

Delegated Report		Analysis sheet		Expiry Date:		15/06/2009	
		N/A / attached		Consultation Expiry Date:		1.6.09	
Officer				Application Number(s)			
Charles Thuaire				2009/2009/P			
Application Address				Drawing Numbers			
pavement outside 242 Grafton Road London NW5 4AU				See decision notice			
PO 3/4	Area Team Signature	C&UD	Authorised Officer Signature				
Proposal(s)							
Installation of a 8m high monopole containing telecommunications antennae and an ancillary equipment cabinet situated on the pavement							
Recommendation(s):		a) requires prior approval b) refuse approval					
Application Type:		GPDO Prior Approval Determination					
Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:		Refer to Draft Decision Notice					
Informatives:							
Consultations							
Adjoining Occupiers:	No. notified	31	No. of responses	01	No. of objections	01	
			No. Electronic	00			
Summary of consultation responses:	1 resident of Willes Rd objects- large mast and associated noise not suitable to be placed on public pavement which is not a dumping ground for commercial operators; object to commercialisation of public space; no more street clutter.						
CAAC/Local groups* comments: *Please Specify	-none-						

Site Description

Site is the pavement on the north side of the road immediately to the west of 242 Grafton Road, formerly the Mitre public house, and immediately to the south of the railway cutting and east of the railway bridge over this railway. The area is characterised by Council blocks of flats with traditional Victorian terraced houses to the southeast. No.242 is a 4 storey high Victorian ex-public house converted into flats- it has little architectural merit. The site does not lie within or close to any conservation areas. This pavement already has a 12m high telecom pole and cabinet owned by Vodafone to serve the railway tunnel/cutting; further to the west next to the bridge is a CCTV camera pole next to a lamppost; around the area are a variety of lampposts, road signs etc, and north of the railway bridge is a width restriction with a plethora of road signs and bollards.

Relevant History

2004/1698- prior approval refused for installation of 12m high monopole and cabinet on pavement for reason of loss of outlook arising from siting and design - decision was received too late by applicant outside 56 day period and thus approval was granted by default and the scheme was implemented.

2009/0820/P- prior approval refused for installation of a 10m high monopole containing telecommunications antennae and an ancillary equipment cabinet situated on the pavement; reason- height, design and siting in conjunction with other street furniture would create additional visual clutter in the street and would be harmful to the townscape.

Relevant policies

B5- telecom,
T3- pedestrians
CPG
Streetscape Design Manual

Assessment

Proposal involves telecom equipment for Orange including a 8m high monopole column with 3 antennae cells at the top facing 0, 120 and 240 degrees, placed on the outer edge of the pavement, and one equipment cabinet 1.46m x 0.66m x 1.5m high, placed at the back edge of the public pavement adjoining a garden wall. The new mast is to provide improved 3G coverage in the area, specifically to the railway cutting to the north/northeast.

The applicants are seeking prior approval for siting and appearance of the equipment only; thus it is not possible to raise objections on any other grounds such as health. A decision has to be made within 56 days of the application's receipt, i.e. **the applicant has to receive the Council's decision by 18th June**, otherwise the applicants have deemed approval by default according to GPDO legislation. It should be noted that due to lateness in receiving the decision to refuse the Vodafone mast, this scheme was deemed to have approval and consequently the applicants erected the mast.

Background- The previous scheme by Vodafone was considered unacceptable solely because the mast would impact upon outlook from rear windows of 242 Grafton Road and be dominant in views across its rear garden; its general position in the streetscene and its design and height were not questioned. The need for having a mast here was not questioned either as it was demonstrated that this was the only feasible location for such a mast which had to serve the needs of phone users in the railway cutting.

A previous application by Orange for a mast here was refused on 30th March on grounds of additional street clutter. It involved a 10m high pole with a bulge on top, in contrast to the current application which has a slimline pole 8m high. The reason for refusal was "The proposed mast, by virtue of its height, design and siting in conjunction with other street furniture, would create additional visual clutter in the street and would be harmful to the character and appearance of the local townscape, contrary to policies B1 and B5 of the London Borough of Camden Replacement Unitary Development Plan 2006, and advice contained in the Camden Planning Guidance 2006".

The current application seeks to address the criticisms made of this previous scheme, in particular by improving the design of the mast in making it more slimline and less obtrusive in the streetscene. This assessment below repeats the previous report's one on the previous scheme; changed sections to reflect the revised scheme are highlighted in italics.

Justification- Orange are experiencing similar problems by Vodafone in that the mast is specifically needed in this location to serve the needs of railway users. They have demonstrated that the adjacent building which would best serve their purposes has been discounted due to lack of landowner interest in using their premises; other buildings nearby are all in Council ownership and are thus unavailable due to a Council moratorium on mobile phone masts on their land and buildings. Similarly a mast cannot be sited on the north side of the railway bridge due to the grass lawn and access road on east and west sides respectively being in Council

ownership. Another possible site to the southwest of the bridge in Vicars Road has been discounted as the pavement is too narrow and the adjacent depot is also Council-owned. This means that the only feasible site is that currently proposed, ie. on the pavement immediately south of the railway cutting between the bridge and no.242 Grafton Rd. Vodafone have also confirmed that their mast is not suitable for site sharing, and in any case this would result in a large mast which would be unattractive and overdominant. The need to provide coverage into the cutting and under the bridge severely limits the choice of locations for a pole here and indeed Orange consider that the site and height of mast chosen is in fact the only option available. The lack of suitable alternative locations here is a material consideration in determining the application.

Orange have demonstrated that there is need for the equipment due to non-existent or poor coverage into the railway cutting for both 2G and 3G networks. They have demonstrated that the equipment complies with ICNIRP standards on emission levels, and indeed it is estimated that the highest level at 60m distance from the mast will be only 0.13% of these maximum levels. Thus the mast will not have any direct impact on public health. The orientation of the antennae is not directed towards any adjacent residential windows. Due to the mast's position not directly outside residential properties (it is only visible in oblique views from front windows of 242 Grafton Road and of the block of flats opposite at nos 351-377), it will not harm residential outlook or perception of risk to health. This position is therefore better than the adjoining Vodafone mast which is visible in views from the rear windows of no.242.

Siting- The mast and cabinet are considered to be detrimental to the appearance of the site in terms of adding visual clutter. *The revisions to the previous scheme do not alter the proposed siting of both mast and cabinet and so the previous considerations and criticisms of the scheme still apply here.* The street has already a scatter of 10m high lamp columns and signposts on the outer edge of the pavement, plus the Vodafone mast and CCTV camera further west. The site behind is quite open with a low garden wall affording views across the cutting to blocks of flats to the north. Depending on the orientation of the viewpoint, views of the proposed mast would be read against this open backdrop, against the trees to the north of the cutting or against the side of the adjoining 4 storey building of no.242. Opposite the proposed site is a row of mature trees along the side of the Council block of 351-377. The area is already to some extent cluttered by posts and poles, some quite close to each other (eg. a lamppost and CCTV camera only a 1m apart, next to the bridge), all providing visual clutter at a high level, and thus it is considered that a new pole will add further clutter in the streetscene which is especially in close proximity to the nearby lamppost and Vodafone mast, the latter already dominating the landscape. In particular the mast will not be equidistantly spaced between existing lampposts, in line with advice usually given for the siting of such masts on pavements, and thus the new mast unusually near a lamppost will appear particularly obtrusive and incongruous. The mast will not be positioned midway between surrounding lampposts, which is the preferred option with such street furniture, and its position only 5m away from the adjacent lamppost is not ideal; however this location is dictated by the need to protect outlook from no.242 as noted above and to provide a line of sight to the cutting, thus a location further east would not be feasible or acceptable. In the immediate vicinity of the site and in the wider context, the townscape is fairly open and modern, containing 4 storey blocks of flats, 3 storey Victorian terraces and grassed areas with trees, all set around the railway bridge and cutting in a random fashion. Thus it is argued that another pole would materially add to this clutter and be readily visible in long views and harm the surrounding streetscape in conjunction with other street furniture, buildings and landscape features.

The rear of the pavement is also flanked by 2-2.5m high wall and thus a new cabinet 1.5m high against this background will not be obtrusive.

It should be noted that in relation to the previous objection raised to the Vodafone mast that its siting was only considered unacceptable in terms of its impact on residential outlook rather than on general streetscene character. The proposed mast's position in relation to windows at rear and opposite is such that only oblique views are possible or that screening is provided by trees, thus residential outlook is not harmed.

Design- *The revisions to the previous refused scheme are welcomed in making the mast less obtrusive. Notably the top bulge has been reduced and the whole pole reduced in diameter so that it appears more slimline in appearance; also the height has been reduced by 2m so that it is below the height of the adjoining lamppost rather than matching it. The mast would thus be below the height of the lampposts at 10m high and the nearby Vodafone mast and it would be painted in matching black. Also, unlike the latter mast and the previous scheme, it would not have such a protruding bulge on top, which is considered unattractive in design terms and thus unduly intrusive in the streetscene.* The cabinet will be painted black and be styled similar to many other standard pavement cabinets; its position at the back edge adjoining a high brick wall will ensure it is not prominent in the streetscene. *The design of both structures is thus considered acceptable in itself. Although the height of the mast is somewhat less obtrusive than before and than the lamppost and Vodafone mast, nevertheless a mast of this height and location, in conjunction with other street furniture in the overall locality,*

would create additional visual street clutter.

Highway- The mast is located at the front edge of the pavement in line with other posts and bollards and will not create a pedestrian obstruction. The cabinet will be sited at the back edge of the pavement in a recess next to railings of no.242, so that pedestrian flows will not be affected. They will maintain a pavement width of 1.8m, which complies with the Camden's Streetscape Design Manual recommendations for minimum pavement widths.

Thus it is considered that the proposals are unacceptable in terms of siting.

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