Prime
Transport Planning
Together for Progress

Technical Note

Grange Lane, Didsbury

Client: Jet Infrastructure



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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of Report

1.1.1 Prime Transport Planning (Prime) has prepared this Technical Note (TN) on behalf Jet Infrastructure to support its Prior Approval application for the:

> *'Installation of a street works monopole and associated equipment cabinets on the southern side of Grange Lane, close to its junction with Wilmslow Road in Didsbury.'*

1.1.2 Following the submission of the application, Manchester City Council's (MCC) Traffic and Road Safety team stated in correspondence dated 17th July 2026:

> *'The location reference JET 152 Grange Lane Didsbury is unsuitable due to restriction of footway below design for access guidance and located close to a tactile drop crossing on a busy junction.'*

1.1.3 This TN has therefore been prepared in response to MCC's comments, providing further clarification and supporting evidence to demonstrate the acceptability of the proposed installation in respect of pedestrian accessibility, movement and highway safety.

1.1.4 The conclusions and recommendations contained herein have been drawn based on information available and obtained in advance of the preparation of the report. Reasonable checks have been carried out on any third-party information used in the preparation of this report but, nonetheless, Prime Transport Planning (Prime) accepts no liability for the accuracy or otherwise of this data. Third-party rights are excluded for the use of information contained within this report.

1.2 Report Structure

1.2.1 Following this introduction, the remainder of the report is structured as follows:

- Section 2 sets out the relevant planning policy, permitted-development framework and pedestrian accessibility guidance;
- Section 3 describes the existing situation, including the Site, the surrounding pedestrian facilities and the relative role of the southern and northern footways;
- Section 4 outlines the Proposed Development and considers its relationship with the existing footway, tactile crossing and petrol filling station (PFS) access;
- Section 5 explains the pedestrian survey methodology, presents the survey results and compares pedestrian movements on the southern and northern footways;
- Section 6 assesses pedestrian capacity, passing movements, inclusive access and the safeguards associated with the Proposed Development; and
- Section 7 provides a summary of the findings and conclusions of the report.

2 PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE CONTEXT

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 This section considers the proposal against the relevant national planning policy and statutory prior-approval framework. It also considers the local design and streetscape context relevant to the siting and appearance of the proposed telecommunications equipment, including the established urban environment, adjacent PFS and existing highway infrastructure.

2.2 National Planning Policy Framework

2.2.1 The current National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in August 2026 and is supportive of the delivery and upgrading of telecommunications infrastructure. Chapter 9, Supporting high-quality communications, includes Policy CO1: Proposals for telecommunications infrastructure and Policy CO2: Supporting information for telecommunications infrastructure proposals.

2.2.2 TR4: Street design, access and parking of the NPPF states:

> *1. To contribute to creating well-designed places, transport considerations should be integral to the design of development, proposals for which should:*
>
> *a. Give priority first to walking, wheeling and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas; and second – so far as possible – to facilitating easy access to high quality public transport, with layouts and densities which maximise the catchments for bus or other public transport services;*
>
> *b. Incorporate or contribute towards appropriate features to support this prioritisation, such as permeable street networks, continuous footways and segregated cycle facilities which are adequately lit, sufficient secure and accessible cycle parking, regularly spaced public seating and good quality waiting facilities for public transport;*
>
> *c. Ensure that the arrangement of streets and other routes help to create places that are safe, inclusive and attractive for all users (particularly for women and girls, for other groups who may be vulnerable to crime or the fear of crime, and for those with limited mobility). This includes reflecting relevant aspects of policy DP3(2), as well as employing measures to:*
>
> *i. Minimise the scope for conflict between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles;*
>
> *ii. Meet the needs of disabled people, older people and children in relation to all modes of transport, and*
>
> *iii. Avoid unnecessary street clutter.*

2.3 General Permitted Development and Prior Approval

2.3.1 The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, provides permitted development rights for electronic communications apparatus under Schedule 2, Part 16, Class A.

2.3.2 Where prior approval applies:

- the local planning authority's consideration is focused on the matters specified by the GPDO, including siting and appearance;
- Part 16, Class A, paragraph A.2(d) requires the siting of the development to avoid preventing pedestrians from passing along a footway or preventing access to adjoining premises;
- the needs of disabled people and the Department for Transport's (DfT) *Inclusive Mobility* (2022) guidance must be taken into account; and
- the proposal must be assessed having regard to its specific location, design and effect on pedestrian movement.

2.3.3 The permitted development framework supports the principle of telecommunications infrastructure but does not remove the requirement to retain a usable and accessible pedestrian route. The assessment in this TN therefore focuses on whether the proposed equipment can be accommodated within the constraints of the existing frontage without preventing pedestrian passage.

2.4 Pedestrian Accessibility Guidance

2.4.1 *Inclusive Mobility*, which is expressly identified in Part 16, Class A, paragraph A.2(d), identifies 2.0m as the normal minimum clear footway width. Where physical constraints prevent this, 1.5m may be acceptable under most circumstances. Where an obstacle is present, an absolute minimum of 1.0m may be used over a short length, with the restricted length limited to 6m.

2.4.2 These figures are benchmarks to inform a site-specific judgement and are not a standalone statutory pass/fail test. Acceptability should therefore be considered having regard to the circumstances of the particular location, including the extent of any restriction, pedestrian demand, route function, likely interaction between users and the availability of alternative pedestrian provision.

2.4.3 The DfT's current *Critical safety issues for walking, wheeling and cycling* (2025) guidance identifies a footway-width safety issue where the clear width is less than 1.0m, where a width below 1.5m continues for more than 6m, or where a 1.0m to 2.0m route is subject to poor pedestrian comfort. This provides relevant current safety context for the proposed short restriction.

2.4.4 MCC's *Design for Access 2* (2003) seeks a 2.0m unobstructed access route and allows 1.8m over a short distance to pass an obstruction. The local guidance is directly relevant to the assessment,

although the 1.8m value is a design benchmark rather than an automatic statutory threshold for this proposal.

2.4.5 For construction and maintenance activity, *Safety at Street Works and Road Works: A Code of Practice* (2013) advises that temporary pedestrian routes should generally provide 1.2m width, with an absolute unobstructed minimum of 1.0m where a wider route cannot be achieved. Temporary arrangements should be safely managed and usable by older and disabled pedestrians.

3 EXISTING SITUATION

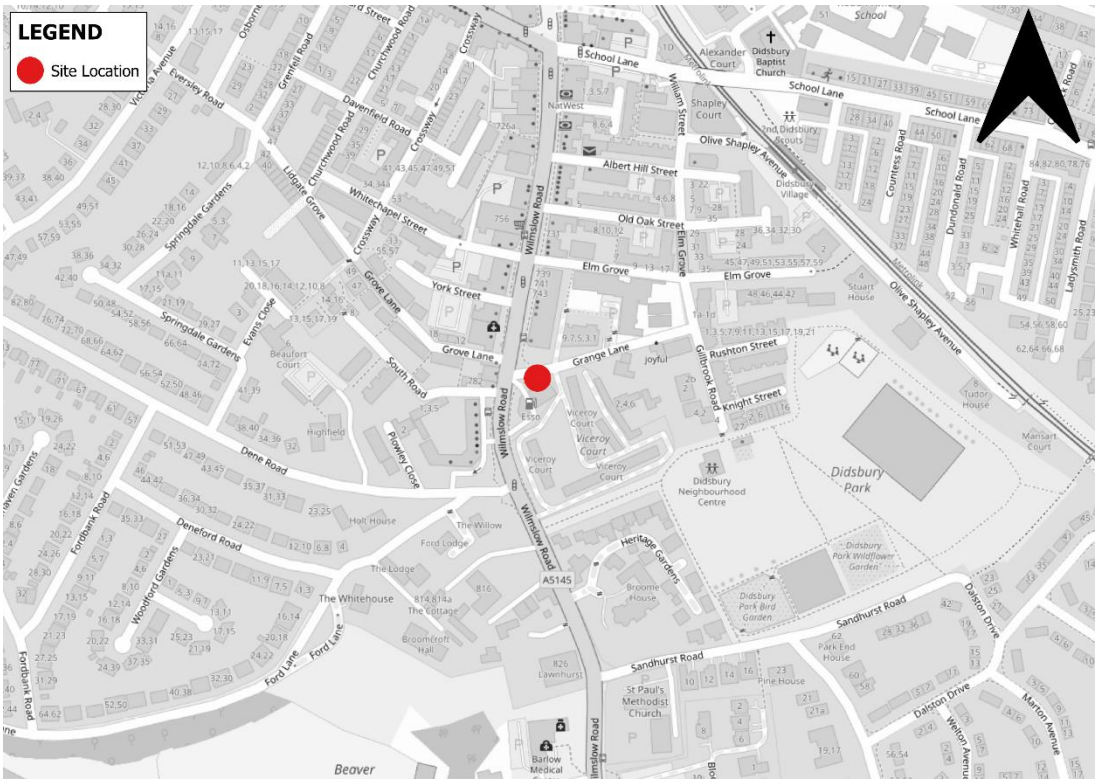
3.1 Site Location

3.1.1 The site is located in Didsbury, south Manchester, on the southern footway of Grange Lane close to its junction with Wilmslow Road.

3.1.2 The site is situated within a well-established urban street environment, immediately adjacent to a petrol filling station (PFS) and within a corridor characterised by existing highway infrastructure, including signage, bollards and lighting columns. The proposed apparatus would be read as part of this existing functional streetscape, where such infrastructure is already a defining feature of the environment.

3.1.3 Grange Lane is subject to a 20mph speed limit, while Wilmslow Road is subject to a 30mph speed limit.

Image 3.1 Map of the area surrounding the Site on Grange Lane, Didsbury



Source: https://www.openstreetmap.org/

3.2 Existing Pedestrian Infrastructure in the Area

3.2.1 The surrounding area is served by a range of pedestrian facilities, including a tactile-paved pedestrian refuge island crossing at the junction of Grange Lane and Wilmslow Road. The footways along Wilmslow Road are approximately 3.2m wide. A further tactile-paved island crossing is located

approximately 30m south of the site on Wilmslow Road, with a signal-controlled pedestrian crossing facility located at the junction with Dene Road approximately 80m to the north.

3.2.2 The northern footway along Grange Lane provides a continuous east-west pedestrian route, connecting directly with the wider footway network along Wilmslow Road. The tactile-paved island crossing at the junction also enables pedestrians to cross conveniently between the northern and southern sides of Grange Lane.

3.2.3 In comparison, the southern footway primarily follows the boundary of the PFS and serves a more limited local function. The PFS access is located to the west of the proposed installation and would remain unaffected. To the east, the footway is constrained by existing bollards before terminating at the adjoining access, limiting its function as a continuous through route.

3.2.4 Wilmslow Road provides access to the surrounding shops, cafés, bars and other commercial uses within Didsbury. Given the location of these amenities, together with the continuous nature and wider connectivity of the northern footway, it is reasonable to expect the northern side of Grange Lane to accommodate higher levels of pedestrian movement than the southern footway.

3.3 Relative Role of the Southern and Northern Footways

3.3.1 The northern footway provides a continuous east-west route and is materially more heavily used. The southern footway is adjacent to the PFS boundary and does not provide the same through-route continuity. The tactile-paved crossing enables pedestrians to transfer between the two sides near Wilmslow Road.

3.3.2 The southern footway is further constrained to the east, where existing bollards interrupt the footway before it terminates at the adjoining access. The arrangement does not provide a continuous through pedestrian route in an easterly direction.

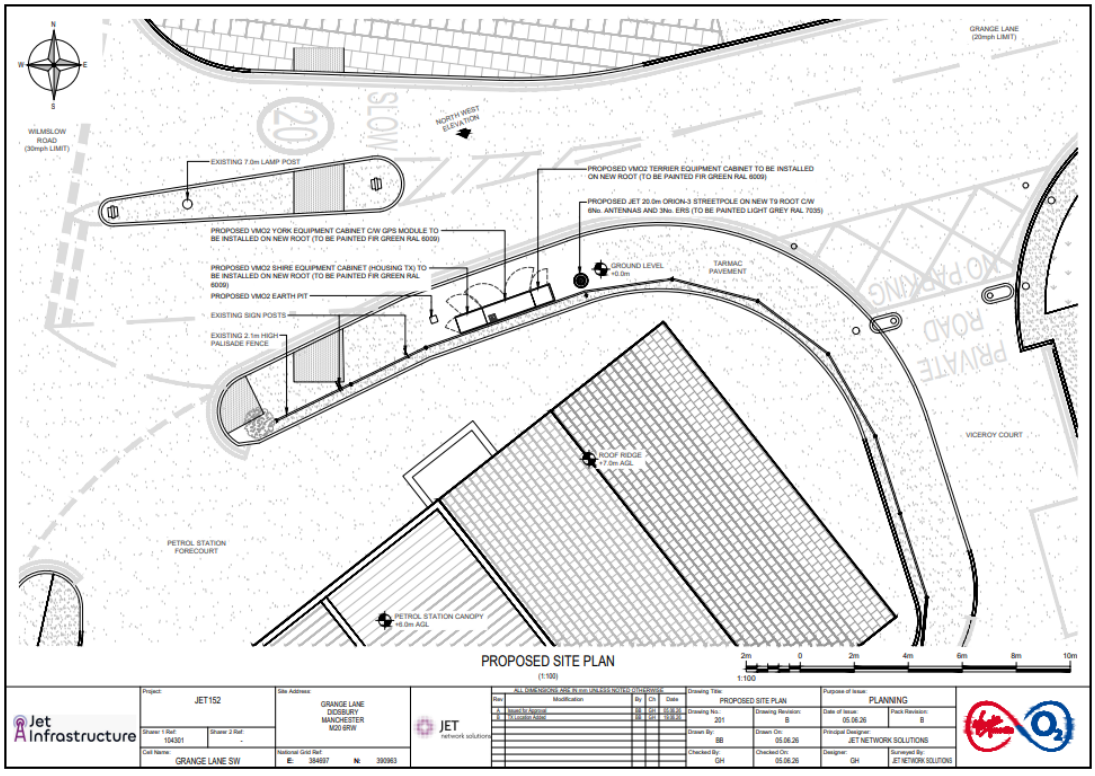
4 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

4.1 Description of Development Proposals

4.1.1 The proposal comprises telecommunications infrastructure required to support the ongoing upgrade of mobile network coverage and capacity, including the transition from 4G to 5G services in the local area. A streetpole arrangement is proposed to provide the required antenna height and network performance while accommodating the equipment within the existing urban highway environment.

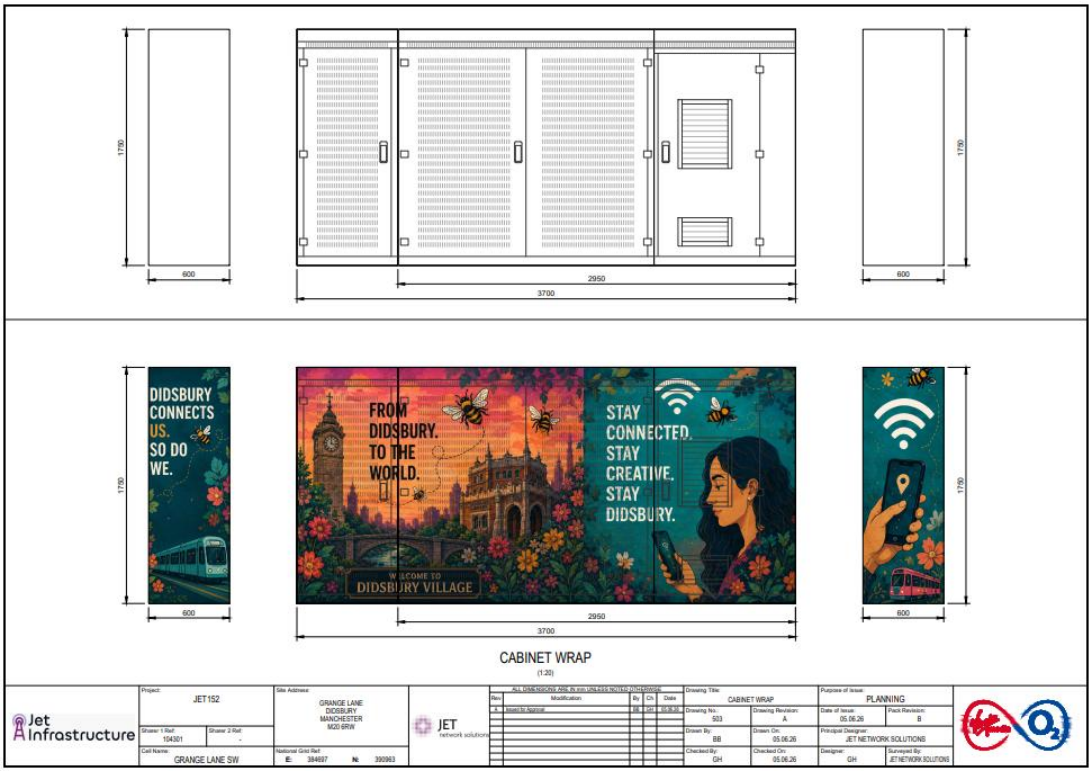
4.1.2 The proposed apparatus is to be located on the southern side of Grange Lane, broadly alongside the existing palisade fence and PFS boundary. This arrangement allows the equipment to be grouped within a defined section of the existing footway while retaining access to the PFS entrance, which is located to the west of the proposed installation.

Image 4.1: The proposed telecommunications installation within the southern footway



4.1.3 Image 4.1 shows the proposed 20m Orion-3 streetpole, including six antennas and associated radio equipment, together with three equipment cabinets and an earth pit. The cabinets comprise the VMO2 York equipment cabinet with GPS module, the VMO2 Shire equipment cabinet housing transmission equipment and the VMO2 Terrier equipment cabinet.

Image 4.2 Cabinet Dimensions

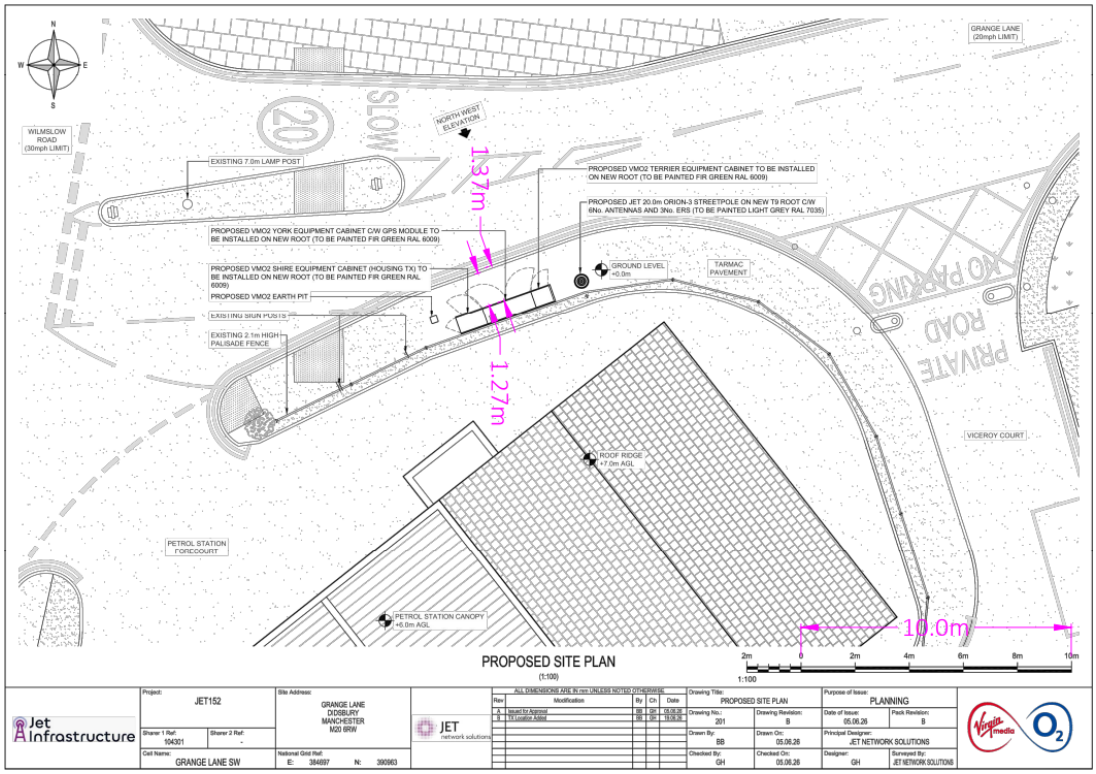


4.1.4 Image 4.2 identifies the cabinet arrangement as 3.7m long, 0.6m deep and 1.75m high, along with a wrap for the cabinet to minimise any visual impact on the area.

4.2 Impact of Infrastructure on Surrounding Footways

4.2.1 Image 4.3 below highlights the remaining footway width with the proposed equipment in place.

Image 4.3: The proposed telecommunications impact on the southern footway.



4.2.2 The measured footway, as seen in Image 4.3, shows that a width of circa 1.3m would remain (1.37m to the front of the kerb and 1.27m to the rear of the kerb), and the restriction would extend over approximately 5m. The proposal would therefore create a short, localised footway restriction rather than preventing pedestrian movement along the route. The retained width and length fall within the parameters identified by Inclusive Mobility for short localised restrictions, although the acceptability of the arrangement is considered further in Sections 5 and 6 having regard to the site-specific pedestrian context.

4.2.3 The proposed apparatus is positioned alongside the existing palisade fence and does not affect the PFS entrance, which is located to the west. The tactile-paved crossing and its approaches should remain clear and legible, with no cabinet, pole foundation, earth-pit cover, sign or other ancillary feature projecting into the permanent pedestrian route.

5 PEDESTRIAN SURVEY

5.1 Survey Methodology and Limitations

5.1.1 The independent data collection specialists, Paul Castle Associates, undertook a continuous 24-hour CCTV survey which commenced at midnight on Saturday 8th August 2026. The analysed data was provided in fifteen-minute intervals and classified pedestrians and cyclists separately. The raw data can be viewed in Appendix A of this TN.

5.1.2 The survey took place on a Saturday, which was selected because the surrounding area contains several cafés, bars and other leisure uses that typically generate high levels of pedestrian activity during the weekend. The continuous 24-hour survey therefore provides an assessment across a full day under conditions when pedestrian activity within the surrounding area would reasonably be expected to be relatively high. While pedestrian activity will vary by day and journey purpose, the survey is considered sufficiently robust for assessing the principal matters relevant to the proposal, namely the level of use of the affected southern footway, the likelihood of pedestrian interaction at the proposed restriction and the relative use of the alternative northern route..

5.2 Survey Results

5.2.1 Table 5.1 below shows the total sum of pedestrian movements over the entire survey period.

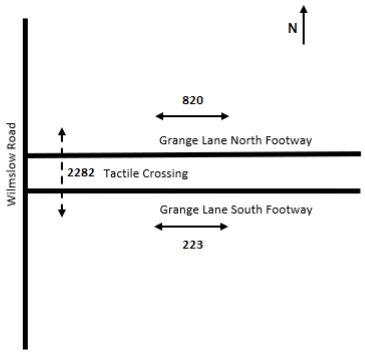
Table 5.1: 24-hour total of pedestrian movements

Location	Pedestrian movements
Affected southern footway	223
Northern footway	820
Tactile-paved crossing point	2,282
Not used crossing point	176

5.2.2 Image 5.1 below provides a visual representation of the information highlighted in Table 5.1.

Image 5.1 24-hour total of pedestrian movements

Grange Lane, Didsbury
Pedestrian Flow Diagram 1 - 2026 Observed Flows
24 Hour Total
All flows are pedestrians
Observed pedestrians in black



5.2.3 The affected southern footway recorded 223 pedestrian movements over 24 hours, compared with 820 movements on the northern footway. The southern-side total was approximately 27% of the northern-side total. The tactile-paved crossing point recorded 2,282 movements, approximately 10 times the southern-footway total. The survey also measured those that didn't use the crossing, with this amounting to just 176, representing just 7% of pedestrians crossing the junction.

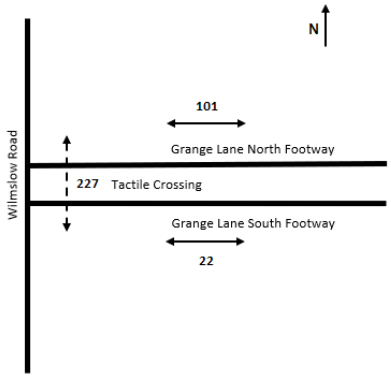
5.2.4 The peak periods varied between the northern and southern footways. For the purposes of the assessment, the peak hour was therefore identified as the period during which the highest combined number of pedestrian movements was recorded across both sides of Grange Lane (i.e. 11:00 – 12:00).

Table 5.2 Peak Hour Comparison (11:00-12:00)

Route / facility	Pedestrians	Highest 15-minute total in hour
Southern footway	22	8
Northern footway	101	30
Tactile-paved crossing	227	73
Not used crossing point	21	7

Image 5.2 Peak Hour Comparison (11:00-12:00)

Grange Lane, Didsbury
Pedestrian Flow Diagram 2 - 2026 Observed Flows
AM (11:00-12:00)
All flows are pedestrians
Observed pedestrians in black



5.2.5 The southern footway saw 22 movements in the peak hour, approximately 22% of the northern footway's 101 movements. The southern footway therefore remains lightly used relative to the principal northern route, even during the peak hour. Also, 227 people in this hour used the crossing while only 21 did not, representing just 8% of all crossings.

5.2.6 With only 22 pedestrians recorded using the southern footway during the peak hour, equivalent to approximately one pedestrian every three minutes, the level of demand is low and would not give rise to a material capacity or safety concern at the proposed pinch point. The relatively high use of the tactile crossing also demonstrates that pedestrians have an existing accessible alternative route via the northern footway (which is evidently well used).

5.2.7 The survey data identified just four vulnerable pedestrian movements, comprising wheelchair users, pushchair users and visually impaired pedestrians, on the southern footway during the peak hour. When considered against the total pedestrian movements recorded on the southern footway, this indicates that the route is not heavily utilised by vulnerable pedestrians during the peak hour. This supports the conclusion that the proposed short restriction would affect a relatively limited number of vulnerable users, subject to the route remaining clear, accessible and usable.

5.3 Comparative Route Use

5.3.1 The relative usage evidence supports the view that the southern footway does not function as the principal through pedestrian route along this section of Grange Lane. The tactile crossing and northern footway accommodate substantially higher levels of pedestrian activity, while the southern footway is already constrained by the PFS boundary and does not provide the same continuous onward connection. Nevertheless, the southern footway continues to serve local access to the southern-side

frontage and is not treated as redundant; the proposals would retain a clear and usable pedestrian route.

6 ACCESSIBILITY AND PEDESTRIAN MOVEMENT ASSESSMENT

6.1 Pedestrian Capacity and Passing

6.1.1 The southern footway recorded 22 pedestrian movements during the combined peak hour, with a highest fifteen-minute total of eight movements. This represents relatively low use compared with the northern footway, which recorded 101 movements during the same period. The level of activity indicates that the proposal would be unlikely to create a material pedestrian-capacity constraint.

6.1.2 The directional split on the southern footway was broadly balanced. However, with only 22 pedestrian movements recorded during the peak hour and the proposed restriction extending for approximately 5m, the likelihood of opposing pedestrians meeting within the restricted section would be low. Accordingly, the acceptability of the retained 1.3m width is supported not by width alone, but by the combination of the short restriction and the low frequency with which passing movements would be expected to occur.

6.1.3 The survey recorded just four vulnerable pedestrian movements on the southern footway during the peak hour, comprising wheelchair users, pushchair users and visually impaired pedestrians. This represents a low level of vulnerable-user activity during the busiest surveyed period.

6.1.4 Nevertheless, the southern footway would remain available and accessible following implementation of the proposals.

6.2 Alternative Northern Route and Crossing

6.2.1 The northern footway and tactile-paved crossing accommodate substantially greater levels of pedestrian activity than the southern footway.

6.2.2 The northern footway provides the more continuous and better-connected pedestrian route along Grange Lane and is already the preferred route, as demonstrated by the higher level of use recorded during the survey detailed in Section 5. The existing tactile crossing provides pedestrians with a convenient opportunity to access this route and, as such, use of the southern footway is a matter of route choice rather than necessity.

6.2.3 The southern footway would remain available and usable for pedestrians, including those accessing the PFS. The northern footway is therefore not relied upon as a substitute for an unusable southern route; rather, its greater width, continuity and existing connection via the tactile crossing provide an additional site-specific factor when considering the overall effect of the short localised restriction.

6.3 Inclusive Access and Safeguards

6.3.1 The footway at the location of the proposed installation would retain a clear width of approximately 1.3m over a length of approximately 5.0m. Inclusive Mobility identifies an absolute minimum of 1.0m

for a short, localised restriction, with the restricted length limited to 6m. These dimensions are relevant benchmarks rather than standalone tests of acceptability, and the proposed arrangement must therefore be considered in the context of the specific circumstances of the site. In this case, the restriction would be short, pedestrian demand on the southern footway is low, opposing movements are infrequent and a wider, more continuous alternative route is available via the northern footway.

6.3.2 The retained width would therefore continue to provide a clear and usable pedestrian route. Most users would be able to pass through the restricted section without difficulty and, where opposing movements coincide, the short length of the restriction means that any need to travel in single file or briefly give way would be limited. This is particularly relevant given the low level of pedestrian demand recorded on the southern footway and the availability of the existing tactile crossing to the wider and more continuous northern route.

6.3.3 While MCC's Design for Access 2 identifies 1.8m as the preferred minimum width over a short distance past an obstruction, this represents a local design benchmark rather than an absolute threshold below which a route becomes inherently unsafe or unusable. In this case, the retained 1.3m width should be considered in the context of the short 5.0m restriction, low pedestrian demand, limited vulnerable-user activity and the alternative route already available via the tactile crossing.

6.3.4 The proposed layout would also ensure that the tactile-paved crossing and its approaches remain fully unobstructed. The cabinet doors would remain closed during normal operation and no door swing, sign, foundation or other feature would project further into the retained pedestrian route. Accordingly, the proposed 1.3m clear width represents the minimum available width in normal operation and would remain consistently available to pedestrians.

6.4 Overall Highway Implications

6.4.1 The survey demonstrates that the southern footway is lightly used compared with the northern footway and tactile-paved crossing. Given the low pedestrian demand, limited vulnerable-user activity and short 5.0m restriction, opposing pedestrian interactions would be infrequent and brief.

6.4.2 Although the retained 1.3m width is below MCC's preferred 1.8m design benchmark, the relevant guidance allows for narrower widths over short localised sections and does not establish 1.8m as an absolute threshold of acceptability. The proposed arrangement should therefore be considered in the round, taking account of the approximately 5.0m restriction, low observed pedestrian demand, infrequent opposing movements, limited vulnerable-user activity and the availability of the wider and more continuous northern route. Against that context, the retained width is considered acceptable.

6.4.3 The tactile-paved crossing would remain fully unobstructed, providing continued access to the wider, more continuous northern footway. Overall, the proposal would retain a clear, usable and accessible pedestrian route and would not result in an unacceptable impact on pedestrian accessibility or highway safety.

7 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

7.1 Summary

7.1.1 This TN assesses the pedestrian and highway implications of the proposed telecommunications streetpole, equipment cabinets and associated apparatus on the southern side of Grange Lane.

7.1.2 The proposal supports the upgrade of local mobile telecommunications services from 4G to 5G, which is supported in principle by the August 2026 NPPF. The relevant consideration is whether the equipment can be accommodated while maintaining a usable and accessible pedestrian route.

7.1.3 The southern footway is already constrained and does not provide the same continuous through route as the northern footway. The survey recorded 223 pedestrian movements over 24 hours, compared with 820 movements on the northern footway and the tactile-paved crossing having 2,282 movements. During the combined peak hour, the southern footway recorded 22 movements, compared with 101 on the northern footway.

7.1.4 The survey recorded four vulnerable pedestrian movements on the southern footway during the peak hour, comprising wheelchair users, pushchair users and visually impaired pedestrians. This confirms that the route is not heavily used by vulnerable pedestrians during the busiest surveyed period. Given the existing bollards further east and the subsequent termination of the footway, the southern side does not function as the primary through-route and is unlikely to experience frequent opposing movements, passing conflicts or queuing.

7.1.5 The footway at the proposed installation would retain an approximate clear width of 1.3m over a length of approximately 5m. While this is below the preferred widths identified within the relevant guidance, it exceeds the 1.0m minimum identified by Inclusive Mobility for a short localised restriction and remains below the associated 6m maximum length. Importantly, these dimensions are not relied upon in isolation; acceptability is supported by the short extent of the restriction, low observed pedestrian demand, limited vulnerable-user activity and the availability of the wider and more continuous northern route.

7.2 Conclusion

7.2.1 The proposal would create a short, localised reduction in the southern footway width, but the route would remain available and usable for pedestrian movement. Its acceptability does not rely on the retained width in isolation, but on the combined site-specific circumstances, including the short extent of the restriction, low level of use, limited through-route function and substantially greater use and connectivity of the northern footway and tactile crossing. Taken together, these factors indicate that the effect on overall pedestrian movement would be very limited.

7.2.2 The proposed installation would not obstruct the tactile crossing or its approaches. Its cabinet doors would remain closed during normal operation, and no other feature of the installation would protrude into the clear pedestrian route.

7.2.3 It is therefore concluded that the proposed telecommunications installation would not result in an unacceptable impact on pedestrian movement, accessibility or highway safety.

APPENDIX A: