electronic communications networks and the availability, reliability and speed of broadband provision is essential to the development of the local economy and for the benefit of the local community. The Council supports the expansion of electronic communications network and full fibre broadband connections for all new development.

15.3 With regards to electronic communications equipment (including satellite dishes, microwave antennae, radio masts, public call boxes, cabinets and other types of telecommunication equipment) the aim is to ensure that these are kept to a minimum through encouraging the sharing of equipment where this is technically possible. The impact of telecommunications can be minimised through careful design, colouring and landscaping to minimise visual intrusion which can help to protect the character and appearance of an area. When considering applications the Council shall have regard to the legal requirements placed upon electronic communications operators to provide an adequate service and any technical and operational obligations that the operator is required to undertake.

15.4 It will be important for all new residential, employment and commercial developments to provide the means to enable connection to be made to fibre optic broadband infrastructure as the main technology for delivering superfast connections. This should be designed and installed as an integral part of development to avoid the visual impact and

future disturbance caused by retrofitting. It is recognised that the availability of broadband infrastructure will vary across the District.

15.5 The expectation is that where such infrastructure is not readily available nearby, provision is made for ducting and cabinets to enable easy connection at a later date. In 2021 the Government defined superfast broadband as being at least 30 Mbps download speed, therefore this is the minimum level of service that is considered acceptable.