

Reference 01551254

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### Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information concerning radiation levels at M33 [REDACTED]. Your request was received on 4 January 2023 and we have considered it under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the “FOI Act”) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (the “EIR”).

#### Your request

*I would like to find out if the property I am purchasing at M33 [REDACTED] is a highly affected area of mobile mast radiation. The environmental search showed that the nearest mast is at 221m and there is one more approved to be built at 150m, which is much closer than the safe distance of 250m.*

*When I checked your website, I could not find any data for M33. Could you please let me know if there were any measurements done in the area of radiation level. Were the exposure measurements at my future property locations near to base stations within guidelines?*

*What were the measurements as and what is the supposedly safe guideline? In what measure does it affect the purchase price?*

*Furthermore if no measurements are done to date, is there a way possible to request the measurements for this area to be recorded?*

#### Our response

It may be helpful for me to first provide some background on our role in relation to radio spectrum and electromagnetic fields (EMF) before turning to your specific questions.

Ofcom authorises and manages the use of the radio spectrum in the UK, including the spectrum used by mobile network operators (MNOs). We issue licences and set conditions for the use of spectrum without a licence. Further information on our role in relation to EMF is available on our [website](#) (see also our [General EMF queries](#)).

In recent years, some people have raised concerns around the safety of EMF emissions, particularly from new technologies such as 5G. In 2021, following public consultation, Ofcom decided to include [a new condition in spectrum licences](#), requiring licensees to ensure that their use of equipment (operating above a certain power) complies with the internationally agreed EMF levels in [Guidelines](#)

issued by the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) for the protection of the general public.

This is consistent with advice from [the UK Health Security Agency](#) (UKHSA), which is responsible for public health matters associated with radiofrequency electromagnetic fields (EMF), or radio waves. UKHSA's main advice is that EMF levels should comply with the internationally agreed levels in the ICNIRP Guidelines. On its website, UKHSA notes that "*expert groups have examined the accumulated body of research evidence at national and international levels. Their conclusions support the view that health effects are unlikely to occur if exposures are below ICNIRP's internationally agreed guideline levels.*" In relation to 5G, UKHSA have said that "*the overall exposure is expected to remain low relative to guidelines and, as such, there should be no consequences for public health*".

Ofcom carries out unannounced tests of EMF levels around radio transmitters, including mobile phone masts, and can take [enforcement action](#) against spectrum licensees if they produce EMF at levels above those set out in the ICNIRP Guidelines. All [measurements](#) to date over many years have shown that EMF levels are well within the internationally agreed levels in the ICNIRP Guidelines. However, we recognise that there is a lot of public interest in this issue and we will continue to carry out EMF measurements as 5G rollout continues, and publish these on our website.

Our [General EMF queries](#) may also help answer some of the questions you have.

In response to your specific questions:

- *I would like to find out if the property I am purchasing at M33 [REDACTED] is a highly affected area of mobile mast radiation. The environmental search showed that the nearest mast is at 221m and there is one more approved to be built at 150m, which is much closer than the safe distance of 250m. When I checked your website, I could not find any data for M33. Could you please let me know if there were any measurements done in the area of radiation level.*

While we have carried out a number of measurements in the Manchester area, we have not yet taken measurements in the M33 postcode. However, we are continuing to carry out EMF measurements across the UK and this could include your area in the future.

In relation to safe distances, please see the [FAQs on our website](#) which cover this point.

Also, we note that many of our measurements have been taken at distances of 100m or less from mobile phone masts (and, as noted above, have all been well within the ICNIRP Guidelines).

- *Were the exposure measurements at my future property locations near to base stations within guidelines?*

See answer above – we have not yet taken measurements in the M33 postcode.

- *What were the measurements as and what is the supposedly safe guideline?*

As explained above, the main advice from UKHSA is that EMF levels should comply with the internationally agreed levels in the ICNIRP Guidelines.

- *In what measure does it affect the purchase price?*

We do not hold any information indicating that the proximity of a property to a base station may affect the purchase price of the property.

- *Furthermore if no measurements are done to date, is there a way possible to request the measurements for this area to be recorded?*

We provide a chargeable service where individuals can request Ofcom to carry out EMF measurements near mobile base stations. Further information is available [here](#).

I hope this information is helpful. If you have any further queries, then please send them to [information.requests@ofcom.org.uk](mailto:information.requests@ofcom.org.uk) quoting the reference number above in any future communications.

Yours sincerely

Zach Westbrook

If you are unhappy with the response you have received in relation to your request for information and/or consider that your request was refused without a reason valid under the law, you may ask for an internal review. If you ask us for an internal review of our decision, it will be subject to an independent review within Ofcom.

The following outcomes are possible:

- the original decision is upheld; or
- the original decision is reversed or modified.

#### **Timing**

If you wish to exercise your right to an internal review **you should contact us within two months of the date of this letter**. There is no statutory deadline for responding to internal reviews and it will depend upon the complexity of the case. However, we aim to conclude all such reviews within 20 working days, and up to 40 working days in exceptional cases. We will keep you informed of the progress of any such review. If you wish to request an internal review, you should contact [information.requests@ofcom.org.uk](mailto:information.requests@ofcom.org.uk)

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Further information about this, and the internal review process can be found on the Information Commissioner's Office [here](#). Alternatively, the Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF