

Scaling sovereign edge AI cloud across the UK with Cornerstone and StonesThro

How Neos Networks and Cornerstone are helping StonesThro bring distributed AI compute closer to UK users

As AI becomes embedded in everyday devices and services, compute needs to move closer to the end user. From smart glasses to autonomous vehicles, real-time services need local infrastructure to reduce latency, rather than relying on centralised data centres alone.

Beyond latency, data sovereignty also matters. Critical National Infrastructure (CNI) providers and businesses handling sensitive data need local, UK-based infrastructure to meet compliance requirements.

Pioneering UK microscaler **StonesThro** is building it. Working with **Cornerstone**, the UK's leading mobile infrastructure services provider, StonesThro is deploying sovereign edge AI cloud nodes at Cornerstone sites across the UK.

To connect those edge sites, StonesThro needed secure, resilient connectivity nationwide. Neos Networks, a trusted CNI provider with the UK's largest B2B-only network, was well placed to deliver it.

The challenge

Real-time AI and 5G services too often face a bottleneck: data travels fast to the mobile mast, only to slow as it travels over the internet back to the data centre. "It's a bit like taking a motorway to the nearest town, then hitting a busy A road," said StonesThro CISO Andy Bates.

"We're moving the data centre as close as we can to the user to enhance user experience," Bates said. That involves building sovereign edge AI cloud nodes nationwide using Cornerstone's 16,500-site mobile infrastructure footprint.

To connect those dispersed nodes, StonesThro needed resilient connectivity it could count on, with:

- UK-wide reach across urban and regional locations
- High capacity, low latency to the edge
- High availability for critical workloads
- UK-based infrastructure for sovereign cloud services
- Scalability to support rapid growth and evolving requirements

The solution

StonesThro chose Neos Networks [Dedicated Internet Access \(DIA\)](#) for the initial rollout. Why Neos DIA?

First, reach and resilience. Built on the UK's largest B2B-only network, Neos DIA provides national reach and diverse routing, supported by multiple global Tier 1 ISPs and third-party access tails.

Second, scalability. DIA, combined with Neos's wider connectivity portfolio, gives StonesThro what Bates described as "ultimate flexibility".

"With SD-WAN and encryption technology, we can overlay virtual networks on top of DIA and be super flexible. As we build out more sites, we may switch to direct Ethernet, Dark Fibre, etc, all of which Neos can deliver for us," he said.

Finally, Project Reach was a key factor in the decision to select Neos as a vendor. The landmark partnership between Neos Networks and Network Rail to deliver new high-performance fibre along key UK railway routes will create new optimised rail-aligned paths. For StonesThro, that's a unique opportunity for future expansion – access to a critical sector where sovereign, low latency edge cloud could be vital.

The outcome

For the initial rollout, StonesThro chose three key sites across England. The platform is already supporting growing workloads, including applications where sovereign infrastructure is critical.

Next, StonesThro plans to expand its edge AI cloud across the UK. Organisations across sectors could benefit from the platform, from UK manufacturers and software providers to local authorities.

And the impact goes beyond compute. By moving workloads closer to where electricity is generated, this new edge model can reduce reliance on long-distance power transmission, a major challenge for the national grid as AI scales.

As AI shifts from training to production, inference is becoming the dominant workload. AI of the future will depend on the edge.

Together with Neos Networks and Cornerstone, StonesThro is helping to build a more sustainable, sovereign edge cloud for the UK's AI future.

"Working with Neos Networks and Cornerstone allows us to develop and scale sovereign edge AI infrastructure with national reach. Their position as the UK's largest B2B connectivity provider, alongside their access to the rail network through Project Reach, makes them the ideal collaborator to help us deliver a local solution for local people."

Andy Bates, CISO, StonesThro



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About us

Neos Networks has the UK's largest business-dedicated network. With over 600 points of presence and 90 data centres nationwide, Neos provides high capacity critical connectivity for businesses, from telecoms and energy to banking and emergency services.

Agile and customer-focused with almost limitless scale, Neos enables emerging technologies like AI, 5G and IoT, making connectivity work for Britain.