



Ein Cyf/Our Ref: qA1289931

To: All Heads of Planning

18 July 2017

Dear Colleagues

This letter concerns the rollout of the Emergency Services Mobile Communication Programme (ESMCP) and how its requirements should be addressed by the planning system in Wales.

The ESMCP will provide the next generation communication system for the three emergency services (police, fire and rescue, and ambulance) and other public safety users in England, Scotland and Wales.

The contract to deliver the infrastructure elements of the programme was awarded by the Home Office to the mobile operator EE. Transition to ESNCP will take place between 2017 and 2020. For the most part EE will use its existing infrastructure network to achieve this. However, in parts of Wales, the Home Office is providing funding to construct masts where it is not viable for EE to do so; these are called Extended Area Sites (EAS).

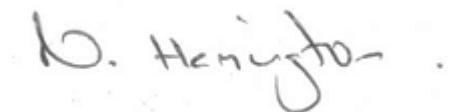
There is a balance to be struck between protecting important landscapes and providing the most efficient distribution of infrastructure for a mobile network. The sharing of masts and sites is strongly encouraged where it represents the optimum environmental solution in a particular case. Whilst this policy applies in all instances, it is especially important in relation to ESMCP where masts are provided in remoter parts of Wales. In these cases masts should be as adaptable and as flexible in their use as possible, and this can be better achieved by the use of lattice (heavy duty) rather than monopole mast construction. Whilst lattice masts require larger sites than monopoles, they have the capability of delivering wider benefits. Lattice masts can allow multiple mobile operators to install their transmission equipment where building a mast for an individual operator is not commercially viable and they can be extended over time to accommodate new requirements. The Home Office have indicated their intention to submit lattice designs on their Extended Area Sites for the ESMCP.

It is essential Local Planning Authorities engage with this project when requested for their input, providing timely advice and feedback on pre-application discussions. Where planning

decisions are needed, Local Planning Authorities should actively consider the benefits to the rollout of the emergency service network provided by lattice designs.

The Welsh Government expects Local Planning Authorities to determine planning applications for new emergency service mobile infrastructure as quickly as possible to ensure there are no unnecessary delays in establishing the network.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "N. Hemington".

Neil Hemington

Prif Gynllunydd | Chief Planner

Cyfarwyddiaeth Cynllunio | Planning Directorate

Economi, Sgiliau a Chyfoeth Naturiol | Department for Economy, Skills and Natural Resources