

Conclusion and Appendices

It is important to consider why so little, and in most cases no care, other than for technical efficacy, has been exercised in the siting of these structures in landscape.

This new technology, as most these days, is conceived, designed, built and advertised by people dwelling in cities. The design process needs to be more closely connected to the end use environment of the product. There is less care and respect for rural landscapes. This apparent failure of sensibility in the design / build arena is certainly caused in part by the myopic attention to profit, to the exclusion and detriment of other concerns, which many large companies display. This has been compounded by two further failures in governance and regulation, by the Tory administrations of 1979-97 and the subsequent Labour administrations since 1997. The scene was set in the mid 80s when the Tory government, with eye firmly set on a new industry being allowed to make a fast buck, saw fit to place all mobile phone base station development below 15m in height under the General Permitted Development Orders(GPDOs). A system which continues to give astonishing and unreasonable freedom from planning restriction. Since then the Stewart Report of 2000, and the *All Party Parliamentary Mobile Group (apMobile) Report of July 2004 have both recommended that all mast developments should have to go through full planning procedures. A further three Private Members Bills have been before Parliament in 2004 which call for the revocation of PDOs. So far the government has ignored all these recommendations although minor adjustments have been made to give protesters more time to make opposing submissions to planning authorities. In Scotland however, since 2001, all new ground based mobile phone masts do require full planning permission.

Visual amenity issues can be the cause of planning refusals and Phil Willis MP, Chairman of apMobile, believes that planning authorities should be exercising their powers to influence design and siting more strongly – the law is there to be used. This is an area where, in theory, the public can get involved and ask planners to require better standards of design and siting. However PLACE's experience demonstrates how, despite the most rigorous and consistent engagement with the Telecoms Mast Working Group (which included a number of councillors and the chief planner along with PLACE) of the Forest of Dean District Council over 18 months, progress is very slow. (See page 32). It also remains the case that few base stations come anywhere near the standards of best practice as promoted by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister on its website. www.planning.odpm.gov.uk

*PLACE gave oral and written evidence to the apMobile Parliamentary Inquiry in May 2004

The situation in the Forest of Dean is similar to many other rural areas with undulating topography. The wish of most of the rural population to have the same technical facilities for mobile telephony and internet connection as urban populations is causing more and more invasion of tranquil areas by technical infrastructure. *The unique landscape of the Forest of Dean is becoming more urban.* There are now 46 mobile phone masts in the Forest of Dean District Council area and a number have caused vigorous 'anti' campaigns by locals. There are a further 5 Tetra masts and 5 TV broadcast masts, a roadside microwave link, a couple of ambulance station masts and small mast of unknown use near the Wigpool Waterworks making a grand total of 60 masts in the area. Masts are being sited in pure woodland at heights which break the tree canopy, long views and vistas are being compromised and more and more equipment is being added to already existing masts causing them to become more of an eyesore and visually 'aggressive.' Base stations are also regularly being sited too close for comfort to local communities.

It can be said with confidence that the experiences captured in this survey can be extrapolated to cover most parts of the UK, with the exception of the National Parks and some of the most remote parts of Britain. That the precious and internationally famous British landscape heritage is once again under a sustained attack by a careless industry and an inefficient, poorly thought through regulatory system is indisputable. Greater investment at the time of making other major infrastructures – roads, railways, National Grid could have reduced their impact. However, it is not necessary to spend more to make the mobile telephone infrastructure less intrusive; just more care, diligence and a thoroughgoing commitment to have more respect for the environment!

In most cases even the simplest painting with appropriate camouflaging colour and planting around the compound has been omitted. The mobile phone companies, the government, and local authority planning departments must jointly bear the responsibility for this grievous lack of respect for the environment and community.

It remains perfectly possible, nay simple, using current technology, to weave the technical infrastructure of mobile telephony into the landscape and community in a much less intrusive and damaging way than current practice.

Appendices

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Appendix I Best Practice

The website of The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (www.planning.odpm.gov.uk) carries much advice regarding siting and design of telecoms infrastructure. This advice is useful for urban and suburban areas but there are gaps in it as regards rural and wild areas. A more radical approach and one which would solve many of the environmental problems at a stroke is outlined in the PLACE street lighting / telegraph pole system proposed on p10.

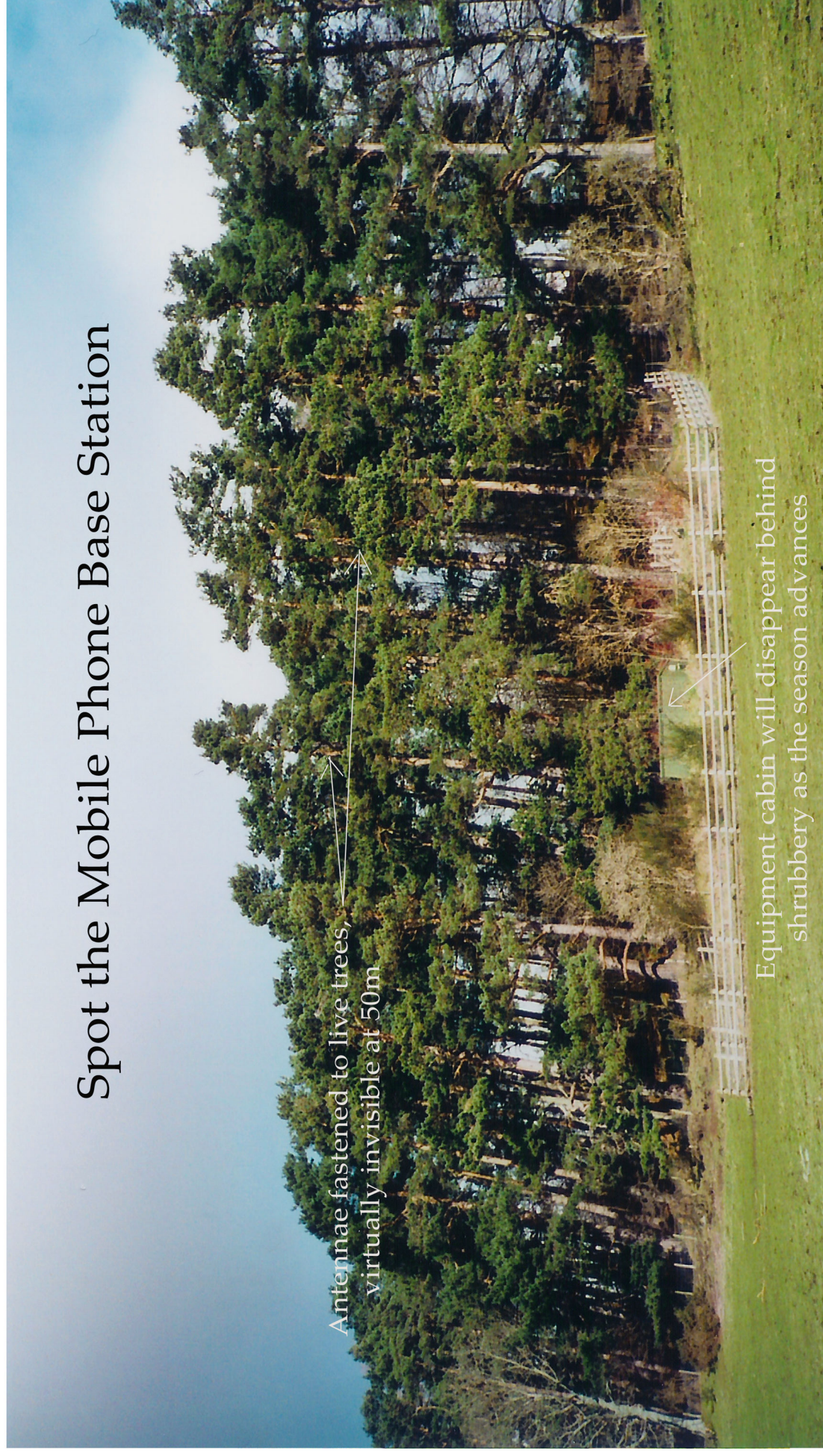
By far the most successful site in terms of minimum impact in the landscape is at Crieff in Scotland. It was built by Vodafone and is illustrated below. The living tree base station was pioneered by Bjorn Amundsen of Telenor Mobil in Norway in the mid-late 1990s. It is hard to see any good reason why this approach has not been more widely adopted.

We also strongly recommend the use of wooden poles or wood clad steel poles as these clearly blend into rural surroundings far better than even the most subtle colouring of a steel mast. (see below and p60). The planting of indigenous shrub and tree species around all equipment compounds is *very* important helping to make a significant reduction in the impact of base stations; wooden fencing is also highly desirable rather than the usual steel or concrete posts with wire mesh fencing.

A further method to reduce impacts where directional antennae are required for an arc of say 270 degrees or less is to site wood poles *within* the tree canopy, some careful tree surgery may be needed. The site on p.14 would be suitable for such an approach.

The very best practice, however, is unlikely to be achieved by the mobile phone operators alone. It is our experience that a strong engagement from the landowner or those controlling land eg. Forestry Commission / Forest Enterprise, National Trust, National Parks and local planners etc. can ensure the best outcome for the landscape. The importance of having an officer trained and dedicated to dealing with telecoms cannot be overemphasised. Such a person must be aware of the significant amount of incorrect information which is put out by the companies.

Spot the Mobile Phone Base Station



Best Practice: The Crieff Solution - 2



Best Practice: The Crieff Solution - 3

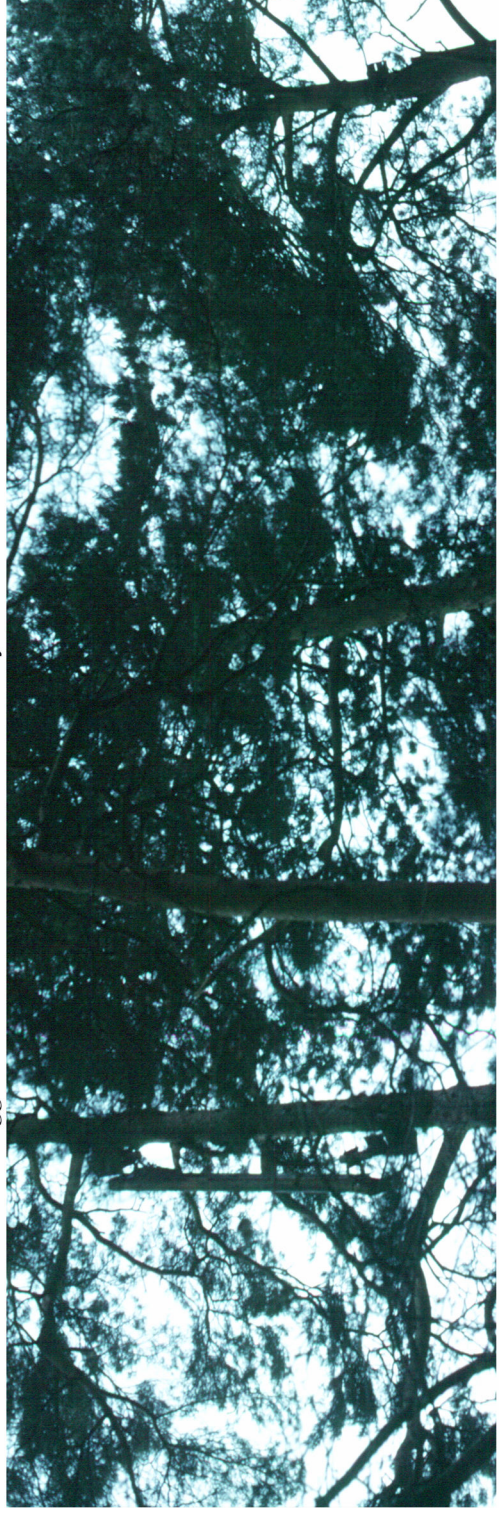


Cables routed under public footpath to equipment cabin 12-15m. away

Best Practice: The Crieff Solution - 4



There is some evidence that suggests birds tend to roost and nest away from antennae.



Antennae are attached by heavy rubber bands which do not damage the tree. There is some evidence that the radio emissions slow tree growth.

Best Practice: Base Station at Harrow Hill Football Club Grid Ref. 648 171

Orange site No.HER 7037; 12m. painted steel monopole; omni ant; small green cabin; no compound; no planting

Comments: *Probably the most visually benign siting of Orange equipment I've ever seen, it is screened from most surrounding viewpoints. However, given Orange's previous record, this is almost certainly accidental! Installations of this sort and the T-mobile installation illustrated on page 26-7 could form the basis of a 'street lighting' system as envisioned on page 10.*

Amelioration desirable: *Paint mast up to height of clubhouse matching brick colour and then above pale grey/green.*



Best Practice: Base Station at Bullo Telephone Exchange. Grid Ref. 688 098

Crown Castle International site No. 164741; Hutchinsonson 3G. 15m wood clad, 12 facet tapering steel pole; 2 sector antennae; green netting on 2m galv. posts; pale grey equipment cabins; 50% screening of compound by existing vegetation.

Comments: *A relatively low impact siting for both community and environment. 2 or 3 houses within 100m, telephone exchange mostly unmanned. The wood finish on the mast is a major factor giving it a visual resonance with trees and wooden poles.* The mast is semi-screened by trees from a number of view points.*

Further Amelioration: *Cylindrical GRP casing the top of the pole placed around the antennae and painted mid brown to match the pole would give a more acceptable and streamlined finish. Reduce the height of the mast so that it is within the tree canopy. Paint equipment cabins and fencing posts matt olive green BS 12B25. Grow ivy up walls of ugly telephone exchange.*

*These poles carry electricity and telephone lines – ideally the lines should be placed underground.



Looking south

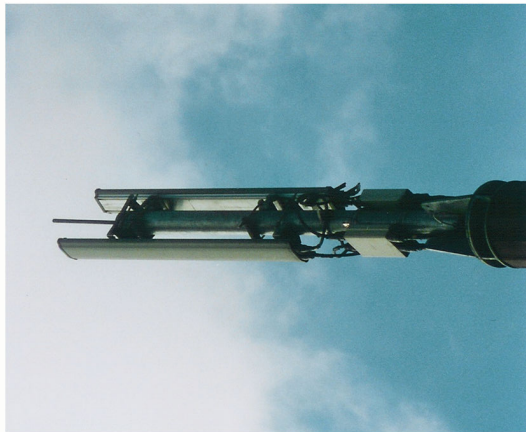
Best Practice: Base Station at Bullo Telephone Exchange. Grid Ref. 688 098



Looking NE from the A48



Looking N from the A48



Looking NNE from the A48

Appendix II

List of Masts

South of Coleford

Base Station at Wyedean School, Sedbury Grid Ref. 545 939	page 4-5
Base Station at Redhill Farm, Lydney Grid Ref. 630 032	12-13
Base Station at Ashwell Grange Farm, Stroat Grid Ref. 584 988	14
Base Station at Barnage Farm, Woolaston. Grid Ref. 584 020	15
Base Stations to rear of Bowens Garage, Tutshill, Chepstow Grid Ref. 539 946	17
Base Station at Caswell Wood, tidenham Grid Ref. 538 002	18-20
Base Station at Little Eddies Field Wood, Stock Farm, Clearwell Grid. Ref. 575 085	22-3
Base Station at Angus Buchanan Recreation Ground Grid Ref. 569 108	25
Base Station at Bream Rugby Field Grid Ref. 601 058	28
Base Station in Centre of Lydney Grid Ref. 631 031	29
Base Station at Pillowell Grid Ref. 624 061;	30-1
Base Station at Driffield Road, near Lydney Grid Ref. 642 045	32-3
Base Station at Cecil's Haulage Yard, Blakeney Grid Ref. 676 086	35
Base Station at Old Hill, Nibley, Blakeney Grid Ref. 668 062	36-7
Base Station at Bullo Telephone Exchange. Grid Ref. 688 098	38-9
Base Station at Chaxhill, Westbury-on-Severn Grid Ref. 741 148	40

List of Masts

North of Coleford

Base Stations at Berry Hill Grid Ref. 575 121	page 26-7
Base Station at Nottswood, Blaisdon Grid Ref. 696 175	41
Base Station at Birdwood Coppice, Huntley Grid Ref. 734 188	42
Base Station near Harts Barn Crafts Centre, Longhope Grid Ref. 676 186	43
Base Station at Hollybush Farm, Longhope Grid Ref. 704 192	45
Base Station at Farmplan, Rank Xerox site, Mitcheldean Grid Ref. 667 188 ...	46
Microwave Link and Base Stations at Edge Hills, Cinderford Grid Ref. 662 159	48
Base Station at College Road, Cinderford Grid Ref. 655 140	49
Base Stations at Cinderford Football Club Grid Ref. 659 143	50
Base Stations at Holly Hill Sawmills, Cinderford Grid Ref. 649 150	51
Base Station at Joys Green, Lydbrook Grid Ref. 600 164	52-3
Base Station at Harrow Hill Football Club Grid Ref. 648 171	54
Base Station at Telephone Exchange, Newent Grid Ref. 716 259	55
Base Stations at Broadford Meadow, Picklenash, Newent Grid Ref. 711 254 ...	56-7
Base Station at Four Oaks Grid Ref. 695 285	58-9
Base Stations at Pfera Hall, Redmarley D'Abitot Grid Ref. 751 320	61
Base Station beside the M50, Dymock Grid. Ref. 708 297	63
Base Station near Dyke House, Bromsberrow Heath Grid Ref. 739 335	64
Base Station at The Hill, Staunton Grid Ref. 781 299	65
Base Station at Hartpury College, Hartpury Grid Ref. 789 230	66
Base Station at Wigpool Waterworks, Mitcheldean Grid Ref. 655 186	67

Appendix IIIa - TETRA Masts (New system for Emergency Services)

Note: Some of the Tetra system is sited on multi-operator masts see pages 39,41,51,55

Tetra Mast at Littledean Grid Ref. 665 146

Multi-operator site; Ref. WIC Littledean; BT site Ref. WA13; 02 site ID N. GL025; 28m tapering square section galv. steel mast; tetra ant; 1 omni ant. 4 emergency services ant; 1 green equipment cabin; 1 brick rendered and tiled cabin; 2m netting on galv. steel posts; no planting.

Comments: Tall mast in commanding position on high summit – damages views and vistas for miles around. Steelwork and ant. relatively slim so is more likely to ‘disappear’ with distance.

Urgent amelioration needed: Demolish mast and site ant. on trees in nearby woodland. Minimum reduce height of mast and paint pale grey/blue, plant shrubs and trees around compound.



Looking northeast



Looking north



Tetra Mast at Lydney Telephone Exchange Grid Ref. 635 030

15m galv. steel tapering pole tetra mast, within telephone exchange compound

Comments: Ugly watchtower design (see p.33) close to housing. Merges into the urban fabric.

Amelioration: Redesign mast and site away from housing.



Looking NNW from the cricket ground



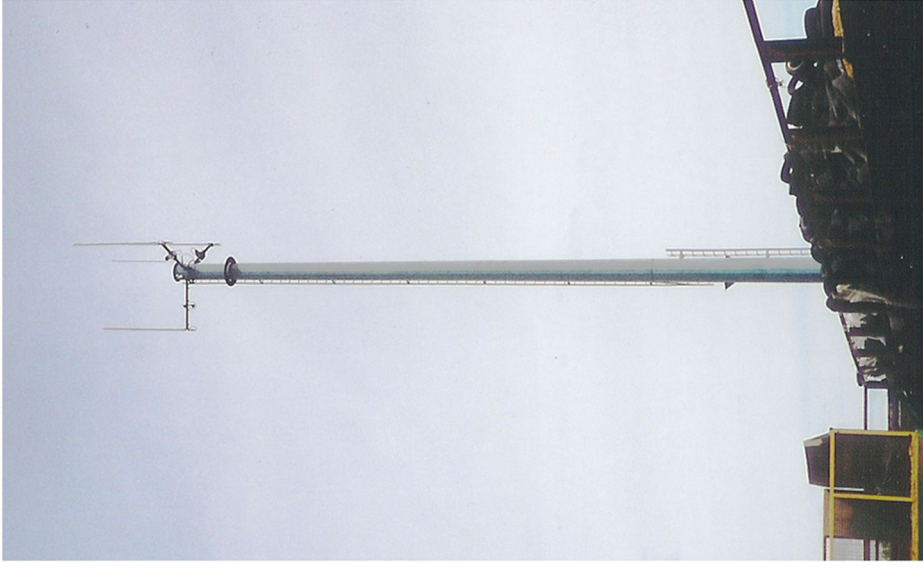
Too close to housing?

Tetra Mast at Tump Farm, Grid Ref. 551 945

2 section multi-facet 18m galvanised steel tapering pole with 3 colinear ant.

Comments: *Moderately intrusive into surrounding rural landscapes, dominates farm buildings. Visible from local footpaths, the A48 and the railway.*

Amelioration: *Paint mast and equipment cabin matt olive green BS 12B25, plant shrubs and small trees around compound.*



Looking SSW



Looking SW

Tetra Mast south of Hudnalls, St. Briavels Grid Ref. 540 032

15m Tetra galv. steel pole mast; three omni-directional antennae; 2m galv. fencing on galv. steel posts 2 pale grey equipment cabins; existing shrubbery on two sides.

Comments: *Unpainted intrusive mast in Wye Valley AONB. Relatively well sited in that it is only visible in the immediate vicinity, however it is very intrusive for one local resident who has been to court to have it removed. This action failed but he is now seeking compensation for loss of value on his property.*

Urgent Amelioration Needed: *Demolish mast and attach antennae to tree(s). Minimum – paint mast and cabins olive green, plant appropriate shrubs around compound.*



Looking west



Tetra Mast at Pillowell Grid Ref. 628 068

25m galv steel tapering then parallel lattice mast; 3 tetra ant; pale grey equipment cabin; 2m grey netting on galv steel posts; no planting
Comments: Highly intrusive into local and longer views. Intrudes into mature woodland and footpath. Surrounded by mature larch with long boles – a perfect site to use a wood clad steel pole.

Urgent Amelioration Needed: Demolish lattice and use appropriately stained wood clad steel pole to match larches. Reduce the height. Minimum – paint mast, cabin, fencing and posts matt BS 12B23 and plant appropriate shrubbery around compound.



Looking northwest, Sept. 2003. The mast on the left is temporary and has now been removed.



Appendix IIIb - TV Broadcast Masts

Redbrook Television Mast Grid Ref. 538 093

ntl broadcast site, 15m parallel sided triangular cross-section lattice with mid grey paint. Green equipment cabin and post and wire fence.

Comments: Mast is partially screened from many viewpoints in the Wye Valley and the mid grey paint is less intrusive than an untreated galvanised finish. Nevertheless this is unnecessarily intrusive in an AONB and should be demolished. Antennae could be attached to a tree or use a wooden clad steel pole set within the tree canopy

Urgent Amelioration Needed: As an interim measure until demolition, mast should be painted matt finish BS 12B25.



Looking SSE

Parkend Television Mast Grid Ref. 616 082

ntl site No.11055; 15m parallel sided, triangular cross-section galv.steel lattice mast; TV relay ant; grey equipment cabin; 3m aggressive galv. steel fence; no planting.

Comments: *Older slim lattice is less intrusive than many see p.16*

Amelioration: *Paint mast, cabin and fence matt BS 12B25; plant around compound.*

Ideal: *Demolish and replace with wooden or wood finish pole mast sited up against tree line.*



Looking south



Looking east Note importance of tree backdrop to help camouflage.

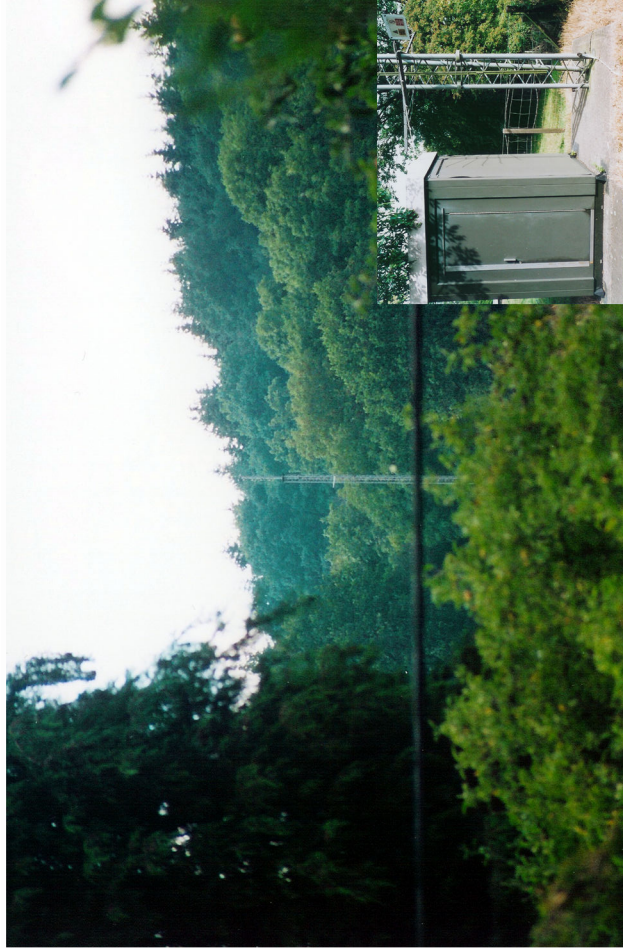
Blakeney Television Mast Grid Ref. 665 070

ntl site No.- 18m parallel sided, triangular cross-section galv.steel lattice mast painted dull grey; TV relay ant; olive green equipment cabin; wood post and sheep wire fence; no planting but incidental tree backdrop.

Comments: *Older slim painted lattice is less intrusive than many. Appropriate fencing much used in the area by farmers. The importance of a backdrop of trees is again demonstrated.*

Amelioration: *Paint mast matt olive green BS 12B25 rather than dull grey, plant around compound.*

Ideal: *Demolish and replace with wooden or wood finish pole mast sited up against tree line.*



Looking NE. Once again a lost opportunity for a brown / green camouflage.

Soudley Television Mast Grid Ref. 656 102

ntl site No. -; 15m parallel sided, triangular cross-section lattice mast, cabin, wood fencing.

Comments: *Older slim painted lattice is less intrusive than many. Appropriate fencing much used in the area by farmers. The importance of a backdrop of trees is again demonstrated.*

Amelioration: *Paint mast matt olive green BS 12B25 rather than dull grey, plant around compound.*

Ideal: *Demolish and replace with wooden or wood finish pole mast sited up against tree line*



Looking south



Looking south

Pillowell Television Mast Grid Ref. 625 065

No information at the compound; 21m triangular cross-section, tapering galv. steel lattice mast, 4 television relay ant; dark green equipment cabin with white roof(!); wood post and sheep wire fencing.

Comments: *Intrusive steel lattice mast just inside woodland and beside footpaths. Mast is surrounded and predominately screened by oak and spruce. The design of the antennae has an intriguing incidental sympathy with the shape of the spruce foliage.*

Amelioration: *Paint mast and antennae olive green.*

Ideal: *Demolish mast and replace with wood pole or attach antennae to surrounding trees*



Looking NW



Interesting sympathy between the design of antennae and the shape of the spruce foliage.

Appendix IV - Curios

Base Station in Kendal

The design intention here is almost too convoluted to follow!



Base Station at Dunblane, Scotland

Why do this:

Vodafone site No.6561, Dunblane



Spot the Mobile Phone Base Station

when you know how to do this?!

Vodafone site No.4788, Crieff



Spot the Mobile Phone Base Station

Base Station at Dunblane, Scotland



Appendix IV - Telecoms Mast Working Group

Forest of Dean District Council

A Report from the Telecommunication Mast Working Group

1 A Telecommunications Mast Working Group (TMWG) chaired by Councillor Stephen McMillan and comprised of Councillors Mick Butler, Andrew Gardiner, and Venk Sheno, planning officers, Ben Lennon from Forest Enterprise, Andrew Darke from local artist group PLACE and Helen Evans from Lydbrook Parish Council, was established in late 2003 to examine the process of pre-application consultation by telecommunications companies.

2 PLACE, a local artists group, had been working with the FoDDC and the then Countryside Agency (CA) on the telecommunications issue for three years and had previously assisted the FoDDC Planning Department in the Revision of their SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE ON TELECOMMUNICATIONS MASTS. As a result of PLACE's lobbying and earlier work in the field the CA called a public meeting on telecommunications issues in July 2003 and a Working Group was suggested. The need for this working group was further reinforced by some local mast planning applications and installations creating a level of conflict where the local community did not feel they had been properly or effectively consulted in the decision making process. As a parallel issue, the group looked at how the design of installations could be influenced within the pre-application consultation process.

3 To start with the major network operators were asked to provide written information. Having received this, the group determined that inviting direct operator participation was not necessary. The group decided that there was enough information available to determine that local people could and should be involved in a process that could ultimately raise the level of consensus about the type, location, and design of telecommunications equipment and its installation.

4 The operators have made a commitment to provide local planning authorities with annual rollout plans for each area. These indicate where new installations are required. The Council will endeavour to create a dialogue with the companies to make sure that sufficient clear information is presented that can be better communicated to communities.

5 The original objectives of the group have been achieved and the outcomes from the Working Group's activity are:

5.1 Draft Supplementary Planning Guidance that the Council's planning department can use to make sure that telecommunications companies stick to the commitments they have made as an industry to consultation with communities. The fact that this exists will demonstrate to the operating companies that Forest of Dean takes their work seriously and expects them to reciprocate. This guidance was approved by the Development Control Working Group on May 23rd 2005

- 5.2 A comprehensive set of information has been published on the council's website so that communities have access to some guidance on the process, and can be more informed about the level of involvement they can expect. (We acknowledge Basingstoke and Dean Borough Council on whose work we based our output).
- 5.3 The council planning department are currently working on aggregating the annual submissions from the telecommunications companies to create an overview plan of future activity. When complete, this plan will be placed on the council website, and will show the operator's areas of search for mast installations, and give background information on how the public can influence installations within their area.
- 5.4 Additional training for members has been agreed as being beneficial by officers. The first priority has been decided to be expert input from a third party to facilitate the learning process regarding the planning regime surrounding telecommunications equipment installation. In addition one or more telecommunications companies will be invited to the Council offices to give members a perspective from their point of view. If there is sufficient interest and demand, interested members from the community may also be able to participate.
- 6 Elements of learning have also been an outcome of this particular exercise.
- 6.1 A working group in a small District Council, that is going to meet over a long period, needs administrative support to deal with minute taking, meeting arranging, letter writing and witness arrangements if the members of the group are not to suffer from overload. The chairman of this group carried out all of these tasks and the process suffered because of this.
- 6.2 The minutes and agendas of meeting should be published on the web site and intranet for all public and members to see.
- 6.3 If external people are to be engaged in a process such as this and have to secure funding to support their contribution, and a request for recognition of this fact is made of the council, we should have a process to provide this in a neutral but supportive way.
- 6.4 The council should not be afraid of using information where it is found in other authorities, provided proper acknowledgement is made.
- 7 I would like to express my thanks to all who participated in this exercise, and made it a valuable learning experience.

Councillor Stephen McMillan
Chairman
June 2005

Appendix VI - Chronological synopsis of PLACE telecoms work in the Forest of Dean (see also p102-7)

November 2000 The Countryside Agency's (CA) proposed new landscape designation for the Forest of Dean inspires PLACE to contact the Forest of Dean District Council's (FoDDC) Chief Planner, Jim Stewart and Val Kirby of CA to discuss how to limit the significant and steadily increasing impact of mobile telephone infrastructure in the landscape **before** the new designation, which **should** restrain this problem, is active. PLACE's intention is that the "shutting the stable door after the horse has bolted" scenario should be avoided.

January 2001 PLACE organises a meeting between Diana Organ MP (Forest of Dean), Val Kirby and Jim Stewart (didn't attend owing to the overrun of another meeting). PLACE proposes a project, to be backed by CA, FoDDC and the MP asking the mobile operators to do a better job for the Forest of Dean owing to its potential new designation.

February 2001 Further contact between PLACE and Jim Stewart begins a collaboration with PLACE assisting the planning dept. with the revision of its DRAFT POLICIES FOR INCLUSION IN SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE ON TELECOMMUNICATIONS MASTS.

August 2001 After revising the SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE ON TELECOMMUNICATIONS MASTS, PLACE submits it to Jim Stewart (JS).

October 2001 JS finds the revision "a bit too radical" saying that the inspector who will trawl the Council's new local plan (which will include the guidance) is likely to object. Nevertheless much of PLACE's work will stand. JS is very favourable towards trying to draw the companies into a special project for the Forest of Dean with the help of the CA. A phone conversation with Jeremy Worth (CA) reveals that its infrastructure priorities lie with reduction of impacts of overhead power lines and the siting of wind farms. The considerable impact of mobile phone infrastructure seems to be low priority.

January 2002 Val Kirby (VK) agrees to draft a letter (to be co-signed by Jim Stewart and Diana Organ) to the mobile operators. CA's new designation (then called the Cultural Landscape Plan - subsequently Integrated Rural Devevelopment (IRD)) will take some 2-3

years to develop and it is worth alerting the companies now. VK suggests that there may be some CA funds to support PLACE's work. VK's draft arrives and PLACE makes amendments and returns it with a fee proposal.

February 2002 The revised SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE ON TELECOMMUNICATIONS MASTS is adopted by the Council.

April 2002 PLACE contacts Louise Thornhill (LT) the regional director of CA Southwest asking why there has been no action on the letter (no further mention of fees for PLACE either). VK has been on sick leave and annual leave and is very busy. A partnership lead by FoDDC needs to be established and CA is awaiting its thoughts.

July 2002 JS meets LT, VK and tells PLACE that a letter will be written to the mobile operators asking for their co-operation.

October 2002 PLACE sends images of a new Orange mast at Pillowell (see p30-1) to JS pointing out the problems of gloss paint and lack of paint on the antennae etc. PLACE contacts the southwest Regional Office of the Forestry Commission (FC) to ask if it would support a best practice project on its land. It is interested in the idea but the time is not right.

December 2002 JS thanks PLACE for the info. on the Orange mast and says he has passed the material on to his officers and they will take it up with Orange. He says the FoDDC is waiting for VK to write the letter.

January 2003 PLACE contacts LT to discover why VK has not written the letter. LT says that there does not seem to be enough support from the FoDDC. This directly contradicts PLACE's knowledge and JS, when phoned, says he will put the CA right. FoDDC does want to go ahead.

March 2003 PLACE contacts Diana Organ MP and she writes to the CA asking for action. A letter is sent by VK to all the mobile phone companies calling for a meeting. JS retires from his position as chief planner with FoDDC.

April 2003 PLACE contacts the Deputy Surveyor of the Forestry Commission (chief officer) in the FoD. He is sympathetic to PLACE's aims but says that with respect to design of masts the FC goes along with the views of the local planners. PLACE discovers that one of the planning officers in charge of telecoms matters has not seen the new **SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE!** The officer is sure that it was **not** sent out to Airwave, the company responsible for the installation of the new TETRA emergency services system. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the revised **SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE** was never sent out.

July 2003

VK chairs a telecoms issues meeting attended by all the mobile phone companies, PLACE, Lydbrook Residents Association, Councillor Stephen McMillan, France and Lewis International Ltd. (mast manufacturers), two representatives from the County Council, a Forestry Commission representative and two local residents from St. Briavels. Many problems are aired and the representatives of the mobile companies are unanimous in their dismay at the poor treatment local residents have received from their companies. They pledge to do better: "tell us what you(the community) want" bears the clear implication that they will be more responsive in future. VK gets promotion in the CA.

October 2003 – March 2004 Negotiations between PLACE, Forest of Dean District Council and the Countryside Agency to facilitate a project to reduce the impact of telecomms infrastructure on the community and landscape in the FoD. The project, co-lead by Councillor Stephen McMillan and PLACE, is adopted by the Council on 19/2/2004.

October 2003 With "tell us what you want" ringing in its ears PLACE writes to Orange asking for improvements to its Pillowell mast. Orange asks for the opinion of the local planners and says "please bear in mind that the reason the antennae themselves are not painted is that this would interfere with the efficient operation of the site." Councillor Stephen McMillan confirms that we should work through and with the Planning Department and forwards the e.mail correspondence to planning officer Clive Reynolds.

January 2004 PLACE contacts Orange to ask about progress on improvements to the Pillowell mast and pursues a definitive statement on the painting of antennae from CA's retained telecoms expert, Henry Dolan. Orange is still awaiting comments from the lpa.

March 2004 CA sends PLACE a copy of "Minimising the Visual Impact of Cellular Base Stations" by Henry Dolan. It states in paragraph 4.4 "Operators frequently object to the painting of their aerials due to increased attenuation of the radio signals and consequent degradation of network performance. This has been investigated and discussion with aerial manufacturers indicates that losses are minimal provided they undertake such coating themselves. Paints should have a low metal or carbon content and should always be identified by a RAL specification. This can be verified by consulting BSI. The manufacturers consider that any subsequent painting might void their performance guarantee. Once again a medium to grey or olive drab would be suitable."

March – June 2004 Preliminary meetings of the Telecoms Mast Working Group.

- April 2004** CA offers to help fund PLACE's photographic survey of the impact of telecoms infrastructure in the FoD landscape.
- June 2004** Forest of Dean District Council Telecomms Mast Working Group (TMWG) first full meeting. PLACE accepts £6K funding offered by the Countryside Agency to help produce a Telecommunications Infrastructure Survey for the FoDDC area and begins work.
- September 2004** After a presentation from PLACE about potential improvements (use of matt paint instead of gloss on the mast, green/brown paint on the antennae and on the equipment cabins, planting of indigenous tree species around the compound. See p30-1) to the Orange Pillowell mast, the West Dean Parish Council agrees to write to Sean Hannaby (new chief planner at FoDDC) asking him to write to Orange asking for the improvements to be implemented.
- October 2004** The FC agrees in principal to help fund the next phase of PLACE's photographic survey of the impact of telecoms infrastructure in the landscape of the FoD. TMWG works on a new more robust revision of the SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE ON TELECOMMUNICATIONS MASTS (approved by the Development Control Working Group 23/5/2005)
- November 2004** PLACE learns that because of a government claw-back of funds from the FC it cannot part fund the photographic survey this financial year. Despite repeated contacts with Orange over six months asking where there are examples of base stations built into street lighting, no information is forthcoming.
- January 2005** TMWG produces a list of actions including writing a letter to Orange asking for improvements to their Pillowell mast (see also p94-5). TMWG concludes its first phase of work having had a total of six meetings. PLACE recognises that its original intentions in establishing a local project (see November 2000) have not been met, principally as a result of the low priority given to landscape quality by the FoDDC and the low priority given to telecoms issues by the CA causing delays, misunderstandings and lack of focus. Work on the The Photographic Survey continues.
- June 2005** PLACE contacts Nick Greer, Head of National Acquisitions and Environment Technology, Vodafone for more information on the circumstances surrounding their Crieff installation:

Dear Nick,

I write concerning the above Vodafone base station which, I believe from your colleagues, was built in 1999 when, I gather, you were more closely involved with the design of sites. I have tried to reach you by phone without success.

I have visited and photographed there and it ranks way above any other base station I have seen, of equivalent power, in terms of its minimal intrusiveness on the environment. I must congratulate you!

Its success raises a number of questions for me and I'd be grateful for your help.

1. What were the circumstances which caused this particular design?

2. Was the landowner requesting an especially low impact design?

3. Was the site more or less expensive than if a steel mast had been used?

4. As it seems to be so successful in landscape terms, I'm somewhat surprised that only one other living tree base station has been undertaken (which I gather has now unfortunately blown down.) What are the reasons for this as there must be numerous rural locations which would greatly benefit from this approach.

5. The Crieff antennae are attached to coniferous trees - is there any reason that antennae cannot be attached to broadleaf trees?

6. Are there any circumstances which would cause Vodafone to use tree mounted base stations more often?

7. I would imagine that there has been a favourable public and press response to the Crieff station - is this the case?

I hope you can help.

Best wishes, Andrew Darke

Andrew

I understand my colleague Jane Frapwell has spoken to you regarding your interest in our site. Regarding your specific questions. From my own recollection although this is somewhat hazy as I was not involved in the project we 'experimented' with the use of a live tree to see if it was a solution that could be used more frequently. As you say we have not pursued this which is more driven by the lack of trees in the right location that provide sufficient height, have sufficient structural capability and that we can attach antenna to facing in the right direction. If you look at a standard RBS you will see the level of equipment that a 'normal' site supports is considerably greater than that at Crieff, which again from memory only had the one antenna**.

You are also right that the tree did not survive* the experiment which again underlines the disadvantages of this type of solution. I know that other operators have used this in other countries again on an experimental basis but I have not heard of widespread adoption.

Perhaps surprisingly the tree solution received little localised press interest and that was about it. The details to which you refer have been lost over time as we have re-organised about 3 times and the people involved have either left the company or moved on to other responsibilities since the tree was installed so regrettably my response cannot be more detailed.

I hope this helps in some way. Regards Nick Greer, Head of National Acquisition and Environment Technology, Regional Operations, Vodafone

* This is incorrect, the Crieff base station is operational, one on the Western Isles blew down.

** This is also incorrect the Crieff station has 2 antennae, one each on two trees about 9m apart.

Dear Nick,

Thanks. I wonder if I might ask again the question below.

5. The Crieff antennae are attached to coniferous trees - is there any reason that antennae cannot be attached to broadleaf trees?
best wishes, Andrew

[Believe it or not the broadleaf does cause reduced signal transmission \(reflection from the leaf surface when in the wind dissipates the signal\) which is one of the reasons why we have not used them.](#)

Nick Greer

July 2005 PLACE is notified by the Planning Department that a letter asking for improvements to the Pillowell mast has been written to Orange.

August 2005 PLACE re-contacts the Forestry Commission and shows the “Views, Vistas and Reverie” research.

September 2005 The Forestry Commission invites PLACE to lead a ‘best practice’ project on FC land.

Appendix V

P L A C E

Jonathan Adamson - Huddersfield, West Yorkshire
Andrew Darke - Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire

A number of artists came together as a result of attending the international "Landscape & Sculpture" symposium, Manchester Polytechnic, 1-3 September 1989. Six artists including Sue Hilder, Ute Kreyman, Anneke Pettican and John Sexton formed the group Art & Place shortly afterwards. PLACE evolved from this group in 1994. Anneke Pettican worked with PLACE until 2001. Dr. Richard Cowell - Research Fellow at the Department of City and Regional Planning, Cardiff University and Pamela Day have collaborated closely with PLACE since 1997.

- * The group is a forum for debate and exchange on a variety of issues surrounding art, public art, aesthetics, society, infrastructure, architecture and the environment.
- * The group works on ideas, papers for publication, exhibitions, open meetings and initiatives in these fields.
- * New responses and approaches are sought.
- * Work is presented by the group, and others, for discussion and constructive criticism.
- * Visits are made to sites of interest.

Note: all members have not necessarily been involved in all PLACE projects.
PLACE is an unincorporated association.

December 1995 Work begins on proposals for Mount Stuart Graving Docks, Cardiff Bay - see the synopsis of the ATLAS project on www.atlasplace.clara.net

December 1996 Andrew Darke initiates, through the Public Art Commissions Agency, Birmingham, a collaboration with Ove Arup

& Partners, Consulting Engineers, on a multi-client project to look at ways of reducing the environmental intrusiveness of mobile telephony base stations and infrastructure.

May 1997 Arts Council of Great Britain grants £5000 to facilitate the employment of artists' skills on the above project.

June 1998 PLACE and Ove Arup organise the "Beauty and the Mast" seminar and issues meeting which brings together the mobile telephony industry, the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions, Countryside Agency, Scottish Natural Heritage, Council for the Preservation of Rural England, planners, and others, for the first time in relation to this issue.

July 1998 PLACE and Ove Arup issue the ASPIRE TO CLEAR HORIZONS prospectus which proposes a cross industry project to reduce the impact of mobile telephony infrastructure, especially in rural areas.

November 1998 The potential sponsors meeting attended by participants of the "Beauty and the Mast" seminar and issues meeting, results in a revision of the above prospectus. The revised prospectus CLEAR HORIZONS is issued to the mobile telephony industry in March 1999.

April 1999 PLACE attends the "Mobiles and the Environment" Conference at the Cumberland Hotel, London and gives a presentation on the need to redress the damage being caused by the industry to the environment.

April 2000 CLEAR HORIZONS - 'Mobile Telephony and the Environmental Intrusiveness of Base Stations' report by PLACE and Ove Arup and Partners, is published with copies sent to the DETR, conservation and heritage organisations, the mobile telephony industry and the press. Website - www.clearhorizons.fsnet.co.uk

October 2000 Response to the Department of the Environment, Transport and Regions (DETR) "Consultation Paper on Telecommunication Mast Development (by Telecommunications Code System Operators)" is returned.

January 2001 Andrew Darke initiates a collaboration between PLACE, the Forest of Dean District Council and The Countryside Agency which aims to draw the telecomms companies into a special project to reduce the impact of their infrastructure on the environment of the Forest of Dean.

February 2001 PLACE submits a response to the Scottish Executive's "Consultation Paper on Telecommunications Mast

Development - November 2000."

February 2001 ASPIRE TO CLEAR HORIZONS and CLEAR HORIZONS documents become available on the Technical Indexes Ltd. Planning CD-Rom.

April 2001 Jonathan Adamson writes to the Chairman of the Peak National Park outlining a number of ideas and suggestions that would reduce the impact of high voltage power transmission, initially in the Hazelhead, Longdendale area of the park, but with potential applications in other National Parks, AONB and the UK as a whole.

1 June 2001 SKY MAP (balloon release). Commissioned by PLACE to coincide with the official opening of Cardiff Bay Barrage. Adrian Holme's and Hana Sakuma's collaborative performance/event offers an alternative experience to the erasure, enclosure and consumerism embodied in the development of Cardiff Bay.

1 August 2001 ATLAS website goes online - www.atlasplace.clara.net

11 August - 2 September 2001 ATLAS project presented at Galleri 21, Radmansgatan 5, 211 46 Malmo, Sweden as part of the exhibition "River, Estuary, Ocean."

September 2001 Scottish Executive Development Department publishes Planning Advice Note 62 (PAN 62) on Radio Telecommunications. PLACE's help is acknowledged by Senior Planner, Ben Train.

September 2002 Director of Planning for the Forest of Dean District Council (FoDDC), Jim Stewart, acknowledges PLACE's help on the new Supplementary Planning Guidance for Telecommunications Masts. The new Guidance will be sent to companies wishing to erect new telecomms installations in the Forest of Dean.

July 2003 The Countryside Agency organises a meeting in the Forest of Dean in response to PLACE's telecomms initiative, which brings together a range of interested parties.

October 2003 – March 2004 Negotiations between PLACE, Forest of Dean District Council and the Countryside Agency to facilitate a project to reduce the impact of telecomms infrastructure on the community and landscape in the FoD. The project co-lead by Councillor Stephen McMillan and PLACE is adopted by the Council on 19/2/2004

April 2004 PLACE submits written evidence to apMobile the Parliamentary Inquiry into Planning Law as it Affects the Siting of Mobile Phone Masts.
 “Dinch me dark God” exhibition, discussion group and slide show by Jonathan Adamson and Pamela Day, April 2nd-4th at Field House.

May 2004 PLACE gives oral evidence to the Parliamentary Inquiry.

June 2004 Forest of Dean District Council Telecomms Mast Working Group first full meeting.
 PLACE accepts £6K funding offered by the Countryside Agency to help produce a Telecommunications Infrastructure Study for the FoDDC area.

August 2004 As a result of a correspondence about the impact of high voltage transmission lines in the landscape between PLACE (initiated by Jonathan Adamson) and the National Grid, PLACE is invited to meet National Grid Transco.

September 2004 PLACE accepts an invitation from the “Friends of the Lake District” to their “Overhead Wires Planning Seminar.”

November 2004 PLACE meets with the National Grid to discuss their “Surface Trough” undergrounding system.

January 2005 PLACE meets representatives of the Campaign for the Preservation of Rural England (CPRE) at Woodhead in the Peak District National Park to discuss PLACE’s proposals for potential environmental improvements for the Longdendale Valley.

March 2005 “Open Meeting” organised by PLACE and hosted by Tam Giles at St. James Studios, London. Six people gave presentations.

March - May 2005 PLACE meets again with the CPRE – for ongoing discussions re the Longdendale Valley and is invited to submit a proposal

August 2005 PLACE meets the Chief Executive, England of the Forestry Commission to discuss the “Views, Vistas and Reverie” research and the initiation of a ‘best practice’ project of camouflaging for telecoms base stations on FC land.

PUBLICATIONS

- 1995** Article by Andrew Darke "Art & Place: Cardiff Bay" in "ECOS. A Review of Conservation," Vo1.16 No.1, 1995.
- July 1998** PUBLIC:ART:SPACE, a book published by Public Art Commissions Agency (Merrell Holberton, London), includes the *ATLAS* project in its chapter "A strategy for public art in Cardiff Bay." The book documents a decade of PACA's advocacy, and commissioning, of art for public spaces.
- August 2000** "alias" (artist led initiative advisory service) publication, documenting a pilot project, includes information on PLACE's contact with the service. The publication also uses a photograph on its cover of the pre-barrage tidal mud in Mount Stuart Graving Docks, Cardiff Bay, taken by Andrew Darke. The publication was commissioned by South West Arts and produced by Stroud Valleys Artspace.
- February 2001** ASPIRE TO CLEAR HORIZONS and CLEAR HORIZONS documents become available on the Technical Indexes Ltd. Planning CD-Rom.
- June 2001** "Landscape Research," Vol. 26 No.1, publishes a polemic by Tim Hall and Iain Robertson - "Public Art and Urban Regeneration: advocacy, claims and critical debates" - which includes a number of references to Andrew Darke's "ECOS" article. (See above.)
- January 2003** Dr. Richard Cowell's report "The Scope for Undergrounding Overhead Electricity Lines" (commissioned by Friends of the Lake District from the UK Centre for Economic and Environmental Development), reproduces two of PLACE's photographs of National Grid's 400Kv open trough system, in use at Woodhead, within the Peak National Park, for approximately 1/4 mile. PLACE contends that the Woodhead, ground level, Surface Trough System (STS) could be deployed more extensively by National Grid, particularly in and around National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The STS dramatically reduces the intrusiveness of the National Grid.
- September 2005** "Views, Vistas and Reverie" - A Photographic Survey of the Intrusion of Telecommunications Infrastructure in the

Landscape of the Forest of Dean is published.

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