

Our Ref: IV312

4th July 2019

The Community Clerk
Katherine Menzies Anderson
Assynt Community Council
2 Bayview Terrace
Lochinver
IV27 4LB

Dear Sir or Madam,

PROPOSED COMMUNICATIONS INSTALLATION FOR ARQIVA'S SMART METER NETWORK AT CSP IV312, STREETWORKS PAVEMENT AT A83, CULAG ROAD, LOCHINER, HIGHLAND, IV27 4LQ

WHP act as agents for Arqiva.

This letter is to draw your attention to a planning application to be submitted by WHP on behalf Arqiva and to provide contact details should you wish to enquire about it.

Arqiva owns, hosts and operates shared radio telecommunications infrastructure. It owns and operates the UK's TV and radio broadcasting transmitter network and it hosts a large number of other radio communications services on its sites.

The Smart Metering Network

Smart metering is a Government programme to roll out, between 2014 and 2020, smart electricity and gas meters to homes and small businesses across Great Britain. The smart meter initiative is a key part of the Government's programme to cut greenhouse gas emissions, decarbonise the economy and support the creation of new green jobs and technologies.

The Department of Energy & Climate Change has awarded the contract to deliver the radio communications network for Smart Metering to Arqiva and Telefónica. Arqiva will deploy and manage the radio communications network in Scotland and northern England whilst Telefónica will provide the network to the remainder of Great Britain.

This new national Smart Metering Network (SMN) is a key project in the UK's National Infrastructure Plan and will form part of the UK's Critical National Infrastructure. Its deployment and timely delivery is particularly important to achieving a sustainable economy and meeting key Government priorities. In Scotland, smart metering will help deliver the aspirations within the [Climate Change \(Scotland\) Act](#) and [Low Carbon Scotland: Meeting our Emissions Reduction Targets 2013-2027 - The Second Report on Proposals and Policies \(RPP2\)](#). It will help meet objectives within the Scottish [Government's Economic Strategy](#) and support Scotland's transformation to a low carbon economy.

The SMN, like all electronic communications networks, is to be supported by an infrastructure of operational sites with the required antennas and other apparatus needed to provide radio coverage to the local area. In that sense, they have similarities with cellular networks, with the Smart Meters, being the devices that must connect and communicate with the network antennas, rather than mobile devices.

The SMN sites must therefore be located in proximity to the premises that will be served and must be able to communicate with meters that are often located within the heart of a property, for example, in an under stairs cupboard.

Consistent with planning policy, the main sites that form the SMN have been largely planned around sharing or using existing communication sites, buildings and structures and where this has not been possible, new ground based masts. These main installations provide the main umbrella of coverage to larger geographical areas and premises within those areas.

However there are still smaller settlements, peripheral areas and more remote locations that cannot be covered by these sites due to coverage constraints, often related to distance, topography or other environmental related factors. Hence, in order to provide more localised coverage to these areas, a secondary layer of smaller sites, known as micro sites are required and these are generally physically smaller. The application is in relation to a site required for this secondary layer.

As these micro and repeater sites are required to provide localised indoor coverage over very specific areas then the siting parameters for coverage reasons are narrow. The sites must also satisfy a range of operational criteria, such as good fibre connectivity, an existing power supply suitably high and resilient for an electronic communications network, a reasonable level of security, vehicular or pedestrian access for ongoing maintenance and security of tenure for the life of the SMN contract with DECC. In addition the site must be capable of being constructed without undue constraints and avoiding undue environmental disturbance, that for example, might be associated with creating new access tracks and supplying new power runs above or below ground.

We are preparing to make an application to the local planning authority and it is possible that in due course the authority may notify you about it.

If you have any comments about the proposal please contact us within the next ten days so that your views can, if practicable, be taken into account before we make the application.

My contact details are given below.

Yours sincerely

Damian Hosker BA (Hons) MA MRTPI
Principal Planner
d.hosker@whptelecoms.com