



Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan
15 Links Road
Prestwick
KA9 1QG

26 August 2004

Our Ref: NG/DPM
Your Ref:

Dear Sir or Madam

AYRSHIRE JOINT STRUCTURE PLAN – CONSULTATION DRAFT

We write to your planning authority on behalf of the Mobile Operators Association (MOA), which consists of: -

- Hutchison 3G UK Limited (“**3**”),
- O2 (UK) Limited (“**O₂**”),
- Orange PCS Limited (“**Orange**”),
- T-Mobile UK Limited (“**T-Mobile**”); and
- Vodafone Limited (“**Vodafone**”).

The MOA has recently taken a decision to monitor all emerging development plan policies and supplementary planning guidance that relate to telecommunications development and those which would have an impact on their member’s licence agreements to supply a mobile telecommunications service in the UK. Mono Consultants are undertaking this project on behalf of the MOA, which commenced on 1 July 2003 when we wrote to your council to confirm this.

We note that the Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan has been placed on deposit and representations have been invited. We note that a number of questions have been postulated and answers invited and whilst we have answered one question some of the points raised will touch on wider issues and other questions.

Question 6

Six Investment Corridors have been identified. Is the concept valid, do they cover the correct areas or are there other areas that should be included?

Good communication links have been demonstrated to be a key component in economic prosperity. Increasingly good telecommunications links have been added to the more traditional communication routes such as road and rail. The national Government has set targets for the introduction of broadband nation-wide to ensure that the UK can take advantage of the benefits afforded by the ability to transfer large amounts of data in an instant. With the roll out of 3G technology from the mobile operators, this will extend to mobile handsets and other electrical appliances as well as the desk-top computer. This will enable remote communities to compete with more central areas in the knowledge-based economy. It will also allow more

people to take advantage of flexible working arrangements such as home-working. Some of the advantages to both the economy and communities are set out in NPPG19:

Economic Importance

28. The telecommunications industry is passing through a period of rapid expansion, technical innovation and intense competition. These are world wide trends and Scotland must be part of these changes in order to maintain and improve our position in an increasingly competitive global market. Scotland must therefore have an advanced telecommunications infrastructure of the highest quality. This can help to reduce the disadvantages of a peripheral location in Europe. The benefits can be particularly important for remote rural areas and island communities.

29. The Scottish Executive has identified the use of information technology as one way of improving the efficiency and productivity of the Scottish economy. New technology allows companies to download and transmit substantially greater amounts of data, reduce their costs, serve more customers and gain access to new markets. This is producing many new businesses and more are expected.

Social and Educational Benefits

30. The use of radio communications, ranging from emergency services to paging, offers a number of valuable benefits. It can help to promote social justice by providing opportunities to participate in work, learning and society generally. While they can be used inappropriately or in unsuitable places, mobile phones enable people to keep in touch easily. They have an important role in enhancing personal safety, for example by facilitating contact with the emergency services, who themselves rely on mobile communications. Text messaging which is akin to e-mail is expected to grow significantly. Both mobile and fixed radio services can be of particular benefit in some rural areas where landlines may not be practical or commercially viable.

31. The educational, shopping, entertainment and information services available through the internet are already popular. The introduction of the new 3G mobile technology and broadband radio systems will allow far more data to be transmitted quickly and a new range of services to be provided to mobile and fixed link customers.

Whilst we accept that for traditional development there exists a rationale for focussing development and activity within certain areas, or corridors, we would be keen that the Councils ensure that everybody can take advantage of the benefits of an advanced telecommunications infrastructure. A digital-divide can hinder the Councils other aims such as social inclusion and job creation. This is especially true for both rural and socially excluded areas.

NPPG19 advises that it should be Local Plans which deal with the siting and design issues associated with telecommunications development. We suggest that this Structure Plan should set out a positive approach for development to ensure that the Ayrshire benefits from new technologies into the future. Should the Councils be mindful to include a telecommunications policy we would suggest the following:

An advanced telecommunications infrastructure can help drive both economic prosperity and provide a valuable social resource. Telecommunications development will be supported where environmental impacts are minimised.

This would accord with the Scottish Executive aims of ensuring Scotland can compete on a global level whilst ensuring the integrity of both the urban and rural landscapes are not compromised.

We trust you find the above comments of assistance. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any queries relating to the above matters.

Yours faithfully

Norman Gillan MRTPI
SENIOR PLANNER

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