

<b>Delegated Report</b>		<b>Analysis sheet</b>	<b>Expiry Date:</b>	<b>03/05/2019</b>
		N/A	<b>Consultation Expiry Date:</b>	<b>06/04/2019</b>
<b>Officer</b>			<b>Application Number(s)</b>	
Kristina Smith			2019/1009/P	
<b>Application Address</b>			<b>Drawing Numbers</b>	
Kings Cross SW Kings Cross York Way London N1 9AA			Refer to Decision Notice	
<b>PO 3/4</b>	<b>Area Team Signature</b>	<b>C&amp;UD</b>	<b>Authorised Officer Signature</b>	
<b>Proposal(s)</b>				
Installation of 1 x 15m high streetworks monopole with 2 x 300mm dishes mounted on new foundation and associated works at ground level				
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>	<b>Refuse Prior Approval</b>			
<b>Application Type:</b>	<b>GPDO Prior Approval Determination</b>			
<b>Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:</b>	Refer to Decision Notice			
<b>Informatives:</b>				
<b>Consultations</b>				
<b>Adjoining Occupiers:</b>	No. of responses	<b>00</b>	No. of objections	<b>00</b>
<b>Summary of consultation responses:</b>	A site notice has been displayed from 13 <sup>th</sup> March 2019 until 6 <sup>th</sup> April 2019 and the Council has received no response			
<b>CAAC/Local groups comments:</b>	No response was received from King's Cross CAAC			

## Site Description

The application site comprises an area of footway on the west side of York Way adjacent to a 2m retaining wall situated above the train tracks leading from Kings Cross station. As such, this side of the street is not built up and clear views are afforded to the Kings Cross train sheds and beyond, St Pancras station, both Grade I listed buildings. The site is located within the King's Cross Conservation Area.

Of the listed station buildings, the King's Cross Conservation Area statement reads, '*The two stations, both grade I listed, form a part of our architectural and historical heritage and are of national importance; they form a national set piece. They are the most dominant elements of this area in terms of scale and use. With their wide train shed roof spans, they are also examples of technological virtuosity. Together with the Great Northern Hotel, this group reflects the power of the Railway age and is of notable historic value. It is the most important group of railway buildings in Britain*'

The east side of York Way falls under the administration of the London Borough of Islington.

## Relevant History

### Nearby sites

Pavement outside 7 York Way

**2018/1835/P** - Installation of telecommunications equipment comprising of replacement of 1 x existing 10m high monopole with 1 x new 15m high monopole with 2 x antennas inside shroud and 1 x new associated equipment cabinet on the pavement. **Prior Approval Granted 23/05/2018**

## Relevant policies

**Part 16 Schedule 2 to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015**

**National Planning Policy Framework 2019**

**London Plan 2016**

**Draft London Plan 2018**

**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 (2018)**

CPG Design

CPG Amenity

CPG Transport

King's Cross Conservation Area Statement (2003)

## Assessment

### 1. Proposal

- 1.1. Confirmation is sought as to whether the installation of telecommunications equipment comprising a new 15m high monopole and associated groundworks would require prior approval under Part 16 of Schedule 2 of the GPDO. The order permits the Council to only consider matters of siting and appearance in determining GPDO prior approval applications. As a result, it is not possible for objections to be raised on any other grounds, such as health.
- 1.2. The monopole would be of black steel construction and situated on a new screw pile foundation. It would be 15m high with 2 x 300mm dishes attached around two thirds of the way up. The pole would incorporate an antenna at the top causing it to become wider and increasing the diameter from 0.4m to 0.7m.
- 1.3. The associated ground level development would consist of a side-by-side cabinet measuring 0.9m (h) x 1.4m (w) x 0.6m (d) and a single cabinet on new root foundation measuring 1.6m (h) x 0.6m (w) x 0.6m (d), both black steel.

### 2. Analysis

- 2.1. The new monopole would provide enhanced coverage for EE Ltd. The applicant has expressed the need to provide extra capacity (rather than coverage) to the station platforms and into the tunnels; however, they have not demonstrated the need for the new monopole with the aid of plot coverage maps.
- 2.2. No evidence was submitted with the application that demonstrated any alternative sites, including on existing buildings, have been explored. This could have been in the form of communication with various nearby landowners. Officers have tried to work with the applicant and suggested moving the proposed pole and associated equipment slightly further north adjacent to the bus stop (Stop D). The applicant dismissed this location on the grounds that it would not achieve their intended aims in terms of providing greater capacity to the platforms and tunnel. Furthermore, the applicant has stated that a trial dig found too many services located under the pavement.
- 2.3. The applicant has declared that the equipment would comply with ICNIRP standards on emission levels and as such it is not anticipated that the proposed mast would have any direct impact on public health. It is noted that the ICNIRP form was not submitted as part of the initial application but at a later date on 8<sup>th</sup> March at which point the application was validated.
- 2.4. Given the location of the pole, away from buildings, there would be no impact on residential amenity in terms of loss of light or outlook.

### 3. Siting, Design and Appearance

- 3.1. Policy D1 states that 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, its contribution to the public realm, and its impact on wider views and vistas. Policy D2 states that within conservation areas, the Council will only grant permission for development that 'preserves and enhances' its established character and appearance, and that to preserve and enhance the borough's listed buildings, the Council will only grant permission for development that it considers

would not harm the setting of a listed building.

- 3.2. Paragraph 184 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) says that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation, and any harm should require clear and convincing justification.
- 3.3. The pole and associated equipment would be located on a relatively uncluttered stretch of York Way that runs adjacent to the train lines of King's Cross station. Other street furniture along this section of footway includes street lamps and several isolated signage poles. Further north, adjacent to the National Rail signal building, there is a bus stop and shelter
- 3.4. From various vantage points along York Way, particularly to the north of the proposed pole and from the opposite side of the road, there is an unobstructed view of the two Grade I listed Kings Cross train sheds, with the St Pancras train shed visible just beyond, also Grade I listed. As such, this is considered to be a rare and special location where the three listed train sheds can be appreciated in a single view. The proposed monopole represents a bold and incongruous intervention into this view that would be clearly visible in both short and long views down York Way, especially given that the street rises northwards.
- 3.5. The view from York Way south of the junction with Wharfedale Road is noted in the King's Cross Conservation Area statement (para 4.2.93).
- 3.6. It is noted that the monopole is proposed to be installed on a stretch of footway where there are no existing tall items that sit within or obstruct the view of the three Grade I listed train sheds. The two street lamps on this section of footway are located either side of the vista and where signage is present, it is sufficiently low to not impede on the appreciation of the heritage assets. Furthermore, these items are far more slender than the bulky pole proposed. To worsen matters, the monopole widens towards the top and comprises two dishes of approx.300mm diameter about two thirds of the way up. These elements only serve to draw further attention to the pole, increasing its bulkiness and adding to its incongruous appearance. Consequently, it is considered that the proposed installation causes harm to the setting of the adjacent Grade I listed train shed and causes harm to the character and appearance of this part of the King's Cross Conservation Area.
- 3.7. Officers have suggested relocating the monopole slightly further north adjacent to a building with no architectural merit and used as a signalling office by Network Rail. In this position, the pole would have no impact on the setting of the designated heritage assets; however, this location has been dismissed.
- 3.8. Considerable importance and weight have been attached to the harm arising to both the conservation area and the adjacent listed building, given the duty of the Council 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, and to give special regard to the desirability of preserving the adjacent listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses, under s.66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended.
- 3.9. Whilst the submission documents note that the application site is located within a conservation area, they do not acknowledge the site's location adjacent to a listed building, and therefore no consideration has been given to the harm that the proposal would cause to the setting of the listed building. In terms of the NPPF, the harm to the conservation area and to the setting of the adjacent listed building would be less than substantial. That being the case, paragraph 196 advises that the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing optimal viable use.
- 3.10. NPPF guidance on telecommunications infrastructure states in paragraph 43 that '[local

planning authorities] should aim to keep the numbers of radio and telecommunications masts and the sites for such installations to a minimum consistent with the efficient operation of the network. Existing masts, buildings and other structures should be used, unless the need for a new site has been justified. Where new sites are required, equipment should be sympathetically designed and Camouflaged where appropriate'. Furthermore, paragraph 113 of the NPPF states that '*The number of radio and electronic communications masts, and the sites for such installations, should be kept to a minimum consistent with the needs of consumers, the efficient operation of the network and providing reasonable capacity for future expansion. Use of existing masts, buildings and other structures for new electronic communications capability (including wireless) should be encouraged. Where new sites are required (such as for new 5G networks, or for connected transport and smart city applications), equipment should be sympathetically designed and camouflaged where appropriate*'

3.11. It is clear from the NPPF guidance that existing buildings and structures should always be considered first. The Council considers it is always a preferable option for antennae and masts to be placed on the roof of an existing building to minimise street and visual clutter and that a new ground-based mast should be treated as a last-resort option. Where new sites are required, the NPPF states that equipment should be sympathetically designed. This is not considered to be the case in this instance whereby the pole enlarges towards the top and comprises two dishes, exacerbating its impact.

3.12. The technical need for a new mast to provide great ESN capacity for the station platforms and into the tunnel mouth is not disputed; however, the need for the mast and the benefits that it would bring have to be balanced against the impact of the proposed monopole on the urban environment. In this case, it is considered that there would be harm to the conservation area and the setting of the adjacent listed building and would not be outweighed by the public benefits of the proposal.

#### **4. Transport and Highways**

4.1. The footway at the proposed site is approximately 3.9 metres wide. The plans submitted suggest that the telecommunications equipment would occupy approximately 600 mm of footway space, reducing the effective footway width to approximately 3.3 metres. This is considered to be sufficient for pedestrians to pass unhindered in this busy location near Kings Cross Station.

4.2. The proposal is therefore acceptable in terms of transport and highways.

#### **5. Conclusion**

5.1. The proposed monopole, by reason of its design, height and location, would be overly dominant in the streetscene, cause harm to the setting of the adjacent Grade I listed train sheds and detract from the character and appearance of the King's Cross Conservation Area.

#### **6. Recommendation**

6.1. Refuse Prior Approval