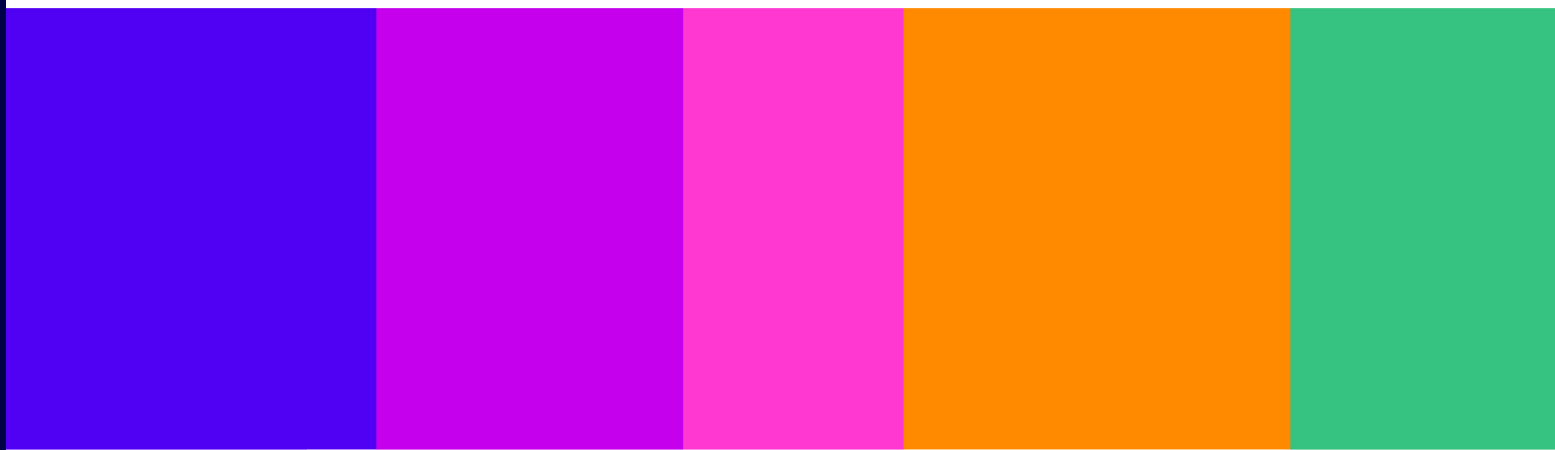


Starlink application for two non-geostationary gateway earth station licences

Decision

Statement

Published 20 July 2026



Contents

Section

1. Overview.....	3
2. Introduction and background.....	5
3. Assessing the impact on NGSO coexistence	7
4. Assessing the impact on competition	11
5. Additional comments and impact assessments.....	15
6. Our decision.....	16

Annex

A1. Impact assessments	17
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1. Overview

- 1.1 This document sets out our decision on an application by Starlink Internet Services Limited (a subsidiary of SpaceX, referred to in this document as 'Starlink') for two UK wireless telegraphy satellite non-geostationary earth station licences (NGSO gateway licences). These licences would authorise Starlink to operate gateway earth stations in the Ka band in Mulberry Wharf (London) and Harlow (Essex).
- 1.2 NGSO systems are a way of delivering broadband services from space using a constellation of satellites, usually in a low or medium orbit. They have the potential to deliver higher speed and lower latency services to consumers, customers and citizens. Starlink has stated that these new gateways are needed to expand network coverage, improve quality of consumer experience, and enable greater network resilience of its satellite broadband services in the UK.
- 1.3 Our [initial assessment of Starlink's NGSO licence application](#) in our March 2026 consultation ('the Starlink consultation') proposed that we grant Starlink these NGSO gateway licences. The proposed two Starlink gateways would be the first NGSO gateways to be located in an urban area of the UK, and we were therefore particularly interested in stakeholder evidence related to whether there is potential for coexistence or competition concerns arising from the location of these gateways. We have now assessed stakeholder comments, as well as new information provided by Starlink.

What we have decided – in brief

We have decided to grant two NGSO gateway licences to Starlink for its NGSO system in Mulberry Wharf (London) and Harlow (Essex), using Ka band frequencies between 27.5-28.0525 GHz, 28.4445-29.0605 GHz and 29.5-30 GHz.

We received one response to this consultation from Amazon Leo which did not raise objections to Ofcom approving these gateway applications.

Having considered this response, as well as additional coexistence analysis we requested from Starlink, published alongside this statement, our view remains the same as set out in our consultation:

- On coexistence, we consider that Starlink's proposed gateways should be capable of coexisting with current and future NGSO systems and gateway earth stations in the Ka band in the UK, and are assured that its NGSO system is designed with sufficient flexibility to mitigate harmful interference should it arise. We are also satisfied that Starlink has provided suitable evidence of coordination discussions with other NGSO licensees and that it intends to continue its efforts to cooperate with other licensees.
- In addition, we consider that the competition risks directly associated with approving Starlink's application for these NGSO gateway licences are low, and that the proposed gateway sites would benefit UK consumers and citizens.

We will now proceed to issue Starlink with its new NGSO gateway licences, subject to payment of the licence fee. A copy of the licence will also be available under the "Existing licences" section of our [NGSO licensing webpage](#).

The overview section in this document is a simplified high-level summary only. Our decision and reasoning are set out in the full document.

2. Introduction and background

- 2.1 Our licensing process for considering applications for NGSO spectrum licences aims to enable citizen and consumer benefits such as improved connectivity. It was designed to encourage greater cooperation between NGSO licensees, enhance our ability to intervene if harmful interference arises, and safeguard competition. Our approach to NGSO licensing is set out in our [2021 statement on licensing NGSO satellite systems](#) (the 2021 NGSO statement), and [guidance for NGSO applicants on the licensing process](#). Since publication of the Starlink consultation we have updated this guidance, following our 2026 [NGSO licensing review](#) statement.
- 2.2 Our NGSO licensing process covers two types of NGSO licences:
- *Satellite (earth station network) licence* - for NGSO use: authorises an unlimited number of user terminals, for example a satellite dish, to connect to the NGSO satellite system (the NGSO network licence).
 - *Satellite (non-geostationary earth station) licence*: authorises gateway earth stations connecting the NGSO satellite system to the internet or private network (the NGSO gateway licence).
- 2.3 This decision document relates to the second of these licences: the **NGSO gateway licence**.
- 2.4 The NGSO gateway licence covers UK earth station hubs connecting an NGSO satellite system to the internet and/or private networks or cloud services. We require the holder of the NGSO gateway licence to have control over the gateway earth station (so it is typically held by a satellite or teleport operator). The NGSO gateway must operate either with a licensed NGSO system under an NGSO network licence, or with an NGSO system using terminals in frequencies which are exempt from licensing.¹ It also places other conditions on licensees, including that gateway(s) must become operational within 12 months of the licence being granted, and managing the gateway to prevent harmful interference (see condition 5 “Additional conditions”). All NGSO licences are listed in the “Existing licences” section of our [NGSO licensing webpage](#).

Starlink’s NGSO licence application

- 2.5 We received a completed application from Starlink Internet Services Limited (a subsidiary of SpaceX,² referred to in this document as ‘Starlink’) in February 2026 to operate two NGSO gateway earth stations that will connect to its NGSO constellation, at the following locations:
- Mulberry Wharf, London
 - Harlow, Essex.
- 2.6 The proposed gateways will communicate with satellites operating under Starlink’s USASAT-NGSO-3X network filing. Starlink has requested to use Ka band frequencies: 27.5-28.0525 GHz, 28.4445-29.0605 GHz and 29.5-30 GHz. Starlink is already authorised to operate terminals in the UK under its NGSO network licence issued on 16 November 2020.

¹ See paragraph 1.10 of our [Non-geostationary satellite earth stations guidance](#).

² Space Exploration Technologies Corporation, more commonly known as SpaceX.

- 2.7 In its NGSO gateway licence application, Starlink states that these two additional gateway sites will expand network coverage, improve quality of experience and enable greater network resilience of its satellite broadband services. It notes that Starlink is already providing a service to thousands of customers in the UK, including in unserved areas, underserved areas and coverage ‘not-spots’.

The Starlink consultation

- 2.8 Taking account of the evidence presented by Starlink, we published a [consultation](#) on 13 March 2026 setting out our preliminary view to grant Starlink two NGSO gateway licences, and invited comments on Starlink’s NGSO licence application and our views. We noted we were open to changing those views depending on responses and evidence submitted to us as part of the consultation process. The Starlink consultation closed on 17 April 2026.
- 2.9 We received one response to the consultation, from Amazon Leo. This response is published alongside the application and consultation on our [website](#). This document summarises the points made by Amazon Leo in its submission.
- 2.10 Following the consultation, we requested additional information from Starlink regarding the impact of the proposed gateways on user terminals. Starlink’s response to our request for further information is now also published on our [website](#).
- 2.11 We have carefully considered the consultation response and additional information from Starlink in finalising our decision on Starlink’s licence application.

Structure of this document

- 2.12 The rest of this document is structured as follows:
- Section 3 assesses the capability of Starlink’s NGSO gateways to coexist with other (current and future) NGSO systems;
 - Section 4 assesses the hypothetical competition risks and benefits arising from Starlink’s NGSO gateway licence application;
 - Section 5 covers any other comments on Starlink’s NGSO gateway licence application, as well as responses regarding our equality and Welsh language impact assessments;
 - Section 6 summarises our decision and next steps; and
 - Annex 1 sets out our impact assessments, including on equality and the Welsh language.

3. Assessing the impact on NGSO coexistence

- 3.1 Our [2022 Space Spectrum Strategy](#) sets out our aspiration to enable as many NGSO systems as possible, to provide services and increase choice for citizens and consumers in the UK. NGSO satellites are dynamic by nature, creating a complex spectrum management environment, both in space and on the ground. We recognise the importance of ensuring that different NGSO systems are able to operate alongside each other without increasing the risk of harmful interference, and this is one of the aims of our NGSO licensing process.
- 3.2 The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Radio Regulations mandate that NGSO satellite operators establish coordination agreements to prevent harmful interference. An order of precedence is assigned to a satellite system or network based on its satellite filing submission date, and operators must seek an agreement with operators of earlier filed systems and networks. Ultimately, the notifying administration responsible for holding the satellite filing is responsible for ensuring that operators comply with these ITU obligations.

Coexistence with existing NGSO systems

- 3.3 When applying for an NGSO gateway licence, we ask applicants to demonstrate how coexistence is possible between their NGSO gateway and other NGSO systems or gateways already licensed in the UK (as well as any NGSO licence applicant's systems or gateways) that plan to operate in the same frequency band(s). Applicants should also show how they are able to coexist with other specific co-frequency earth stations registered with the ITU.³
- 3.4 In the Starlink consultation we considered the information provided by Starlink in its NGSO gateway applications:
- a) Starlink already has coordination agreements in place with OneWeb, Kepler Communications, Inmarsat and Space Norway, as well as Telesat for both their GSO and NGSO operations.
 - b) Starlink provided an update on the progress of its coordination discussions with Mangata, NSLComm and Rivada. ✕
 - c) We reviewed technical coexistence analysis Starlink provided for Amazon Leo. This analysis indicated that even if co-located, Starlink's gateway and Amazon Leo's gateway would still be able to coexist. We assessed that the analysis Starlink provided constituted a worst-case scenario given the actual distance between the two sites (Amazon Leo's gateway site is in Bude, Cornwall).
 - d) Starlink stated it is committed to good faith coordination with NGSO licensees.
- 3.5 Starlink's application reiterated the flexibility of the design of its network and its availability to coexist with other operators through the use of:
- i) directional antennas designed to maximise transmissions towards the SpaceX satellite system and minimise power directed elsewhere;
 - ii) multiple beams with very narrow transmit and receive beam widths;

³ These are listed at the bottom of our [NGSO licensing webpage](#).

- iii) steerable beams on satellites, which can point in a different direction in advance of an in-line event to avoid interference;
 - iv) multiple satellites in view to provide options to serve users while avoiding in-line events;
 - v) the ability to dynamically split spectrum (cease transmitting on certain channels) in the case of in-line events;
 - vi) low gateway height above ground level (less than two meters above ground level), to make use of shielding fences and other physical obstructions (“ground clutter”) to protect adjacent users from interference.
- 3.6 Our preliminary view was that, based on the information provided, Starlink’s proposed new gateways should be able to coexist with existing NGSO licensees. We noted that these gateways are similar in design to other Starlink gateways that we have already approved.
- 3.7 We asked stakeholders the following question:

Consultation question 1

Do you anticipate these NGSO gateway earth stations will pose coexistence challenges to existing NGSO systems?

Consultation responses

- 3.8 We received one response to this question, from Amazon Leo.
- 3.9 Amazon Leo noted that Starlink’s application included an analysis addressing coexistence between its two proposed gateways and Amazon Leo’s gateway site in Bude but did not include an analysis addressing coexistence with Amazon Leo’s user terminals, which may be deployed across the entire UK.
- 3.10 Amazon Leo stated that it did not object to Ofcom’s approval of these gateway licences. It was of the view that coordination in this instance could be handled effectively at the operator-to-operator level between Starlink and Amazon Leo. However, to enable comprehensive coexistence analysis in the future, Amazon Leo encouraged Ofcom to remind future applicants that their analysis should address compatibility with both gateways and user terminals.

Our assessment

- 3.11 We agree with Amazon Leo’s view that the evidence provided by NGSO gateway applicants should address compatibility with both gateways and user terminals.⁴
- 3.12 Therefore, while Amazon Leo did not object to granting the licences and was satisfied that coordination could be handled at an operator level, we decided to request that Starlink provide coexistence analysis on the impact of Starlink’s proposed gateways on Amazon’s user terminals, which will also use the Ka band. The additional analysis provided by Starlink in response to this request is published alongside this statement.

⁴ This is consistent with our NGSO Guidance (see paragraph 2.16) which says that evidence should be provided for co-frequency NGSO *systems* that are licensed in the UK.

- 3.13 Having taken account of Amazon Leo's response and the additional information provided by Starlink, we are satisfied that Starlink's proposed gateways should be capable of coexisting with licensed NGSO systems and gateway earth stations in the Ka band in the UK.

Coexistence with future NGSO systems

- 3.14 Our process for considering NGSO gateway licence applications recognises that it is not possible for an applicant to know the future plans of other operators. An applicant's proposed approach to coexistence cannot therefore be detailed and specific at this stage.
- 3.15 In summary, we request applicants to set out clear principles for appropriately mitigating interference issues, to demonstrate that their system has the flexibility to accommodate new entrants, if required. This will ensure they can meet the terms of their licence if and when additional NGSO operators apply to operate services in the UK. We therefore require applicants to:
- explain how their existing network design and operating model might facilitate coexistence with future NGSO systems, as well as any limitations;
 - outline any additional measures for improving coexistence with future NGSO systems; and
 - take reasonable measures to accommodate future NGSO systems, in order to avoid material degradation to services in the UK.
- 3.16 Starlink stated in its NGSO licence application that it will coordinate with any future system via operator-to-operator coordination, for efficient spectrum use. Its application noted that this methodology has been successfully implemented across global markets. In addition, Starlink stated that its technical approach supports effective industry coexistence through proven interference mitigation technologies including:
- Directional antennas
 - Narrow beam widths
 - Steerable satellite beams
 - Dynamic spectrum management
 - Low profile installations
- 3.17 Starlink also said that its NGSO system design incorporates flexibility and risk mitigation measures through multiple redundancy layers and adaptive capabilities that maintain service quality in various interference scenarios. It said that, combined with established practices, these gateways present minimal interference risk whilst delivering clear consumer benefits.
- 3.18 Our initial view, based on the information submitted by Starlink in its NGSO gateway application, was that the proposed coordination approach should be sufficient to enable coexistence with future NGSO systems, including gateways and user terminals. This view was supported by the fact that the proposed gateways are similar in design to gateways already in operation. We therefore considered it likely that the gateways at the two requested sites will be capable of coexisting with future NGSO entrants.
- 3.19 We asked the following question to gather input from stakeholders:

Consultation question 2

Are the measures set out by the applicant to enable coexistence with future NGSO systems reasonable?

Consultation responses

- 3.20 Amazon Leo submitted a combined response to consultation questions 1 and 2, and its comments have been summarised in our assessment of question 1 above. We did not receive any other responses to this question.

Our assessment

- 3.21 We continue to consider that the techniques described by Starlink in its application for flexibly accommodating new entrants should be sufficient to ensure its NGSO gateways will be capable of coexisting with future NGSO systems (including gateways and user terminals).

Conclusion on NGSO coexistence

- 3.22 Overall, we are satisfied that Starlink has provided sufficient evidence that the proposed gateways at Mulberry Wharf and Harlow should be capable of coexisting with existing and future NGSO licensees, and that granting these additional NGSO gateway licences is unlikely to degrade consumer services.

4. Assessing the impact on competition

- 4.1 Our NGSO licensing process explains that our starting position for assessing competition is to authorise applications where possible. This reflects:
- a) the extent of the likely risks to competition which are directly related to our gateway authorisations, and
 - b) our view that, the benefits of enabling systems are typically timely and relatively certain whereas the NGSO industry is still emerging and how competition will develop is currently uncertain.

Risks to competition

What we said in the consultation

- 4.2 In the consultation, we identified six hypothetical risks to competition that could be relevant to our assessment of Starlink's NGSO licence application for two NGSO gateway licences. These concerns relate to scarcity, i.e. the availability of gateway sites to future applicants, risks to coexistence with other NGSO operators, and Starlink's vertical integration affecting competition in the supply of satellite broadband to UK customers.
- 4.3 If any of the risks above were credible, approving the licences could lead to weakened competition and worse outcomes for consumers, such as higher prices or lower quality of services. The six hypothetical risks we identified in the consultation were:
- **Hypothetical risk 1:** Occupying all or most of the available NGSO gateway sites, or occupying preferential sites, giving Starlink an unassailable competitive advantage.
 - **Hypothetical risk 2:** Requiring large separation distances between its NGSO gateway(s) and gateways or user terminals of other operators, thereby sterilising areas for existing and future rivals.
 - **Hypothetical risk 3:** Applying for NGSO gateway licences at sites which it does not plan to develop to deliberately block future entrants.
 - **Hypothetical risk 4:** Gateways creating harmful interference into existing NGSO gateways and/or user terminals, resulting in weakened competition and worse outcomes for consumers.
 - **Hypothetical risk 5:** Gateways being unable to coexist with future NGSO systems, creating a barrier to entry and in turn restricting competition.
 - **Hypothetical risk 6:** Starlink's vertical integration affecting competition in the supply of satellite broadband to UK customers given its parent company's (SpaceX) involvement in satellite launch services.
- 4.4 In the consultation, we set out our initial view on these six potential risks. We concluded that those risks were unlikely to materialise for the reasons set out below:
- **Hypothetical risk 1:** we noted that the applied-for sites were located in densely built-up urban areas, which could in theory raise scarcity concerns if there are challenges in securing alternative gateway sites. We also noted that the applied-for Mulberry Wharf site was close to the Telehouse West data centre – a major UK interconnection hub,

hosting the London Internet Exchange (LINX) and a large concentration of carriers, internet exchange points (IXPs) and content distribution networks. We said that, in theory, locating a gateway site near a major data centre can enhance an operator's quality of service, including throughput and resilience to congestion. For this to be a competition concern, it would need to be true that gateway sites in and around the Telehouse West data centre give Starlink an unassailable competitive advantage.

Our preliminary view was that this condition is not true for this licence application. First, while there are benefits to a satellite operator from proximity to a data centre, it is not clear that the benefits to Starlink of being located close to the Telehouse West are so significant that other satellite operators without this access could not compete. Second, even if proximity to Telehouse West conveyed significant benefits to Starlink, our preliminary view was that there are other data centres located in/around London which rivals can locate close to and achieve comparable benefits as those derived from proximity to Telehouse West.⁵ We noted also that there were other data centre providers across the UK. Our preliminary view was that hypothetical risk 1 is unlikely to materialise.

- **Hypothetical risk 2:** Starlink suggested in its application that it does not require any specific geographic separation between its gateway earth stations and those of other co-frequency systems. Starlink also submitted that its coexistence analysis indicated that, even when Starlink's gateway is co-located with another operator's gateway, existing licensees' decreased availability and reduction in throughput would be modest. Our preliminary view was that hypothetical risk 2 is therefore unlikely to materialise.
- **Hypothetical risk 3:** We said that the incentive to engage in strategic behaviour by any operator is diminished by the uncertainty about how this market will develop (which makes any profits from attempting to foreclose rivals less predictable) and Ofcom's requirement for gateway licensees to commence and maintain transmissions within 12 months of being granted a licence. We said that the ability to engage in such behaviour is also dependent on rival operators not having the option of alternative gateway sites (including potentially in other countries). Since this assessment relates to Starlink's application for only two additional gateway sites, our preliminary view was that hypothetical risk 3 is unlikely to materialise.
- **Hypothetical risk 4:** We noted that Starlink has reached coordination agreements with multiple NGSO operators and our preliminary view was that it is capable of coexisting with other co-frequency NGSO systems and gateway earth stations. Our preliminary view was that hypothetical risk 4 is unlikely to materialise.
- **Hypothetical risk 5:** We said that the techniques for flexibly accommodating new entrants described in Starlink's application should be sufficient to ensure its NGSO gateway would be capable of coexisting with future NGSO systems (including gateways and user terminals). Our preliminary view was that hypothetical risk 5 is unlikely to materialise.

⁵ For example, Equinix LD8 and Digital Realty (Interxion) LHR19 and LHR20, located in London Docklands, Equinix data centres located in Slough, Digital Realty (Interxion) Hanbury Street Campus, located in the City of London, all have IXP and CDN services onsite, as well as options for cloud connectivity.

- **Hypothetical risk 6:** We said that the additional incentive from a larger presence in the UK is likely to be small when compared against the potential ‘cost’ of input foreclosure, i.e. the loss of global sales of satellite launches to its downstream rivals. Our preliminary view was that hypothetical risk 6 is unlikely to materialise.
- 4.5 Overall, our initial assessment was that Starlink’s application for two gateway sites at Mulberry Wharf and Harlow poses a low competition risk.
- 4.6 We asked stakeholders the following question in the Starlink consultation:

Consultation question 3

Do you expect that granting these two NGSO gateway licences in the proposed locations would harm or benefit competition? If so, please explain why and where possible provide evidence to substantiate your submission.

Consultation responses and our assessment

- 4.7 We did not receive any responses to our consultation on hypothetical risks 1, 2, 3 and 6. Therefore, our view on those risks is unchanged.
- 4.8 Amazon Leo provided views on coexistence between current and future NGSO systems. As discussed at 3.8-3.10, Amazon Leo did not object to Ofcom approving these gateway licences. It was of the view that coordination in this instance could be handled effectively at the operator-to-operator level between Starlink and Amazon Leo. Its response is relevant to our competition assessment as it covers hypothetical risks 4 and 5 (coexistence with existing and future NGSO systems) and is summarised in the previous section. Starlink also provided additional coexistence analysis on the impact of Starlink’s proposed gateways on Amazon’s user terminals. We assess that Starlink should be able to coexist with other co-frequency gateways and user terminals. As Starlink set out in its application, it has reached coordination agreements with several NGSO licensees and we continue to encourage all parties to cooperate where this is not the case.
- 4.9 In addition, we have not identified a risk of monopolisation arising from the proposed gateway sites. While gateway sites are subject to coordination requirements, the underlying spectrum resource is reusable, and there remains access to suitable alternative gateway locations (addressed in hypothetical risk 1). As a result, we consider that rival operators remain able to establish and expand their services.

Benefits

What we said in the consultation

- 4.10 In its application, Starlink stated that the two gateway sites would help it to meet demand, contribute to network resilience including in diverse weather conditions, improve its backhaul capacity, and have a positive impact on congestion. It stated this would translate into latency benefits that will be available to all UK consumers. This is described in more detail in the consultation.
- 4.11 Our preliminary view was that granting these gateway licences has the potential to deliver benefits to UK consumers and citizens, compared to the counterfactual of not granting these licences.

- 4.12 In addition, we said in the consultation that the expected benefits must be weighed against the risks. Specifically, we compared the application's potential benefits against the benefits from a hypothetical conservative counterfactual where the applied-for gateways are instead not located in proximity to Telehouse West. Our preliminary view was that the hypothetical application would also be able to generate some of the Starlink's stated benefits, i.e. promoting broadband access and choice and enabling network resilience. We accepted that there are likely to be some incremental benefits in terms of improved quality of experience from locating a gateway close to Telehouse West, which may not be fully replicable from instead applying for gateways located a significant distance further away.
- 4.13 Overall, our preliminary view was that granting these NGSO licences would create net benefits to UK consumers and citizens.
- 4.14 We asked stakeholders the following question in the Starlink consultation:

Consultation question 3

Do you expect that granting these two NGSO gateway licences in the proposed locations would harm or benefit competition? If so, please explain why and where possible provide evidence to substantiate your submission.

Consultation responses and our assessment

- 4.15 We did not receive any responses to our consultation on the benefits of granting this licence. Therefore, our view remains unchanged.

Conclusion on competition

- 4.16 Overall, our starting position for assessing competition is to authorise applications where possible. This reflects:
- a) the extent of the likely risks to competition which are directly related to our gateway authorisations, and
 - b) our view that, the benefits of enabling systems are typically timely and relatively certain whereas the NGSO industry is still emerging and how competition will develop is currently uncertain.
- 4.17 In this light, we consider that competition risks directly associated with Starlink's application for two gateway sites at Mulberry Wharf and Harlow are low and that granting these NGSO licences would create timely benefits to UK consumers and citizens.

5. Additional comments and impact assessments

Additional comments

- 5.1 We gave respondents the opportunity to offer any other comments they may have in relation to Starlink's NGSO licence application, and asked:

Consultation question 4

Do you have any additional concerns or comments regarding the application?

- 5.2 We did not receive any responses to this question.

Equality and Welsh language impact assessments

- 5.3 We also assessed the likely impacts and benefits of granting Starlink's NGSO gateway licences on persons sharing protected characteristics, and on the Welsh language, as set out in annex 1 of the Starlink consultation. We did not identify any adverse impacts on persons sharing protected characteristics that meant they are likely to be affected in a different way to the general population, nor did we consider that our proposals had any negative impact on our Welsh language obligations.

- 5.4 We also considered that our proposal to grant Starlink's NGSO gateway licences is likely to have positive impacts on households, businesses and other customers in the UK. This includes improving connectivity in more rural or remote areas of the UK, including such areas in Wales.

- 5.5 We asked stakeholders the following questions:

Consultation question 5

Do you agree with our assessment of the potential impact of our proposal on specific groups of persons?

Consultation question 6

Do you agree with our assessment of the potential impact of our proposal on the Welsh language?

Consultation responses

- 5.6 We did not receive any responses to these questions.

Our assessment

- 5.7 We remain of the view that granting these NGSO gateway licences will not have any adverse impact on persons sharing protected characteristics, reduce opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, nor does it treat the Welsh language any less favourably than the English Language. Our full reasoning is set out in annex 1 of this statement.

6. Our decision

How we decide whether to grant the NGSO gateway licences

- 6.1 Our [2021 NGSO statement](#) explains the considerations we would take into account when deciding whether to grant an NGSO licence:
- a) our technical coexistence checks;
 - b) our competition check;
 - c) our impact assessments⁶;
 - d) our statutory duties, as set out in section 3 of the Wireless Telegraphy Act 2006 and section 3 of the Communications Act 2003, with our principal duty being to further the interests of citizens and consumers in relation to communications matters, where appropriate by promoting competition;
 - e) our NGSO licensing objectives, including to enable citizen and consumer benefits arising from innovative satellite services, such as improved connectivity; and
 - f) any other available relevant evidence, including the application, consultation responses and any further information provided by the applicant.
- 6.2 In exercising our regulatory functions, we are also required to have regard to the desirability of promoting economic growth.⁷

Our decision and next steps

- 6.3 In light of the evidence presented in Starlink's NGSO licence application and additional information, and our careful consideration of potential coexistence and competition issues, impact assessments and consultation response, we have decided to grant Starlink the two NGSO gateway licences requested for sites at Harlow and Mulberry Wharf, London to connect to its NGSO system in the Ka band in the UK.
- 6.4 We will now proceed to issue Starlink its new NGSO gateway licences to operate in Ka band frequencies (27.5-28.0525 GHz, 28.4445-29.0605 GHz and 29.5-30 GHz), subject to payment of the licence fee. Copies of the NGSO gateway licences will also be made available under the "Existing licences" section of our [NGSO licensing webpage](#).
- 6.5 We remind stakeholders that, in line with our March 2026 [NGSO Licensing Review](#), we now no longer routinely consult on NGSO gateway applications and will only do so where we identify material coexistence or competition concerns. Any gateway licences that we grant will be published on our [NGSO licensing website](#). We encourage all applicants to review this page before applying for a new gateway site.

⁶ See annex 1 for full details of the impact assessments carried out.

⁷ Section 110(3) of the Deregulation Act 2015 requires us to have regard to the [Growth Duty: Statutory Guidance](#) (revised by the Government in May 2024).

A1. Impact assessments

Impact assessment

- A0.1 Section 7 of the Communications Act 2003 (the Act) requires us to carry out and publish an assessment of the likely impact of implementing a proposal which would be likely to have a significant impact on businesses or the general public, or when there is a major change in Ofcom's activities.
- A0.2 Impact assessments form part of good policy making and we therefore expect to carry them out in relation to a large majority of our proposals. We use impact assessments to help us understand and assess the potential impact of our policy decisions before we make them. They also help us explain the policy decisions we have decided to take and why we consider those decisions best fulfil our applicable duties and objectives in the least intrusive way. Our [impact assessment guidance](#) sets out our general approach to how we assess and present the impact of our proposed decisions and section 4 of our [2021 NGSO statement](#) sets out how we assess the impact of applications for NGSO gateway licences.
- A0.3 We have carefully considered the potential impact of granting two NGSO gateway licences to Starlink at Mulberry Wharf and Harlow throughout the consultation and decision process. We assessed the benefits of Starlink's application for the two NGSO gateway licences on citizens and consumers, as well as the risks posed to coexistence with other services and competition in sections 3 and 4 of the Starlink consultation. We set out our assessment and final decision in sections 3-6 of this statement, taking into account Starlink's NGSO licence application, the comments we received in response to the Starlink consultation, and the further information from Starlink.
- A0.4 For the reasons given in sections 3 and 4 of this document, our overall view is that the expected benefits of granting these gateway licences are likely to outweigh the costs and risks.
- A0.5 In particular, we have concluded that our decision to grant the NGSO gateway licences creates timely benefits to UK consumers and citizens, and that competition risks directly associated with Starlink's application are low. In addition, we consider that Starlink is unlikely to cause harmful interference to other services in the frequencies it intends to use. Further, our NGSO licence conditions require licensees to cooperate with each other so they can coexist, and we are able to use our enforcement powers to remedy any issues that may arise.

Equality impact assessment

- A0.6 We have given careful consideration to whether our decision will have a particular impact on persons sharing protected characteristics (broadly including race, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, and religion or belief in the UK, and also dependents and political opinion in Northern Ireland), and in particular if they may discriminate against such persons or impact on equality of opportunity or good relations. This assessment helps us comply with our duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

- A0.7 When thinking about equality we think more broadly than persons that share protected characteristics identified in equalities legislation and think about potential impacts on various groups of persons (see paragraph 4.7 of our [impact assessment guidance](#)).
- A0.8 In particular, section 3(4) of the Act requires us to have regard to the needs and interests of specific groups of persons when performing our duties, as appear to us to be relevant in the circumstances. These include:
- the vulnerability of children and of others whose circumstances appear to us to put them in need of special protection;
 - the needs of persons with disabilities, older persons and persons on low incomes; and
 - the different interests of persons in the different parts of the UK, of the different ethnic communities within the UK and of persons living in rural and in urban areas.
- A0.9 We also examine the potential impact our policy is likely to have on people, depending on their personal circumstances. This assists us in making sure that we are meeting our principal duty of furthering the interests of citizens and consumers, regardless of their background and identity.
- A0.10 According to [Connected Nations 2025](#), Starlink is already providing satellite broadband services to over 110k customers in the UK. We have assessed the impacts and benefits of granting Starlink’s additional NGSO gateway licences on specific groups of persons, including those sharing protected characteristics.
- A0.11 Taking account of the stakeholder response we received (and noting that we did not receive any comments on question 5 on the impact of our proposal on specific groups of persons) we can confirm our view set out in the Starlink consultation that our decision to grant Starlink these NGSO gateway licences is likely to have positive impacts on households, businesses and other customers in the UK. This includes by expanding coverage, availability and resilience of Starlink’s network, and quality of experience for consumers. These positive impacts include improving connectivity in more rural and remote areas of the UK.
- A0.12 We have not identified any adverse impacts on specific groups of persons, including those sharing protected characteristics, that are likely to be affected in a different way to the general population through the granting of these NGSO gateway licences.

Welsh language impact assessment

- A0.13 We are required to take Welsh language considerations into account when formulating, reviewing, or revising policies which are relevant to Wales (including proposals which are not targeted at Wales specifically but are of interest across the UK).⁸
- A0.14 Where the Welsh Language Standards are engaged, we consider the potential impact of a policy proposal on (i) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language; and (ii) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language. We also consider how a proposal could be formulated to have or to increase, a positive impact, or not to have or to decrease any adverse effects.

⁸ See Standards 84-89 of [Hysbysiad cydymffurfio](#) (in Welsh) and [compliance notice](#) (in English). Section 7 of the Welsh Language Commissioner’s [Good Practice Advice Document](#) provides further advice and information on how bodies must comply with the Welsh Language Standards.

- A0.15 We consider our decision to grant Starlink two NGSO gateway licences will not have any negative impacts on our Welsh language obligations, as it relates to a nationwide licensing regime and the relevant licence products are available for anyone within the UK to apply.
- A0.16 We note that our current practice is to produce spectrum licences in Welsh when requested, in accordance with our obligations set by the Welsh Language Commissioner. We will continue to take this approach in relation to NGSO licences.