

Comments of DPCAAC on application 2020/4559/P Haddo House Highgate Road NW5

Installation of telecommunications equipment on rooftop comprising 3 antennas on poles, 3 cabinets and ancillary works, plus 1meter cabinet at ground level.

Note: The public site notices show end of consultation date 19/11/2020 while 29/11/2020 on Council's website. NW elevation existing/proposed do not show existing fixtures.

This application is broadly similar to the previously refused application 2020/1456/P except:

- Antenna 3 has been repositioned towards the centre to avoid panorama views
- Inclusion of a Heritage Impact Assessment
- Inclusion of the NW elevation existing/proposed.

Our strong objections remain.

The building

Haddo House is a beautifully balanced, symmetrical and architecturally significant building in our conservation area in a setting of listed buildings and the historic Grove Terrace London Squares. Designed by architect Robert Baillie for St Pancras Borough in 1965, a forerunner of the modernist architecture of LB Camden that closely followed and which is renowned the world over. He was then commissioned to finish this estate in Gordon House Road. It is described in detail in DPCAAMS 7.11 and is listed as making a positive contribution. Due to its height and excellent design, it forms an important feature in the area. The Council is its freehold owner and as clients should ensure the integrity of this building is respected.

Visual impact

Due to the DPCA topography its roofscape, acknowledged to be of great importance, can be viewed from many locations from within and also outside the conservation area. In the view west from the Hampstead and Highgate Ridge the upper floors of Haddo House and its roofscape is particularly significant (DPCAAMS 4.6 Views and DPNP Appendix 1 Protected views such as 2 Chetwynd Road). The proposed equipment would introduce clutter visually unbalancing the attractive roofline. Long views are not shown in the applicant's photomontage which only shows near views; contrary to Code of Best Practice on Mobile Phone Development in England page 26. The local view from the ancient College Lane footpath is not shown.

The Heritage Impact Assessment on page 10 fig 4 (mislabelled fig 1) makes no reference to the protected long views from the Hampstead and Highgate Ridge looking west to Haddo House nor from Parliament Hill itself. We note fig 4 (1) does not give the height of Haddo House. The Assessment examines purely the effect from nearby public realm where on page 13 it claims the equipment will not be directly visible from ground level in spite of the blurry images in the photomontage showing the contrary. Page 10 states the equipment will "have a large degree of visual screening by surrounding mature trees along Highgate Road" and throughout the document the screening of mature trees is frequently referred to. This reasoning has no value as for half the year trees are not in leaf. We strongly disagree that the equipment is "designed

so it does not protrude the skyline of the area” and with its conclusion that it will cause no visual harm. It clearly does. This proposal does not comply with Camden’s Local Plan which states in Design, Policy D1 that Council will require that development preserves strategic and local views.

The NW elevation now included in this application, shows a proposed meter cabinet with cable tray rising full height up the building. Neither existing nor proposed elevations show the existing fixtures, (see application 2011/5732/P).

The existing elevation shows a careful design articulation of this end wall. The proposed installation would clearly introduce harm to the building’s design concept and where it would be prominently viewed from the public realm and affect the setting of nearby listed buildings.

The roof plan shows 300mm wide cable tray crossing over 4 no. rooflights; this continues to show a lack of consideration for the integrity of the original design. It will demean the quality of the internal space and would likely affect maintenance.

Suitability of the host building

The applicant states these masts are required to improve network inadequate coverage in the Highgate Road area. Crucially relevant, is the consent recently granted (2020/2420/P) whereby Telephonica and Vodaphone gained permission for 12 antennas and associated equipment on Grangemill House, an eight storey block on nearby Ingestre Road less than 200m away. This will provide as per its informative, coverage for 3G, 4G and provide new 5G coverage locally. The document VF 88298 Coverage plots in the Grangemill application show mobile voice efficiency in the whole of the Highgate area (Dartmouth Park) improving from rural to urban/dense urban coverage and broadband efficiency from negative/outdoors to rural/urban. Also relevant is another Telephonica application (2017/5172/P) for telecommunication equipment on the roof of Winifrede Paul House in York Rise, which was refused the reasons as set out the officer’s delegated report.

With the current emerging large development of the nearby Murphy site, it may be appropriate for the applicant to liaise with their developer at an early stage to design in telecommunication requirements as per Camden’s Local Plan.

Conclusion

The installation of this telecommunication equipment on the roof of Haddo House will introduce unacceptable clutter detrimental to its balanced roof form and together with other additions will negatively alter the appearance of the building and affect the DPCA setting. It does not comply with Camden’s Local Plan and DPNP policies, nor with DPCAAMS.

In the light of the Grangemill consent referred to above, there can be no justification for this application on the grounds of public benefit that outweighs the visual harm to the duty to preserve or enhance our conservation area.

DPCAAC consider that this application should be refused