



Officer Report

Application Number:	HGY/2023/2229
Application Type:	Full planning permission
Address:	21-23, High Road, Wood Green, London, N22 6BH
Proposal:	Installation of a free-standing communication hub with LCD advertisement display and defibrillator unit.
Case Officer:	Sarah Madondo
Valid Date:	16/08/2023
Applicant:	Mr Nathan STILL
Agent:	Mr Martin Stephens

RECOMMENDATION

Refuse

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND LOCATION DETAILS

Proposed Development

This is an application for the installation of a free-standing communication hub with LCD advertisement display and defibrillator unit on the pedestrian footway of the public highway.

Site and Surroundings

The subject is an area of pavement located outside 21-23 High Road N22. The immediate surrounding area is characterised by commercial and retail use. The road is a very busy high road with a high volume of movement from both pedestrians and vehicles.

There are shops on both sides of the road and Turnpike Lane underground station is a short distance to the south. The pavement is wide but there are various items of street furniture along it, including street lamps, waste bins, cycle stands, and bus stop shelters. There are also two trees to the south of the site, either side of the existing BT phone box. The existing phone box comprises a phone with a small canopy shelter on one side and an advert on the other, which does not appear to be illuminated. The unit is around 2.5metres high.

The application site is not located within any conservation area.

Background

Officers note that according to planning history, an planning application was submitted by Harlequin Group for BT street hub under reference (HGY/2021/1730) which was refused by the Council and allowed under (Appeal Ref: APP/Y5420/W/21/3284560). The inspector concluded that BT hub was acceptable on grounds that an existing BT phone box close to the application site (20 metres away) would be removed and therefore the proposed BT hub would not increase the

amount of street furniture and therefore there would be no additional cluttering effect. The Inspector imposed a condition on their decision requiring the removal of the existing phone box. Officers would highlight that permission for the BT street hub has not been implemented and the condition attached under (Appeal Ref: APP/Y5420/W/21/3284560) has not been complied with.

The current applicant is not BT and therefore have now control over the removal of the existing phone box as part of their proposal and therefore would not be able to comply with a similar condition to the one imposed by the inspector. Furthermore the current proposal appears to be within 1 metre of the site of BTs extant consent. If both were implemented then this would rather odd and would contribute even more to an increase in visual clutter in the area.

As result, it is not considered that the proposal for the free-standing communication hub with LCD advertisement display/defibrillator unit would be acceptable as this contribute to the existing furniture, thereby increasing clutter on this section of the pavement which cannot be supported.

Relevant Planning and Enforcement History

HGY/2021/1730 Outside, 21-23, High Road, London, N22 6BH, Two digital 75 inch LCD display screen, one on each side of the amended InLink unit REFUSED - ALLOWED (APP Ref: APP/Y5420/W/21/3284560) 21st April 2022.

HGY/2021/1730 Outside, 21-23 High Road, London N22 6BH, Installation of a proposed BT street hub and associated display of advertisement (internally illuminated digital LCD) to both sides of the unit on footpath at High Road N22. REFUSED.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

The following responses were received following consultation on the application:

LBH Transport: Object to the application for the following reason(s):

- a. Ther is already a similar free-standing communication hub with LCD advertisement display panel adjacent to 15 High Road .
- b. The proposed installation of another communication Hub adjacent to 21-23 High Road will cumulatively increase 'street clutter' and adversely affect the pedestrian amenity.
- c. The location of proposed installation will also potentially adversely impact on highway safety , given that it is located adjacent to pedestrian refuge island where vehicle drivers, cyclists and pedestrians crossing the road may be distracted by the advertisement displays, that result in accidents.
- d. There is a bus shelter on the opposite side of High Road adjacent to the proposed location of the communication hub that also includes advertisement panels These display panels cumulatively with the proposed new communication hub will potentially increasingly distract road users that result in accidents.

LOCAL REPRESENTATIONS

No representation was received

MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

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

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. 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. London Plan Policy D8 sets out that the public realm should be well-designed, attractive and wellrelated 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. Applications which seek to introduce unnecessary street furniture should be refused.

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.

The bulk and scale of the proposed communication hub would have a dominating presence within the public realm. 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. As stated previously, a BT street hub was allowed under appeal (Appeal Ref: APP/Y5420/W/21/3284560) which has been not implemented and there is an existing old BT hub within close proximity of the proposed communication hub. As result it considered that if this communication hub is granted planning permission then this would cumulatively increase the street furniture on this section of the pavement resulting excessive clutter. Overall, it is considered that the proposed communication hub would add to existing 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

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.

Haringey's Transportation Group have been consulted and have raised concerns in relation to impacts on highway safety and increase in clutter, particularly given that there is an extant consent for a BT street hub (see **background** above). Given the location of proposed installation, officer consider that this would have an adverse impact on highway safety, given that it is located adjacent to pedestrian refuge island where vehicle drivers, cyclists and pedestrians are crossing the road may be distracted by the advertisement displays which then results in accidents. In addition, there is bus shelter on the opposite side of the High Road which includes advertisement panels These display panels cumulatively with the proposed new communication hub will potentially increasingly distract road users that result in accidents. Overall, it is considered the siting of the street hub in a busy pedestrian area would impede the free movement of pedestrians on the pavement and to result in an unacceptable increase in street clutter.

Other considerations

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, 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.

CONCLUSION

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.

The proposed development would have an adverse impact upon highway safety. The advertising structure would be visual distraction for road users and hinder the safety and ease of movement of pedestrians along the footway.

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.

RECOMMENDATION

Refuse permission for the following reasons:

Refusal Reasons:

The proposed development, by virtue of its size, scale and siting, would appear as a visually intrusive addition to the streetscene, resulting in the 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).