



Officer Report

Application Number:	HGY/2026/1017
Application Type:	Full planning permission
Address:	Muswell Hill Telephone Exchange, Grand Avenue, Muswell Hill, London , N10 3AY
Proposal:	Replacement of 6no. existing antennas and ancillary development with 6no. new antennas and installation of Remote Radio Units and ancillary development thereto.
Case Officer:	Mark Chan
Valid Date:	09/04/2026
Applicant:	Vodafone Limited
Agent:	Ms Sarah Daniels

RECOMMENDATION

Approve with Conditions

1. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND LOCATION DETAILS

Proposed development

This is an application for the replacement of 6no. existing antenna and ancillary development with 6no. new antennas and installation of Remote Radio Units on the rooftop of Muswell Hill Telephone Exchange building and associated ancillary works thereto.

Site and Surroundings

The application site is a two-storey, detached telephone exchange building on the southern side of Grand Avenue facing the junction with Firs Avenue. The rooftop of the site is an existing telecommunication base station with many telecommunication apparatuses already installed. The site is located within the Muswell Hill conservation area (CA) and does not fall within the curtilage of a listed building.

Relevant Planning and Enforcement history

PRE/2025/0142 – The work will consist of the Installation of 1 no. quadpod mast on grillage support accommodating antenna and ancillary radio equipment, and the installation of new antenna support pole accommodating antenna and ancillary equipment, upgrades to existing equipment cabinets at rooftop level, and ancillary development thereto. The enclosed drawings provide further details of the siting and the design of the development. To assist the works are proposed new antenna in green and existing to be removed in brown, new steelwork is in blue. Pre-application advice issued 02/06/2025.

PRE/2024/0056 – Upgrade to the existing rooftop base station at Muswell Hill ATE, Grand Avenue, London, N10 3AY. (AMENDED DESCRIPTION). Pre-application advice issued 20/05/2024.

HGY/2025/1409 – The installation of 1 no. new rooftop quadpod mast and upgrades to the existing tripod mast to accommodate antenna and ancillary radio equipment and ancillary development thereto. Approved 22/07/2025.

HGY/2023/1985 – Installation of new and alteration of existing telecommunications apparatus on roof of building. Approved 15/09/2023.

HGY/2022/3221 – Addition of 3no. antennas on new climbable tripods and installation of ancillary apparatus. Approved 13/12/2022.

HGY/2021/0893 – Removal of 3 no. antennas and installation of 3 no. antennas and supporting steelwork and associated apparatus and ancillary works – Approved 07/05/2021.

HGY/2019/1493 – Prior notification: Development by telecoms operators for: installation 1No. CSC Cabinet to be placed on an existing concrete plinth. In addition, the installation of 12No. ERS units will be mounted on proposed free standing frames, 3 No. antennas to be installed on existing steel work at a height of 14.9m & 13.7m to replace 3No. antennas be removed from a height of 14.9m & 13.7m. Additional ancillary works including cabling and cable trays. Approved 24/06/2019.

2. CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Internal:

1) LBH Conservation Officer: The proposed development would have a neutral impact on the Muswell Hill Conservation Area, having the same impact as the existing equipment.

3. LOCAL REPRESENTATIONS

The application has been publicised by way of a press notice and a site notice displayed in the vicinity of the site. No representation was received from neighbours, local groups, etc. in response to notification and publicity of the application.

4. MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The main planning considerations raised by the proposed development are:

1. Principle of the development
2. Impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area/visual amenity
3. Health risks
4. Impact on neighbouring amenity

Principle of the development

Policy CO1 of the newly adopted NPPF 2026 states that advanced, high quality and reliable communications are essential to meet changing technological, social, business and security requirements. Equally, public benefits associated with such proposal are outlined as a material consideration. This is equally reflected in Local Plan Policy DM54, which promotes the development of high-quality communications infrastructure subject to complying with design criteria outlined in Policy DM3.

Policy DM3 outlines that proposals for the installation of telecommunications equipment are supported subject to design criteria to avoid adverse effects on the external appearance of the building, street scene, spaces in which they are located and heritage assets, including conservation areas.

The proposed development would replace the existing installation at this location to improve existing mobile network infrastructure and provide enhanced 4G and new 5G coverage, ensuring that this area of Haringey has access to the latest technologies. This is fully in accordance with the NPPF and London Plan.

Impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area/visual amenity

Policy HE5 of the newly adopted NPPF 2026 states when considering the potential effect of a development proposal on the significance of a designated heritage asset, substantial weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential effect amounts to a positive effect, harm, substantial harm, or total loss of its significance. Section 4 of Policy HE6 further states that where a development proposal would harm the significance of a designated heritage asset the effect on the asset and its significance should be weighed against any public benefits resulting from the proposal. Important public benefits can include securing the long-term reuse of a vacant or underused listed building, and enabling energy efficiency and low carbon heating measures to be employed.

London Plan (2021) policies emphasise the importance of high-quality and seek to optimise site capacity through a design-led approach. Policy D4 'Delivering good design' states that development proposals should enhance local context by delivering buildings and spaces that positively respond to local distinctiveness through their layout, orientation, scale, appearance and shape, with due regard to street hierarchy, building types, forms and proportions.

Local Plan Policy SP11 (2017) and Development Management Development Plan Document (DPD) Policy DM1 seek to secure the highest standard of design which respects local context and character to contribute to the creation and enhancement of Haringey's sense of place and identity. DPD Policy DM1 'Delivering High Quality Design' requires development proposals to meet a range of criteria having regard to the following: building heights; form, scale and massing prevailing around the site; urban grain; sense of enclosure and where appropriate following existing building lines; rhythm of neighbouring or local regular plot and building widths; active, lively frontages to public realm; and distinctive local architectural styles, detailing and materials.

DPD Policy DM9 requires alterations and extensions to existing buildings in conservation areas to complement the architectural style, scale, proportions, materials and details of the host building and not appear overbearing or intrusive. Haringey Local Plan Policy SP12 requires the conservation of the historic significance of Haringey's heritage assets. London Plan (2021) Policy HC1 is consistent with the above policy approach.

Whilst the application site is in the Muswell Hill CA, it is not a positive contributor to its character and appearance. The host building has existing telecommunication installations which have been in place for many years.

The proposed development involves the replacement of 6no. existing antennas and ancillary development with 6no. new antennas and installation of Remote Radio Units and ancillary development thereto. The replacement equipment would be positioned centrally on the rooftop and away from Grand Avenue. The locations of the new equipment would be largely the same as the existing and would benefit from a high degree of screening. Whilst some of the new antennas would be slightly taller than existing, the maximum height of the antennas would only increase from 17.65m to 18.34m above ground level. As such, the proposed development would have limited visibility from street level and surrounding public viewpoints and would not be materially different from the existing antennas in terms of scale, height and massing. Given the discreet siting, similar scale and no appreciable increase in height or clutter over the existing provision, the proposal

would have a neutral impact on the Muswell Hill Conservation Area, having the same impact as the existing equipment.

The proposed development would represent a typical form of telecommunication development on a building which has many existing antennas and other telecommunication equipment on the rooftop at the same position. Given the scale of the host building and limited visual impact on views of it, it is not considered to have any material impact upon the setting of the conservation area.

The harm caused to the designated heritage asset (the CA) is considered to be 'less than substantial' harm and this has to be weighed against the potential public benefit of the proposals. As such, the operational and locational needs of the equipment here are considered to sufficiently outweigh the harm arising to the appearance of the building and the character of the CA.

The proposed development is in general accordance with Policies DM1, DM9 and DM54 of the Development Management, Development Plan Document 2017, and policies SP11 and SP12 of Haringey's Local Plan Strategic Policies 2017. The proposed development also accords with the relevant policies of the London Plan 2021 and the NPPF.

Health risks

In terms of health risks, Section 2 of the newly adopted NPPF 2026 states that local planning authorities should not require minimum distances to be maintained between telecommunications infrastructure and other development, seek to prevent competition between different operators, question the need for the expansion or upgrading of telecommunications networks, or use health safeguarding standards different from the International Commission guidelines on non-ionising radiation protection.

The applicant has supplied a declaration of conformity with International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation (ICNIRP) public exposure guidelines, confirming the proposed installation would be in full compliance. Therefore, the proposal would be acceptable in this regard, and the LPA would not be able to refuse permission on such a ground.

Impact on neighbouring amenity

London Plan (2021) Policy D4 outlines that design must not be detrimental to the amenity of surrounding housing, in specific stating that proposals should provide sufficient daylight and sunlight to surrounding housing that is appropriate for its context, while also minimising overshadowing. Policy D14 requires development proposals to reduce, manage and mitigate noise impacts.

DPD DM Policy (2017) DM1 'Delivering High-Quality Design' states that development proposals must ensure a high standard of privacy and amenity for the development's users and neighbours.

The proposed development, by reason of its location, size and nature would not be sufficient to detrimentally affect the amenity of occupiers within this building or neighbouring buildings. The same view is reached regarding noise/vibration/general disturbance from the operation of the equipment. The proposal is acceptable on amenity grounds. As noted above, the proposal would conform with ICNIRP guidelines and as such, it is not considered to have material impact on health.

Conclusion

The proposal is acceptable in principle. It would not materially harm the character and appearance of the Muswell Hill CA, conforms to ICNIRP guidelines, and would not harm residential amenity.

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

5. CIL APPLICABLE

N/A

6. RECOMMENDATION

GRANT PERMISSION subject to conditions.

Conditions:

- 1 The development hereby authorised must be begun not later than the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission, failing which the permission shall be of no effect.

Reason: This condition is imposed by virtue of the provisions of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and to prevent the accumulation of unimplemented planning permissions.

- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be completed in accordance with the approved plans and drawings listed below except where conditions to this planning permission indicate otherwise or where alternative details have been subsequently approved following an application for an non-material amendment.

Approved Drawings and Documents:

Existing Drawings.pdf

ICNIRP.pdf

Planning Statment (SD - 001).pdf

Cover Letter SD - 001.pdf

Proposed Drawings.pdf

SLP.pdf

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

- 3 The telecommunications antennas, dishes, mounting poles and equipment cabinets shall be permanently removed upon redundancy for its dedicated purpose and the roof to the building reinstated to its former condition within a period of six months unless agreed otherwise in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect the visual amenity of the area and character and appearance of the conservation area.

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.