

Delegated Report		Analysis sheet	Expiry Date:	01/05/2019
		N/A	Consultation Expiry Date:	01/05/2019
Officer			Application Number(s)	
Nora-Andreea Constantinescu			2019/0878/P	
Application Address			Drawing Numbers	
o/s 42 New Compton Street London WC2H 8DA			See draft decision notice	
PO 3/4	Area Team Signature	C&UD	Authorised Officer Signature	
Proposal(s)				
Installation of 1 x street cabinet.				
Recommendation(s):		Prior Approval Required - Approval Refused		
Application Type:		GPDO Prior Approval Determination		

Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:	Refer to Draft Decision Notice					
Informatives:						
Consultations						
Adjoining Occupiers:	Site notices Press notice	15/03/19-08/04/19 21/03/19-14/04/19	No. of responses	3	No. of objections	3
Summary of consultation responses:	<p>Neighbouring occupiers at nos.63 St Giles High Street and no. 4 Earnshaw Street have objected to the proposed cabinet on the following grounds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The proposed location is a danger to pedestrians as it would result in pedestrians being forced to walk into the street. - Extremely narrow pavement and overcrowded. - The proposed cabinet would create a further impediment, and obstruction to movement. - The site is unsuitable for this additional piece of street furniture. - The cabinet creates an obstruction and hazard to wheelchairs, prams, mobility scooters - The cabinet would negatively affect the appearance of the building which sits in front of. 					
Covent Garden Community Association	<p>Objected to the proposed cabinet on the following grounds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unsuitable location. - Very busy street with pedestrian footfall projected to increase significantly due to Crossrail station. - The width of the clear footway would be less than 2m required for free pedestrian movement and easy passage of disabled people. - The applicant should liaise with other mobile telecoms providers to share the street cabinet, to ensure less intrusion to the public realm. 					

Site Description

The application site comprises of an area of the footway adjacent to no. 42 New Compton Street, on the western side of New Compton Street, in close proximity to the junction with St Giles Street. The side is directly in front of the entrance to a ground floor gallery.

The site is situated within the Denmark Street Conservation Area, and is adjacent to a building which is considered to make a positive contribution to the area.

Relevant History

No planning records at the application site

Relevant policies

National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

London Plan 2016

TfL's Pedestrian Comfort Guidance for London (2010)

Camden Local Plan 2017

A1 Managing the impact of development

C5 Safety and Security

C6 Access

D1 Design

D2 Heritage

G1 Delivery and location of growth

T1 Prioritising walking, cycling and public transport

Camden Planning Guidance

CPG Design (2018)

CPG Transport (2019)

Denmark Street Conservation Area Statement (2000)

Camden Streetscape Design Manual (2010)

1. Proposal

1.1 Confirmation is sought as to whether the installation of telecommunications equipment comprising of 1 x new cabinet with dimensions of 1.89m length, 0.55m width, 1.57m height, outside no. 42 New Compton Street would require prior approval under Part 24 of Schedule 2 of the GPDO prior approval applications. The proposed cabinet would sit on a 75mm plinth and would have three doors, two on the sides and one along the length opening into the pavement.

2. Justification

2.1 In line with Telefonica's network improvement program, there is a specific requirement to upgrade the existing radio base station in order to maintain and improve 3G and 4G coverage and capacity. Due to the increased use of smart phones and other similar devices the network experienced substantial increase in traffic which requires the existing base stations to be maintained and improved in order to provide sufficient coverage.

2.2 The applicant stated that 65 St Giles High Street hosts an existing microcell telecommunications installation which needs to be upgraded to provide improved coverage and capacity particularly in relation to 3G and 4G services. The improved coverage would be achieved by replacing and adding to the antennas currently installed on the building under permitted development, and the installation of the cabinet subject to the current application.

2.3 The applicant has declared that the equipment would comply with ICNIRP standards on emission levels. Thus, it is not anticipated that the proposed cabinet would have any direct impact on public health. There would be no impact on residential amenity in terms of loss of light, outlook or privacy.

3. Siting, Design and Appearance

3.1 The pedestrian pavement where the proposed cabinet would be located measures a width of 2.26m which increases in width to the north towards St High Giles Street and opposite to the south of the site. Once in place, the proposed cabinet would leave an effective footway width of 1.4m, which is below the 1.8m minimum unobstructed 'clear footway' width as request by Appendix B of TfL's Pedestrian Comfort Guidance and section 3.01 of Camden's Streetscape Design Manual.

3.2 Furthermore, the corner property at no. 65 St Giles High Street has a step along New Compton Street with a length of 4m and width of 0.66m which results in a remaining pavement width of 1.6m. The distance in between the proposed cabinet and the existing step would be of 1m which is less than 1.8m minimum distance recommended by Camden's Streetscape Design Manual.

3.3 As such, due to the current pavement width and site constraints, the proposed siting for the cabinet would result in an obstruction to all pedestrian users especially to those vulnerable as protected by the Equality Act 2010, given the remaining pavement width unsuitable for wheelchair users, people with buggies and old people. Given the existing high footfall along the pedestrian street pavement, the proposal would further harm the pedestrian environment and its users which is contrary to policy T1 of Camden Local Plan 2017.

3.4 In relation to design, policy D1 aims to ensure the highest design standards for development and the Council will require all developments to be of the highest standard of design and to respect the character, setting, form and scale of neighbouring buildings,

integrates well with the surrounding streets, improving movement through the site and wider area with direct, accessible and easily recognisable route and contributes positively to the street frontage and it is inclusive and accessible for all. Under Policy D2, the Council will only grant permission for development that preserves or enhances the character and appearance of the conservation area.

- 3.5 The proposed cabinet would be located in front of the entrance into the Lawrence Alkin Gallery which occupies the ground floor level of no. 42 New Compton Street. Due to the proposed bulk and scale of the cabinet, this would obstruct the entrance into the gallery and reduce the movement through the site and wider area. As shown on the documentation provided, when the cabinet door would be open the remaining distance to the frontage would be of approximately 1m, which is significantly less than the minimum of 1.8m as recommended by Camden's Streetscape Design Manual.
- 3.6 Furthermore, as the cabinet is proposed to be located in front of the building considered to make a positive contribution to the conservation area, due to its bulk and poor detailed design, this would be an obtrusive piece of street furniture, unattractive and incongruous in the streetscene, which would degrade the visual amenity of the area.
- 3.7 Considerable importance and weight have been attached to the harm arising to both the conservation area given the Council's duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area under s.72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended. As such, the cabinet, due to its unsuitable proposed location, bulk, scale and poor detailed design would harm the character and appearance of the conservation area and the streetscene.

4. Amenity

- 4.1 Policy A1 states that the Council will seek to protect the quality of life of residents and will grant permission for development unless this causes unacceptable harm to amenity. Under policy A1 the council will resist development that fails to adequately assess and address transport impacts affecting communities, neighbours and the existing transport network and would require mitigation measures when necessary.
- 4.2 The proposed location of the cabinet has not taken into account the current relationship of the ground floor premises at no. 42 New Compton Road and no. 64 St Giles High Street with the street pavement. The proposed location would lead to significant impact on the pedestrian movement along the street pavement, restricting its access by all users affecting communities and neighbours, contrary to policy A1.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 The proposed cabinet by virtue of its position and location, would have an adverse impact on the pedestrian movement along the pavement it is sited, restricting access to vulnerable groups by creating an obstruction in an area with high footfall.
- 5.2 The proposed cabinet by virtue of its design, bulk, scale and location, would be overly dominant in the streetscene, creating visual clutter which would detract from the character and appearance of the streetscene and the Denmark Street Conservation Area.

6. Recommendation

- 6.1 Refuse Prior Approval.