

Location **John Keble Church Deans Lane Edgware HA8 9NT**

Reference: **15/04505/FUL** Received: 17th July 2015
Accepted: 27th July 2015

Ward: Hale Expiry 21st September 2015

Applicant:

Proposal: Installation of 8 no. antennas on exterior metal balustrade on church tower and development ancillary thereto

Recommendation: Approve subject to conditions.

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:
 - Photomontage external equipment - Drg No 900 Rev A
 - Site location maps - Drg No 100 Rev C
 - Site layout plan proposed - Drg No 202 Rev G
 - North elevation proposed - Drg No 304 Rev G
 - West elevation proposed - Drg No 305 Rev G
 - South elevation proposed - Drg No 306 Rev G
 - First floor plan proposed - Drg No 401 Rev G
 - Equipment floor plan proposed - Drg No 402 Rev G
 - Equipment elevation proposed - Drg No 403 Rev G

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning and so as to ensure that the development is carried out fully in accordance with the plans as assessed in accordance with Policies CS NPPF and CS1 of the Local Plan Core Strategy DPD (adopted September 2012) and Policy DM01 of the Local Plan Development Management Policies DPD (adopted September 2012).

- 2 The proposed antennas shall be located on the existing metal balustrade in the position shown on the plans and painted black.

Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance of the streetscene and general locality in accordance of the area in accordance with policy DM01.

- 3 This development must be begun within three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 4 a) No site works (including any temporary enabling works, site clearance and demolition or any investigative works referred in any other conditions, or development) shall be commenced until an ecological survey has been undertaken investigating the presence of bats within the tower of the subject building. This survey shall detail any mitigation strategy that may be necessary and shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

b) The site clearance and any mitigation measures shall be implemented in full in accordance with details approved under this condition.

Reason: To ensure that nature conservation interests are not prejudiced by the development in accordance with Policy DM16 of the Development Management Policies DPD (adopted September 2012) and the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (adopted April 2013).

- 5 No site works (including any temporary enabling works, site clearance and demolition or any investigative works referred in any other conditions, or development) shall be commenced until detailed drawings of the approved antennas at a scale of 1:5 or 1:10 are provided to and approved by Council.

Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance of the streetscene and general locality in accordance of the area in accordance with policy DM01

Informative(s):

None

Officer's Assessment

1. Site Description

The application site is located at John Keble Church, Deans Lane, Edgware, HA8 9NT. This site is located on the corner of Deans Lane and Church Close. Residential land use surrounds the application site. Deansbrook Junior School and Deansbrook Infant School is located approximately 140 metres to the south of the application site. John Keble Church is a grade II listed building.

2. Site History

Reference: W00082A

Address: John Keeble Church Hall Church Close Edgware Middlesex

Decision: Approved subject to conditions

Decision Date: 15 June 1992

Description: Single storey side extension and external alterations

Reference: W00082B

Address: John Keble Church, Deans Lane Edgware

Decision: Approved subject to conditions

Decision Date: 5 June 1998

Description: Demolition of existing scout hut and adjoining shed and construction of replacement single storey building for Scouts and Guides

Reference: H/03948/08

Address: John Keble Church, Deans Lane, Edgware, Middx, HA8 9NT

Decision: Refused (appeal dismissed)

Decision Date: 29 December 2008

Description: Replacement of single glazed windows with double glazed windows.

Reference: W00082

Address: John Keble Church, Deans Lane, Edgware, Middx, HA8 9NT
Decision: Approved subject to conditions
Decision Date: 20 May 1965
Description: Use of Church Hall for a children's play group.

3. Proposal

This application seeks approval to install 8 kathrien (panel) antennas mounted to an existing metal balustrade located on the tower of the existing building. The metal balustrade is located approximately 17.5 metres above ground level. The proposed antennas will be painted black to match the colour of the existing metal balustrade. The supporting equipment for the antennas will be located internally within the tower. The purpose of the proposed works is to secure acceptable replacement 2G and 3G coverage within this area of Edgware resulting in the need to vacate the roof of Trafalgar House.

4. Public Consultation

Consultation letters were sent to 124 neighbouring properties. Seven responses have been received in regard to this application comprising 7 letters of objection. The letters of objection can be described as follows:

- The application site is a densely populated area and the proposal could result in health problems for surrounding residents and those who use the church
- The application site is close to schools
- The proposal could impact satellite dish signals
- The site is a religious and holy place where people frequently accumulate
- The antennas would reduce the value of properties in the area
- Alternative site have not been explored
- The address of the application site is incorrect
- There are bats in close vicinity of the church and no action has been taken to protect them
- The declaration of conformity is not complete
- There has been a lack of consultation

A letter was received from Historic England in regard to this application. Historic England did not consider it necessary for this application to be notified to them. They did not express any objection to the proposal.

Council's Urban Design and Heritage Department also commented on this application. Officers have indicated that the proposed antennas are not overly damaging to the significance of the heritage asset.

5. Planning Considerations

5.1 Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework

The determination of planning applications is made mindful of Central Government advice and the Local Plan for the area. It is recognised that Local Planning Authorities must determine applications in accordance with the statutory Development Plan, unless material

considerations indicate otherwise, and that the planning system does not exist to protect the private interests of one person against another.

The 'National Planning Policy Framework' (NPPF) was published on 27 March 2012. This is a key part of the Government's reforms to make the planning system less complex and more accessible, and to promote sustainable growth.

The London Plan is recognised in the NPPF as part of the development plan.

The NPPF states that "good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people."

NPPF retains presumption in favour of sustainable development. This applies unless any adverse impacts of a development would "significantly and demonstrably" outweigh the benefits.

The NPPF states that high quality communications infrastructure is essential for sustainable economic growth and plays a vital role in enhancing the provision of local community facilities and services. Local planning authorities are directed by the NPPF to support the expansion of telecommunications networks, ideally through the use of take advantage of existing structures in order to keep the number of telecommunication sites to a minimum. Further, the NPPF states that equipment should be sympathetically designed and camouflaged where appropriate. Additionally, local planning authorities are required to consider planning matters only and not seek to prevent competition between different operators, question the need for the telecommunications system, or determine health safeguards if the proposal meets the required guidelines for public exposure.

The Mayor's London Plan July 2011:

The London Development Plan is the overall strategic plan for London, and it sets out a fully integrated economic, environmental, transport and social framework for the development of the capital to 2031. It forms part of the development plan for Greater London.

The London Plan provides a unified framework for strategies that are designed to ensure that all Londoners benefit from sustainable improvements to their quality of life.

Core Strategy (Adopted) 2012:

The Core Strategy was adopted by the Council on September 11 2012. Therefore very significant weight should be given to the 16 policies in the CS. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (para 216) sets out the weight that can be given to emerging policies as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

Relevant Core Strategy Policies: CS NPPF, CS1, CS5.

Development Management Policies (Adopted) 2012:

The Development Management Policies document provides the borough wide planning policies that implement the Core Strategy. These policies will be used for day-to-day decision making.

Development Management Policies was adopted by the Council on September 11 2012. Therefore very significant weight should be given to the 18 policies in the DMP.

Relevant Development Management Policies (Adopted) 2012: DM01, DM02, DM06 and DM18.

5.2 Main issues for consideration

1. Whether harm would be caused to the heritage values of and/or visual appearance of the existing building.
2. Whether the proposed antennas would harm residential amenity.

5.3 Assessment of proposals

1. Whether harm would be caused to the heritage values of the building and the visual appearance of the application site and wider area.

Policy DM18 of Barnet's Development Management Policies document outlines Council's direction in terms of telecommunications related applications. This policy states that council will seek to ensure that the development of modern telecommunications equipment is sympathetic to Barnet's suburban townscape and countryside. Further, Policy DM18 states that the visual impact of telecommunications equipment on the character of an area and the appearance of property can be minimised through careful design, placement, colouring and landscaping. In regard to heritage assets, Policy DM18 states that the telecommunications equipment should preserve or enhance the special character and appearance of heritage assets. Additionally, the NPPF outlines that telecommunications equipment should be sympathetically designed and camouflaged where appropriate.

The existing building is a grade II nationally listed structure and as such, it is necessary to take into account the effect of the proposed antennas on the heritage values of the existing building. In regard to this matter it should be noted that this application has been assessed by Historic England and by Councils Urban Design and Heritage Department. Neither Historic England nor Council staff have raised any objection to the proposed antennas in terms of their effect on the heritage values of and/or visual appearance of the existing building.

It is considered that the plans included as part of the application provide a sufficient representation of the location and appearance of the proposed antennas from street level. These plans suggest that the proposed antennas will not be visually obtrusive. The antenna are positioned on an existing metal balustrade approximately 17 metres above ground level and are of a size which integrates well with the scale of the existing metal balustrade and the wider building as a whole. Further, it is proposed to paint the antennas the same colour as the metal balustrade (black).

As such, it is considered in this instance that the proposed antennas integrate well with the existing building, preserve its historic values, and do not compromise the visual appearance of the application site or wider area.

It should also be noted in regard to this matter that John Keble Church has ecclesiastical exemption from Listed Building Consent and as such, no listed building application has been submitted in association with this application.

2. Whether the proposed antennas would harm residential amenity

It is not considered that the proposed antennas would harm residential amenity in this instance. This determination is based on the siting and scale of the antennas. In particular, the antennas are located approximately 17 metres above ground level and are of a size and colour which integrates well with the existing building. Further, although the application site adjoins residential properties, the building subject to this application is located approximately 26 metres from the nearest boundary of a residential property. It should also be noted that this nearest property is separated from the application site by Church Close. The next closest residential boundary not separated from the site by a road is located approximately 30 metres from the subject building. As such, it is not considered that the antennas will limit the ability for any person to enjoy the amenity of their residential property in the vicinity of the application site.

6. Equality and Diversity Issues

The proposal does not conflict with either Barnet Council's Equalities Policy or the commitments set in the Equality Scheme and supports the Council in meeting its statutory equality responsibilities.

7. Response to Consultation

A number of those matters raised in the letters of objection have been addressed in those paragraphs above and will not be given further consideration in this section.

It is not considered that the proposed antennas will impact satellite dish signals in the vicinity of the application site.

The effect an application may have on property values is not a material planning matter which can be taken into account.

In regard to the exploration of alternative sites for the proposed antennas, the application outlined the process given to choosing the proposed site and consideration of alternative sites. The application suggests that alternative sites were limited due to the predominance of residential land use and coverage requirement. Coverage plots have also been generated and included as part of the application. This demonstrates that there would be a significant drop in coverage in the area if the proposed replacement antennas at the application site were not provided. Further, it is indicated that the replacement installation would result in an overall improvement in coverage within the local area. It is also acknowledged in regard to this matter that the NPPF encourages the use of existing structures and directs local planning authorities to keep the number of telecommunication sites to a minimum. In this instance, an existing structure is being used and the subject antennas are replacing existing facilities on the roof of Trafalgar House which is located within the vicinity of the application site.

In regard to the incorrect address of the application site and the process of consultation, officers identified and corrected the address of the application site and reconsulted on this application. Further, officers have followed procedure in terms of those parties consulted. All properties within a 50 metre radius of the application site were consulted. Further a site notice was posted in the vicinity of the application site on 6 August 2015.

In regard to the presence of bats in the church, the applicant has included a letter from Thomas Ford & Partners Chartered Architects Surveyors confirming that an onsite visit was made to determine the presence of bats. This visit did not reveal any evidence of bats in the structure and suggests that the structure does not provide good living conditions for bats. Further, a condition has been recommended for inclusion within any potential approval for this activity which requires that no works take place until an ecological survey has been undertaken and approved by the local planning authority which investigates the presence of bats within the subject building. This survey is also required to detail any mitigation in the event of the presence of bats.

In regard to health and safety concerns, the application included a certificate demonstrating the Declaration of Conformity with ICNIRP Public Exposure Guidelines. As directed by the NPPF, no further consideration need be given to the effects of the proposed antennas on the health or safety of any person in the vicinity of the application site.

8. Conclusion

Having taken all material matters into account, it is considered that the proposal would preserve the historic value of the existing building and will not compromise the visual appearance of the application site or wider area. Further, it is not considered that the proposed works would impact residential amenity in the vicinity of the application site. As such, this application is recommended for approval.

Site Plan

