

Officer Report

Application Number:	HGY/2026/1109
Application Type:	Prior notification: Development by telecoms operators
Address:	Land at Watermead Way / Marigold Road, Northumberland Park, London, N17 0UR
Proposal:	Installation of a telecommunications base station comprising a 20m monopole supporting 3no. antennas, together with 3no. cabinets and ancillary development thereto.
Case Officer:	Mark Chan
Valid Date:	20/04/2026
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Applicant:	BTEE
Agent:	Ms Dianne Perry

RECOMMENDATION

Approve with Conditions

1. Description of Proposal

This application concerns the installation of a telecommunications base station comprising a 20m monopole supporting 3no. antennas, together with 3no. cabinets and ancillary development thereto. The installation is to be located on western side of the public footpath along Watermead Way near the junction with Marigold Road, an area characterized by general industrial use and storage warehouses.

2. Site and Surroundings

The proposed site is located on the western side of the public along Watermead Way near the junction with Marigold Road. The footpath is narrow and sits in a primarily industrial and warehouse area and Watermead Way is a prominent public route in the area. The site currently has a bus stop and two large freestanding advertisement displays. The site is not within a conservation area but is highly visible from the main road. The mast would be taller than nearby advertisement displays and lamp posts

3. Relevant Planning and Enforcement History

None relevant.

4. Internal & Statutory Consultation

The following stakeholders were consulted:

- LBH Transportation Group: No objections raised

5. Local Representations

The following number of representations were received from local residents or groups in response to the public notification of the application:

- No. of individual responses: 0
- Objections: 0
- Support: 0
- Neutral: 0

The following Councillor(s) made representations:

Cllr John Bevan made a neutral representation to the proposal.

6. Assessment of Planning Considerations

Principle of development

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.

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 is required for the siting and appearance of the mast.
2. Whether the details provided regarding the siting and appearance are acceptable in relation to national and local planning policies, particularly the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Local Development Plan.

Siting and Appearance

The proposal is assessed under Policy DM3 of the Local Development Plan, which sets out requirements for telecommunications equipment, including minimizing visual impacts and ensuring equipment is sympathetically designed to blend into its surroundings. The proposal has also been evaluated under Paragraphs 113 and 119 of the NPPF, which emphasize the need to justify new sites for telecommunications equipment and to design masts in a way that is camouflaged or discreet.

The applicant has explained in their Site Specific Supplementary Information (SSSI) document that the operator (EE) previously supplied the area with network services via the existing base station located upon the rooftop of 42 Garman Road, (Cell Ref: 14318). However, the operator has been served with a 'Notice to Quit' (NTQ) and due to the resulting forced decommissioning of the site, the applicant is now seeking a replacement solution to prevent a long-term loss of network coverage in the area in the form of the current proposal.

The applicant has fully considered alternative sites and other existing masts in the vicinity (Locations D1 – D14). However, the proposed location and design are considered to provide the optimum solution in this instance. The proposed development would benefit all current and future network users in the locale, including the Emergency Services and EE's Mobile Virtual Network Operators by 2G provision allowing for calls to be made and texts to be sent, 4G provision allowing internet access, video calling, data downstreaming, accessing social media networks and emailing and would also facilitate the provision of 5G in the future which would deliver unparalleled speeds and capacity, with significantly reduced latency, which would be needed to deliver numerous innovative applications from autonomous cars to Internet of Things. Other factors that have influenced the site selection process include – nearby existing mast sites not capable of supporting additional equipment or nearby existing mast cannot be shared by the incoming operator and provide multigenerational services for the two operators without significant redevelopment to a larger

monopole of lattice style structure, neither of which would be viable for this roadside location due to their development footprint.

The proposed 20m high Phase 5 streetworks pole has been chosen to minimise its visual impact upon the area, as it represents a form of development that is commonplace within highway verges throughout the country and would not be entirely out of keeping with general industrial and warehouse character of the locality. Furthermore, at this location, the chosen site offers the opportunity to site a mast that:

- The mast and telecommunication base station would be located in a position relatively distant from the residential dwellings.
- Benefits from a backdrop of large freestanding advertisement displays, lamp posts up to 9.8m high and existing bus top in front of the site, ensuring that the mast and telecommunication base station would not appear as stark and obtrusive as would otherwise be the case without such a backdrop.
- The rear of the site are general industrial buildings and storage warehouse and would be separated by tall trees and boundary fencing which would assist in screening/softening more distant views of the proposal.

The above represents a set of circumstances to demonstrate that, in terms of the chosen siting of the mast, and the design as a mast, the proposal is the most suitable having regard to constraints imposed by the character of the area and the technical requirement to provide additional coverage.

The height of the proposed mast at 20m would constitute the tallest item of street furniture within the locality, being 10m above the height of the existing lamp posts. However, the proposed height of the mast is unavoidable, given that it is to support the three antennas for the provision of replacement coverage and capacity to the surrounding area as well as future proofing for the provision of new 5G services. The proposed mast is the slimmest and simplest aesthetical solution that exists in the operator's design portfolio. The antennas are all unshrouded for technical reasons and have been designed to be as tight as possible to minimise their visual appearance. The higher the radio frequency the more signal attenuation there is with higher frequency antennas unable to operator effectively through the like of Glass Reinforced Plastic shrouding.

Therefore, the proposed mast height at 20m height is essential to provide optimum replacement network services to the target coverage area. Due to the height of the surrounding clutter in the wider locale, the height cannot be reduced as this would prevent the base station from being able to operate at full capacity.

Having regard to the above, it is considered that the proposed mast is situated within the most sensitive location available to the applicants and that the most appropriate design solution has been chosen. However, despite the careful design and siting as stated above, it will have a degree of impact upon the character and appearance of the area primarily by virtue of its height. A balancing exercise must therefore be taken to determine whether it has been demonstrated that, the degree of visual harm is offset by whether or not there is a demonstrable need for the proposal. This report has already set out that, in officers view, there is demonstrable requirement for the mast to provide coverage within the area. In this instance, officer is content that the degree of harm created by the proposal, particularly having regards to its height, is sufficient to justify the limited harm created by the proposal.

The proposed mast and base station is located within a general industrial and storage warehouse area and at a considerable distance from the nearest housing. The mast and cabinets would not be

in the direct views of the nearest residential properties and there would be no unacceptable impact upon the outlook from nearby residential properties.

Having regards to the distances involved, the slimline nature and appearance of the proposed mast, and partial screening/backdrop provided by the existing trees, lamp posts and advertisement displays, it is considered that the proposal would not significantly result in any undue impact upon the amenities currently enjoyed by the occupiers of any dwellings.

Like the posted mast, the proposed cabinets would be painted in Grey. The siting and design of the cabinets, given their low height and small number, are considered to not add undue clutter to the street and harm the visual character of the area. The proposed mast and associated cabinets would be set back from the edge of the footway along Watermead Way and would not impinge on movement of pedestrians. In addition, no highways issues would arise from the proposal.

Other Matters

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 effect.

7. Conclusion

The proposed 20m high mast is sited in a location and of such height as to form a reasonably prominent addition to the street scene. However, it is considered that in this instance there is demonstrable requirement for the proposed structure, having regard to the operator operational needs, there are not considered to be other acceptable alternative locations for the mast or more sympathetic design solutions. These factors are considered material to the extent that the degree of limited visual harm created by the proposal is outweighed by for the reasons as set out in this report.

In addition, the proposal is not expected to result in any undue impacts upon residential amenity or highway safety, and the applicant's have confirmed that the base station will be fully ICNIRP compliant.

8. Recommendation

Prior approval is required and granted.

Conditions:

- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in complete accordance with the approved plans listed below, other than where those details are altered pursuant to the conditions of this planning permission or where alternative details have been subsequently approved following an application for a non-material amendment. :

- DCMS MHCLG Collaborating for Digital Connectivity Letter.pdf

- 10101159 BTEE GPDO Developers notice England .pdf
- 10101159 Planning Drawings rev A.pdf
- 10101159 ICNIRP_merged.pdf
- HGY216_10101159__EE_NTQ Declaration V4.pdf
- EMF Guidelines v20.pdf
- KTL BTEE 10101159 Watermead Way SSSI.pdf
- 10101159 pre con merged.pdf
- 10101159 GPDO Cover Letter .pdf
- MobileUK Health Fact Sheet V1.pdf
- 10101159 London City Airport Planning Aerodrome Notice and POD.pdf
- MobileUK 5G Local Authority Toolkit.pdf
- allaying health concerns regarding 5g.pdf
- Mobile UK Digital Inclusion report.pdf
- gsma 5G EMF briefing web 05 20.pdf
- Keir Starmer in The Times - We will launch a golden era of building.pdf
- Matt Warman MP letter on 5G broadband.pdf
- HM Government Ofcom 5G Guide.pdf
- 10101159_KTL Developers Notice Covering Letter .pdf
- Matt Warman MP Letter to LPA Chiefs 2021.pdf
- DSIT Minister of State letter to Leaders Nov 2024.pdf
- 10101159_KTL Developers Notice Covering Letter and POD .pdf
- 10101159 Dyson Osiers Airstrip Airport Planning Aerodrome Notice and POD.pdf

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

Informatives:

INFORMATIVE: Hours of Construction Work

The applicant is advised that under the Control of Pollution Act 1974, construction work which will be audible at the site boundary will be restricted to the following hours:-

8.00am - 6.00pm Monday to Friday

8.00am - 1.00pm Saturday

and not at all on Sundays and Bank Holidays.

INFORMATIVE: Land Ownership

The applicant is advised that this planning permission does not convey the right to enter onto or build on land not within his ownership.