

Camden Planning Guidance

# Digital Infrastructure

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## Digital Infrastructure

### What is Camden Planning Guidance?

1. The Council has prepared this guidance to support the policies in the Camden Local Plan 2017. It is a formal Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which is therefore a “material consideration” in planning decisions.
2. Camden Planning Guidance covers a range of topics (such as design, housing, sustainability and planning obligations) and all of sections should be read in conjunction with, and within the context of the Local Plan.

### What does this guidance cover?

3. This guidance supports the Camden Local Plan policies E1 Economic development and DM1 Delivery and monitoring. One of the Council's priorities for delivering growth and harnessing its benefits for the borough is securing infrastructure and services to meet the needs of Camden's growing numbers of residents, workers and visitors. The Council aims to enable improved internet access through the acceleration of high speed connectivity, including public wireless systems. Policy E1 specifically expects the applicants to provide electronic communication networks, including telecommunications and high speed broadband in business premises. This guidance sets out further information on the Council's approach.

#### KEY MESSAGES

- The Council will support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including telecommunications and high speed broadband
- Building Regulations require physical infrastructure to support high-speed broadband in all new building developments and major renovation projects
- The Camden Local Plan specifically requires high speed digital infrastructure in all employment developments
- The Council will require applications for telecommunications development to be supported by the necessary evidence to justify the proposed development.

### Building Regulations

4. In January 2017 a digital connectivity requirement (Part R) was introduced to Schedule 1 of the Building Regulations 2010. This requires physical infrastructure to support high-speed broadband in all new building developments and major renovation projects.

## Fibre optic broadband

5. The Council recognises the importance of digital infrastructure in enterprise development and as stated in Local Plan policy E1(h) expects high speed digital infrastructure in all employment developments.
6. In order to support the expansion of digital infrastructure and help businesses in all employment developments access highest available broadband speeds, the Council expects the provision of on-site infrastructure, including open access ducting to industry standards, to enable all premises to be directly served by fibre optic broadband technology.
7. It is important that developers consider what digital infrastructure needs to be in place ahead of employment development. Applicants are expected to consider the following in schemes for employment premises:
  - Service access points to the building
  - Wiring
  - Positioning of Optical Network Termination and Battery Backup
  - Duct laying around the site, under footways and carriageways
  - Internal network cabling in the building
  - Installation of conduit to the communications room or distribution box
  - Joint boxes
  - Frames and covers
  - Quality Control
8. Enabling works for digital infrastructure will need to be considered at the planning stage in order to ensure connectivity is provided without disruption to the occupiers.
9. Applicants are encouraged to work with a network provider from the early stages of the planning of their development and on a non-exclusive basis during the construction phase. This will reduce delays in connecting to existing networks and reduce lead-in times if the existing network requires capacity upgrade to serve the development.
10. Different network providers may have different requirements. Example guides for developers can be viewed at the links below:

<http://www.newdevelopments-openreach.co.uk/>

<http://www.virginmedia.com/lightning/network-expansion/property-developers>

## Telecommunications equipment

11. Proposals for the installation of telecommunications equipment such as masts, cabinet boxes and satellite dishes, erecting antennae or other such structures will be determined in accordance with the [National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\)](#) Section 5 – Supporting high quality infrastructure (paragraphs 42 to 46).
12. In line with the NPPF, the Council will support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including telecommunications and high speed broadband.

13. In particular, 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.
14. The Council will require applications for telecommunications development (including for prior approval under Part 24 of the General Permitted Development Order) to be supported by the necessary evidence to justify the proposed development. The evidence should include:
  - the outcome of consultations with organisations with an interest in the proposed development, in particular with the relevant body where a mast is to be installed near a school or college; and
  - 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-ionising radiation protection guidelines; or
  - for a new mast or base station, evidence that the applicant has explored the possibility of erecting antennas on an existing building, mast or other structure and a statement that self-certifies that, when operational, International Commission guidelines will be met.
15. Given both the potential impact of such infrastructure on the historic environment and the significance of much of Camden's built environment, the Council also refers the applicants to the [Code of Practice for Mobile Network Development in England](#) developed in partnership between mobile operators, Government and other stakeholders including Historic England.

### Digital Infrastructure Toolkit

16. Camden, Central London Forward and other partners have contributed to the City of London Corporation's new [standardised wayleave template](#) for central London which aims to simplify the process for network operators and developers looking to make digital infrastructure improvements. Taking input from local developers, landlords, ISPs, property managers, government, legal firms and key trade associations, the toolkit should help make it quicker and cheaper to roll-out superfast broadband to buildings.
17. Wayleaves are legal agreements which grant special access to land or buildings to install or manage infrastructure. For example, this could include running a new fibre optic cable through a building. Agreements are needed with land and building owners, as well as affected tenants. In central London, this can often mean complicated negotiations with multiple parties, leading to frustrating delays. The toolkit hopes to simplify the process.

18. The tools listed below will allow landlords and broadband providers to more quickly agree the details of access, installation and maintenance for network equipment in new and existing buildings. Using them should help premises to be connected more quickly.
- [Toolkit guidance](#)
  - [Flowchart](#)
  - [Standardised Wayleave Agreement template](#)
  - [Contacts sheet template](#)
  - [Model risk assessment and method statement](#)
19. The resources above, however, should not be taken as setting the approach that the Council shall take in its role as landowner if a wayleave agreement is required to be secured over its land. This is because there exists a general policy that all applications for wayleave agreements affecting Council land are directed to Camden Council's legal department (property team) and then assessed by external advisors.

### **Mayor's Connectivity Rating Scheme**

20. Since 2015 the Greater London Authority has run the Mayor's Digital Connectivity Rating Scheme, delivered by Wired Score.
21. With the critical role of technology to commercial growth, businesses need clear information and intelligence when seeking new premises. The opt-in scheme rates the quality of digital connectivity in office spaces in London, and helps businesses find the information they need in advance of signing leases.
22. The project is also valuable for developers and landlords looking to market their properties. As the connectivity of buildings is now a major asset, the project enables them to better communicate their investment in digital infrastructure.
23. The certification scheme from Wired Score, already highly successful in the United States, provides an independent assessment of buildings' connectivity. The project uses several metrics including: connectivity quality, infrastructure, and readiness, providing a benchmark against a single standard.

### **Camden's Digital Strategy**

24. [Camden's Digital Strategy](#) sets out a series of actions to support the uptake of high quality, next generation connectivity. This includes:
- better connections for businesses and residents already on-line
  - tackling the 'digital divide' where people lack the confidence to use IT
  - the greater use of digital technology in delivering services.