



MBNL InSite

Q2 2021



Contents

Foreword

Mobile networks get boost ahead of return of work commuters and summer season

Telecoms in the Queen's Speech

The 5G experience - how the new technology will make your work and life easier

Accelerating Britain's mobile connectivity with standardisation and innovation

Are you planning construction activity, redevelopment or re-roofing of your property?





Foreword

by Juliette Wallace, Property Director

Welcome to our summer edition of MBNL InSite. Once again, I will start by saying thank you to our site provider communities for your enduring and unwavering support, ensuring our mobile networks continue to be accessible across the UK.

Over the past few months, I've had the pleasure of meeting with a number of our site providers. This has given me a fantastic opportunity to better understand what is important to you and how MBNL can continue to improve our ways of working. We remain committed to working constructively with all our site providers, so if you have any suggestions or questions, please do get in touch.

As we all adjust to what feels like ever-changing Government guidelines under the pandemic, the summer holidays can be expected to be challenging for many. Personally, my family and I have decided not to try and second-guess which countries will be open to UK citizens and instead we will be exploring all that England's South Coast has to offer. Wherever you go and whatever you get up to, I sincerely hope you get a chance to have a break to refresh and recharge during the summer months.

Of course, not everyone is able to take time off during what can be a very busy period. Many NHS and Emergency Services staff, as well as my operational colleagues, continue to provide key services to all of us. And it is typically a very busy period for the country's seasonal workers such as those in farming and hospitality who will ensure we

have sufficient fresh food and can enjoy ourselves at various entertainment venues. My hats off to all of them, and if you are one of these people, a massive thank you.

As ever, it is vital we continue to get your full support for accessing our telecoms infrastructure to carry out essential maintenance, repairs and upgrade works on our networks. Please let us know of any changes to your access arrangements during the summer period by contacting site.access@mbnl.co.uk. Again, a huge thank you for supporting us with that!

To get you summer ready, this issue starts with a special feature on how EE and Three have been boosting their network performances ahead of the holiday season ensuring people can remain connected wherever they go this summer. We also have a short article on how telecommunications was featured in the 2021 Queen's Speech. If you're interested in technology, then check out the 5G benefits article to learn more about how the next generation technology is transforming our lives. I'm also delighted to have contributions from some of my team here at MBNL. Will Osborne (Town & Country Planning Manager) talks about how standardisation and innovation is helping to accelerate the UK's digital infrastructure rollout; and John Reid (Project Manager) explains the importance of early notification if you are considering any construction activity with the potential to impact our telecoms installations.

I hope you enjoy reading our newsletter.

Have a great summer!



Mobile networks get boost ahead of return of work commuters and summer season

Over the last 18 months, mobile operators have seen dramatic changes in the patterns of network usage across the UK. Significant investment has been made to adapt and transform the networks to help people stay connected, wherever and whenever they want connectivity. As lockdown restrictions further ease across the country and we move into the summer season, the return of workers to city centres and visitors to holiday hotspots is expected to create another change of demand on our mobile networks. In anticipation of this, both EE and Three have been delivering significant improvements to their existing networks and continuing to rollout new 5G services to keep customers connected wherever they go this summer and beyond.

EE has been focussing its efforts on improving connectivity for commuters and visitors around the country. Significant upgrades have been made to its mobile network across key commuter routes in and out of London, with nearly 70 new 4G sites being built and dozens more upgraded in the past year. These improvements have included some of London's busiest rail stations, vital routes to and from cities around the UK, and key sections of rail lines to London's airports. EE has also added extra capacity to some of the country's most popular coastal locations, alongside the continued rollout of its 5G network across the country.

Marc Allera, CEO Consumer Division, BT, said:

"The upgrades to our network will help ensure our customers stay connected this summer, even at the busiest times. The additional capacity delivered through improvements to our 4G network, alongside the continued rollout of our 5G network, will help people make the most of their time at the coast, and also provide a valuable lifeline, if an emergency occurs."

Three has embarked on a £2bn+ investment programme to transform its network and IT infrastructure. Major upgrades are underway on its 4G network to deliver significantly faster speeds in more locations, improving outdoor and indoor connectivity across the country. Three is also investing heavily in its 5G rollout in towns and cities across the UK, as part of a 5-year programme to deliver super-fast speeds, capacity and low-latency to mobile and home broadband customers alike.

David Hennessy, Chief Technology Officer at Three UK, said:

"The investment we're making in our network and IT infrastructure is vital to delivering on our promise of providing better connectivity, every day for every customer. Despite unprecedented challenges presented by a global pandemic, our 5G and 4G rollout is going strong and we're making sure our customers remain at the centre of every decision we make."

Continuous network improvements and new rollouts will be essential for the UK's recovery from the pandemic and achieving the Government's levelling up ambitions by supporting the extension of 4G coverage to 95% of the country's geography. Rolling out 5G network capability will future-proof the UK with world-class connectivity that will benefit all.

Read press releases by EE ([rail networks coverage](#), [coastal coverage](#)) and [Three](#) for more information



Telecoms in the Queen's Speech

Last month's [Queen's Speech for 2021](#) set out the commitment from Government to improve connectivity and opportunities around the country with better transport and technology, including the acceleration of 5G mobile and gigabit broadband rollout. The Speech highlighted the Product Security and Telecommunications Infrastructure Bill which will aim to accelerate and improve the deployment and use of digital communications networks. A main element of the Bill is reform to the Electronic Communications Code to support faster and more collaborative negotiations for the use of private and public land for telecommunications deployment. MBNL, as part of the Speed Up Britain campaign, supports the need for reform to provide much needed clarity to the industry.

The Government's intended aim of the Code regarding the transition of old Code agreements to new Code agreements was put under the spotlight for the first time in *EE Ltd and Hutchison 3G UK Ltd v Duncan [2021] CSIH 27 ("Duncan")*. The Scottish appeal court looked at this afresh and ruled the operators are entitled to a new agreement under the Code. This decision provides welcome guidance and clarity. MBNL is confident this clarity will assist in paving the way to more collaborative and quicker negotiations on Code agreement renewals.

We are hopeful that amendments to the Code will assist in bringing forward the economic benefits of the Shared Rural Network (SRN) and of 5G. [Analysis carried out by the Centre for Policy Studies](#) highlights that if 5G coverage reaches a quarter more of the population than the Government's current target of 51%, it will produce GDP gains of £41.7 billion by 2027. Furthermore, and without action, the difference between the UK being a leader in 5G adoption or ceding leadership to others could be as much as £173 billion in incremental GDP over the coming decade.



The 5G experience - how the new technology will make your work and life easier

With its superfast speeds and unparalleled reliability and capacity, 5G can do much more than enabling us to download HD movies in seconds on our mobile phones or video calling each other without 'glitching'. It has the potential to deliver a host of benefits to enhance our everyday life and ensure strong economic growth, both now and into the future. Here are a few pioneering areas where 5G benefits are already being realised:

Healthcare - 5G can enable a wider range of healthcare services to be offered remotely. We are all aware the COVID-19 pandemic led to a sharp rise in the use of remote healthcare services, with many diagnoses carried out via HD video calls between patients and medical consultants. This has proven to be a significant advancement to many people, especially those living in remote areas of the country. 'Smart ambulances' are currently being trialled to explore how patients could be treated in an emergency by connecting paramedics directly with hospital staff. 5G technology will also mean more and better information on our health is able to be collected, such as via the use of fitness tracking wearables, to enable earlier diagnoses of health problems and timely treatments.

Manufacturing industry - 5G digital connectivity will provide extra capabilities and enable manufacturers to use advanced production technologies such as smart machinery, augmented reality and artificial intelligence to improve efficiency and lower costs. Manufacturers will also have the possibility to operate on private 5G networks, helping to securely adapt factory settings to meet changing business needs.

Rural opportunities - 5G can help to future-proof the rural economy by bringing better digital connectivity to the country's remote regions, including areas where fixed digital connectivity cannot reach. Farmers will be able to use autonomous machinery and other new tools to boost productivity. 5G-enabled remote working can help rural residents to access better jobs and training whilst tourism could be enhanced by new ways of engaging visitors. 5G could be the viable answer for providing high-speed connectivity and the associated benefits to rural communities across the country.

Helping the environment - 5G will provide opportunities to automate a decrease in the emissions we create during our daily lives. 5G-enabled technologies are being applied to calibrate vehicles on the roads to minimise CO2 emissions. Similar technologies can connect and manage the usage of appliances and devices in our homes and neighbourhoods, reducing the power they consume. 5G technology has the ability to enable much faster and more accurate monitoring of the environment than existing technology, meaning action can be taken sooner to prevent or address environmental harm and damage.

Community life - while 4G already plays a major role to help councils deliver for residents, 5G is expected to enable higher-quality services to be delivered in more efficient and cost-effective ways. 5G will offer new technologies and tools, such as IoT (Internet of things), to local authorities to improve social care and public services for their communities, such as parking, traffic management, street lighting and waste collection. More and better data generated by 5G connections will ultimately enable community and environmental concerns to be managed and addressed more quickly.

Visit Mobile UK's website to learn more about [5G's benefits and examples of how they are being applied in real life](#).



Accelerating Britain's mobile connectivity with standardisation and innovation

by Will Osborne, Town and Country Planning Manager



As demands on mobile networks continue to grow, the expectation for ubiquitous coverage becomes more prevalent. The UK Government has set the target for mobile operators to provide 4G coverage to 95% of the country's geographical land mass by 2025, whilst 95% land mass coverage for 5G is required to be in place by 2027. Such ambitious targets will ensure the UK has world-class digital infrastructure in place to sustain and boost economic growth.

However, agreeing where digital infrastructure should be located is a complicated process requiring a close partnership between public bodies, mobile network operators, private landowners and the wider community. To accelerate the progress and to keep our network build advancing, a number of independent organisations are helping to facilitate and improve the engagement between potential landowners and mobile network operators.

In England, [West Midlands 5G](#) (WM5G) has been working with local authorities and mobile network operators to facilitate new Code agreements and encourage sustained, collaborative relationships to support the rollout of 5G in the Midlands region. On the back of this success, they have recently expanded this role to other parts of the country. WM5G facilitates conversations and utilises standardised processes and a common approach to promote collaboration. MBNL has been working very closely with WM5G in engaging with several local authorities to deliver better connectivity in the region, including the [successful delivery of more than twenty 5G sites for Birmingham City Council](#).

In Scotland, [Infralink](#) is seeking to smooth the process by making interactions between local authorities, site owners, and mobile operators much more simple, predictable and efficient. Through standardised tools and documentation, including template lease agreements for buildings and land across different areas of Scotland, Infralink helps all parties start off on a positive footing and accelerate negotiations over site agreements. For instance, Infralink played a crucial role in helping Forestry and Land Scotland to finalise agreements for 50 sites to support the deployment of the vital Emergency Services Network on its land.

Innovation is a key driving force behind these programmes. Both WM5G and Infralink offer innovative online tools, including interactive maps laying out local authority assets suitable for hosting digital infrastructure. This kind of creativity helps to maximise the potential of new technologies for accelerating the rollout of digital connectivity across the country.

MBNL fully supports organisations such as WM5G and Infralink and their efforts in helping to accelerate the rollout of critical digital infrastructure across the country. We look forward to the development of similar innovative programmes with private sector landowners and are hopeful a national approach can be developed to help to bring better connectivity to every part of the country faster and more efficiently.



"Our programme has already helped our region's towns and cities accelerate their access to 5G... this will help to enhance the UK's position as a world leader in 5G technology."
Rhys Enfield, Head of Infrastructure Acceleration at WM5G



Are you planning construction activity, redevelopment or re-roofing of your property?

by John Reid, Project Manager

The Office for National Statistics reports continued growth in the UK's construction output since the end of 2020. This is great news for the construction industry. Not surprisingly, we have found that such growth directly corresponds with an increase in requests from our site providers to relocate telecommunications infrastructure. Landowners' construction activities can range from new residential development, redevelopment of residential or commercial property, to general repairs and maintenance of property.

By working closely with site owners and developers, MBNL's dedicated Infrastructure Management team successfully managed nearly 200 site relocations in 2020, ensuring our infrastructure is re-sited at the right locations and at the right time to continue to provide critical mobile connectivity to EE and Three's customers.

The successful relocation of telecommunications equipment is no small accomplishment. The process typically takes 18 months and involves the close interaction between the MBNL team and the site provider to ensure a mutually satisfactory outcome. If a full relocation is ultimately required, early focus on selecting and acquiring a new site location(s) to meet network coverage and capacity requirements is imperative so customers in the area can continue to experience the same high-quality mobile services they expect.

As a Project Manager at MBNL, I manage the process where an existing site's redevelopment plans may affect our telecommunications installations. A key part of my role is to identify sites which may be subject to redevelopment as early as possible, and to work with the owners to explore and reach appropriate solutions for all parties. Early engagement is vital to helping us to speed up what can be a complex process, in order to enable the planned construction works to progress on time. Ensuring critical mobile connectivity is maintained for individuals and businesses in the area is vital. Frequently, the optimum solution for both the operator and the site owner is by "Lift and Shift" where we work together to move the infrastructure to a new location on the same property.

Case Study 1: Relocation to a new greenfield site

We are currently on track to deliver a relocation this summer in Essex in line with the site owner's demolition plans. We first received the notification to relocate in 2017 from the site owner, a local college. Since then, we have worked closely with the owner and the Local Authority Planning Department culminating in successfully entering into a new site agreement and securing planning permission for a new greenfield site within the college grounds. Whilst the process has taken four years, it highlights the benefits of early engagement to secure a successful solution for all parties. The new site will be deployed in good time to provide uninterrupted coverage for EE and Three's customers in the area, whilst supporting the demolition and construction timetable set by the college.

Case Study 2: Relocation on a rooftop

In early January 2021, we delivered a successful "Lift and Shift" relocation with an art academy in London. The academy notified us in 2019 of work due to be carried out on the rooftop of their building which was hosting our apparatus. By working closely with the academy, we were able to establish a relocation solution that met both the academy and MBNL's requirements. As a result, continued coverage was maintained for customers in the area and the academy's roofing works were able to progress on schedule.

If you are considering any construction activity which you feel may impact our telecoms installations, please let us know by contacting propertyadmin@mbnl.co.uk. The earlier we are made aware of any plans, the quicker and easier it is to establish a mutually agreeable solution which supports your construction timetable.



