



Ministry of Housing,  
Communities &  
Local Government



Department for  
Digital, Culture,  
Media & Sport

# Proposed reforms to permitted development rights to support the deployment of 5G and extend mobile coverage

Consultation



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# Contents

<b>Scope of the consultation</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>About this consultation</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Introduction to the consultation</b>	<b>7</b>
Deployment of 5G infrastructure and extending mobile connectivity	8
Proposed planning reforms to support deployment of 5G and extend mobile coverage	9
Code Operators and Permitted Development Rights	11
Question 1: Role of Industry	12
<b>Potential changes to the General Permitted Development Order</b>	<b>15</b>
Question 2: Enabling deployment of radio equipment housing on land without requiring prior approval, excluding on sites of special scientific interest, to support 5G deployment	15
Question 3: Strengthening existing ground-based masts to enable sites to be upgraded for 5G and for mast sharing without prior approval	18
Question 4: Enabling deployment of building-based masts nearer to highways to support deployment of 5G and extend mobile coverage	21
Question 5: Enabling higher masts to deliver better mobile coverage and mast sharing	23
<b>Public Sector Equality Duty</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Annex A</b>	<b>27</b>

# Scope of the consultation

<p>Topic of this consultation:</p>	<p>This consultation seeks views on the principle of amending permitted development rights in England to grant planning permission for mobile infrastructure to support deployment of 5G and extend mobile coverage, particularly in rural areas, and the circumstances in which it would be appropriate. It covers the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Deployment of 5G and extending mobile connectivity;</li> <li>● Proposed planning reforms to support deployment of 5G and extend mobile coverage;</li> <li>● Code Operators and Permitted Development Rights;</li> <li>● The Role of Industry;</li> <li>● Potential changes to the General Permitted Development Order;</li> <li>● Enabling deployment of radio equipment housing on land without prior approval, excluding sites of special scientific interest, to support 5G deployment;</li> <li>● Strengthening existing masts to enable sites to be upgraded for 5G and for mast sharing without prior approval;</li> <li>● Enabling the deployment of building based masts nearer to highways to support deployment of 5G and extend mobile coverage;</li> <li>● Enabling higher masts to deliver better mobile coverage and mast sharing; and</li> <li>● Public Sector Equality Duty.</li> </ul>
<p>Scope of this consultation:</p>	<p>The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media &amp; Sport are consulting on the principle of amending permitted development rights to grant planning permission for mobile infrastructure to support deployment of 5G and extend mobile coverage, and the circumstances in which it would be appropriate.</p>
<p>Geographical scope:</p>	<p>These proposals relate to England only.</p>
<p>Impact Assessment:</p>	<p>Impact Assessment is not required.</p> <p>Following this consultation closing on 4 November 2019, the Government will consider the replies and issue a response. Subject to the outcome of this consultation, we anticipate undertaking a further consultation on our detailed proposals, which would be accompanied by an Impact Assessment, if required.</p>

## Basic Information

To:	This consultation is open to everyone. We are keen to hear from a wide range of interested parties from across the public and private sectors, as well as from the general public.
Body/bodies responsible for the consultation:	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport
Duration:	This consultation will last for 10 weeks from 27 August 2019.
Enquiries:	For any enquiries about responding to the consultation please contact: <a href="mailto:Mobileplanningconsultation@communities.gov.uk">Mobileplanningconsultation@communities.gov.uk</a>
How to respond	<p>You may respond by completing an online survey at: <a href="https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/3LBZ5ZH">https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/3LBZ5ZH</a></p> <p>We strongly encourage responses via the online survey, particularly from organisations with access to online facilities such as local authorities, representative bodies and businesses. Using the online survey greatly assists in our analysis of the responses, enabling more efficient and effective consideration of the issues raised for each question.</p> <p>Alternatively, you can email your response to the questions in this consultation, including any attachments to: <a href="mailto:Mobileplanningconsultation@communities.gov.uk">Mobileplanningconsultation@communities.gov.uk</a></p> <p>If you are responding in writing, please make it clear which questions you are responding to.</p> <p>Written responses should be sent to:</p> <p>Planning Infrastructure Division Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government 3rd Floor Fry Building 2 Marsham Street LONDON SW1P 4DF</p> <p>When you reply it would be very useful if you confirm whether you are replying as an individual or submitting an official response on behalf of an organisation and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- your name, and</li> <li>- the name of organisation (if applicable).</li> </ul>

# About this consultation

This consultation document and consultation process have been planned to adhere to the Consultation Principles issued by the Cabinet Office.

Representative groups are asked to give a summary of the people and organisations they represent, and where relevant, who else they have consulted in reaching their conclusions when they respond.

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal data, may be published or disclosed in accordance with the access to information regimes (these are primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004).

If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, as a public authority, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport are bound by the FOIA and may therefore be obliged to disclose all or some of the information you provide. In view of this it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information, we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Departments.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport will process your personal data in accordance with the law and in the majority of circumstances this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties. A full privacy notice is included at Annex A.

Your opinions are valuable to us. Thank you for taking the time to read this document and respond.

Are you satisfied that this consultation has followed the Consultation Principles? If not or you have any other observations about how we can improve the process, please contact us via the [complaints procedure](#)<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Details about MHCLG's complaints procedure is available at:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-housing-communities-and-local-government/about/complaints-procedure>

# Introduction to the consultation

1. The Government recognises that widespread coverage of mobile connectivity is essential for people and businesses. People expect to be connected where they live, work, visit and travel. That is why the Government is committed to extending mobile geographical coverage further across the UK, with continuous mobile connectivity provided to all major roads and to being a world leader in 5G.
2. This will allow everyone in the country to benefit from the economic advantages of widespread mobile coverage, something rural communities in particular have been calling for. A recent report found that better mobile infrastructure has the potential to transform the rural economy by enabling small businesses to grow, recruit and retain staff and making it easier for people to work from home<sup>2</sup>. As well as improved mobile signal, 5G networks are also crucial to drive productivity and growth across the sectors that local areas are focusing on through their emerging Local Industrial Strategies. Enabling and planning for 5G implementation is central to achieving the Government's objective to deliver prosperity at the local level and enable all places to share in the proceeds of growth.
3. The Government is determined to ensure the UK receives the coverage and connectivity it needs, and, in recent years, a number of initiatives have been completed to help achieve this. In 2014, the Government reached a landmark deal with mobile network operators, securing their commitment to significant investment in mobile infrastructure and to the achievement of specific coverage targets. In return, following an extensive period of research and consultation, the Government introduced reforms to the Electronic Communications Code (the Code) in 2017 that will incentivise and support network investment, by making it cheaper and easier for communications apparatus to be installed, maintained and upgraded.
4. The Government has also made significant reforms to the planning system to support increased mobile connectivity. In 2016 we amended planning regulations in England to extend the existing permitted development rights to enable ground and building-based mobile telecommunications masts to be built without the need for a full planning application. Whilst in 2018 we strengthened national planning policy to support the expansion of electronic communications networks. Collectively the reforms to the Code and the planning system have played an important role in supporting the Government's ambitions for improving mobile connectivity.
5. The Future Telecoms Infrastructure Review, published in July 2018, sets out the Government's long-term strategy for meeting its digital connectivity targets<sup>3</sup>. It restated our commitment to tackling barriers to deployment and concluded that there were steps the Government could take in order to create the right conditions for the investment required to deliver additional network coverage and capacity. These measures included keeping the planning regime under review and listening

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<sup>2</sup> House of Lords Select Committee on the Rural Economy 'Time for a strategy for the rural economy' HL Paper 330 (published 27 April 2019) – Chapter 4: Digital Connectivity - available at: <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201719/ldselect/ldrurecon/330/330.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> The Future Telecoms Infrastructure Review (July 2018) is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/future-telecoms-infrastructure-review>

to suggestions from industry for how new technology is best supported in the planning regime.

6. We are now considering further reforms to the planning system in England in order to support the network upgrades that will be required to deploy 5G and to extend network coverage, particularly in rural areas. **The purpose of this consultation is to seek views on the principle of amending permitted development rights for operators with rights under the Code to support deployment of 5G and extend mobile coverage, and the circumstances in which it would be appropriate to do so.** The consultation also seeks views on whether it is appropriate to impose specific limitations, conditions and restrictions on any amendments to permitted development rights to mitigate the impact of any new development. As planning is a devolved matter, these proposals relate to England only.
7. Along with Ofcom, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport is working to ensure that mobile network operators commit to extending their coverage across the UK. Therefore, to complement the proposed planning reforms we are consulting on, we are also asking the Operators for evidence of the impact these changes to the planning regulations would have on meeting the Government's ambitions for 5G and mobile coverage. Views are also sought on what further measures industry could offer to mitigate the impact of any new electronic communications infrastructure, including assurances about the greater use of existing sites and buildings, sharing of infrastructure, and removing redundant infrastructure and restoration of the land, to protect local amenity and minimise proliferation of infrastructure.

## Deployment of 5G infrastructure and extending mobile connectivity

8. Improvements have been made to mobile coverage with a 3.9 million hectares reduction in the area of the UK with no mobile signal in the last five years. In the same period, 13.8 million hectares (an area roughly the size of England) has been upgraded to 4G across the UK<sup>4</sup>. Ofcom's recent Connected Nations 2018<sup>5</sup> report found that good 4G coverage is available across 67% of the UK from all four of the main mobile network operators (EE, O2, Three and Vodafone). However, there is more to be done, as 8% of the UK does not have good outdoor 4G coverage from any mobile network operators - so called "total not-spots", with the remaining 25% of the country covered by one, two or three mobile network operators - so called "partial not-spots". Rural areas tend to be more severely affected by poor mobile coverage, though we recognise that it can affect other areas such as business parks, market towns and new build developments.

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<sup>4</sup> House of Lords Select Committee on the Rural Economy 'Time for a strategy for the rural economy' HL Paper 330 (published 27 April 2019), paragraph 284 – available at:

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201719/ldselect/ldrurecon/330/330.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Ofcom, Connected Nations 2018 report – available at: <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/research-and-data/multi-sector-research/infrastructure-research/connected-nations-2018>



9. The Government wants to be a world leader in 5G, the next generation of wireless connectivity, and for communities to benefit from the investments in this new technology. All of the four main mobile network operators have announced intentions to begin deployment of 5G networks in 2019.
10. The case for 5G is compelling as it will bring faster, more responsive and reliable connections than ever before. More than any previous generation of mobile networks, it has the potential to improve the way people live, work and travel, and to deliver significant benefits to the economy and industry through the ability to connect more devices to the Internet at the same time – creating the so-called “Internet of Things”. This will enable communities to manage traffic flow and control energy usage, monitor patient health remotely, and increase productivity for business and farmers, all through the real-time management of data.
11. The West Midlands has been selected to host the Urban Connected Communities project, as part of the Government’s 5G Testbed and Trials Programme. This will develop a large-scale 5G testbed across the region, with hubs planned in Birmingham, Coventry and Wolverhampton, the UK’s first multi-city 5G test bed. The multi-million pound trial of next generation connectivity will pave the way for the future rollout of 5G across the UK, making the region the first in the UK ready to trial new 5G applications and services at scale. This is one example from many in the 5G Testbeds and Trials Programme, that demonstrate the Government’s commitment to support investment in digital infrastructure.
12. The demand for mobile data in the UK is increasing rapidly, and as households and businesses become increasingly reliant on mobile connectivity, the infrastructure must be in place to ensure supply does not become a constraint on future demand. As mobile network operators have now started rolling out 5G in the UK, it is timely to consider whether there are further reforms which could be made to the planning system. This consultation seeks views on proposals for further reforms to the planning system in England to support the deployment of the infrastructure needed for 5G and to extend mobile coverage, including in rural areas, to benefit communities and businesses.

## Proposed planning reforms to support deployment of 5G and extend mobile coverage

13. In order to deploy 5G and improve coverage in partial not-spots, mobile network operators will need to strengthen existing sites to accommodate additional equipment. To extend coverage into total not-spots or to add capacity in areas of high demand, mobile network operators will also need to identify and develop new sites. Under English law, such development generally requires planning permission. There are two forms of permission relevant to the development proposals:
  - a. A planning application is submitted to the relevant planning authority, who can balance the impact of the development including on the environment and community with the economic benefits, and make a decision; and
  - b. Government can grant planning permission across England for specific types of development (these are known as permitted development rights).

There are two forms of permitted development rights:

- i. **Permitted Development with prior approval needed** – Some permitted development rights are subject to a requirement to seek the **prior approval** of the local planning authority for the siting and appearance of apparatus before carrying out development and may be considered by the Planning Committee. This involves a requirement for public engagement through site or written notices to allow representations from local residents, and the views of statutory consultees. This gives the local planning authority the opportunity to refuse the development and, should there be no refusal, the developer may deploy after 56 days. The requirements relating to prior approval are much less prescriptive than those relating to planning applications, as prior approval is a lighter-touch process which applies where the principle of the development has already been established; and
- ii. **Permitted Development with the requirement to notify** - In certain cases, electronic communications infrastructure has permitted development rights that do not require the prior approval of the local planning authority. In these cases, the developer must notify the local planning authority of its intention and can deploy after one calendar month's notice.

14. The choice between these approaches is about balancing the importance of local democratically elected representatives making decisions on infrastructure which affect their local community and giving mobile network operators certainty that decreases the risk, cost and time associated with deployment of infrastructure. As mobile network operators have now started rolling out 5G in the UK, it is appropriate to consider whether the existing balance needs to be adjusted in light of the new technology requirements of 5G and the public interest in increasing mobile coverage, particularly in rural areas. Mobile network operators have identified that to provide greater mobile coverage and to support the accelerated deployment of 5G, the following would be needed: taller and wider masts; building-based masts located nearer to highways; and faster deployment of radio equipment housing located on both protected and unprotected land.

15. This consultation seeks views on the principle of amending or creating new permitted development rights to grant planning permission for the following four proposals, and in particular, the circumstances in which it would be appropriate to:

- a. enable deployment of radio housing equipment on land without requiring prior approval, excluding on sites of special scientific interest, to support 5G deployment;
- b. strengthen existing masts to enable sites to be upgraded for 5G and for mast sharing without prior approval;
- c. enable the deployment of building-based masts nearer to highways to support deployment of 5G and extend mobile coverage, subject to prior approval; and
- d. enable higher masts to deliver better mobile coverage and mast sharing, subject to prior approval.

16. The Government will consider the responses to this consultation before deciding whether and how to take forward the proposals (as identified in paragraph 15), taking into consideration the need to balance the following principles of:
- a. ensuring that the proposals help to deliver the Government's commitment to extending mobile geographical coverage further across the UK with continuous mobile connectivity provided to all major roads and to being a world leader in 5G;
  - b. ensuring that communities benefit from increased and enhanced coverage;
  - c. increasing investor confidence in 5G and mobile infrastructure, providing greater certainty that incentivises investment in mobile infrastructure;
  - d. encouraging maximum utilisation of existing sites and buildings, before new sites are developed, including enabling greater sharing of infrastructure; and
  - e. ensuring appropriate environmental protections are in place.
17. Secondary legislation would be required in order to implement any proposed changes to the planning regulations. Subject to the outcome of this consultation, we anticipate undertaking a further consultation on our detailed proposals, which would be accompanied by an Impact Assessment, if required.

## Code Operators and Permitted Development Rights

18. The Code is set out in Schedule 3 of the Communications Act 2003 and is designed to facilitate the installation, maintenance and upgrade of electronic communications, through a statutory framework of specific duties, obligations and protections that apply to the deployment of digital communications networks by Code Operators. Mobile network operators can obtain "Code Operator" status by applying to Ofcom. The Code is supported by secondary legislation: The Electronic Communications Code (Conditions & Restrictions) Regulations 2003 ('the Electronic Communications Code Regulations'), which provide more detail on the duties Code Operators must fulfil, including duties to follow a voluntary Code of Practice and to consult with planning authorities when deploying infrastructure. The Electronic Communications Code Regulations also include a duty for all operators to share use of their apparatus with each other wherever possible. As the industry's voluntary Code of Best Practice<sup>6</sup>, makes clear, this can help reduce the overall number of sites needed and make deployment more cost efficient.
19. Permitted development rights for Code Operators are set out in Part 16 of Schedule 2 to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) ('the General Permitted Development Order'). The General Permitted Development Order sets out both what is allowed under each permitted development right, and any exclusions, limitations and conditions that apply in order to comply with the legal duty to mitigate the impact of the development permitted. For example, most permitted development rights are subject to conditions that seek to minimise their impact and protect local amenity, others are subject to geographic exclusions to ensure environmental protections

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<sup>6</sup> The Code of Best Practice on Mobile Network Development in England (2016), Role of Mobile Operators available at: <http://www.mobileuk.org/cms-assets/documents/259876-147086.code-of-best-practice-2016-edition-pub>

are in place. All, however, are subject to clearly defined restrictions to cover the specific nature and scope of the operation or quantum of development that would benefit from a permitted development right.

20. Where a proposed development does not fall within the permitted development limits, this does not mean that the development is not acceptable and cannot be built. It means that an application for planning permission needs to be made so that the local planning authority can consider all the circumstances of the case.
21. Permitted development only covers the planning aspects of the development. It does not remove requirements under other regimes, for example, environmental licensing and permitting or environmental legislation.

## Question 1: Role of Industry

22. These proposed reforms aim to simplify planning processes to support the deployment of infrastructure needed for 5G and extend mobile coverage, including in rural areas, to benefit communities and businesses. It is critical that any new reforms lead to tangible benefits for communities. To realise the benefits of 5G and improved coverage, the industry has a vital role to play in how these are delivered through upgrading and improving mobile networks.
23. Under the Electronic Communications Code Regulations, Code Operators are obliged to share infrastructure wherever viable. Mobile network operators have confirmed their commitment to this principle in the Code of Best Practice<sup>7</sup>, which recognises that site sharing (wherever viable) will reduce the need to build new masts and minimise the number of base station sites. As identified in the Code of Best Practice<sup>8</sup>, if operators are able to share sites and install more equipment on each site, this reduces the overall visual impact of the network infrastructure, because although shared sites tend to be slightly bigger, fewer sites are needed to improve coverage and capacity.
24. Mobile network operators already share infrastructure through joint venture commercial arrangements to reduce the amount of infrastructure needed and extend their coverage more cost-effectively. However, evidence provided to the House of Lords Committee on the Rural Economy suggested that communities are keen to see more sharing of masts by Operators<sup>9</sup>. A report by the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Rural Business published in 2018 also found that more mast sharing should form part of the solution for covering the remaining mobile 'not spots'<sup>10</sup>. We are seeking views on what further measures industry could provide to facilitate greater sharing of infrastructure, including sharing a single mast in all new sites, to reduce the number of new masts required.

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<sup>7</sup> The Code of Best Practice on Mobile Network Development in England (2016), Role of Mobile Operators, section 7.5, page 13 – available at: <http://www.mobileuk.org/cms-assets/documents/259876-147086.code-of-best-practice-2016-edition-pub>

<sup>8</sup> The Code of Best Practice on Mobile Network Development in England (2016), Role of Mobile Operators, Annex A, Siting and Appearance Principles, Mast and Site Sharing, page 24 – available at: <http://www.mobileuk.org/cms-assets/documents/259876-147086.code-of-best-practice-2016-edition-pub>

<sup>9</sup> House of Lords Select Committee on the Rural Economy 'Time for a strategy for the rural economy' HL Paper 330 (published 27 April 2019), paragraph 290 – available at: <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201719/ldselect/ldrurecon/330/330.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> APPG for Rural Business, "4G in Rural Areas, how to close the digital divide", page 7 – available at: <https://www.cla.org.uk/sites/default/files/APPG%204G%20Report%20FINAL.pdf>

25. The General Permitted Development Order already includes a condition which requires that where electronic communication apparatus is deployed under permitted development rights, it is permitted subject to the condition that the apparatus is removed as soon as reasonably practicable after it is no longer required for an electronic communications purpose and that the land, building or structure on which the equipment is located is restored. However, views are sought on what further measures could be taken by industry to remove redundant infrastructure and restore the land to protect local amenity and minimise the proliferation of infrastructure.
26. Therefore, to complement the proposed planning reforms we are consulting on, we are also asking the industry for evidence of the impact these changes to the planning regulations would have on meeting the Government's ambitions for 5G and mobile coverage. Views are also sought on what further measures the industry could offer to mitigate the impact of electronic communications infrastructure, including assurances about the greater use of existing sites and buildings, sharing of infrastructure, and removing redundant infrastructure and restoring the land.
27. We welcome responses to the questions below on the role of industry (Questions 1.1 to 1.5) from all respondents. Responses to these questions will be considered alongside consultation responses to Questions 2 to 5 (proposed changes to the General Permitted Development Order), when deciding whether to take forward these proposals.

**Question 1.1: If these in principle proposals (set out in Questions 2 to 5) were taken forward, what impact would they have on meeting the Government's ambitions in relation to mobile coverage including addressing 'total not-spots' and 'partial not-spots'?**

Please provide supporting comments

**Question 1.2: If these in principle proposals (set out in Questions 2 to 5) were taken forward, what impact would they have on planned deployment of 5G technology ?**

Please provide supporting comments

**Question 1.3: If these in principle proposals (set out in Questions 2 to 5) were taken forward, what further measures could industry offer to reduce visual impacts of new electronic communications infrastructure and how would these be delivered?**

Please provide supporting comments

**Question 1.4: If these in principle proposals (set out in Questions 2 to 5) were taken forward, what further measures could industry offer to ensure that equipment at redundant sites is removed and the land is restored, and how would these be delivered?**

Please provide supporting comments

**Question 1.5: If these in principle proposals (set out in Questions 2 to 5) were taken forward, what further measures could industry offer to ensure that the use of existing sites and infrastructure were maximised before new sites are identified, for example through increased sharing?**

Please provide supporting comments

# Potential changes to the General Permitted Development Order

## Question 2: Enabling deployment of radio equipment housing on land without requiring prior approval, excluding on sites of special scientific interest, to support 5G deployment

28. To enable deployment of 5G and to improve mobile coverage, mobile network operators need to deploy radio equipment housing ('equipment housing'). This can range in size from a small cabinet to a purpose built cabin serving several operators. It can be placed within a building, underground, on the ground or on a rooftop. The equipment is connected to antennas via feeder cables and provides the power source. An example would be an equipment cabinet located near to a monopole mast.

29. A Code Operator can use permitted development rights to install, alter or replace equipment housing<sup>11</sup>. Currently the General Permitted Development Order allows equipment housing to be consented through permitted development rights, provided that the development meets the following criteria<sup>12</sup>:

- a. the development is not ancillary to the use of other electronic communications apparatus; or
- b. the cumulative volume of such development would not exceed 90 cubic metres; or
- c. if located on the roof of a building, the cumulative volume of such development would not exceed 30 cubic metres; or
- d. if located on any protected land (Article 2(3) land<sup>13</sup>, or on any land which is, or is within, a site of special scientific interest), any single development would not exceed 2.5 cubic metres, unless the development is carried out in an emergency.

30. Where the volume of any single development on unprotected land exceeds 2.5 cubic metres, or the development is located within protected Article 2(3) land or a site of special scientific interest, then the prior approval process applies before the equipment housing can be deployed<sup>14</sup>. This gives the local planning authority the opportunity to consider the siting and appearance of the development and, should there be no refusal, the developer may deploy after 56 days. The local planning authority can consider the effects of the proposed development on the basis of the siting (such as location) and appearance, taking into account representations received. Where the size of the radio equipment exceeds the thresholds in the

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<sup>11</sup> Class A(a), Part 16 of Schedule 2 to the General Permitted Development Order

<sup>12</sup> A1.9, Part 16 of Schedule 2 of the General Permitted Development Order

<sup>13</sup> Article 2(3) land is defined in the General Permitted Development Order and includes: Conservation Areas, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, National Parks and World Heritage Sites

<sup>14</sup> Condition at paragraph A.2(3)(iii)(bb) of Part 16 of Schedule 2 to the General Permitted Development Order

General Permitted Development Order criteria, then an application for planning permission to the local planning authority is required.

31. In 2016 we amended how fixed-line broadband infrastructure is consented through the General Permitted Development Order, removing the condition for prior approval for infrastructure located in Article 2(3) protected land. This enabled fixed-line Code Operators to continue to install, alter or replace fixed line broadband equipment, including cabinets, on Article 2(3) protected land or on unprotected land, without the requirement for prior approval from the local planning authority, enabling faster deployment of broadband. As equipment housing is similar in size and appearance to the cabinets required to support fixed-line broadband infrastructure, which have been deployed to help deliver 96% superfast broadband coverage to the country, we consider that there should be consistency in how these are consented through the General Permitted Development Order.
32. In relation to monopole masts, which are usually connected to equipment housing, this consultation also considers proposals in relation to widening and increasing the height of masts. These are considered in the following sections.

### **Government proposal**

33. We therefore consider that the permitted development right for equipment housing should be amended to remove the requirement for prior approval for development within protected Article 2(3) land, and for development on unprotected land which exceeds 2.5 cubic metres.
34. This proposal would enable a faster roll out of equipment housing which is needed to support deployment of 5G mobile equipment and better coverage. The overall time taken to deploy equipment housing would be reduced, where it is located on protected Article 2(3) land or unprotected land. Instead of the 56 days that the local planning authority has to consider the prior approval application, the Code Operator would only be required to give one calendar month's notice to the local planning authority prior to deployment<sup>15</sup>. However, as with fixed-line broadband cabinets, prior approval would still be required where the equipment housing is located on land which is on, or within, a site of special scientific interest, ensuring environmental protection of these sensitive sites is maintained.
35. Where equipment housing is permitted through the General Permitted Development Order, it is subject to a condition that the siting and appearance should minimise the effect of the development on the external appearance of a building, or the visual impact of the development on the surrounding area. To ensure good practice on siting and appearance of equipment, mobile network operators have committed in the Code of Best Practice<sup>16</sup> to ensure that, especially in the case of new sites, that equipment is sympathetically designed and camouflaged where appropriate, in line with national planning policy principles<sup>17</sup> and relevant adopted local planning policies.

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<sup>15</sup> Regulation 5, The Electronic Communications Code (Conditions and Restrictions) Regulations 2003 (as amended)

<sup>16</sup> The Code of Best Practice on Mobile Network Development in England (2016), Role of Mobile Operators, section 7.5, page 14 – available at: <http://www.mobileuk.org/cms-assets/documents/259876-147086.code-of-best-practice-2016-edition-pub>

<sup>17</sup> Chapter 10, paragraph 113, revised National Planning Policy Framework – available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/revised-national-planning-policy-framework>



36. Views are sought on the principle of whether permitted development rights should be amended to allow Code Operators to install, alter or replace radio equipment on unprotected land where it exceeds 2.5 cubic metres and on Article 2(3) land without prior approval.
37. We consider that the current permitted development right criteria for equipment housing is appropriate and are not seeking views on amending these. Therefore, the limits on the size of the equipment housing that would be consented through permitted development rights would not be altered by these proposals.
38. If the General Permitted Development Order were to be amended resulting in an increase in the amount of equipment housing deployed, views are sought on how this could be addressed, to minimise the impact on the surrounding area. For example, this could include:
- strengthening the Code of Best Practice to reflect the detailed principles on the siting and appearance of cabinets set out in the Code of Practice on Cabinet Siting and Pole Siting which applies to fixed line Code Operators<sup>18</sup>; and/or
  - encouraging Code Operators to share equipment housing to reduce the amount needed; and/or
  - using equipment housing for siting smaller antennas, as suggested in the Code of Best Practice<sup>19</sup>.

**Question 2.1: Do you agree with the principle of amending permitted development rights for equipment housing to remove the requirement for prior approval for development within Article 2(3) protected land and on unprotected land which exceeds 2.5 cubic metres, to support deployment of 5G?**

Yes / No / Not Sure

Please provide supporting comments

**Question 2.2: What impact could this proposal have on the surrounding area and how could this be addressed?**

Please provide supporting comments

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<sup>18</sup> Available at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/692124/Revised\\_Cabinet\\_and\\_Pole\\_Siting\\_COP\\_Nov\\_16.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/692124/Revised_Cabinet_and_Pole_Siting_COP_Nov_16.pdf)

<sup>19</sup> The Code of Best Practice on Mobile Network Development in England (2016), Annex A, page 24 – available at: <http://www.mobileuk.org/cms-assets/documents/259876-147086.code-of-best-practice-2016-edition-pub>

### Question 3: Strengthening existing ground-based masts to enable sites to be upgraded for 5G and for mast sharing without prior approval

39. To enable the upgrading of sites to support both 4G and 5G infrastructure and to extend network coverage, mobile network operators have identified that existing ground-based masts would need to be strengthened to accommodate additional equipment and enable greater sharing of infrastructure between operators.
40. Under the General Permitted Development Order, Code Operators are currently able to increase the width of an existing ground-based mast by up to one third, at any given height, using permitted development rights. Where the mast width is increased up to one third, the prior approval of the local planning authority is not required. However, the Code Operator must notify the local planning authority of its intention and can deploy after 28 days' notice<sup>20</sup>. Where the Code Operator wants to alter or replace an existing ground-based mast, the Code Operator can through a permitted development right:
- a. Replace the mast with another mast of the same height; or
  - b. Increase the height of the mast up to 25 metres above ground level on unprotected land, subject to prior approval where it exceeds the height of the original mast and is taller than 20 metres above ground, or
  - c. Increase the height of the mast up to 20 metres above ground level on Article 2(3) land or land which is on a highway, subject to prior approval.
41. Where the Code Operator wants to increase the width of the existing ground-based mast beyond one third, or to increase the height of the existing mast beyond the current height of 25 metres on unprotected land, or 20 metres on Article 2(3) land or land which is on a highway, whichever is greater, a planning application to the local planning authority is required. Where a ground-based mast is located on a site of special scientific interest, full planning permission is also required.
42. To accommodate additional 5G equipment and enable more Code Operators to utilise one site, many existing ground-based masts would need to be strengthened by increasing their width to support the additional equipment. Some of these strengthened structures may need to be increased by more than one third, which could necessitate the Code Operator submitting a full planning application simply to upgrade the site to 5G.
43. In contrast, when installing new ground-based masts under permitted development rights, there is no restriction on the width of the mast. The permitted development right is, however, subject to the prior approval of the local planning authority, who will consider the siting and appearance of the new mast, before deployment can commence. This difference in the consenting approach for existing and new masts could disincentivise Code Operators from upgrading existing sites and result in delays to deployment where planning permission is required.

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<sup>20</sup> Regulation 5, The Electronic Communications Code (Conditions and Restrictions) Regulations 2003 (as amended)

44. National planning policy<sup>21</sup> already specifies that the number of 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. National planning policy<sup>22</sup> also specifies the expectation that use of existing masts, buildings and other structures for new communications capacity, including wireless, should be encouraged.

## Government proposal

45. As mobile network operators have now started to roll out 5G, there is the opportunity to consider whether the limit on increasing the width of existing ground-based masts up to one third under permitted development rights without prior approval should be amended, to encourage greater utilisation of existing sites, before identifying new sites. As identified in the Code of Best Practice<sup>23</sup>, if operators are able to share sites and install more equipment on each site, this reduces the overall visual impact of the network infrastructure, because although shared sites tend to be slightly bigger, it means fewer sites are needed to improve coverage and capacity.

46. Where a mast is altered or replaced, including the increase in the width of an existing mast, through a permitted development right, it is subject to a condition that the siting and appearance of the mast should minimise the effect of the development on the surrounding area<sup>24</sup>. To ensure good practice on siting and appearance of equipment, mobile network operators have committed in the Code of Best Practice<sup>25</sup> to ensure that equipment is sympathetically designed and camouflaged where appropriate, in line with national planning policy principles<sup>26</sup> and relevant adopted local planning policies. When extending masts, the Code of Best Practice<sup>27</sup> encourages operators to consider the opportunity for environmental enhancements, such as removing redundant brackets and fixings. When replacing masts, the Code of Best Practice encourages operators to look at lighter weight lattice or pole masts, in consultation with the local planning authority and interested parties.

47. If the General Permitted Development Order were to be amended to remove the limit on increasing the width of existing ground-based masts up to one third without prior approval, resulting in an increase in the width of masts, views are sought on how this could be addressed to minimise the impact on the surrounding area. For example, this could include strengthening the Code of Best Practice to:

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<sup>21</sup> Chapter 10, paragraph 113 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2018 (as amended) – available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/revised-national-planning-policy-framework>

<sup>22</sup> Chapter 10, paragraph 113 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2018 (as amended) – available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/revised-national-planning-policy-framework>

<sup>23</sup> The Code of Best Practice on Mobile Network Deployment in England (2016), Role of Mobile Operators, Annex A, page 24 – available at: <http://www.mobileuk.org/cms-assets/documents/259876-147086.code-of-best-practice-2016-edition-pub>

<sup>24</sup> Condition at paragraph A.2(1)(b) of Part 16 of Schedule 2 to the General Permitted Development Order

<sup>25</sup> The Code of Best Practice on Mobile Network Deployment in England (2016), Role of Mobile Operators, section 7.5, page 14 – available at: <http://www.mobileuk.org/cms-assets/documents/259876-147086.code-of-best-practice-2016-edition-pub>

<sup>26</sup> Chapter 10, paragraph 113, revised National Planning Policy Framework – available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/revised-national-planning-policy-framework>

<sup>27</sup> The Code of Best Practice on Mobile Network Deployment in England (2016), Annex A, page 25 – available at: <http://www.mobileuk.org/cms-assets/documents/259876-147086.code-of-best-practice-2016-edition-pub>

- a. reflect the detailed principles on the siting and appearance of poles set out in the Fixed Line Code Operators' Code of Practice on Cabinet Siting and Pole Siting<sup>28</sup>; and/or
- b. consider whether any additional environmental enhancements could be provided by operators when extending masts.

48. Views are sought on the principle of whether the limit on increasing the width of existing ground-based masts up to one third should be amended to allow a greater increase in the width of existing masts which can be deployed by Code Operators through permitted development rights without prior approval, and if so, the circumstances in which it would be appropriate to do so.

49. Given that we want to incentivise maximum utilisation of existing sites by Code Operators, over deployment of new sites, views are also sought on the principle of whether any further amendments to permitted development rights should be proposed to strengthen existing masts to enable upgrading and greater infrastructure sharing, such as increasing the height of existing masts to the relevant development height without prior approval. However, we recognise that there would be safety and security issues to consider as well as impacts on local amenity, including visual impacts. Currently if prior approval is required, operators must notify the Civil Aviation Authority, the Secretary of State for Defence or the aerodrome operator as appropriate, where an existing mast is altered or replaced within 3 kilometres of the perimeter of an aerodrome<sup>29</sup>. To ensure that this protection is maintained, any proposals to increase the height of an existing mast without prior approval would not be considered within 3 kilometres of an aerodrome.

**Question 3.1: Do you agree with the principle of amending permitted development rights to allow an increase in the width of existing ground-based masts by more than one third, to support 5G deployment and encourage greater utilisation of existing sites?**

Yes/ No / Not Sure

Please provide supporting comments

**Question 3.2: If yes to question 3.1, what increase in width should be granted through permitted development rights, without prior approval, to ensure that the visual impact on the surrounding area is minimised?**

Please provide supporting comments

<sup>28</sup> Available at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/692124/Revised\\_Cabinet\\_and\\_Pole\\_Siting\\_COP\\_Nov\\_16.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/692124/Revised_Cabinet_and_Pole_Siting_COP_Nov_16.pdf)

<sup>29</sup> Prior Approval at paragraph A.3(3) of Part 16 of Schedule 2 to the General Permitted Development Order

**Question 3.3: To further incentivise operators to maximise the use of existing sites, should permitted development rights be amended to increase the height of existing masts to the relevant permitted height without prior approval? If yes, what restrictions are appropriate to protect safety and security, and visual impact considerations?**

Yes / No / Not Sure

Please provide supporting comments

**Question 3.4: Are there any other amendments to permitted development rights that would further incentivise operators to maximise the use of existing sites? If yes, what are these and what restrictions would be appropriate to ensure that the visual impact on the surrounding area is minimised?**

Yes / No / Not Sure

Please provide supporting comments

## Question 4: Enabling deployment of building-based masts nearer to highways to support deployment of 5G and extend mobile coverage

50. Ofcom's Connected Nations Report 2018<sup>30</sup> showed that as of September 2018, 4G in-car coverage on all UK roads was 57% from all four mobile network operators, with consumers unable to receive good 4G in-car coverage from any operator on 5% of roads. To support deployment of 5G and extend mobile coverage, mobile network operators have identified that building-based masts need to be deployed in close proximity to highways in order to ensure customers receive dependable and consistent coverage where they live, work and travel.

51. Where a Code Operator wants to install a new mast on a building less than 15 metres tall located within 20 metres of the highway full planning permission is currently required from the local planning authority. However, a Code Operator can currently alter or replace an existing mast on a building which is less than 15 metres in height, within 20 metres of the highway under a permitted development right, provided that the siting remains the same and the dimensions of the mast are no greater.

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<sup>30</sup> Ofcom, Connected Nations 2018 report – available at: <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/research-and-data/multi-sector-research/infrastructure-research/connected-nations-2018>

## Government proposal

52. To support deployment of 5G and to ensure customers receive more dependable and consistent coverage where they live, work, visit and travel, we consider that it may be appropriate to amend the General Permitted Development Order to allow building-based masts to be deployed nearer to highways. This proposal would also encourage greater use of existing buildings for the siting of apparatus, reducing the need for new ground-based masts and thereby minimising the overall visual impact of the network infrastructure. As recognised in the Code of Best Practice<sup>31</sup> the use of existing buildings and structures by operators as sites for installation of telecommunications equipment is an established measure which has helped to reduce the environmental impact of networks.
53. If the General Permitted Development Order were to be amended to allow the deployment of building-based masts within 20 metres of the highway, located on buildings less than 15 metres tall, consideration would need to be given to what proximity to the highway would be appropriate for deployment within permitted development, taking into account any potential impact on visual amenity or highway safety for vehicle lines of sight. For example, restrictions which could be considered to control the deployment of masts near highways include:
- a. a revised minimum restriction for the height of the building; and/or
  - b. a revised minimum restriction on the proximity to the highway; and/or
  - c. restricting the number of masts that can be installed on buildings less than 15 metres in height.
54. Conditions in the General Permitted Development Order currently require that where the installation of a mast is permitted through permitted development rights, this is subject to the prior approval process where it is installed on all types of land, both protected (Article 2(3)) land and sites of special scientific interest) and unprotected land. Where the alteration or replacement of a mast is permitted through permitted development rights, this is subject to the prior approval process where it is installed on protected land (Article 2(3) land and sites of special scientific interest) and on unprotected land, where the mast when complete is taller than the mast prior to alteration or replacement and exceeds a height of 20 metres above ground.
55. If the General Permitted Development Order were to be amended to allow the deployment of building-based masts within 20 metres of the highway, located on buildings less than 15 metres tall, views are sought on whether the installation, alteration or replacement of the mast should still be subject to the prior approval process.
56. Views are sought on the principle of whether to allow the deployment of building-based masts within 20 metres of the highway, where they are located on buildings less than 15 metres tall and, if so, the circumstances in which it would be appropriate to do so.

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<sup>31</sup> The Code of Best Practice on Mobile Network Deployment in England (2016), Annex A page 25 – available at: <http://www.mobileuk.org/cms-assets/documents/259876-147086.code-of-best-practice-2016-edition-pub>

**Question 4.1: Do you agree in principle with creating a permitted development right to grant permission for masts to be located within 20 metres of a highway on buildings less than 15 metres in height, in all areas?**

Yes / No / Not Sure

Please provide supporting comments

**Question 4.2: If yes to question 4.1, what restrictions (if any) could be put in place to control the deployment of infrastructure within 20 metres of a highway on a building less than 15 metres in height, taking into consideration potential impacts on safety to accommodate vehicle lines of sight, and visual impact on local amenity?**

Please provide supporting comments

**Question 4.3: If yes to question 4.1, do you agree that this permitted development right should be subject to the prior approval process by the local planning authority?**

Yes / No / Not Sure

Please provide supporting comments

## Question 5: Enabling higher masts to deliver better mobile coverage and mast sharing

57. To reduce the need to build new masts, minimise the visual impact of the networks and to deploy these more cost-effectively, mobile network operators have committed in the Code of Best Practice<sup>32</sup> to site sharing wherever viable and are already working together through joint ventures to achieve this. However, to provide greater mobile coverage and support the deployment of 5G through accommodating multiple operators' equipment on single masts, operators have identified that taller masts are likely to be needed.

58. The ability to site radio equipment higher up on a mast increases the range over which the signals can travel over a geographical area, meaning that fewer masts are needed to cover a particular area. For example, in 2018 a 50 metre mast was deployed in the rural community of Kildary and Milton in Scotland offering much greater coverage than that of traditional mobile masts. The local area, as well as the local major road, now enjoys greatly improved 4G coverage<sup>33</sup>.

<sup>32</sup> The Code of Best Practice on Mobile Network Deployment in England (2016) – available at: [http://www.mobileuk.org/cms-assets/documents/259876-147086\\_code-of-best-practice-2016-edition-pub](http://www.mobileuk.org/cms-assets/documents/259876-147086_code-of-best-practice-2016-edition-pub)

<sup>33</sup> <http://www.wirelessinfrastructure.co.uk/highlands-mobile-not-spots-targeted-by-wig-o2-and-scottish-water/>

59. Currently Code Operators have a permitted development right to erect new ground-based masts of up to 25 metres in height in unprotected areas and 20 metres on Article 2(3) land or land which is on a highway. This permitted development right is subject to the prior approval of the local planning authority, who will consider the siting and appearance of the new mast, before deployment can commence. Where Code Operators want to install new ground-based masts, which are taller than 25 metres in an unprotected area and above 20 metres in Article 2(3) land or on a highway, planning permission is required from the local planning authority. Planning permission is also required where Code Operators want to install new ground-based masts within sites of special scientific interest to ensure environmental protections are maintained.
60. As mobile network operators have now started to roll out 5G and we want to encourage them to increase their geographic coverage, it is timely to consider whether the current limits on the height of new masts which can be consented through permitted development rights should be increased to encourage mobile network operators to share single mast sites and provide greater mobile coverage.

## Government proposal

61. National planning policy<sup>34</sup> already specifies that the number of 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. As identified in the Code of Best Practice<sup>35</sup>, if operators are able to share sites and install more equipment on each site, this reduces the overall visual impact of the network infrastructure, because although shared sites tend to be slightly bigger, fewer sites are needed to improve coverage and capacity.
62. We are therefore considering amending the General Permitted Development Order to encourage the deployment of fewer but taller masts, by increasing the height of new masts which can be deployed by Code Operators through permitted development rights, subject to the prior approval process.
63. If the General Permitted Development Order were to be amended to increase the height of new ground-based masts which can be installed, subject to prior approval, consideration would need to be given to what restrictions should be put in place to control development. For example, there is currently a lower permitted height limit for masts located on Article 2(3) land and land on a highway, compared to the permitted height limit for masts located on unprotected land. Views are sought on whether this approach should be retained given the demand for better mobile coverage in rural areas, including protected areas. Where shorter masts are deployed, a greater number of masts may be required to cover an area than if taller masts had been used. It is also recognised that the terrain of an area will

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<sup>34</sup> Chapter 10, paragraph 113 of the revised National Planning Policy Framework – available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/revised-national-planning-policy-framework>

<sup>35</sup> The Code of Best Practice on Mobile Network Deployment in England (2016), Role of Mobile Operators, Annex A, page 24 – available at: <http://www.mobileuk.org/cms-assets/documents/259876-147086.code-of-best-practice-2016-edition-pub>



influence the approach taken to deployment of infrastructure and in certain areas a greater number of smaller masts may be more effective to provide coverage.

64. Views are sought on the principle of whether the limit on the height of new ground-based masts which can be deployed through permitted development rights by Code Operators should be increased subject to prior approval, and if so, the circumstances when it would be appropriate to do so.
65. When seeking to install, alter or replace a mast within 3 kilometres of an aerodrome, the Code Operator is required to notify, as appropriate, the Civil Aviation Authority, the Secretary of State for Defence or the aerodrome operator, prior to submitting any application for prior approval to the local planning authority<sup>36</sup>. We consider that this notification requirement for prior approval is appropriate. Therefore, views are not being sought on amendments to this requirement.
66. We are aware of the ongoing review of National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which are protected Article 2(3) land, led by Julian Glover<sup>37</sup>. When the report is published, we will consider any recommendations that relate to these proposals in developing our response to this consultation.

**Question 5.1: Do you agree in principle with amending permitted development rights to increase the height of new masts, subject to prior approval?**

Yes / No / Not Sure

Please provide supporting comments

**Question 5.2: If yes to question 5.1, what permitted height should masts be increased to and why?**

Please provide supporting comments

**Question 5.3: If yes to question 5.1, should a lower height limit be permitted for masts located in Article 2(3) land or on land on a highway and why?**

Yes / No / Not Sure

Please provide supporting comments

**Question 5.4: If yes to question 5.1, what restrictions (if any) should be put in place to control development of permitted higher masts?**

Please provide supporting comments

<sup>36</sup> Condition at paragraph A.3(3) of Part 16 of Schedule 2 to the General Permitted Development Order

<sup>37</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/designated-landscapes-national-parks-and-aonbs-2018-review>

# Public Sector Equality Duty

67. We consider that the matters raised in this consultation will have a positive impact on all persons, including those with protected characteristics, where the policy is intended to deliver greater connectivity, particularly in rural areas. We do not consider there would be any other differential impacts on any persons from a Protected Group compared to others, having regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, foster good relations and advance equality of opportunity. However, we will keep this under review and would welcome your comments as part of this consultation.

**Question 6: Do you have any views on the potential impact of the matters raised in this consultation on people with protected characteristics as defined in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010?**

Yes / No / Not Sure

Please provide supporting comments

# Annex A

## Personal data

The following is to explain your rights and give you the information you are entitled to under the Data Protection Act 2018.

Note that this section only refers to your personal data (your name that could be used to identify you personally) not the content of your response to the consultation.

### **1. The identity of the data controller and contact details of our Data Protection Officer**

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) is the data controller. The Data Protection Officer can be contacted at [dataprotection@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:dataprotection@communities.gsi.gov.uk)

### **2. Why we are collecting your personal data**

Your data is being collected in order to undertake statistical analysis of the different organisations and personal views recorded. This statistical data will be included in the Government response.

### **3. Our legal basis for processing your personal data**

The Data Protection Act 2018 states that, as a government department, MHCLG may process personal data as necessary for the effective performance of a task carried out in the public interest. i.e. a consultation.

Article 6 of the General Data Protection Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2016/679) (GDPR) states that processing shall be lawful if processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the controller.

### **4. With whom we will be sharing your personal data**

Your personal data will only be shared with officials in the Departments for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport and the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government, as this is a joint consultation between these Departments.

### **5. For how long we will keep your personal data, or criteria used to determine the retention period.**

Your personal data will be held for two years from the closure of the consultation and will be processed by the end of this two-year period.

### **6. Your rights, e.g. access, rectification, erasure**

The data we are collecting is your personal data, and you have considerable say over what happens to it. You have the right:

- a. to see what data, we have about you
- b. to ask us to stop using your data, but keep it on record
- c. to ask to have all or some of your data deleted or corrected
- d. to lodge a complaint with the independent Information Commissioner (ICO) if you think we are not handling your data fairly or in accordance with the law. You can contact the ICO at <https://ico.org.uk/>, or telephone 0303 123 1113.

**7. The Data you provide directly will be stored by Survey Monkey on their servers in the United States. We have taken all necessary precautions to ensure that your rights in terms of data protection will not be compromised by this.**

**8. Your personal data will not be used for any automated decision making.**

**9. Your personal data will be stored in a secure government IT system.**

If you submit information to this consultation using Survey Monkey, it will be moved to our internal systems at a date following the consultation publication date.