

Delegated Report		Analysis sheet		Expiry Date:	14/08/2020
		N/A / attached		Consultation Expiry Date:	09/08/2020
Officer			Application Number(s)		
Sofie Fieldsend			2020/2760/P		
Application Address			Drawing Numbers		
Pavement outside No.176 Camden High Street, opposite No.201 Camden High Street. London NW1 8QL			See decision notice		
PO 3/4	Area Team Signature	C&UD	Authorised Officer Signature		
Proposal(s)					
Erection of 20m high telecommunications monopole with 4 cabinets and ancillary works on pavement.					
Recommendation(s):		i) Prior approval required ii) Prior approval refused			
Application Type:		GPDO Prior Approval Determination			

Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:	Refer to Decision Notice					
Informatives:						
Consultations						
Adjoining Occupiers:	No. notified	00	No. of responses	00	No. of objections	00
			No. electronic	00		
Summary of consultation responses:	Site notices were displayed on the 01/07/2020 and the consultation period expired on the 25/07/2020. A press notice was advertised on 02/07/2020 and expired on 26/07/2020.					
	Due to a discrepancy between the plans and the site location plan (now corrected) a 2 nd consultation period was undertaken.					
	Site notices were displayed on the 15/07/2020 and the consultation period expired on the 08/08/2020. A press notice was advertised on 16/07/2020 and expired on 09/08/2020.					
	<u>11 objections were received</u> during the consultation period from the following properties: Unknown, 14A Redington Road, 57 Christchurch Hill, 64 Albert Street, 11 Rochester Terrace, 12 Jeffreys Place, 5-7 Buck Street, 17 South Hill Park, 7 Hartland Road, 3 Ivor Street.					
	Their objections can be summarised as follows:					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Health concerns- Design out of character with the local area, highly visible in multiple views due to height and prominent location- Harm to the conservation area- Scale and siting inappropriate, significantly higher than neighbouring buildings- Concerns about pedestrian comfort, it is a very busy area- Other locations should be considered- Unclear how many antennae there will be on the pole- No dimensions provided for the cabinets to understand their scale- Street clutter: no health and safety document for those with visual impairments and mobility impairments.- Encourage anti-social behaviour such as graffiti- ICNIRP certificate is not on Camden's website (<i>note- a certificate dated 6.7.20 is now on the website as of 7.8.20</i>)- Frequency and modulation characteristics and the power output of antennae not provided.- No detail of cumulative exposure from this antennae with all the other antennae in the area, need to ensure that they will not exceed ICNIRP guidelines.					

TFL	<p><u>Transport for London (TfL) objected</u> on the following grounds:</p> <p>Given the site’s location directly outside a busy underground station, and consistently high footfall within a high flow environment (see pedestrian Comfort Guidance, 2015), the available footway width following installation should not fall below 3.3 metres.</p> <p>The current London Plan Policy 6.10 (Walking) refers to ‘promoting simplified streetscape, decluttering and access for all’ and also states that Planning Decisions ‘should ensure high quality pedestrian environments and emphasise the quality of the pedestrian and street space’. Intend to Publish (ItP) London Plan Policy T2(d) states that development proposals should ‘demonstrate how they deliver improvements that support the 10 Healthy Streets Indicators in line with Transport for London guidance’.</p> <p>TfL hold concerns that the installation of equipment in the footway where there is already a large amount of street furniture may impact upon the ease of informal pedestrian crossing and risk creating pedestrian pinch points which, given the site’s location near to a high priority area for social distancing, is a concern.</p> <p>Overall, considering the negative impact upon pedestrian comfort and amenity along this high flow footway, TfL recommend refusal of the application.</p>
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Site Description

The application site is located on the footpath outside No.176 Camden High Street which adjoins Camden Town underground station.

The building adjacent is not listed but the site is located within the Camden Town Conservation Area. Both the adjacent buildings at No.176 Camden High Street and Camden Town underground station are recognised as positive contributors within the conservation area.

Relevant History

Application site

2015/2851/P- Replacement of existing public telephone kiosk with combined public telephone and Automated Teller Machine (ATM) kiosk.- **Refused 09/12/2015**

Reasons for refusal:

- 1) The proposed kiosk, by reason of its location, size and detailed design, would result in visual clutter to the detriment of the visual amenity of the streetscene and the character and appearance of the conservation area contrary to Core Strategy Policies CS5 (Managing the impact of growth and development) and CS14 (Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage) of the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Core Strategy and policies DP24 (Securing high quality design) and DP25 (Conserving Camden's heritage) of the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Development Policies.
- 2) The proposed kiosk, by virtue of its inappropriate siting and design and lack of security safeguarding measures, would fail to reduce opportunities for crime and antisocial behaviour to the detriment of community safety and security, contrary to policy CS17 (Making Camden a safer place) of the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Core Strategy.

Neighbouring sites:

Centenary House, 96-98 Camden High Street

2018/6382/P - Removal of existing stub-monopole and 3 no. antennas, installation of a steel-frame supporting 12 no. antennas and 3 no. dishes screened by proposed GRP shroud, retention of 1 no. existing dish, removal of 2 no. existing cabinets and replacement with 10 no. proposed equipment cabinets and associated works - **Refused 11/12/2019**

PEX0300226/P - The installation of a flag pole style telecommunications facility incorporating 3 panel antennas, 2 dish antennas, 1 equipment cabinet, ancillary equipment on the roof and a ground floor level electricity cabinet. - **Granted 26/09/2003**

126 Camden High Street

PEX0000926 - The erection of a telecommunication flagpole antenna and associated equipment cabin at roof level. – **Refused 02/01/2001**

Bedford House, 125 - 133 Camden High Street

2007/0778/P -Installation of telecommunications equipment on roof of building comprising of six antennas (four to the front of the building and two to the rear), equipment cabinets and associated roof mounted equipment including 1.1m railings. - **granted 27/04/2007**

2006/2659/P - Installation of telecommunications equipment on roof of building comprising of six pole mounted antennas (four to the front of the building and two to the rear), equipment cabinets and associated roof mounted equipment including 1.1m railings. - **Refused 21/08/2006**

58 Camden Road

2019/4930/P - Installation of 3 telecommunication equipment cabinets in rear yard for use in connection with an existing microcell antenna on front elevation of building. – **Granted 11/12/2019**

2019/5499/L - Installation of 3 telecommunication equipment cabinets in rear yard for use in connection with an existing microcell antenna on front elevation of building. – **Granted 11/12/2019**

14 Parkway

PE9800758 - Installation of telecommunications equipment at roof level. comprising an equipment cabin six pole antenna, three dish antennae and allocated cabling and safety railing. - **Granted 21/01/1999**

Outside on the corner of 120 Parkway

2005/0806/P - The installation of telecommunications equipment consisting of a 12m high monopole, traffic sign and a single equipment cabinet on the pavement outside 120 Parkway. -**Refused 22/04/2005**

Reasons for refusal:

- 1) The proposed development is unacceptable on the grounds of visual amenity. More specifically the proposed height and location of the telecommunications equipment would add to the visual clutter at this junction and as such would be detrimental to the character and appearance of three conservation areas. In this regard the proposal is contrary to policies EN1 General environmental protection and improvement, EN4 Providing safe and attractive public spaces, EN31 Character & appearance of conservation areas and PU8 Telecommunications of the London Borough of Camden UDP 2000.
- 2) The proposed development is unacceptable on the grounds of pedestrian safety. More particularly the proposed development would result in obstacles on the footway, to the detriment of pedestrian movement. In this regard the proposal is contrary to Policy TR21 Pedestrians of the London Borough of Camden UDP 2000.

Relevant policies

National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

London Plan (2016)

Intend to publish London Plan (2019)

TfL's Pedestrian Comfort Guidance for London (2010)

Camden's Local Plan (2017)

- A1 - Managing the impact of development
- C6 - Access for all
- D1 - Design
- D2 – Heritage
- T1 - Prioritising walking, cycling and public transport

Camden Planning Guidance

- CPG Design (2019)
- CPG Amenity (2018)
- CPG Digital infrastructure (2018)

Assessment

1. Proposal

1.1 The application has been submitted under Part 16 of schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order (GPDO) 2015 (as amended). 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 proposal involves the erection of 20m high monopole incorporating a large cabinet at its base and 3 other cabinets and ancillary works, all on the pavement. The plans have been revised to show the correct location of all equipment.

1.3 The base station cabinet of the mono pole measures 0.8m deep x 2m wide x 1.5m high. The other cabinets are 0.8m deep x 2m wide x 1.8m high, 0.5m deep x 0.6m wide x 0.8m high, and 0.5m deep x 0.6m wide x 1.6m high.

1.4 A decision is needed to be made within 56 days of the application's receipt (19th June 2020). Thus if the applicant does not receive the Council's decision by 14th August 2020, the proposals will have deemed approval by default according to GPDO legislation.

2.0 Assessment

2.1 Prior approval is required for this type of development as it includes the installation of an antennae (including any supporting structure) which exceeds the height of the building or structure (other than a mast) by 4 metres or more at the point of where it is installed or to be installed.

2.2 The main considerations in relation to this proposal are:

- Applicant's Justification
- Siting and Design
- Planning balance

3.0 Applicant's Justification

3.1 The proposal is based on the principle of meeting operational requirements of the mobile operator H3G (Three). It is for a new mast in the area and does not replace any existing equipment. The equipment would improve 5G coverage in the area.

3.2 The applicant has provided no information for this specific site selection apart from that it is in close proximity to Camden High Street. The supplementary information document provided states that 4 other alternative sites have been identified to install the equipment. This information identified that there are alternative suitable sites but these have been discounted. The reasoning given for discounting these alternative sites is considered to be vague and not enough site specific information has been given to justify why these locations are not suitable and have been ruled out. It is also

considered that not enough alternative sites were explored to give sufficient justification for this location.

3.3 The applicants have declared with appropriate documentation that all of the proposed equipment would comply with International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) standards on emission levels in accordance with government guidelines. Consequently there are no direct public health concerns regarding this proposal.

4. Siting and design

4.1 Local Plan Policies D1 (Design) and D2 (Heritage) are aimed at achieving the highest standard of design in all developments. Policy D1 requires development to be of the highest architectural and urban design quality, which improves the function, appearance and character of the area; and Policy D2 states that the Council will preserve, and where appropriate, enhance Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including listed buildings.

4.2 CPG Digital Infrastructure states that "the Council will 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 demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Council. Where new sites are required, equipment should be sympathetically designed and appropriately camouflaged where possible."

4.3 It is noted that the Council have also granted permission on neighbouring roads such as Camden High Street, Parkway and Camden Road (see planning history section above). It is unclear from the information provided if these permissions have been included in their coverage provision maps included in their site specific supplementary information document.

4.4. There is also a refusal at the corner of 120 Parkway (ref. 2005/0806/P) which is in close proximity to the site and this was refused on grounds of visual amenity and pedestrian safety. More specifically the proposed height and location of that telecommunications equipment would add to the visual clutter at this junction and as such would be detrimental to the character and appearance of three conservation areas. It is noted that this monopole was 12m high, significantly shorter than the 20m proposed in this application. A recent refusal outside the application site for a telephone kiosk/ATM (ref. 2015/2851/P) was refused by reason of its location, size and detailed design, which would result in visual clutter to the detriment of the visual amenity of the streetscene and the character and appearance of the conservation area, and for anti-social behaviour concerns.

4.5 The application site is on the pavement outside No.176 Camden High Street which adjoins Camden Town underground station. These buildings are low rise at 3 storeys (Camden tube station) and 2 storeys (No.176 Camden High Street). It is close to the corner junction with Camden High Street and Kentish Town Road. Given the siting near a prominent and open corner and the low scale of the neighbouring buildings, the 20m monopole would be highly prominent in multiple short and long views along Camden High Street, Parkway, Greenland Road, Camden Road and Kentish Town Road. It would also be the most prominent and dominant structure in Camden High Street and the neighbouring streets. Indeed it is probably the highest telecom monopole or mast on the footway that the Borough has ever received as a planning proposal.

4.6 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 street and positive contributors. The two

street lamps on this section of footway are located on the edge of the footpath, and are 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. In addition, the base is enveloped by a large wrap-around cabinet which further adds to the pole's bulky and incongruous form. Consequently, it is considered that the proposed installation causes harm to the setting, character and appearance of the surrounding buildings, streetscene and this part of the Camden Town Conservation Area. The development would be visually very prominent in one of the most iconic views in the whole borough of Camden. The pole would be substantially taller than a lamp post and much thicker, with a large amount of associated cabinets at ground level. The pole would also be substantially taller than the neighbouring low-rise buildings. It will interfere with appreciation of the surrounding positive contributors in the conservation area and is overscaled and visually dominant.

4.7 It is noted that there is not any existing telecom equipment in this location. The monopole and associated 4 cabinets would appear bulky and very dominant in relation to the existing streetscene.

4.8 The proposed 3 equipment cabinets and base station around the monopole are located at street level. They are set 1.2m away from the edge of the footpath. Given their siting and scale, they would be highly visible from a range of vantage points along Camden High Street and Parkway. They would create very dominant and bulky street clutter along a pavement which only has small litterbins, seats and an information panel plus the usual slender lampposts etc. They would thus create visual harm to the streetscene and conservation area.

4.9 Neither the plans nor the supplementary planning information provided indicate how many antennae there will be on the pole. The applicant has confirmed by email that there will be three antenna proposed at each of 90, 210 and 330 degrees orientation. It is considered that the drawings are insufficient to clearly show this.

4.10 In conclusion, it is considered that the development would result in visual street clutter and little justification has been provided for its need in this location or that alternative sites have been fully explored. Secondly, the 20m height of the pole and 0.8m-1.8m high of the cabinets is considered excessive. No justification has been provided on the pole's height which significantly dwarfs the neighbouring buildings. Thirdly, its location/height results in the development being very prominent as it is near the wide junction of Camden High Street and Kentish Town Road.

4.11 Camden policy supports uncluttered streetscapes which do not detract from the surrounding environment in policy D1 and D2. Any intervention at street level for telecoms equipment should harmonise with the underlying design ethos of the neighbouring buildings and streetscape rather than detract from its character and appearance. It is considered that the equipment in terms of its siting, bulk and height has not been carefully considered and no attempt has been made to screen or conceal the equipment nor place it elsewhere more unobtrusively and appropriately on existing high buildings. Therefore the visibility of the proposed equipment is exacerbated by the long/ short distance views of the building. It is considered to harm the character and appearance of Camden Town Conservation Area.

4.12 It is accepted that telecommunications equipment by the nature of their functional design and aesthetic may not blend seamlessly with existing buildings. However, given the above, it is considered that the structures, by virtue of their excessive bulk and height and their prominent siting, would result

in a proliferation of harmful visual clutter which would be unattractive and over-dominant on the street and would cause harm to the character and appearance of the streetscene and Camden Town Conservation area.

Transport

4.13 Both the Council's Highways team and TFL have objected that the development would harm pedestrian comfort in this high footfall area.

4.14 The footway at the proposed site is approximately 7.2 metres wide. The plans submitted suggest that the telecommunications equipment would reduce the effective footway width to approximately 5 metres. This is considered to be insufficient for pedestrians to pass unhindered in this busy location near Camden Town Station.

4.15 Highways officers and TFL have identified that the site is located near one of the busiest junctions in Camden and next to Camden Town tube station which has high pedestrian movements both day and night. The proposed monopole and 3 cabinets would add to the street clutter which would further hinder pedestrians on Camden High Street.

4.16 CPG Transport 9.7 states that the Council expects developments to consider the movement of people in and around a site, and to include the following:

- Ensuring the safety of vulnerable road users, including children, elderly people and people with mobility difficulties, sight impairments, and other disabilities;
- Avoiding street clutter and minimising the risk of pedestrian routes being obstructed or narrowed, e.g. by footway parking or by unnecessary street furniture.

4.17 The current London Plan Policy 6.10 (Walking) refers to 'promoting simplified streetscape, decluttering and access for all' and also states that Planning Decisions 'should ensure high quality pedestrian environments and emphasise the quality of the pedestrian and street space'. Intend to Publish (ItP) London Plan Policy T2(d) states that development proposals should 'demonstrate how they deliver improvements that support the 10 Healthy Streets Indicators in line with Transport for London guidance'.

4.18 The proposed monopole and cabinets, by virtue of its location, size and additional unnecessary street clutter, would reduce the amount of useable, unobstructed footway, which would be detrimental to the quality of the public realm, would cause harm to highway safety and would hinder pedestrian movement, and have a detrimental impact on the promotion of walking as an alternative to motorised transport.

Amenity

4.19 Para 45 of the NPPF states that applications for telecommunications development should be supported by the necessary evidence to justify the proposed development. This should include, for an addition to an existing mast or base station, a statement that self-certifies that the cumulative exposure, when operational, will not exceed International Commission on non-ionizing radiation protection guidelines. Para 46 states that local planning authorities must determine applications on planning grounds. They should not seek to prevent competition between different operators, question the need for the telecommunications system, or *determine health safeguards if the proposal meets International Commission guidelines for public exposure.* (my emphasis)

4.20 The application submitted an ICNIRP Declaration which certifies that the equipment is designed to be fully compliant with the precautionary guidelines set by the International Commission on Non-

Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP). It is noted that a number of objections have been received to the proposed telecommunications equipment on health grounds. As noted above, the NPPF does not give scope for the local planning authority to determine health safeguards beyond compliance with ICNIRP.

4.21 On account of the pole's siting in relation to other properties, there will be no impact on daylight, sunlight or outlook to neighbouring premises nor any harm arising from a perception of risk to health. It is thus concluded that there will be no adverse impact on residential amenity or public safety of adjoining residential occupiers.

5.0 Planning balance

5.1 Local Plan Policies D1 and D2, consistent with Section 16 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment) of the NPPF (2019), seek to preserve and enhance heritage assets, stating that the Council will not permit the loss of or substantial harm to a designated heritage asset, including conservation areas and Listed Buildings, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss.

5.2 The site is located within the Camden Town Conservation area; No.176 and Camden Town Tube, as well as the bank buildings adjacent and opposite, are recognised as positive contributors. Britannia Junction is similarly highlighted thus identifying all associated buildings as Non-Designated Heritage Assets thus providing protection under the policy 197 within the NPPF as well as heritage related policy D2 within the Camden Local Plan.

5.3 Given the assessment outlined above, it is considered that the proposed telecommunications equipment would result in 'less than substantial' harm to the Camden Town Conservation Area. It is recognised that the proposed scheme would result in better network coverage, and as such, some public benefit would be derived from the scheme. However, the harm caused as a result of the development is not outweighed by this public benefit, thus the proposal is considered to be contrary to Section 16 of the NPPF which seeks to preserve heritage assets.

5.4 Considerable importance and weight has been attached to the harm and special attention has been paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance conservation area, under s. 72 of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990 as amended by the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013.

5.5 The proposal would therefore fail to accord with policies D1 and D2 of the Camden Local Plan 2017, and Section 16 of the NPPF 2019. The development would create overly dominant visual clutter on a prominent corner, causing harm to the host and neighbouring buildings, local views from the street and conservation area. It would also create unnecessary obstructions on the pavement and would cause harm to highway safety and hinder pedestrian movement.

6.0 Recommendation

6.1 Prior Approval Required – Approval refused on grounds of unacceptable siting and design.