

BY EMAIL

Please find below the formal response of the Planning Officers Society to this consultation.

Consultation Questions

1. Approximately how much of network will be built using this relaxation, and are the cost and benefit estimates in the impact assessment accurate?

A question for the communications industry, not the LPA.

2. Do respondents agree that existing infrastructure should be used, if possible, before new overhead deployment can take place? Do respondents agree that communications providers should be required to demonstrate that sharing of existing infrastructure has been examined?

Yes – very important to minimise impact on visual amenity etc.

3. Do respondents believe that notification and consultation of planned works in local newspapers and through a qualifying body such as a Parish Councils or Neighbourhood Forums, where one exists, to be sufficient?

Not convinced that local newspapers still constitute a useful means of consultation – consideration should be given to how the web could be used, as well as site notices. Consultation with Parish Councils (copied to the District Council) is essential. (It should be noted that Wards in rural areas can be quite large.)

4. Do respondents believe this notification and consultation would place a significant and onerous burden on communications providers that may be planning these works? If so, what level of cost or burden is envisaged to the Communications Provider?

It is a reasonable cost and with the availability of electronic communications should not be overly onerous.

5. We are committed to amending the Electronic Communications Code (Conditions and Restrictions) Regulations 2003 in order to relax the rules on new overhead deployment but would welcome feedback on any aspect of the proposals as to how this should be achieved outlined in the consultation.

Concern is raised on section 4 (1) (b) where reference is made only to grade 1 listed buildings. There are many important grade II and II* buildings where the fixing of a line could impact on the significance of the building. It should refer to all listed buildings, as well as Conservation Areas.

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