

**Listed Building Application**

**Installation of Fibre Optic Cabling at Alexandra Ainsworth Estate**

**Design & Access Statement**

**June 2022**

**Table of Contents**

1. Community Fibre
2. Requirement and Need
3. Site Specific Proposals
4. Policy
5. Pre-application Consultation
6. General Impact Issues
7. Design & Access
8. Conclusion
9. **Community Fibre**

Community Fibre are the largest supplier of Fibre to The Home (FTTH) services in central London.

Unlike many other Internet Service Providers, who use copper cables to get Internet services into the home, Community Fibre installs a fibre optic cable directly into the subject premises to provide the fastest possible Internet service currently available.

Community Fibre are a relatively young company, which clearly takes time to establish itself, but we have already started network builds in many London Boroughs including Westminster & Chelsea.

Community Fibre can offer an Internet connection with speeds up to 1,000 megabits per second.

Care is always taken with any installation, no matter the circumstances. The environmental issues that will arise, and the impact on the buildings across the estate in this case, are modest, and these are detailed later within this statement.

1. **Requirement**

Community Fibre have been progressing discussions with the London Borough of Camden in relation to the supply of their FTTH services across several the housing estates owned by the Council.

These discussions have now progressed to an agreement to extend these services to Alexandra Ainsworth Estate while residents’ groups have also been met by Community Fibre in each case.

This application deals with the installations at Alexandra Ainsworth Estate.

4-119 & 5- 104 Rowley Way (NW8 0SL), 12-62 Alexander Place (NW8 0DY), 1-8 Langtry Walk ( NW8 0DU)

The Community Fibre scheme has the benefit of providing true ultrafast fibre broadband services to all residents of the above buildings and has the added advantage of allowing the removal of unsightly external dishes and other associated equipment, that might currently be in place to service individual users’ broadband needs.

The fibre-optic cable installed by Community Fibre has a very high capacity and can deliver Internet services, TV signals, radio signals as well as the data required by building management systems such as CCTV, door entry, heating system data, security alarm and tele- health applications.

1. **Site Specific Proposals**

In this case, the intention is to install fibre optic cabling to the addresses mentioned in the previous section, which are part of Alexandra Ainsworth Estate.

In total, there are 512 premises to be connected under this proposal. Providing service to these units will include the installation of fibre cables externally of the building that will be secure with catenary wire.

Community Fibre will also be running their feed and distribution cables externally.

Associated small fibre cabinets (splitter boxes) will be installed externally on the side walls of the two buildings. (Splitter box dimensions (LxDxH): 376x182x500mm).

1. **Policy**

**Central**

The National Planning Policy Framework, details Government guidance on planning for telecommunications development. This confirms the principal policy of the Government to facilitate the growth of new and existing telecommunication systems, whilst keeping the environmental impact to a minimum.

Relevant extracts from the NPPF are as follows:

*42. Advanced, high-quality communications infrastructure is essential for sustainable economic growth. The development of high-speed broadband technology and other communications networks also plays a vital role in enhancing the provision of local community facilities and services.*

*43. .... local planning authorities should support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including telecommunications and high-speed broadband. They 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.*

**5) London Plan**

The London Plan (March 2016) sets out the mayor’s planning strategy for Greater London and contains strategic, thematic and general crosscutting policies and more specific guidance for sub- areas within the Metropolitan Area.

It is considered that the Community Fibre network is an integral element in securing the mayor’s vision for the delivery of modern communications networks across London. More specifically, the proposed development is entirely consistent with, and will help to implement, the strategic objectives contained in Policy 4.11 ‘Encouraging a Connected Economy’ of the Plan. Policy 4.11, and its written justification (notably paragraphs 4.56 & 4.57), is clearly supportive of the proposal and the role that it will perform in allowing Community Fibre to widen communication services access.

The Mayor’s Office works with central government and London’s local authorities to ensure that strategic communication networks are enabled rather than inhibited by the planning and other regulatory systems (whilst ensuring the utility works themselves are properly managed).

The Community Fibre network is an integral element in securing the mayor’s vision for the delivery of modern communications networks across London. More specifically, the proposed development is entirely consistent with and shall help to implement the strategic objectives contained in the London Plan and London Infrastructure Plan.

It is our view that this scheme falls squarely in line with the above guidance and policy.

1. **General Impact Issues**

**Visual**

As the net effect of the works proposed will be a minor change to the existing buildings and their appearance, our firm belief is that the impact on visual appearance and amenity, both in terms of the buildings themselves and the wider environment will be minimal.

**Impact on Building**

We are conscious that the scheme includes the installation of cabling on, and equipment within, buildings that are listed Grade II. These works are required to provide true ultrafast fibre broadband services to all occupants within the estate.

The cabling itself is not considered to be intrusive or distracting. All newly drilled holes were required to run cabling will be completed to a high specification and inspected post installation by an independent fire and safety company to ensure these meet government specifications. Existing routes have been planned to be used to minimise the number of new holes as much as possible.

Therefore, we believe that there will be a minimised material impact on either the important architectural or historic elements of the buildings.

1. **Design & Access Design Component**

* Use proposed – Installation of fibre optic broadband cabling, to provide true ultrafast broadband connectivity
* Amount – Distribution fibre and drop cabling and related fibre cabinets as per drawings and complementary photomontage pack. The extent of the works has been driven by the need to ensure the widest possible availability to all occupants, and to comply with health and safety requirements.
* Layout – As per drawings and associated photomontage pack.
* Scale - Distribution fibre and drop cabling and related fibre cabinets as per drawings and complementary photomontage pack.
* Landscaping - None considered to be necessary. However, we are happy to consider any proposals that the Council may wish to put forward.
* Appearance - Distribution fibre and drop cabling and related fibre cabinets as per drawings and complementary photomontage pack. The extent of the works has been driven by the need to ensure the widest possible availability to all occupants, and to comply with health and safety requirements.

1. **Design & Access**

Access to the works is limited to Community Fibre and their authorised agents. The works will not impede any current or future access to the site, buildings or individual homes.

1. **Conclusion**

The proposal to install the Community Fibre system within Alexandra Ainsworth Estate is as a direct result of demand for true ultrafast fibre optic broadband services. The scheme is also in accordance with the adopted policy of the London Camden, while also being in full accord with central government guidance, together with the London Plan.

In physical terms, the works will witness a very limited change to the existing site and buildings, and our firm belief is that the impact on visual appearance and amenity, together with the listed status of the buildings, both in terms of the buildings themselves, and the wider environment, will be minimal.