

Officer's Report

Application Number	HGY/2022/4031
Type	Prior notification: Development by telecoms operators
Location	Highways Land, Linkway, Harringay, London, N4 1QF
Proposal	Installation of communications mast, antennas and ground-based apparatus
Case Officer	Kwaku Bossman-Gyamera
Valid Date	11/11/2022
Applicant	CK Hutchison Networks (UK) Limited
Agent	Ms Esther Valencia

RECOMMENDATION

Refuse

2. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION

PRIOR APPROVAL IS REQUIRED AND REFUSED

3. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND LOCATION DETAILS

Proposed development

3.1 This is a prior notification application for the installation of a mono pole mast with antennae and for the installation of three ancillary cabinets. The overall height of the mast/pole with antennae/apertures would be 20m high. The footprint of the mast would measure 0.7m in depth by 1.8m wide and is akin to the provision of extra cabinet at the base level. The monopole would be a steel structure and headframe with a grey finish. The antennae/apertures would be made of composite materials and electrical components.

3.2 The largest of the ancillary cabinets would measure 1.9 wide by 0.7m depth by 1.7m high. The second which contains the mast measures 0.6m wide, 0.6m in depth and 1.5m in height. The smallest of the ancillary cabinets would measure 0.5m depth by 0.5m wide 1.3m high respectively. The cabinets would be constructed of steel and would have a green finish. They would contain doors which would open towards onto the pavement and would be set upon a new concrete base.

Site and Surroundings

3.3 The application site is located on pavement adjacent to green verge along Linkway, close to its junction with Eade Road. Directly outside an existing residential dwelling and close to the boundary with a site for new residential development currently under construction.

3.4 The application site is not located within any Conservation Area. It does not fall within the curtilage of a listed building.

Relevant Planning and Enforcement history

3.5 There is no planning/enforcement history in relation to the site.

4. CONSULTATION RESPONSE

4.1 The responses below were received following consultation on the application:

Internal:

1) LBH Transportation Team: we generally recommend that the telecom mast and cabinets should be located at the back of footway to reduce the impacts for footway users

5 MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Principle of development

5.2 The proposal is permitted development under Class A, Part 16 of the General Permitted Development Order (as amended) and does not therefore require planning permission.

5.3 The 56-day notification procedure requires the Local Planning Authority to determine (a) whether prior approval of the siting and appearance of the proposed development is required and, if so, (b) to notify the applicant giving or refusing such approval. Therefore, the principal issues in this case are considered to be:

- 1) Whether prior approval of siting and appearance is required; and, if so
- 2) Whether the details of the siting and appearance are acceptable, having regards to the relevant development plan policies and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) relate to the installation of telecommunications equipment.

5.4 Within the general policy framework of facilitating the growth of new and existing telecommunications systems, Paragraphs 113 of NPPF advises that the use of existing masts, buildings and other structure for new electronic communications capability (including wireless) should be encouraged. Where new sites are required for installation - the need for a new site should be justified and equipment should be sympathetically designed and camouflaged where appropriate.

Siting and appearance

5.5 In relation to Telecommunications Equipment Policy DM3(d) sets out that proposals for the installation of telecommunications equipment will be permitted where:

- a. It is demonstrated the equipment is limited to the minimum operational equipment, which should include any future-proofing requirements to accommodate anticipated improvements in infrastructure;
- b. Opportunities for sharing facilities, such as masts, cabinet boxes and satellite dishes, and erecting antennae on existing buildings or other structures has been fully explored and taken advantage of;
- c. There is no significant adverse impact on the visual amenity of neighbouring occupiers;
- d. There is no adverse effect on the external appearance of the building, street scene, or spaces in which they are located;
- e. The size of any equipment visible from the street is minimised (including satellite dishes, other domestic equipment and any supporting structures);

- f. They are located discretely and do not detract from the special character and appearance of heritage assets or conservation area (see Policy DM9);
- g. They are appropriately designed, coloured and landscaped. For dishes, this may include installing a mesh or transparent structure;
- h. A minimum residual footway width on main pedestrian roads is preserved, in line with the Manual for Streets.”

5.6 The applicant has set out in their supporting statement that full consideration has been given to alternative sites and other existing masts in the vicinity. However, the proposed location and design are considered to provide the optimum solution in this instance, the new sites will enhance the coverage of the 5G technologies providing enhanced coverage to the public and surrounding area.

5.7 The application site is an area of pavement adjacent to small green verge along Linkway. There are street lighting are features within the immediate site. In addition to existing residential dwelling opposite and new residential development under construction located immediately to the proposed installation. The proposed installation will be within 2m of the boundary to this new residential block of flats.

5.8 The surrounding area is wholly residential in character with commercial and industrial units to the north-east of the application site. The proposed mast would be in a prominent position and directly in front of existing and new residential flats elevation which can be seen from all parts of the surrounding street and would therefore dominate the local character and appearance of the streetscape. Given the location of the mast on a prominent position and its height, the proposed mast would appear considerably higher than other existing street furniture's within the immediate surroundings and would appear as an incongruous feature in the street scene.

5.9 The application site is fairly exposed and is therefore highly visible when viewed from habitable room's windows of the existing residential dwellings and potential new residential development adjacent and the immediate street scene, as well as the surrounding area. The proposed 20m high telecommunications mast would appear as a prominent feature on this section of Linkway and Eade Road would have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the street scene. In addition, due to the open nature and high visibility of the site, the proposed telecommunications installation would appear as an incongruous addition on the edge of the Highway, and as such it will visually dominate the space and the equipment will introduce urban clutter to an otherwise attractive public footpath.

5.10 The 20m high monopole would rise way above the roof lines of the nearby housing stock along Linkway and way above the canopies of street trees along Eade Road. Additionally, any visual mitigation offered by nearby vegetation will be significantly reduced once trees have dropped their leaves in winter. No attempt is considered to have been made to conceal the structure in any meaningful way and the structure would be visible from a wide area. Due to its height, shape and position, the monopole would dominate the vertical emphasis in the particular spot, the adjacent street furniture would do little to soften the impact when viewed at some distance along Link way or close up.

5.11 The 20-metre monopole would be the highest structure in this area and would dominate the foreground amongst street furniture and trees. This would intrude on the visual quality of the area. It would also be visible for several residents in surrounding roads and would be an incongruous and overly dominant structure, which would completely alter the character of the area in a way that it would be abruptly noticeable and harmful. In this instance, it is considered that the public benefits of the proposal do not outweigh the harm identified.

5.12 The height of the mast at 20m makes it readily visible and overbearing from residential windows of the surrounding properties. This provides for visual intrusiveness since, the proposed mast and its appendages are most dominant and disharmonious focal point for distraction from the residential properties contrary to the thrust of the council's adopted policy DM3 of the Development Management DPD.

5.13 Along with the mast the proposal includes the installation of three cabinets. The cabinets would be positioned against back of the highway. It would reduce the width of the pavement. However, officers consider that even the narrower width of pavement available would still allow users to pass one another including those pushing a baby buggy or groups of people walking along the pavement. The proposed installations would add additional clutter, and as it has no real design merit, would be detrimental to the appearance of the street and the pavement.

5.14 It is considered that the proposed installation would have an unacceptable visual impact on the street scene. Its excessive height, bulk and design in this location would be clearly visible and the mast would appear as an incongruous addition within the surrounding area. Alternative, site should be thoroughly investigated before a street works installation of this scale proposed in this location can be considered.

5.15 Whilst the benefits of providing improved infrastructure for the telecommunications network have been taken into account and acknowledged, they are not considered to outweigh the visual harm that of this proposal would cause to the character and appearance of the area, residents of the new development and the street scene. Given all the above, the proposal would significantly harm the character and appearance of the area and is contrary to relevant policies the Local Plan (2017) and advice contained in the NPPF.

Conclusion

5.16 The proposal development is considered unacceptable, by reason of its siting, appearance, size, scale and prominent location, to be visually intrusive to the new residential development adjacent, resulting in an incongruous and obtrusive form of development, adding to street clutter and harming the street-scene and visual amenity. The proposal would therefore be contrary to adopted Policies DM1 and DM3 of the Development Management, Development Plan Document (2017), and Policy SP11 of the Haringey Local Plan (2017) and as such prior approval is required and refused.

6. RECOMMENDATION

PRIOR APPROVAL IS REQUIRED AND REFUSED

Refusal Reasons:

The proposal development is considered unacceptable, by reason of its siting, appearance, size, scale and prominent location, to be visually intrusive to the new residential development adjacent, resulting in an incongruous and obtrusive form of development, adding to street clutter and harming the street-scene and visual amenity. The proposal would therefore be contrary to adopted Policies DM1 and DM3 of the Development Management, Development Plan Document (2017), and Policy SP11 of the Haringey Local Plan (2017) and as such prior approval is required and refused.