

Reference: 02171585

Information Requests
information.requests@ofcom.org.uk

7 May 2026

Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information concerning Mobile Network Service issues in the post code HP11 1PX.

We received this request on 9 March 2026 and we have considered your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the 'FOI Act') and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (the "EIR").

Your request & our response

Can I please have a copy of Ofcom Case number 02086967 OFCOM -02112802.

he intermittent issue with the 4G service has been investigated and I've copied below the information:

As per my Mobile Service provider EE, Ofcom completed an investigation a source of interference was traced to a commercial building close to the affected site. The interference is very intermittent in nature and we have made multiple visits. As the impact is low, Ofcom had decided to close the case, suggesting If the problem becomes more persistent then please raise a new case with a revised impact statement.

Hence could Ofcom be kind enough to share the copy of the investigation report.

Please find attached a copy of the investigation report as requested.

Please note that we have made redactions where necessary, under Regulations 12(3), 12(5)(a) and 13 of the EIR.

For the reasons set out below, we consider some of the requested information to fall under exceptions in the EIR and we have therefore decided not to disclose it by redacting it from the document.

The EIR provides that a public authority may refuse to disclose environmental information requested to the extent, amongst other things, that its disclosure would adversely affect international relations, defence, national security or public safety (regulation 12(5)(a) of the EIR), and in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exception outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Ofcom has considered your request in light of the relevant statutory scheme. HM Government has raised significant concerns with Ofcom about the release of mast location on national security grounds and has advised that disclosure of this type of information would adversely affect national security.

Taking all relevant factors into account, Ofcom considers that regulation 12(5)(a) of the EIR is engaged; specifically, that disclosure of the information would adversely affect national security and public safety.

The attached Annex sets out the exceptions in full, as well as the factors in favour of disclosure of the requested information and factors in favour of withholding the requested information that we considered when deciding where the public interest lay.

Regulation 12(3) prohibits the disclosure of third-party personal data. In deciding whether we can disclose third-party personal data, we have to consider whether any of the prohibition conditions listed in regulation 13 is satisfied. In this instance disclosure of the third-party personal data would contravene the UK GDPR and the DPA 2018 therefore we consider that regulation 13 is satisfied and as such under regulation 12(3) we are prohibited in disclosing the third-party personal data.

Regulation 12(3) is not subject to a public interest test.

Yours sincerely,

Information Requests

Request an internal review

If you are unhappy with the response you have received to your request for information, or think that your request was refused without a reason valid under the law, you may ask for an internal review. If you do, it will be subject to an independent review within Ofcom. We will either uphold the original decision, or reverse or modify it.

If you would like to ask us to carry out an internal review, you should get in touch within two months of the date of this letter. There is no statutory deadline for us to complete our internal review, and the time it takes will depend on the complexity of the request. But we will try to complete the review within 20 working days (or no more than 40 working days in exceptional cases) and keep you informed of our progress. Please email the Information Requests team (information.requests@ofcom.org.uk) to request an internal review.

Taking it further

If you are unhappy with the outcome of our internal review, then you have the right to [complain to the Information Commissioner's Office](#).

Annex

Regulation 12(5)(a) of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004

The exception

Regulation 12(5)(a) of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 – a public authority may refuse to disclose information to the extent that its disclosure would adversely affect international relations, defence, national security or public safety.

The regulation is engaged because disclosure of this information would adversely affect national security.

The public interest test

Regulation 12(5)(a) is subject to the public interest test.

Key points:

Ofcom can refuse to disclose information under this exception only if in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exception outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information. In assessing this, under regulation 12(2), Ofcom must also apply a presumption in favour of disclosure.

In carrying out the public interest test, Ofcom should consider the arguments in favour of disclosing the information and those in favour of maintaining the exception, attaching the relative weight to each argument (for and against disclosure) to decide where the balance of public interest lies.

We have set out the matters Ofcom have considered in reaching its decision with respect to the public interest below.

Factors for disclosure	Factors for withholding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transparency: There is always a general public interest in transparency. The EIR implements EU Directive 2003/4/EC on public access to environmental information. Recital 1 of the preamble to the Directive states this public interest: “Increased public access to environmental information and the dissemination of such information contribute to a greater awareness of environmental matters, a free exchange of views, more effective participation by the public in environmental decision-making and, eventually, to a better environment.” • Accountability: Some individuals or companies may want to know the location of a fixed link in a particular area, for example, to assist with spectrum trading, coordination and/or planning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk to emergency services network (ESN): Telecommunications are considered critical national infrastructure in the UK; businesses in the UK are dependent on telecommunications to transact, and members of the public require the services to work effectively for almost all aspects of their lives. There is a substantial public interest in the government taking measures, including the withholding of sensitive information about the location of masts, to protect the integrity and availability of the telecoms network across the whole of the UK. • Publishing information which gives off the specific location is likely to expose critical national infrastructure (CNI) that could be a potential target for a cyber or physical attack. Any disruption or compromise of this infrastructure could affect emergency responses and therefore poses a risk to national security and public safety.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information already in the public domain or which might be made publicly available in the future: In response to previous freedom of information requests, Ofcom has already published information relating to the location of some of MBNL's shareholders' fixed links in block assigned bands.• Ofcom already publishes information about fixed links in <i>non-block</i> assigned bands in its Wireless Telegraphy Register.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• HM Government has similarly advised Ofcom that disclosure of information relating to the UK's CNI raises significant concerns on national security grounds and would adversely affect national security. CNI is those critical elements of infrastructure (including assets, facilities, systems, networks or processes), the loss or compromise of which could result in major detrimental impact on the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of networks, or delivery of essential services (including those of the emergency services). Government has also stated that knowledge of commercial networks could help enable an attacker to target the UK's emergency service communications network to a degree that knowledge would not have enabled in the past. This is due to the ESN programme switching emergency service communication from the private Airwave network to a commercial network.• Further national security concerns raised by Government are set out in the Annex of our response to a previous request for information. We have also taken into account the following:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We recognise that Ofcom has already published information relating to the location of some of MBNL's shareholders' fixed links in block assigned bands. However, this information was based on data obtained in August 2021 and May 2023 meaning it is not necessarily accurate and up-to-date. The published information was also limited in volume and scope; it only identified the potential presence of MBNL's shareholders at or around a limited number of its sites in block assigned bands and did not identify the specific location of any links or technical information associated with those links.• The requested information is not otherwise publicly available and we are unaware of any reason why it may become publicly available.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There have been a significant number of attacks on mobile sites in recent years and publishing information on the location of sites (or potential sites) risks further sites being attacked. Such attacks always have an adverse impact such as customers losing mobile signal and mobile operators incurring additional costs but they can have severe consequences, for example, where a mobile site that supports critical communications for the emergency services is attacked. Such attacks can also cause physical harm to employees of mobile operators, emergency services personnel and the general public.• We have also taken into account paragraphs 9 - 27 of the ICO Decision dated 20 September 2024 relating to the proposed locations for Mobile Network Operators' masts in Scotland.
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Reasons why public interest favours withholding information	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The greater the likelihood of the adverse effect, the greater the public interest in maintaining the exception. This is affected by how extensive the adverse effect is – in this case the adverse effect on national security and public safety has the potential to affect the security and public safety of the United Kingdom and its people, and the opportunity for the adverse effect to arise is ongoing.• The impact of the adverse effect on national security and public safety also has the potential to harm the United Kingdom and its people and is therefore severe.• On balance, the arguments against disclosure – including the likelihood and severity of the adverse effect on national security and public safety, and the increased threat to national security and public safety in respect of the requested information when compared to the information already in the public domain - carry greater weight than the arguments in favour of disclosure. Therefore, the public interest in maintaining the exception outweighs the public interest in disclosure.	

Regulation 12(5)(a) exception

I have delegated authority from the Ofcom Board to make decisions in relation to Ofcom's obligations under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR).

Taking into account representations from MBNL and the advice from Government on the potential implications of disclosure, in my reasonable opinion, disclosure of the information requested would:

- adversely affect national security and public safety. Regulation 12(5)(a) of the EIR therefore applies.

In applying this exception, I have balanced the public interest in withholding the information against the public interest in disclosing the information. I have set out above the factors I considered when deciding where the public interest lies.

I have decided that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exceptions outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information. In assessing this, I have applied a presumption in favour of disclosure.

Full disclosure of the information requested is therefore refused under regulation 12(5)(a).

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact information.requests@ofcom.org.uk.

Signed: David Willis

Date: 7 May 2026