



Officer Report

Application Number:	HGY/2023/2228
Application Type:	Full planning permission
Address:	64 High Road, Wood Green, London, N22 6DH
Proposal:	Installation of a free-standing communication hub with LCD advertisement display and defibrillator unit.
Case Officer:	Eunice Huang
Valid Date:	16/08/2023
Applicant:	Mr Nathan STILL
Agent:	Mr Martin Stephens

RECOMMENDATION

Refuse

1. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION

REFUSE PERMISSION

2. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND LOCATION DETAILS

Proposed Development

2.1 This is an application for the installation of a free-standing communication hub with LCD advertisement display and defibrillator unit.

Site and Surroundings

2.2 The application site is an area of the footway on the north-eastern side of High Road, Wood Green, outside No. 64 (Betfred), close to the junction of the High Road with Dovecote Avenue; and the junction of the High Road with Brompton Park Road. A street bin is located adjacent to the site to the north-west. Two street trees and parking bays are located further north-west of the site. The site is within the Wood Green Metropolitan Town Centre and the surroundings are generally commercial in character, being made up of a mixture of shopping frontages, with residential flats present on the upper levels. The site is not within a Conservation Area nor within the vicinity of a listed building.

Relevant Planning and Enforcement History

2.3 There is no relevant planning and enforcement history relating to the site.

3. CONSULTATION RESPONSES

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

1) LBH Transport: Object to the application. The proposal will increase clutter on-street and adversely impact pedestrian amenity. There are other existing communication hubs and bus shelters with digital displays in proximity to current proposal. The communication hub is also in proximity of a pedestrian crossing, and has the potential to distract road users (vehicle driver, cyclists, and pedestrians, etc.) that would increase the risk of accidents and adversely impact highway safety.

4. LOCAL REPRESENTATIONS

4.1 No representations received from neighbours, local groups, etc in response to notification of the application.

5. MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 The main planning considerations raised by the proposed development are:

1. Design and appearance;
2. Transport and highways; and
3. Other considerations.

Design and appearance

5.2 Local Plan Policy SP11 outlines that all development should enhance and enrich Haringey's built environment. Proposals should respect local context, character and historic significance, in order to contribute to the creation and enhancement of Haringey's sense of place. Policy DM1 of the Development Management DPD requires developments to be of the highest standard of design, which contribute to the distinctive character and amenity of the local area. London Plan Policy D8 sets out that the public realm should be well-designed, attractive and well-related to local/historic context. Policy D8 specifically seeks to reduce and remove street clutter, including street furniture that is poorly located, unsightly, or without a clear function. With specific reference to advertisements, DPD Policy DM3 requires new adverts to be high quality and sensitive to the visual appearance of the surrounding street scene. This policy also notes that unsightly proliferation or clutter of signage in a vicinity should be avoided.

5.3 The proposed street hub would be installed on the footway on the north-eastern side of High Road. The development would be located 5.8m north-west of Dovecote Avenue (note: the proposed site plan is not drawn to scale). The Brompton Park Road junction with High Road is located approximately 10m to the west. The street hub would be installed in a highly prominent location.

5.4 The proposed communication hub unit would have dimensions of 2630mm (height), 1338mm (width) and 917mm (depth including canopy). One side of the unit would have a 1895mm by 1065mm digital screen for the display of advertisements. The other side of the unit would comprise a canopy, 698mm by 392mm digital touch screen, telephone handset, USB charger and defibrillator.

5.5 The bulk and scale of the proposed communication hub would have a dominating presence within the public realm. The bulky nature of the structure is coupled with its prominent position within the street scene. The dominance of the proposed street hub would be elevated due to the high level and strong internal illumination (300cdm² – 2,500cd/m²) that is proposed to be incorporated into the advertisement. Overall, the proposed street hub would appear as a bulky, dominant and visually intrusive addition to the public realm. There would be an adverse impact upon the character and appearance of the public realm, the street scene and the wider locality.

5.6 The proposal would exacerbate visual clutter within the street scene by adding street furniture in an unsuitable location that is already populated by an array of advertisement and street furniture structures. A number of prominent digital advertising panels are existing on the High Road footway, within the visual catchment of the proposed development. This includes:

- An advertising panel structure located on the footway outside No. 87 High Road, approximately 33m north-west;
- A digital advertising screen attached to a bus shelter outside No. 3 Cheapside High Road, approximately 40m north-west;
- A digital advertising screen attached to a bus shelter outside No. 7 Cheapside High Road, approximately 65m north-west;
- A digital advertising screen attached to a bus shelter outside 67 High Road, approximately 53m south-west of the subject site.

The proposed communication hub would exacerbate the existing high levels of street clutter, and the cumulative impact of this additional clutter would have an unacceptably harmful impact on the character and appearance of the street scene and local visual amenity, contrary to the above policies which seek to reduce rather than increase visual clutter within the public realm.

Transport & Highways

5.7 London Plan Policy T4 notes that proposals should not increase road danger. DPD Policy DM3 outlines that all new advertisements should contribute towards a safe environment and should not cause a hazard to pedestrians or road users. In addition, DPD Policy DM2 requires the protection of safe and accessible pedestrian and cycling routes.

5.8 The Transport Planning Officer has raised concerns that the proposal would have an adverse impact upon highway safety. A pedestrian crossing is located approximately 11m south-east of the proposed development. Furthermore, the proposed structure would be visually prominent from the intersections of Dovecote Avenue and High Road, and Brampton Park Road and High Road. The advertising structure would be visual distraction for road users, including vehicle drivers, cyclists and pedestrians. This would increase the risk of accidents. The advertising structure would also obstruct sightlines for road users; including drivers and cyclists merging onto High Road from Dovecote Avenue; and pedestrians crossing from the north-eastern side of High Road.

5.9 A street bin is currently located to the north-west of the proposed development. The street bin is proposed to be relocated further north-west on the High Road footway, adjacent to the existing street tree pits and parking bay. The proposed site plan show that a clearance of 3.7m would be maintained for pedestrian traffic on the footway. However, the proposed plans omit the presence of an existing street lamp located on the footway, in front of No. 70 High Road. The proposed siting of the street bin is in proximity to this street lamp; and would obstruct the safe and logical flow of pedestrians. The pavement, as part of Wood Green Metropolitan Town centre, experiences high levels of pedestrian traffic, necessitating footway clearances in excess of minimum requirements, in order to ensure pedestrian safety and amenity.

Other considerations

5.10 It is noted that the communication hub would allow the display of community messaging, emergency adverts and directional information. Furthermore, the structure would incorporate features such as: wi-fi, phone charging, a free phone calling system and defibrillators. However, when regard is had to the widespread use of personal smart phones and the presence of other public advertisements in the locality, it is considered that the benefits of the street hub would only be of moderate weight. This moderate weight would not outweigh the harm to the appearance of the public realm nor the impact upon highway safety.

6 CONCLUSION

6.1 The proposal is considered unacceptable, as the proposed communication hub would appear as a bulky, dominant and visually intrusive feature in the public realm. There would be an adverse impact upon the character and appearance of the public realm, the street scene and the wider locality.

6.2 The proposed development would have an adverse impact upon highway safety. The advertising structure would be visual distraction for road users, in proximity to a pedestrian crossing and two intersections. The structure would also obstruct sightlines for road users, and hinder safe and accessible pedestrian routes on the footway. For these reasons, the proposal is unsatisfactory.

6.3 All other relevant policies and considerations, including equalities, have been taken into account. Planning permission should be refused for the reasons set out above. The details of the decision are set out in the RECOMMENDATION.

7. RECOMMENDATION

REFUSE PERMISSION.

Refusal Reasons:

The proposed development, by virtue of its size, scale, siting and illumination, would appear as a visually intrusive addition to the streetscene, resulting in a unsightly proliferation of visual clutter within the public realm, to the detriment of the character and appearance of the street scene and local visual amenity, contrary to Policies D3 and D8 of the London Plan (2021), Policy SP11 of Haringey's Local Plan Strategic Policies (2017) and Policies DM1 and DM3 of the Development Management DPD (2017).

The proposed development would have an adverse impact upon highway safety, by causing a visual distraction and obstructing sightlines for road users, increasing the risk of traffic accidents. The proposal would also impact negatively on the ease and safety of pedestrian movement in this busy town centre location. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies D3 and D8 of the London Plan (2021), Policies DM2 and DM3 of the Development Management DPD (2017).