



Appeal Decision

Site visits made on 10 October 2023

by Nigel McGurk BSc(Hons) MCD MBA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23 October 2023

Appeal A Ref: APP/U4610/W/23/3315401

Pavement East Warwick Road, Coventry, CV1 2GT

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by JC DecauxUK against the decision of Coventry City Council.
 - The application Ref FUL/2022/3039, dated 27 October 2022, was refused by notice dated 3 January 2023.
 - The development proposed is installation of a modern, multifunction Hub unit featuring an integral advertisement display and defibrillator.
-

Appeal B Ref: APP/U4610/H/23/3315402

Pavement East Warwick Road, Coventry, CV1 2GT

- The appeal is made under Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 against a refusal to grant express consent.
 - The appeal is made by JC DecauxUK against the decision of Coventry City Council.
 - The application Ref ADV/2022/3109, dated 27 October 2022, was refused by notice dated 3 January 2023.
 - The development proposed is an 86-inch LCD screen capable of showing illuminated static displays in sequence.
-

Appeal C Ref: APP/U4610/W/23/3315403

Pavement outside 2 Fairfax Street, Coventry, CV1 5RX

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by JC DecauxUK against the decision of Coventry City Council.
 - The application Ref FUL/2022/3040, dated 27 October 2022, was refused by notice dated 16 December 2022.
 - The development proposed is installation of a modern, multifunction Hub unit featuring an integral advertisement display and defibrillator.
-

Appeal D Ref: APP/U4610/H/23/3315405

Pavement outside 2 Fairfax Street, Coventry, CV1 5RX

- The appeal is made under Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 against a refusal to grant express consent.
 - The appeal is made by JC DecauxUK against the decision of Coventry City Council.
 - The application Ref ADV/2022/3110, dated 27 October 2022, was refused by notice dated 13 December 2022.
 - The development proposed is an 86-inch LCD screen capable of showing illuminated static displays in sequence.
-

Appeal Decisions: APP/U4610/W/23/3315401; APP/U4610/H/23/3315402; APP/U4610/W/23/3315403; APP/U4610/H/23/3315405; APP/U4610/W/23/3315406; APP/U4610/H/23/3315407; APP/U4610/W/23/3315408; APP/U4610/H/23/3315409; APP/U4610/W/23/3315410; APP/U4610/H/23/3315411; APP/U4610/W/23/3315412; APP/U4610/H/23/3315413; APP/U4610/W/23/3315416; APP/U4610/H/23/3315417; APP/U4610/W/23/3315419; APP/U4610/H/23/3315420.

Appeal E Ref: APP/U4610/W/23/3315406

Pavement outside Marks and Spencers, The Precinct, Coventry, CV1 1DE

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by JC DecauxUK against the decision of Coventry City Council.
 - The application Ref FUL/2022/3041, dated 27 October 2022, was refused by notice dated 15 December 2022.
 - The development proposed is installation of a modern, multifunction Hub unit featuring an integral advertisement display and defibrillator.
-

Appeal F Ref: APP/U4610/H/23/3315407

Pavement outside Marks and Spencers, The Precinct, Coventry, CV1 1DE

- The appeal is made under Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 against a refusal to grant express consent.
 - The appeal is made by JC DecauxUK against the decision of Coventry City Council.
 - The application Ref ADV/2022/3111, dated 27 October 2022, was refused by notice dated 13 December 2022.
 - The development proposed is an 86-inch LCD screen capable of showing illuminated static displays in sequence.
-

Appeal G Ref: APP/U4610/W/23/3315408

Pavement outside 16 Market Way, Coventry, CV1 1DL

- The appeal is made under Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 against a refusal to grant express consent.
 - The appeal is made by JC DecauxUK against the decision of Coventry City Council.
 - The application Ref FUL/2022/3042, dated 27 October 2022, was refused by notice dated 16 December 2022.
 - The development proposed is installation of a modern, multifunction Hub unit featuring an integral advertisement display and defibrillator.
-

Appeal H Ref: APP/U4610/H/23/3315409

Pavement outside 16 Market Way, Coventry, CV1 1DL

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by JC DecauxUK against the decision of Coventry City Council.
 - The application Ref ADV/2022/3113, dated 27 October 2022, was refused by notice dated 13 December 2022.
 - The development proposed is an 86-inch LCD screen capable of showing illuminated static displays in sequence.
-

Appeal Decisions: APP/U4610/W/23/3315401; APP/U4610/H/23/3315402; APP/U4610/W/23/3315403; APP/U4610/H/23/3315405; APP/U4610/W/23/3315406; APP/U4610/H/23/3315407; APP/U4610/W/23/3315408; APP/U4610/H/23/3315409; APP/U4610/W/23/3315410; APP/U4610/H/23/3315411; APP/U4610/W/23/3315412; APP/U4610/H/23/3315413; APP/U4610/W/23/3315416; APP/U4610/H/23/3315417; APP/U4610/W/23/3315419; APP/U4610/H/23/3315420.

Appeal I Ref: APP/U4610/W/23/3315410
Pavement outside 30 Market Way, Coventry, CV1 1DL

- The appeal is made under Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 against a refusal to grant express consent.
 - The appeal is made by JC DecauxUK against the decision of Coventry City Council.
 - The application Ref FUL/2022/3043, dated 27 October 2022, was refused by notice dated 19 December 2022.
 - The development proposed is installation of a modern, multifunction Hub unit featuring an integral advertisement display and defibrillator.
-

Appeal J Ref: APP/U4610/H/23/3315411
Pavement outside 30 Market Way, Coventry, CV1 1DL

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by JC DecauxUK against the decision of Coventry City Council.
 - The application Ref ADV/2022/3068, dated 27 October 2022, was refused by notice dated 13 December 2022.
 - The development proposed is an 86-inch LCD screen capable of showing illuminated static displays in sequence.
-

Appeal K Ref: APP/U4610/W/23/3315412
Pavement Outside 28-34 Corporation Street, Coventry, CV1 1GF

- The appeal is made under Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 against a refusal to grant express consent.
 - The appeal is made by JC DecauxUK against the decision of Coventry City Council.
 - The application Ref FUL/2022/3044, dated 27 October 2022, was refused by notice dated 21 December 2022.
 - The development proposed is installation of a modern, multifunction Hub unit featuring an integral advertisement display and defibrillator.
-

Appeal L Ref: APP/U4610/H/23/3315413
Pavement Outside 28-34 Corporation Street, Coventry, CV1 1GF

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by JC DecauxUK against the decision of Coventry City Council.
 - The application Ref ADV/2022/3070, dated 27 October 2022, was refused by notice dated 14 December 2022.
 - The development proposed is an 86-inch LCD screen capable of showing illuminated static displays in sequence.
-

Appeal Decisions: APP/U4610/W/23/3315401; APP/U4610/H/23/3315402; APP/U4610/W/23/3315403; APP/U4610/H/23/3315405; APP/U4610/W/23/3315406; APP/U4610/H/23/3315407; APP/U4610/W/23/3315408; APP/U4610/H/23/3315409; APP/U4610/W/23/3315410; APP/U4610/H/23/3315411; APP/U4610/W/23/3315412; APP/U4610/H/23/3315413; APP/U4610/W/23/3315416; APP/U4610/H/23/3315417; APP/U4610/W/23/3315419; APP/U4610/H/23/3315420.

Appeal M Ref: APP/U4610/W/23/3315416

Pavement outside 2 Cross Cheaping, Coventry, CV1 1HG

- The appeal is made under Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 against a refusal to grant express consent.
 - The appeal is made by JC DecauxUK against the decision of Coventry City Council.
 - The application Ref FUL/2022/3045, dated 27 October 2022, was refused by notice dated 19 December 2022.
 - The development proposed is installation of a modern, multifunction Hub unit featuring an integral advertisement display and defibrillator.
-

Appeal N Ref: APP/U4610/H/23/3315417

Pavement outside 2 Cross Cheaping, Coventry, CV1 1HG

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by JC DecauxUK against the decision of Coventry City Council.
 - The application Ref ADV/2022/3071, dated 27 October 2022, was refused by notice dated 16 December 2022.
 - The development proposed is an 86-inch LCD screen capable of showing illuminated static displays in sequence.
-

Appeal O Ref: APP/U4610/W/23/3315419

Pavement outside Albert Buildings, Queen Victoria Road, Coventry, CV1 3JH

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by JC DecauxUK against the decision of Coventry City Council.
 - The application Ref FUL/2022/3046, dated 27 October 2022, was refused by notice dated 15 December 2022.
 - The development proposed is installation of a modern, multifunction Hub unit featuring an integral advertisement display and defibrillator.
-

Appeal P Ref: APP/U4610/H/23/3315420

Pavement outside Albert Buildings, Queen Victoria Road, Coventry, CV1 3JH

- The appeal is made under Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 against a refusal to grant express consent.
 - The appeal is made by JC DecauxUK against the decision of Coventry City Council.
 - The application Ref ADV/2022/3072, dated 27 October, was refused by notice dated 14 December 2022.
 - The development proposed is an 86-inch LCD screen capable of showing illuminated static displays in sequence.
-

Decisions:

Appeal A

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal B

2. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal C

3. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal D

4. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal E

5. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal F

6. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal G

7. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal H

8. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal I

9. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal J

10. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal K

11. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal L

12. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal M

13. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal N

14. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal O

15. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal P

16. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

17. Appeals M and N relate to a site within a Conservation Area. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of Conservation Areas. National planning policy, as set out in the Framework, states that when considering the impact of a proposal on the significance of designated heritage assets, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation and that significance can be harmed or lost through development within their setting.
18. I note that the Council's decision notice refers to the above site as also being within the setting of Listed Buildings. However, neither the Council's decision notice nor the Council's officer's report, which appears vague in this regard, identify any specific Listed Buildings.
19. The Council's officer's report relating to appeals E and F concludes that there will be unacceptable harm to heritage assets. However, the report does not go on to identify any heritage assets affected by the proposal and the Council's decision notice does not refer to any harm to heritage assets.
20. In its decision notices for all of the appeals considered within this decision letter, the Council refers to the "Coventry Local Plan 2016." The information provided by the Council shows that the Coventry Local Plan 2011-2031 was adopted on 6 December 2017.
21. Amongst other things, each proposed Hub unit would provide a defibrillator, free Wi-Fi, some free phone calls, wayfinding, device charging and a connection to emergency services. Together, I find that these factors amount to a community benefit and I have taken this into account in reaching my decisions below. I also note that the Hub units would be powered by green energy.

Main Issues

22. In its reasons for refusal, the Council states that each of the proposals would be harmful to visual amenity. Also, in respect of each of the proposals the subject of Appeals C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, O and P, the Council states that the proposed development would be harmful to pedestrian and/or highway safety.
23. Further to the above and having regard to my comments under Procedural Matters, in respect of the proposals the subject of Appeals M and N, the Council considers that there would be harm to the Lady Herbert's Garden and the Burges Conservation Area.

24. Taking everything into account, I consider that the main issue for Appeal A is the effect that the proposal would have on the character and appearance of the area. For Appeal B, the main issue comprises the effect of the proposal on visual amenity.
25. The main issues for Appeals C, E, G, I, K and O are the effect that each proposal would have on the character and appearance of the area; and the effect of each proposal on pedestrian and/or highway safety.
26. The main issues for Appeals D, F, H, J, L and P are the effect that each proposal would have on visual amenity; and the effect of each proposal on public safety.
27. The main issue for Appeal M is the effect that the proposal would have on the character and appearance of the Lady Herbert's Garden and the Burges Conservation Area; and the main issue for Appeal N is the effect of the proposal on visual amenity, having regard to the character and appearance of the Lady Herbert's Garden and the Burges Conservation Area.

Reasons

Background

28. The appeals relate to proposals for the installation of new Hub units with digital advertisement display screens, at eight different locations in Coventry city centre.
29. Two planning applications were determined by the Council in respect of each of the eight sites: one for full planning permission for the development of a multifunction Hub unit featuring an integral advertisement display and defibrillator; and one for planning permission and consent to display advertisements in the form of an 86-inch LCD screen capable of showing illuminated static displays in sequence.
30. In describing the proposed advertisement which forms part of each proposed multifunctional Hub, the applicant states that the advertisement display would be similar in scale to bus shelter advertisements. It is proposed that images on the LCD screen would change every ten seconds.
31. The design of each of the Hub units proposed would be the same, comprising a modern free-standing structure with a large digital advertisement display screen to one side and a user interface panel to the other side. The Hub unit would be constructed of aluminium and steel and the advertising display would be protected by hardened laminated glass.
32. Each Hub unit would be 2.6 metres tall, 1.3 metres wide and would occupy a site area of just under 0.5 square metres. The 86-inch LCD screen would be on one side of the Hub unit and the other side would house a 32-inch touchscreen beneath a canopy, along with a defibrillator.

Appeals A and B

33. The appeal site is located within a pedestrianised area along an approach to Coventry Railway Station.
34. The pedestrianised area forms part of a very large public walkway and is comprised of modern paving. The walkway is set within notably green and spacious surroundings, with wide expanses of public open space in the form of grassland to either side. Consequently, this area provides a significantly green, open and spacious part of Coventry city centre.
35. During my site visit, I observed there to be a general absence of street clutter along the public walkway and surrounding public open space in this location. This is a contributing factor to the area's attractive sense of openness and it provides for nearby views to attractive planting and for distant views to large commercial buildings as one proceeds along the walkway. The presence of a long, low bench close to the appeal site appears in keeping with the parkland feel of the area.
36. I find that the proposal for a tall, solid Hub unit in this location would result in the introduction of an incongruous development, entirely out of keeping with the green, open and clutter-free appearance of the area. The Hub unit would appear as an alien feature and would, I find, draw attention to itself and away from the attractive near and distant views identified.
37. The harm arising from this would be exacerbated by the introduction of a very large advertisement, with changing images, the very purpose of which would be to draw attention to itself. The large digital screen would appear at a height in line with, as well as above and below, the vision of passers-by and would draw the eye to such an extent that it would appear as an unduly dominant feature.
38. Taking the above into account, I find that the proposed Hub unit would harm the character and appearance of the area. This would be contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), to Local Plan¹ DE1 and to Policy CC12 of the Council's City Centre Area Action Plan², which together amongst other things, seek to protect local character.
39. Taking the above into account, the proposed advertisement would harm visual amenity.
40. Whilst I note that the proposed development would provide features of benefit to the community, the benefits identified would not, in this case, amount to something that would outweigh the significant harm identified.
41. Appeals A and B are dismissed.

¹ Coventry Local Plan 2011-2031 (2017).

² Coventry City Centre Area Action Plan (2017).

Appeals C and D

42. The appeal site is located along Fairfax Street in a very busy part of Coventry city centre. The site is located close to the main entrance to Coventry Bus Station and to a pedestrian crossing near to Fairfax Street's junction with Hales Street.
43. The surrounding area is mixed use and includes shops, offices and leisure uses as well as a major public transport hub. Buildings range in height from single storey to over six stories in height. During my site visit, I observed the area around the appeal site to be extremely busy, with many pedestrians walking along paved areas and looking to cross roads; and with cars, vans and delivery trucks travelling along Hales Street, where there is also a taxi rank, on the opposite side of the road to the appeal site.
44. I also noted during my site visit that there is already a considerable amount of street furniture along the pavement around and close to the appeal site. Very close to the appeal site there is a pedestrian crossing, a waste-bin, a tall post for CCTV, a lamp-post, a post-box and telecoms boxes. Also, immediately adjacent to the appeal site, there is a new information station, comprising a tall solid feature stepped back around a metre from the pavement.
45. In addition to the above, there is a digital advertisement set within the pavement further along Fairfax Street, where the street appears to become a little less busy, away from the pedestrian crossing.
46. However, notwithstanding the amount of street furniture identified, in the area around the appeal site, existing street furniture appears generally modest in scale. Consequently, it does not detract from what appears to be a reasonably spacious street with good visibility through to attractive city centre features, including a large art installation.
47. The introduction of the proposed Hub unit would add a large, tall, solid feature immediately adjacent to, but much larger and more dominant in appearance than, the existing information station. This would immediately introduce an unduly cluttered effect, with two tall structures adjacent to one another drawing the eye. The harm arising from this would be exacerbated as a result of the contrasting appearance of each – whereby their differing dimensions and design would result in them visually jarring with one another.
48. The proposed development would also be seen in the same context as another digital advertisement just a short distance away. I find that the effect of this would be to introduce an over-proliferation of large digital advertisements, drawing attention to themselves as a dominant feature along Fairfax Street.
49. Further to the above, the proposed Hub unit would be located near to the pavement edge in a location very close to a pedestrian crossing. For the reasons identified above, this area comprises a busy location where people are looking to cross roads. I find that the introduction of the Hub unit would place a barrier in the way of the flow of pedestrian movement and could lead to

50. pedestrians stepping out into the road, at the same time as reducing visibility of surrounding traffic conditions. Together, these factors present a significant risk to pedestrian safety.
51. Consequently, I find that the proposed Hub unit would harm the character and appearance of the area. This would be contrary to the NPPF, to Local Plan Policy DE1 and to Policy CC1 of the Council's City Centre Area Action Plan which together amongst other things, seek to protect local character. The proposed advertisement would harm visual amenity.
52. Further, I find that the proposed Hub unit would harm pedestrian safety, contrary to the NPPF and to Local Plan Policy AC4, which together amongst other things, seek to protect the safety of pedestrians. In this way, the proposed advertisement would harm public safety.
53. Whilst the proposal would bring community benefits, including the provision of a defibrillator and free WiFi amongst other things, I find that in this case, the benefits would not outweigh the significant harm identified.
54. Appeals C and D are dismissed.

Appeals E and F

55. The appeal site is located along one of Coventry city centre's main shopping streets. The area is busy and it is characterised by the presence of retail and commercial units along either side of a pedestrianised precinct.
56. As above, the street is pedestrianised. It appears to have been recently landscaped, with a number of neat planting and sitting areas and with open and spacious paved areas along the middle and sides of the precinct. The modern paving, clean lines and careful planting provide for an attractive, open and spacious shopping environment, with a notable sense of greenery.
57. During my site visit, I observed that the area's clean lines and openness character combine to present a striking and distinctive feature of The Precinct in this location. Street furniture is kept to a minimum and this enables the appreciation of occasional modern attractive lamp-posts, which appear as design features, as well as of The Precinct's maintained greenery.
58. I find that the proposed development would appear highly incongruous when seen in the context of the above features. The tall and wide Hub unit would stand out as a large, imposing and alien feature. It would detract from the area's clean lines and openness. The harm arising from this would be exacerbated by the large advertisement, designed to draw attention to its large changing images, day and night.
59. Given the above, I find that the proposed Hub unit and its digital advertisement would dominate an uncluttered pedestrianised area where generally, street paraphernalia is purposefully limited and carefully designed to appear in keeping with the landscaped surroundings. The proposal would reduce the open and spacious attributes of The Precinct in this location.

60. Whilst I am mindful that the proposed Hub unit would introduce a physical barrier and reduce the spaciousness of the pedestrianised area, I consider that The Precinct is so wide and largely uncluttered in this location that the proposed development would not result in any harm to pedestrian safety and there is no substantive information before me to the contrary.
61. Taking all of the above into account, I find that the proposed Hub unit would harm the character and appearance of the area. This would be contrary to the NPPF, to Local Plan Policy DE1 and to Policy CC1 of the Council's City Centre Area Action Plan, which together amongst other things, seek to protect local character. The proposed advertisements would harm visual amenity.
62. Whilst community benefits would arise from the proposal, they would not amount to such benefits as to outweigh the significant harm identified.
63. Appeals E and F are dismissed.

Appeals G and H

64. The appeal site is located along Market Way in Coventry city centre. Market Way in this location comprises a very busy pedestrianised area along one of the city's main shopping streets.
65. The area is characterised by the presence of retail and commercial units along either side of a wide pedestrian walkway. To the south of the appeal site there are street trees set into the walkway along one side of the street and regularly spaced low benches and waste-bins to the other side. To the north of the appeal site, there is a wide expanse of pedestrianised area. This provides for a significant sense of spaciousness within this busy city centre location.
66. The area's wide expanses of pedestrianised areas and the low-impact, modest and regularly placed street furniture therein provide for a satisfying sense of space and symmetry.
67. The proposed Hub unit would be located away from, but in line with, the low benches and waste-bins to one side. It would appear immediately adjacent to the wide, spacious and open pedestrianised area.
68. The proposal would bear no physical resemblance to the benches and waste-bins and would appear entirely out of context with the wide and clear area of paving around it. Consequently, I find that the proposed Hub unit would appear as an incongruous and discordant feature. It would detract significantly from the area's established sense of space and symmetry.
69. The harm arising from the above would be exacerbated by the appearance of the proposed advertisement. I find that it would appear as an alien feature in its spacious surroundings, with large, changing images, the very purpose of which would be to draw attention to themselves. The large digital screen would appear directly in line with, as well as above and below, the vision of passers-by and in so doing, it would draw the eye and emphasise the proposal's incongruous appearance.

70. Whilst I note that the Council's decision notice states that the proposed development would result in harm to pedestrian safety, I find that the very wide expanses of pedestrianised areas around the appeal site would serve to prevent any significant harm arising in this regard.
71. Taking all of the above into account, I find that the proposed Hub unit would harm the character and appearance of the area. This would be contrary to the NPPF, to Local Plan Policy DE1 and to Policy CC1 of the Council's City Centre Area Action Plan which together amongst other things, seek to protect local character. The proposed advertisements would harm visual amenity.
72. Whilst the proposal would bring community benefits, including the provision of a defibrillator and free WiFi amongst other things, I find that in this case, the benefits arising would not outweigh the significant harm identified.
73. Taking the above into account, Appeals G and H are dismissed.

Appeals I and J

74. The appeal site is located along Market Way in Coventry city centre. Market Way in this location is a very busy pedestrianised area within one of the city's main shopping streets.
75. The area is characterised by the presence of retail and commercial units along either side of a wide pedestrianised street. To the north of the appeal site there are street trees set into the walkway along one side of the street and regularly spaced low benches and waste-bins along the other side. This street furniture appears modest and its regular spacing provides for a sense of symmetry.
76. To the south of the appeal site, there is what might be described as a public artwork, comprising a tall, ornate entrance sign to Coventry Market. The area in the immediate vicinity of the appeal site is devoid of any street furniture and this provides for an open and spacious area of paving and provides for an appreciation of the market entrance sign.
77. I also observed during my site visit that there is already a digital advertisement in place beyond the market sign. This draws attention to itself by its very nature and it would be seen within the same context as the proposal the subject of this appeal as one travels along Market Way towards the market.
78. The proposed Hub unit would be located away from but in line with, the low benches and waste-bins to one side. It would also be located in close proximity to the Coventry Market sign.
79. The proposal would appear distinctly different from the benches and waste-bins. There would be no satisfactory sense of rhythm derived from "aligning" the proposal with the benches and bins and the proposal, with its different shape and form, would appear as an incongruous feature.
80. Further to the above, I find that the large size of the digital advertisement proposed would result in the proposal drawing undue attention to itself. This

would detract from the sense of rhythm and symmetry along Market Way as it curves northwards. Further, I consider that the proposal's digital images would visually jar with the natural green landscaping provided by the nearby street trees.

81. Consequently, I find that the proposal would appear as an alien feature, out of context with its surroundings. Also, I consider that the Hub unit, due to its size and incongruous appearance, would appear as clutter within the vicinity of the Coventry Market sign and that the proposal would combine with that of the existing digital advertisement beyond the sign to result in a sense of an undue proliferation of digital advertisements in this location.
82. Whilst the Council's decision notice states that the proposed development would result in harm to pedestrian safety, I find that the wide expanses of space provided by the pedestrianised areas around the appeal site would serve to prevent any harm arising in this regard.
83. Taking all of the above into account, I find that the proposed Hub unit would harm the character and appearance of the area. This would be contrary to the NPPF, to Local Plan Policy DE1 and to Policy CC1 of the Council's City Centre Area Action Plan which together amongst other things, seek to protect local character. The proposed advertisements would harm visual amenity.
84. Whilst the proposal would bring community benefits, including the provision of a defibrillator and free WiFi amongst other things, I find that in this case, the benefits arising would not outweigh the significant harm identified.
85. Taking the above into account, Appeals I and J are dismissed.

Appeals K and L

86. The appeal site is located close to a tall university building along Corporation Street in Coventry city centre. Corporation Street in this location comprises a partly traffic-calmed street and the area is notable for its wide expanses of pedestrianised routes and the presence of attractive areas of green landscaping and street trees. Together, this provides for an attractive green, open and spacious context for a range of attractive modern buildings, which are set back from the open spaces of this mixed use area.
87. The appeal site is situated within a wide area of pavement, characterised by the presence of attractive, modern paving materials. During my site visit, I observed this area of pavement to be notable for the general absence of street furniture, other than lamp-posts and low bollards forming part of the Corporation Street traffic-calming.
88. This provides for a clear and obstruction-free pavement which makes a positive contribution to the area's open and spacious qualities. It also provides for an appreciation of the quality of the landscaping visible across the wider area.

89. Having regard to the above, I find that the proposed development would jar severely with the pavement's open character in this location. It would appear as an incongruous feature, out of context with its surroundings.
90. The harm arising from this would be exacerbated as a result of the large size and attention-grabbing characteristics of the proposed digital advertisement which would draw the eye away from the area's identified qualities.
91. Whilst the Council's decision notice states that the proposed development would result in harm to pedestrian safety, I find that the wide expanses of space provided by the pedestrianised areas around the appeal site would serve to prevent any harm arising in this regard.
92. Taking all of the above into account, I find that the proposed Hub unit would harm the character and appearance of the area. This would be contrary to the NPPF, to Local Plan Policy DE1 and to Policy CC1 of the Council's City Centre Area Action Plan which together amongst other things, seek to protect local character. The proposed advertisements would harm visual amenity.
93. Whilst community benefits may arise from the proposal, including from the provision of a defibrillator and free WiFi amongst other things, I find that in this case, the benefits identified would not amount to something that would outweigh the significant harm identified.
94. Appeals K and L are dismissed.

Appeals M and N

95. The appeal site is located within a wide area of attractive modern paving in a pedestrianised part of Cross Cheaping, in Coventry city centre. The appeal site is located towards the edge of an attractive square which itself makes a notable contribution to the Conservation Area's green, open and spacious qualities.
96. The appeal site is located in the Lady Herbert's Garden and the Burges Conservation Area, which in this location is characterised by the presence of a mix of modern and period properties in mixed use, occasionally set within open and spacious settings, enabling historic buildings to be appreciated in near and more distant views and thus providing for a strong sense of the city's heritage.
97. Further to the above, I noted during my site visit that the presence of street trees in the area provides a considerable greening effect and softening impact within what is a busy part of Coventry city centre; and that the appeal site is located within an area that appears to have undergone significant investment in highly attractive paving and the careful placing of street furniture.

98. The proposed Hub unit would be located approximately in line with a series of bicycle racks and a street tree. However, whilst the bicycle racks comprise small, simple metal frames of modest appearance, the proposed Hub unit would appear as a large and imposing feature.
99. As such, I find that the proposed Hub unit would jar with its surroundings, drawing attention to itself as an incongruous feature. Further, it would appear as an unduly dominant development where no such Hub units exist and would detract from the Lady Herbert's Garden and the Burges Conservation Area's open and spacious qualities.
100. The harmful impacts arising from the above would be exacerbated by the appearance of the proposed digital advertisement, which would, as a large, attention-grabbing feature, draw the eye and appear as incongruous street clutter, taking attention away from the area's high quality paving and landscaping.
101. Whilst the Council's decision notice states that the proposed development would result in harm to pedestrian safety, I find that the wide expanses of space provided by the pedestrianised areas around the appeal site would serve to prevent any harm arising in this regard.
102. Taking all of the above into account, I find that the proposed Hub unit would harm the character and appearance of the Lady Herbert's Garden and the Burges Conservation Area. This would be contrary to the NPPF, to Local Plan Policy DE1 and to Policy CC1 of the Council's City Centre Area Action Plan which together amongst other things, seek to protect local character.
103. The harm arising would be localised and in respect of the significance of the heritage asset, would be less than substantial. Whilst public benefits may arise from the proposal in terms of community benefits including a defibrillator and access to free WiFi, I find that, in this case, all of the public benefits identified in support of the proposal do not amount to something that would outweigh the significant harm identified.
104. The proposed advertisements would harm visual amenity, having regard to the Lady Herbert's Garden and the Burges Conservation Area.
105. Taking the above into account, Appeals M and N are dismissed.

Appeals O and P

106. The appeal site is situated in Coventry city centre in a prominent location, close to Queen Victoria Road's junction with Croft Road. During my site visit, I observed this to be a busy location, where pedestrians are looking to cross both Queen Victoria Road, where there is a pedestrian crossing close to the appeal site, as well as Croft Road.
107. The area is mixed use and is characterised by the presence of large and tall buildings set within wide streets.

108. The appeal site is situated in a large pedestrianised area, albeit close to Queen Victoria Road. This area is notable for its open and spacious qualities, which include areas of green landscaping and street trees. During my site visit, I noted that there is little in the way of intrusive street furniture in this location.
109. An unimposing and modestly-sized information station, lamp-posts and the pedestrian crossing comprise the only significant street furniture of note in the immediate vicinity of the appeal site. There is a digital advertisement further along Queen Victoria Road, beyond the pedestrian crossing, albeit some distance away from the appeal site and within a different immediate setting.
110. Taking all of the above into account, the appeal site makes a positive contribution to the area's open and spacious qualities.
111. The proposed Hub unit would introduce a tall and imposing feature into a notably open area. It would be set close to and would appear much larger and significantly more dominant in appearance than the existing information station. I find that the proposal would introduce an unduly cluttered effect, whereby the large Hub unit and the relatively small information station would fail to appear in harmony with one another and would draw the eye as contrasting features.
112. Further to the above, I find that the proposed development would stand out within its open and spacious surroundings as a large, dominant and alien feature and that the harm arising from this would be exacerbated by the presence of the proposed large advertisement, the changing digital images of which would draw attention to themselves day and night.
113. Consequently, I find that the proposed Hub unit and its digital advertisement would jar with and unduly dominate its surroundings, where street paraphernalia is limited and where that which does exist, is generally low-key in appearance.
114. The proposed Hub unit would be located close to the pavement edge adjacent to a busy road junction and in the immediate vicinity of a pedestrian crossing. Vehicles travelling along Queen Victoria Road from the south currently have clear and unimpeded views of the crossing and pedestrians walking along Queen Victoria Road in a northerly direction currently have clear sight towards and across Croft Road.
115. I find that the introduction of the Hub unit in this location would result in an impediment to the visibility of both drivers and pedestrians in a busy location where people are looking to cross various roads.
116. Further to the above, I consider that the proposed digital advertisement, with its changing images, would comprise an added distraction to highway users. Also, the Hub unit would also place a potential barrier in the way of the flow of pedestrian movement and this could lead to pedestrians stepping out into the road, at the same time as resulting in a reduction in overall visibility for highway users.

117. Given this, I find that the proposed development would present a risk to pedestrian and highway safety.

118. Taking all of the above into account, I find that the proposed Hub unit would harm the character and appearance of the area. This would be contrary to the NPPF, to Local Plan Policy DE1 and to Policy CC1 of the Council's City Centre Area Action Plan which together amongst other things, seek to protect local character. The proposed advertisement would harm visual amenity.

119. Further, I find that the proposed Hub unit would harm pedestrian and highway safety, contrary to the NPPF and to Local Plan Policies AC2 and AC4, which together amongst other things, seek to provide for highway safety. The proposed advertisement would harm public safety.

120. Whilst the proposal would bring community benefits, including the provision of a defibrillator and free WiFi amongst other things, I find that in this case, the benefits arising would not outweigh the significant harm identified.

121. Appeals O and P are dismissed.

Conclusions

122. I conclude that, for the reasons given above and having regard to all matters raised, Appeals A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O and P do not succeed.

N McGurk

INSPECTOR