

Officer Report

Application Number:	HGY/2023/1459
Application Type:	Prior notification: Development by telecoms operators
Address:	Pavement opposite 520 King Street, Tottenham, Haringey, London, N17 8NN
Proposal:	The installation of a 15m high slim-line monopole, supporting 6 no. antennas, 3 no. equipment cabinets and ancillary development thereto. Prior Notification by Telecom Operator)
Case Officer:	Kwaku Bossman-Gyamera
Valid Date:	01/06/2023
Applicant:	3
Agent:	NA Mr Alan Osborne

RECOMMENDATION

Refuse

REPORT FOR CONSIDERATION UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

1. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION

PRIOR APPROVAL IS REQUIRED AND REFUSED

2. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND LOCATION DETAILS

Proposed development

2.1 This is a prior notification application for the installation of a monopole mast with antennae and for the installation of three ancillary cabinets. The overall height of the mast with antennae/apertures would be 15m high and is akin to the provision of extra cabinets 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.

2.2 The cabinets would be constructed of steel and would have a green finish. They would contain doors which would open towards onto the public footpath and would be set upon a new concrete base.

Site and Surroundings

2.3 The application site is located on the footpath (pavement) immediately adjacent to the boundary fence to Lancasterian Primary School, on King Street close to the junction with Church

Road directly opposite the railway Viaduct. The application site is surrounded by mixture of adjacent school, residential properties and commercial units within the railway viaduct arches. Residential properties are located along King Road and Church Road.

2.4 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

2.5 There is no relevant recent planning history in relation to the site.

3. CONSULTATION RESPONSE

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

Internal:

1) LBH Transportation Team: There are no Transport objections to this application.

4. LOCAL REPRESENTATIONS

4.1 The application has been publicised by way of 117 letters. The number of representations received from neighbours, local groups, in response to notification and publicity of the application were as follows:

No of individual responses: 6

Objecting: 6

Supporting: 0

4.2 The following issues were raised in representations that are material to the determination of the application and are summarised and addressed in the next section of this report:

Objections

- My objection stems from the fact that, as the head teacher of Lancasterian Primary School, I am surprised and disappointed that there has not been more consultation with the us about this. I am aware of the health and safety concerns that parents/carers and staff may have about a new mast being placed so close to the school and would have welcomed direct discussions. I am keen to engage directly with you if this is still a possibility, and the school would be happy to host meetings between yourselves and the local community to address issues and concerns.
- This is completely unnecessary and very inconsiderate that you are planning this to be installed less than 15 feet from a primary and nursery school, the last thing we need in this area is higher levels of radiation.
- Objects to the proposal on the grounds that they do not want a new telecom antenna near my home, there is already an operator antenna on Tottenham High Road close to the planned installation. I have health concerns about the effects of the radio waves from the proposed development. I object this development.
- The residents of the surrounding area have not been properly informed of this matter, nor has the school. Have children who attend this school and do not want them exposed to unnecessary radiation. Surely the staff and parents of the children that attend both Lancasterian and the Vale would not want this mast either.

- Strongly object. There has been a lack of consultation with the local area and school. Unthinkable to even consider erecting a mast so close to a school playground.

4.3 The following issues raised are not material planning considerations:

- Health implication (Officer Comment:) The application was accompanied by the required ICNIRP Certificate, which satisfied the requirements as laid down by the NPPF. Health considerations and public concern, including perceived fear of health risks can in principle be considerations in determining applications for planning permission. However, it is for the decision maker (generally the local planning authority) to determine the weight to be afforded to such considerations in any particular case. In the Government's view, if the development meets the ICNIRP guideline for public exposure, it should not be necessary for a local planning authority, in processing planning application, to further consider health aspects and concerns. The applicant, in this case, has confirmed that the proposed installation would comply with the relevant ICNIRP guidelines, and a Certificate has been provided to this affect.

5. MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Principle of development

6.1 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.

6.2 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.

6.3 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

6.4 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.”

6.5 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. Other factors that have influenced the site selection process include - this is location, existing mast sites area not capable of supporting additional equipment compliment to extend coverage reach across the target area and prospective in-fill mast sites are extremely limited.

6.6 Proposal located on public footpath behind the school fence with playground at the edge of the Lancasterian Primary School. The area is predominantly residential, comprised primary of two storey buildings. Due to its position and trees, the area has an open, spacious and verdant character. The open space therefore contributes positively to the character of the area. The installation of 15m high mast with associated ancillary equipment, including ground level cabinets. While The Local Planning Authority appreciate the proposed mast must be taller than other objects in the vicinity in order to operate efficiently, the large size and utilitarian appearance of the proposed equipment would appear out of scale and overly prominent within its immediate residential setting.

6.7 The surrounding area is mainly residential in character and the proposed mast would be in a prominent position, which can be seen from all parts of the surrounding properties and would therefore dominate the streetscape. The mast due to its height, bulk of its upper section and position in adjoining to the school fence will clearly incongruously dominate the appearance of these features to the detriment of the character and appearance of the area.

6.8 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. The proposed siting of the mast against the open back drop and green edge of the park means that it would appear unduly prominent on the skyline, affecting views into and out of the park and harming primary school setting.

6.9 The trees on the shared boundary would offer some screening and natural backdrop and would be coloured green in an attempt to camouflage the mast where possible. However, this would likely depend on the time of year and would not sufficiently reduce the visual impact of the mast given its size. Additionally, any visual mitigation offered by nearby vegetation will be significantly reduced once trees have dropped their leaves in winter.

6.10 The mast would be clearly seen against the skyline and would represent an intrusive and unduly prominent feature. With such a setting, it is considered that the mast would appear unsympathetic and intrusive to character of the area, notwithstanding its relatively slim appearance. The proposed mast would have a height of 15 metres and would be clearly visible amongst and above nearby trees. It would appear particularly stark in winter when the nearby deciduous trees are bare of leaves. As such it would appear unduly prominent and out of place in this location.

6.11 Proposal would rise above the height of the trees in views from all angles and approach looking towards the site from all the surrounding roads. From these directions, the mast would stand out as a visible or discordant feature. The proposal would result as an isolated and uncharacteristically high feature that fails to blend into the landscape or street scene.

6.12 The proposed mast would appear considerably higher than existing lampposts and would appear as a utilitarian and incongruous feature within the open space. The proposed siting and design of the cabinets, which would expand the area, over which they are placed, is considered to add undue clutter to the street and harm the visual character of the area. The proposed mast and associated cabinets would be located at edge of the footway along King Street used by many parents during school hours. The proposed location on the footway would retain a clear pavement width sufficient to allow for the free movement of pedestrians. However, the area in which the proposed installation would be situated is incredibly open, with a street furniture (lamp post). The proposed installations would add additional clutter, and as it has no real design merit, would be detrimental to the appearance of the street scene and the pavement.

6.13 Overall, 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.

6.14 In the supporting documents, the applicant has listed 6 other discounted locations. The application fails to demonstrate that a range of sites were considered. All the proposed locations are on the highway, other buildings within the immediate adjoining site were not considered and other land outside of the highway, therefore the Council do not consider that full and proper assessment of all potential sites has been made. Alternatively, site should be thoroughly investigated before a street works installation of this scale proposed in this location can be considered.

6.15 Whilst the operational need for the mast is noted, this need is considered to be outweighed by the visual harm of the mast particularly when alternative options and mast sharing have not been considered. The application has outlined alternative sites that were considered but discounted for a variety of reasons. While Local Planning Authority (LPA) have some background on these sites, there is little substantive information in this regard. This is especially pertinent as to whether alternative locations would be as prominent or harmful. There are several nearby buildings within the vicinity of the site where these installations can easily be accommodated. The Framework states that applications for electronic communications development should be supported by the necessary evidence to justify the proposed development. In this case, such evidence is lacking as it pertains to alternative sites.

6.16 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 conservation area, residents of the surrounding residential properties and the wider community. Given all the above, the proposal would significantly harm the character and appearance of the conservation area and is contrary to relevant policies in the Local Plan (2017) and advice contained in the NPPF.

7.0 Conclusion

7.1 The proposed development, by reason of its siting, appearance, size and prominent location, would be visually intrusive, resulting in an incongruous and obtrusive form of development, adding to clutter on the open area and would be visible from long views of the site, appear out of keeping with the character of the surrounding street scene and would have a detrimental impact on local visual amenity and on the character and appearance of the wider area. 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 Policy SI 6 of the adopted London Plan 2021 and as such prior approval is required and refused.

8. RECOMMENDATION

PRIOR APPROVAL IS REQUIRED AND REFUSED

Refusal Reasons:

The proposed development, by reason of its siting, appearance, size and prominent location, would be visually intrusive, resulting in an incongruous and obtrusive form of development, adding to clutter on the open area and would be visible from long views of the site, appear out of keeping with the character of the surrounding street scene and would have a detrimental impact on local visual amenity and on the character and appearance of the wider area. 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 Policy SI 6 of the adopted London Plan 2021 and as such prior approval is required and refused.