



Appeal Decision

Site visits made on 10 November 2023

by Nigel McGurk BSc (Hons) MCD MBA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20 November 2023

Appeal A Ref: APP/N1160/W/22/3303655

Pavement outside B&M Store, 31 Cornwall Street, Plymouth, PL1 1NW

- 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 BT Telecommunications PLC against the decision of Plymouth City Council.
 - The application Ref 22/00628/FUL, dated 29 March 2022, was refused by notice dated 17 June 2022.
 - The development proposed is installation of 1no. new BT Street Hub, incorporating 75" LCD advert screens plus the removal of 2no. associated BT kiosks.
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Appeal B Ref: APP/N1160/H/22/3303656

Pavement outside B&M Store, 31 Cornwall Street, Plymouth, PL1 1NW

- 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 BT Telecommunications PLC against the decision of Plymouth City Council.
 - The application Ref 22/00629/ADV, dated 29 March 2022, was refused by notice dated 20 June 2022.
 - The development proposed is 2no. digital 75" LCD display screens, one on each side of the Street Hub unit.
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Appeal C Ref: APP/N1160/W/22/3303657

Pavement outside Plymouth City Council 1st Stop Shop, 71 New George Street, Plymouth, PL1 1RJ

- 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 BT Telecommunications PLC against the decision of Plymouth City Council.
 - The application Ref 22/00632/FUL, dated 29 March 2022, was refused by notice dated 17 June 2022.
 - The development proposed is installation of 1no. new BT Street Hub, incorporating 75" LCD advert screens plus the removal of 2no. associated BT kiosks.
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Appeal D Ref: APP/N1160/H/22/3303658

Pavement outside Plymouth City Council 1st Stop Shop, 71 New George Street, Plymouth, PL1 1RJ

- 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 BT Telecommunications PLC against the decision of Plymouth City Council.

Appeal Decisions: APP/N1160/W/22/3303655; APP/N1160/H/22/3303656; APP/N1160/W/22/3303657; APP/N1160/H/22/3303658; APP/N1160/W/22/3303660; APP/N1160/H/22/3303663; APP/N1160/W/22/3303667; APP/N1160/H/22/3303668; APP/N1160/W/22/3303669; APP/N1160/H/22/3303670; APP/N1160/W/22/3303672; APP/N1160/H/22/3303674; APP/N1160/W/22/3303680; APP/N1160/H/22/3303681; APP/N1160/W/22/3303283; APP/N1160/H/22/3303285.

- The application Ref 22/00633/ADV, dated 29 March 2022, was refused by notice dated 20 June 2022.
 - The development proposed is 2no. digital 75" LCD display screens, one on each side of the Street Hub unit.
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Appeal E Ref: APP/N1160/W/22/3303660
Pavement outside Sports Direct, 82-84 New George Street, Plymouth, PL1 1RX

- 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 BT Telecommunications PLC against the decision of Plymouth City Council.
 - The application Ref 22/00634/FUL, dated 29 March 2022, was refused by notice dated 17 June 2022.
 - The development proposed is installation of 1no. new BT Street Hub, incorporating 75" LCD advert screens plus the removal of 2no. associated BT kiosks.
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Appeal F Ref: APP/N1160/H/22/3303663
Pavement outside Sports Direct, 82-84 New George Street, Plymouth, PL1 1RX

- 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 BT Telecommunications PLC against the decision of Plymouth City Council.
 - The application Ref 22/00635/ADV, dated 29 March 2022, was refused by notice dated 20 June 2022.
 - The development proposed is 2no. digital 75" LCD display screens, one on each side of the Street Hub unit.
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Appeal G Ref: APP/N1160/W/22/3303667
Pavement outside Poundland, 56-58 Royal Parade, Plymouth, PL1 1DZ

- 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 BT Telecommunications PLC against the decision of Plymouth City Council.
 - The application Ref 22/00636/FUL, dated 29 March 2022, was refused by notice dated 17 June 2022.
 - The development proposed is installation of 1no. new BT Street Hub, incorporating 75" LCD advert screens plus the removal of 2no. associated BT kiosks.
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Appeal H Ref: APP/N1160/H/22/3303668
Pavement outside Poundland, 56-58 Royal Parade, Plymouth, PL1 1DZ

- 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 BT Telecommunications PLC against the decision of Plymouth City Council.
 - The application Ref 22/00637/ADV, dated 29 March 2022, was refused by notice dated 20 June 2022.
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Appeal Decisions: APP/N1160/W/22/3303655; APP/N1160/H/22/3303656;
APP/N1160/W/22/3303657; APP/N1160/H/22/3303658; APP/N1160/W/22/3303660;
APP/N1160/H/22/3303663; APP/N1160/W/22/3303667; APP/N1160/H/22/3303668;
APP/N1160/W/22/3303669; APP/N1160/H/22/3303670; APP/N1160/W/22/3303672;
APP/N1160/H/22/3303674; APP/N1160/W/22/3303680; APP/N1160/H/22/3303681;
APP/N1160/W/22/3303283; APP/N1160/H/22/3303285.

- The development proposed is 2no. digital 75" LCD display screens, one on each side of the Street Hub unit.
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Appeal I Ref: APP/N1160/W/22/3303669

Pavement outside Co-op Funeralcare, 61 Exeter Street, Plymouth, PL4 0AH

- 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 BT Telecommunications PLC against the decision of Plymouth City Council.
 - The application Ref 22/00638/FUL, dated 29 March 2022, was refused by notice dated 17 June 2022.
 - The development proposed is installation of 1no. new BT Street Hub, incorporating 75" LCD advert screens plus the removal of 2no. associated BT kiosks.
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Appeal J Ref: APP/N1160/H/22/3303670

Pavement outside Co-op Funeralcare, 61 Exeter Street, Plymouth, PL4 0AH

- 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 BT Telecommunications PLC against the decision of Plymouth City Council.
 - The application Ref 22/00639/ADV, dated 29 March 2022, was refused by notice dated 20 June 2022.
 - The development proposed is 2no. digital 75" LCD display screens, one on each side of the Street Hub unit.
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Appeal K Ref: APP/N1160/W/22/3303672

Pavement outside Crowne Plaza, Armada Way, Plymouth, PL1 2HJ

- 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 BT Telecommunications PLC against the decision of Plymouth City Council.
 - The application Ref 22/00640/FUL, dated 29 March 2022, was refused by notice dated 20 June 2022.
 - The development proposed is installation of 1no. new BT Street Hub, incorporating 75" LCD advert screens plus the removal of 2no. associated BT kiosks.
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Appeal L Ref: APP/N1160/H/22/3303674

Pavement outside Crowne Plaza, Armada Way, Plymouth, PL1 2HJ

- 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 BT Telecommunications PLC against the decision of Plymouth City Council.
 - The application Ref 22/00641/ADV, dated 29 March 2022, was refused by notice dated 20 June 2022.
 - The development proposed is 2no. digital 75" LCD display screens, one on each side of the Street Hub unit.
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Appeal M Ref: APP/N1160/W/22/3303680

Appeal Decisions: APP/N1160/W/22/3303655; APP/N1160/H/22/3303656;
APP/N1160/W/22/3303657; APP/N1160/H/22/3303658; APP/N1160/W/22/3303660;
APP/N1160/H/22/3303663; APP/N1160/W/22/3303667; APP/N1160/H/22/3303668;
APP/N1160/W/22/3303669; APP/N1160/H/22/3303670; APP/N1160/W/22/3303672;
APP/N1160/H/22/3303674; APP/N1160/W/22/3303680; APP/N1160/H/22/3303681;
APP/N1160/W/22/3303283; APP/N1160/H/22/3303285.

Pavement outside Costa, 51-53 New George Street, Plymouth, PL1 1RJ

- 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 BT Telecommunications PLC against the decision of Plymouth City Council.
- The application Ref 22/00630/FUL, dated 29 March 2022, was refused by notice dated 17 June 2022.
- The development proposed is installation of 1no. new BT Street Hub, incorporating 75" LCD advert screens plus the removal of 2no. associated BT kiosks.

Appeal N Ref: APP/N1160/H/22/3303681**Pavement outside Costa, 51-53 New George Street, Plymouth, PL1 1RJ**

- 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 BT Telecommunications PLC against the decision of Plymouth City Council.
- The application Ref 22/00631/ADV, dated 29 March 2022, was refused by notice dated 20 June 2022.
- The development proposed is 2no. digital 75" LCD display screens, one on each side of the Street Hub unit.

Appeal O Ref: APP/N1160/W/22/3303283**Pavement outside Subway, 7 Derrys Cross, Plymouth, PL1 2SG**

- 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 BT Telecommunications PLC against the decision of Plymouth City Council.
- The application Ref 22/00614/FUL, dated 29 March 2022, was refused by notice dated 16 June 2022.
- The development proposed is installation of 1no. new BT Street Hub, incorporating 75" LCD advert screens plus the removal of 2no. associated BT kiosks.

Appeal P Ref: APP/N1160/H/22/3303285**Pavement outside Subway, 7 Derrys Cross, Plymouth, PL1 2SG**

- 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 BT Telecommunications PLC against the decision of Plymouth City Council.
- The application Ref 22/00615/ADV, dated 29 March 2022, was refused by notice dated 16 June 2022.
- The development proposed is 2no. digital 75" LCD display screens, one on each side of the Street Hub unit.

Decisions:**Appeal A**

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal B

2. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Decisions: APP/N1160/W/22/3303655; APP/N1160/H/22/3303656;
APP/N1160/W/22/3303657; APP/N1160/H/22/3303658; APP/N1160/W/22/3303660;
APP/N1160/H/22/3303663; APP/N1160/W/22/3303667; APP/N1160/H/22/3303668;
APP/N1160/W/22/3303669; APP/N1160/H/22/3303670; APP/N1160/W/22/3303672;
APP/N1160/H/22/3303674; APP/N1160/W/22/3303680; APP/N1160/H/22/3303681;
APP/N1160/W/22/3303283; APP/N1160/H/22/3303285.

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 C, D, E, F, G, H, K, L, M and N relate to sites that are located within a Conservation Area and of these, Appeals K and L relate to a site also within the setting of a Grade II Listed Park and Garden. Further, Appeals O and P relate to a site within the setting of a Conservation Area.
18. According to statute, 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 these 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.
19. Each application for the development of a BT Street Hub would involve the removal of two existing phone kiosks from elsewhere. I note that the appellant considers that this would result in de-cluttering and give rise to other possible benefits in the location wherever such removal takes place.
20. In this regard, the appellant states that two existing phone kiosks occupy a larger footprint than one proposed BT Street Hub and that the removal of existing phone kiosks would visibly reduce street clutter. The appellant considers that the existing phone kiosks do not contribute to their setting in a positive manner compared to the benefits arising from, what the appellant considers to be, more aesthetically pleasing BT Street Hubs.
21. The appellant considers that the proposed BT Street Hubs comprise a significant improvement to the fall-back position of the existing phone kiosks being retained.
22. Whilst I note all of this, only one phone kiosk would be removed from only one of the appeal sites considered below and the rest of the appeal sites do not feature any existing phone kiosks. All of the appeals would involve the removal of a phone kiosk or phone kiosks from a location other than the appeal site. Consequently, this is not something that necessarily impacts on the sites the subject of these appeals or on their immediate settings.
23. I recognise that the removal of phone kiosks from elsewhere may have positive effects on the location from which they are removed. However, there is no substantive evidence before me to lead me to conclude that this would, in all cases, amount to something that would outweigh the harm that I identify in respect of the proposals before me.
24. Amongst other things, each proposed Hub unit would provide, free Wi-Fi, phone calls, wayfinding, device charging, a connection to emergency services and a platform for interactive technologies such as air quality monitoring. Together, I find that these are factors that amount to a community benefit, and I have taken this into account in reaching my decisions below.

Main Issues

Appeal Decisions: APP/N1160/W/22/3303655; APP/N1160/H/22/3303656;
APP/N1160/W/22/3303657; APP/N1160/H/22/3303658; APP/N1160/W/22/3303660;
APP/N1160/H/22/3303663; APP/N1160/W/22/3303667; APP/N1160/H/22/3303668;
APP/N1160/W/22/3303669; APP/N1160/H/22/3303670; APP/N1160/W/22/3303672;
APP/N1160/H/22/3303674; APP/N1160/W/22/3303680; APP/N1160/H/22/3303681;
APP/N1160/W/22/3303283; APP/N1160/H/22/3303285.

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25. The Council states, in its reasons for refusal, that each of the proposals subject to each Appeal would have an unacceptable visual impact.
 26. The Council considers that the proposals relating to Appeals C, D, E, F, G, H, K, L, M, N, O and P would fail to conserve heritage assets or the setting of heritage assets.
 27. The Council also considers that each of the proposals would be harmful to highway and/or pedestrian safety.
 28. Taking everything into account, I consider that the main issues for Appeal A are the effect that the proposal would have on the character and appearance of the area; and its effect on highway and/or pedestrian safety.
 29. For Appeal B, the main issues comprise the effect of the proposal on visual amenity, and its effect on public safety.
 30. The main issues for Appeal C are the effect that the proposal would have on the character and appearance of the City Centre Conservation Area; and its effect on highway and/or pedestrian safety.
 31. For Appeal D, the main issues comprise the effect of the proposal on visual amenity, including its effect on any heritage assets (as identified in respect of Appeal C), and its effect on public safety.
 32. The main issues for Appeal E are the effect that the proposal would have on the character and appearance of the City Centre Conservation Area; and its effect on highway and/or pedestrian safety.
 33. For Appeal F, the main issue is the effect of the proposal on visual amenity, including its effect on any heritage assets (as identified in respect of Appeal E), and its effect on public safety.
 34. The main issues for Appeal G are the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the City Centre Conservation Area; and its effect on highway and/or pedestrian safety.
 35. For Appeal H, the main issue is the effect of the proposal on visual amenity, including its effect on any heritage assets (as identified in respect of Appeal G), and its effect on public safety.
 36. The main issues for Appeal I are the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area; and its effect on highway and/or pedestrian safety.
 37. For Appeal J, the main issue is the effect of the proposal on visual amenity, and its effect on public safety.
 38. The main issues for Appeal K are the effect that the proposal would have on the character and appearance of The Hoe Conservation Area and on the setting of The Hoe Grade II Listed Park and Garden; and its effect on highway and/or pedestrian safety.

Appeal Decisions: APP/N1160/W/22/3303655; APP/N1160/H/22/3303656;
APP/N1160/W/22/3303657; APP/N1160/H/22/3303658; APP/N1160/W/22/3303660;
APP/N1160/H/22/3303663; APP/N1160/W/22/3303667; APP/N1160/H/22/3303668;
APP/N1160/W/22/3303669; APP/N1160/H/22/3303670; APP/N1160/W/22/3303672;
APP/N1160/H/22/3303674; APP/N1160/W/22/3303680; APP/N1160/H/22/3303681;
APP/N1160/W/22/3303283; APP/N1160/H/22/3303285.

39. For Appeal L, the main issue is the effect of the proposal on visual amenity, including its effect on any heritage assets (as identified in respect of Appeal K), and its effect on public safety.
40. The main issues for Appeal M are the effect that the proposal would have on the character and appearance of the City Centre Conservation Area; and its effect on highway and/or pedestrian safety.
41. For Appeal N, the main issue is the effect of the proposal on visual amenity, including its effect on any heritage assets (as identified in respect of Appeal M), and its effect on public safety.
42. The main issues for Appeal O are the effect that the proposal would have on the character and appearance of the setting of the City Centre Conservation Area; and its effect on highway and/or pedestrian safety.
43. For Appeal P, the main issue is the effect of the proposal on visual amenity (as identified in respect of Appeal O), and its effect on public safety.

Reasons

Background

44. The appeals relate to proposals for the installation of new BT Street Hubs with 75-inch digital advertisement display screens plus, as described above, for each proposed BT Street Hub it is proposed to remove two existing phone kiosks.
45. In respect of these appeals, two planning applications were determined by the Council in relation to each of eight sites, one for full planning permission for a BT Street Hub and one for planning permission and consent to display advertisements.
46. The design of each of the BT Street Hubs proposed would be the same, comprising a modern free-standing structure with two large digital advertisement display screens – one to either side – and a user interface panel to the side. The main casing of the proposed unit would be aluminium, and the advertising displays would have front tempered and laminated glass. The proposed interface panels and vent areas would be painted powder-coated aluminium.
47. The dimensions of each BT Street Hub would be 1.236m wide by 0.35m deep by 2.98m high. The proposed digital advertisements, measuring 1.67m by 0.95m, would form a large part of each side of the BT Street Hubs.

Appeals A and B

48. The appeal site is located along Cornwall Street, which in this location is a very wide pedestrian boulevard with a central walkway edged with wide planters to either side. There are further walkways to the other side of the planters, between the planters and rows of shops.

49. The appeal site is situated along a busy shopping street in Plymouth city centre, where ground floor retail units sit within two and three storey blocks.
50. The planters along the street are so numerous and significant as to combine with more distant trees to provide for a predominantly verdant character to this spacious pedestrian street.
51. During my site visit, I observed there to be a general absence of street clutter in the area around the appeal site. Other than the planters, there are only unassuming telecoms boxes and occasional thin, tall telegraph-type posts in addition to the predominant planting.
52. All of the above results in a green, spacious and uncluttered environment.
53. I find that the development of a BT Street Hub and digital advertisements along the strip of open and entirely uncluttered pavement in front of the B&M Store would introduce an incongruous and alien form of development, uncharacteristic of the form and appearance of Cornwall Street in this location.
54. The BT Street Hub and digital advertisements would appear large, imposing and unlike any other form of development in the area. Consequently, I consider that the proposed development would draw attention to itself and unduly dominate its surroundings.
55. I find that the harm arising from the above would be exacerbated as a result of the proposal jarring significantly with the area's green, spacious and uncluttered surroundings, resulting in a visually intrusive development that would detract from the area's identified attributes.
56. The appeal site's location within a wide pedestrianised area would prevent any significant harm arising in respect of public safety, having regard to highway and pedestrian safety. However, I find that the proposed BT Street Hub would, for all of the reasons set out above, harm the character and appearance of the area. This would be contrary to the NPPF and to Local Plan¹ Policies SO3, PLY6 and DEV20 which together amongst other things, seek to protect local character. The proposed advertisement would harm visual amenity.
57. Whilst I note that benefits may arise from the proposal, including community benefits in terms of access to free Wi-Fi and other information and that, as noted above, possible benefits might arise from the removal of phone kiosks elsewhere, I find that in this case, the benefits identified in support of the proposed development do not outweigh the significant harm identified.
58. Appeals A and B are dismissed.

Appeals C and D

59. The appeal site is located along New George Street, adjacent to a raised planted area and across an open area of paving adjacent to tall mixed-use

¹ Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan (2019).

buildings containing, amongst other things, retail and public information services at ground floor level.

60. New George Street in this location is a busy and wide pedestrianised commercial, predominantly shopping street within a central part of Plymouth city centre.
61. The appeal site is located within the City Centre Conservation Area, characterised by the presence of large, attractive, distinctively mid-Twentieth Century buildings set within a spacious grid pattern of streets.
62. During my site visit, I observed impressive Post-War buildings along either side of New George Street set within a wide and spacious pedestrianised street notable for its absence of clutter and presence of significant greenery, including mature trees, some rhythmically spaced in a row and others set within impressive planters.
63. I also noted that the occasional presence of bike racks, wastebins, lampposts and benches appear unassuming and does not detract from the area's green and spacious qualities, nor from the distinctive sense of history and grandeur afforded by the presence of the Post-War buildings.
64. Taking all of the above into account, I consider that the appeal site and its environs make a positive contribution to the attributes of the City Centre Conservation Area.
65. The proposed development would introduce a tall and imposing BT Street Hub of dominant appearance into an area notable for its green and spacious qualities as well as for an absence of street paraphernalia.
66. Consequently, I find that the proposal would appear as an incongruous and visually intrusive feature, out of keeping with its setting. I find that this would result in the proposed development detracting from the open and spacious qualities characteristic of this part of the City Centre Conservation Area.
67. The harm arising from the above would be exacerbated as a consequence of the proposed large and changing advertisements that would be located to either side of the BT Street Hub drawing the eye to an undue extent.
68. The appeal site's location within a very large pedestrianised area would prevent any significant harm arising in respect of public safety, having regard to highway and pedestrian safety. However, I find that the proposed BT Street Hub would harm the character and appearance of the City Centre Conservation Area. This would be contrary to the NPPF and to Local Plan Policies SO3, PLY6, DEV20 and DEV21 which together amongst other things, seek to protect local character.
69. The harm arising would be localised and in respect of the significance of the heritage asset, would be less than substantial. Public benefits may arise from the proposal, including community benefits in terms of access to free Wi-Fi and other information and I note above that possible benefits might arise from the removal of phone kiosks elsewhere. However, 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.

70. The proposed advertisement would harm visual amenity.

71. Appeals C and D are dismissed.

Appeals E and F

72. The appeal site is located along New George Street, between two street trees and close to a low bench and bollard. New George Street in this location is a wide, partly pedestrianised, partly traffic-calmed street. It is situated within a busy mixed-use area in Plymouth city centre.
73. Surrounding uses include ground floor and occasionally upper floor retail in two and three storey buildings along that side of the street closest to the appeal site; and ground floor commercial and upper floor residential and/or commercial uses on the opposite side of the street, characterised by the presence of tall, four to eight storey buildings.
74. The appeal site is located within the City Centre Conservation Area, characterised by the presence of large, attractive, distinctively mid-Twentieth Century buildings set within a spacious grid pattern of streets.
75. During my site visit, I noted the presence of impressive Post-War buildings within the vicinity of the appeal site and in particular, I was drawn by the impressively landscaped street, whereby this part of New George Street is characterised by its attractively laid out surface, largely comprising stone setts and paving, and by the presence of two long rows of regularly spaced street trees and the purposefully rhythmic placing of benches, waste bins and bollards.
76. This planned landscaping makes a significant positive contribution to the City Centre Conservation Area.
77. As noted above, the appeal site is located between street trees, which themselves form part of one of the long attractive rows of landscaping. I find that the introduction of a tall and imposing BT Street Hub into this location would serve to severely disrupt the sense of regularity and rhythm afforded by this landscaped row.
78. Further to the above, I find that the proposed BT Street Hub and its large advertisements would appear as an incongruous feature and jar with the

qualities of the surrounding area. I consider that the harm arising from this would be exacerbated as a result of the frequently changing proposed advertisements drawing attention to themselves as visually intrusive features out of keeping with their surroundings.

79. The appeal site's location within a very large pedestrianised area would prevent any significant harm arising in respect of public safety. However, having regard to highway and pedestrian safety, the proposed development would, for the

reasons set out above, be to the detriment of the identified attributes of the City Centre Conservation Area.

80. Taking all of the above into account, I find that the proposed BT Street Hub would harm the character and appearance of the City Centre Conservation Area. This would be contrary to the NPPF and to Local Plan Policies SO3, PLY6, DEV20 and DEV21 which together amongst other things, seek to protect local character.
81. The harm arising would be localised and in respect of the significance of the heritage asset, would be less than substantial. Public benefits may arise from the proposal, including community benefits in terms of access to free Wi-Fi and other information and I note above that possible benefits might arise from the removal of phone kiosks elsewhere. However, 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.
82. The proposed advertisement would harm visual amenity.
83. Appeals E and F are dismissed.

Appeals G and H

84. The appeal site is located along Royal Parade close to where it meets the wide pedestrianised expanse of Armada Way in Plymouth city centre. Royal Parade in this location is a busy thoroughfare situated within the City Centre Conservation Area.
85. The City Centre Conservation Area is characterised by the presence of large, attractive, distinctively mid-Twentieth Century buildings set within a spacious grid pattern of streets.
86. During my site visit, I observed the appeal site to be within the vicinity of a range of impressive and imposing Post-War buildings and noted that the sense of grandeur provided by these buildings is significantly enhanced by their situation within wide, open and spacious surroundings.
87. The appeal site itself is set well back from the road and is located close to a main entrance to the impressive Pearl Assurance Building – a large, tall and imposing expression of Mid-Twentieth Century commercial architecture. Part of the building's concrete exterior appears to have been recently refurbished and this emphasises its distinctive and striking appearance, in keeping with the attractive qualities of the City Centre Conservation Area.
88. Also, during my site visit, I observed that the appeal site and its immediate surroundings appear clutter-free, with only an attractive lamppost notable within the immediate vicinity of the site, the paved area around which adjoins an open and largely clutter-free expanse of Armada Way.
89. Whilst there is a simple, modern, glazed bus stop, a pair of waste bins and a pedestrian crossing all within the wider vicinity of the site, these features

appear some distance away and more as features associated with the pavement next to the roadside, whereas the appeal site itself is set well-back and appears more within the context of the spacious paving outside the Pearl Assurance Building.

90. Taking all of the above into account, I consider that the appeal site and its environs make a positive contribution to the attributes of the City Centre Conservation Area.
91. The proposed development would introduce a tall and imposing BT Street Hub of dominant appearance into an otherwise clutter-free area. I find that this would result in the proposed development appearing as an incongruous and visually intrusive feature, out of keeping with its surroundings. In particular, the proposed BT Street Hub would introduce an unduly cluttered effect close to the entrance and within the immediate setting of, an attractive and imposing building which itself makes a significant positive contribution to the City Centre Conservation Area.
92. Furthermore, I find that the proposed BT Street Hub would detract from the open and spacious qualities characteristic of this part of the City Centre Conservation Area.
93. The harm arising from the above would be exacerbated as a consequence of the proposed advertisements that would be located to either side of the BT Street Hub drawing undue attention to their large, changing and attention-grabbing appearance.
94. The appeal site's location within a very large pedestrianised area would prevent any significant harm arising in respect of public safety. However, having regard to highway and pedestrian safety, I find that the proposed BT Street Hub would, for the reasons set out above, harm the character and appearance of the City Centre Conservation Area. This would be contrary to the NPPF and to Local Plan Policies SO3, PLY6, DEV20 and DEV21 which together amongst other things, seek to protect local character.
95. The harm arising would be localised and in respect of the significance of the heritage asset, would be less than substantial. Public benefits may arise from the proposal, including community benefits in terms of access to free Wi-Fi and other information and I note above that possible benefits might arise from the removal of phone kiosks elsewhere. However, 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.
96. The proposed advertisement would harm visual amenity.
97. Taking the above into account, Appeals G and H are dismissed.

Appeals I and J

98. The appeal site is located along Exeter Street, which in this location is a busy main traffic thoroughfare within a mixed-use area of Plymouth city centre. The

wide road forms a dual carriageway with additional bus lanes, with a grassed central reservation and to either side of the road, commercial and residential buildings ranging in height from two to several stories front onto relatively wide pavements.

99. During my site visit, I noted that Exeter Street in this location provides for distant views in either direction. This is a characteristic enhanced by the spacious and largely clutter-free appearance of the street, whereby street furniture is sparsely distributed over a considerable distance and is largely limited to road signs, lampposts and to two simple, modern, glazed bus stops, each with a two-sided advertisement to one end, and the submitted plans show that the proposed development would replace an existing phone kiosk.
100. Taking all of the above into account, the appeal site is located within an open, spacious and generally uncluttered environment.
101. The proposed BT Street Hub and digital advertisements would appear as a large, imposing development. The size, form and features of the proposed development and most notably, the large digital advertisements to either side of the BT Street Hub, would draw attention to themselves over a large distance and I find that this would lead the proposal to unduly dominate its surroundings.
102. I find that the harm arising from this would be exacerbated as a result of the proposed BT Street Hub and the digital advertisements being seen to combine with existing advertisements at the nearby bus stops, most notably at the bus stop along the same side of the road as the appeal site, to result in the effect of appearing as an over-proliferation of advertising. The resultant cluttered effect would be out of character and jar with, the area's otherwise open, spacious and generally uncluttered appearance.
103. I consider that the appeal site's location along a street with wide pavements and within an area not apparently especially busy in respect of pedestrian movements, means that little in the way of significant harm would arise from the proposed development in respect of public safety, having regard to highway and pedestrian safety. However, I find that the proposed BT Street Hub would, for all of the reasons set out above, harm the character and appearance of the area. This would be contrary to the NPPF and to Local Plan Policies SO3, PLY6 and DEV20 which together amongst other things, seek to protect local character. The proposed advertisement would harm visual amenity.
104. Some benefits may arise from the proposed development, including community benefits in terms of access to free Wi-Fi and other information and I note above that possible benefits might arise from the removal of phone kiosks elsewhere— noting that in this case, the submitted plans show the removal of one phone kiosk from the appeal site itself. However, I find that in this case, the benefits identified in support of the proposal do not outweigh the significant harm identified.

105. Appeals I and J are dismissed.

Appeals K and L

106. The appeal site is in a mixed-use area between Plymouth city centre and Hoe Park, and it falls within The Hoe Conservation Area and within the setting of The Hoe Grade II Listed Park and Garden.
107. The appeal site is located along Armada Way close to its junction with Citadel Road in Plymouth city centre. It is situated on a pavement adjacent to a large hotel. Directly across Armada Way to the west of the appeal site and across Citadel Road to the south of the appeal site, are large areas of public open space comprising grassland bordered by trees.
108. The Hoe City Centre Conservation Area is characterised in this location by the presence of large areas of open green parkland containing mature trees, footpaths and statues, including within The Hoe Grade II Listed Park and Garden, located close to the appeal site.
109. During my site visit, I observed there to be a very strong sense of greenery, openness and spaciousness. Further, Armada Way in this location only has a pavement to one side and alongside the adjacent hotel, this comprises a notably modern and largely clutter-free pavement. As such, the pavement appears complementary to and does not detract from, the notable views to and/or across adjacent green areas, including towards The Hoe Grade II Listed Park and Garden.
110. I also noted during my site visit that the appeal site is located close to a plain stone wall of the hotel, constructed from materials that to some considerable degree appear to blend in with the adjacent paving. This contributes to the simple and largely clutter-free environment along the appeal site side of Armada Way and again, the clean lines afforded by this simplicity complement and do not detract from, the surrounding area.
111. There are a small number of simple, evenly spaced black metal bollards spaced along the length of the pavement as it passes the hotel, as well as some simple black metal railings separating part of the pavement from the hotel. These features, along with occasional modern lampposts, whilst unassuming, add a sense of formality to the pavement in the area close to the appeal site.
112. Taking all of the above into account, I consider that the appeal site and its environs make a positive contribution to the attributes of The Hoe Conservation Area and to the setting of The Hoe Grade II Listed Park and Garden.
113. The proposed development would introduce a tall, large and imposing BT Street Hub along an area of paving that is notably clutter-free, and which currently complements its green, open and spacious surroundings. As such, the proposed development would appear as an unduly dominant, incongruous and visually intrusive feature, out of keeping with its surroundings.

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APP/N1160/H/22/3303663; APP/N1160/W/22/3303667; APP/N1160/H/22/3303668;
APP/N1160/W/22/3303669; APP/N1160/H/22/3303670; APP/N1160/W/22/3303672;
APP/N1160/H/22/3303674; APP/N1160/W/22/3303680; APP/N1160/H/22/3303681;
APP/N1160/W/22/3303283; APP/N1160/H/22/3303285.

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114. The proposed BT Street Hub would draw attention to itself not only as a result of its scale and its incongruous siting, but also as a result of the digital advertisements to either side of it. I find that these would extend the overall harm arising by drawing attention to their large and changing images.
115. The proposed BT Street Hub and its digital images would partially block and severely detract from expansive views into and across the greenery beyond as one travels the pavement along Armada Way in a southerly direction; and would draw attention away from the greenery and spaciousness of the public open space across Armada Way as one travels in a northerly direction along Armada Way past the hotel.
116. Further to this, I find that the appearance of the BT Street Hub with its large digital advertisements to either side, as proposed, would jar severely with the clean and simple appearance of the pavement along Armada Way in this location.
117. In addition to the above, during my site visit, I observed there to be an information board, wastebins, a Belisha beacon and a no entry sign adjacent to Armada Way's junction with Citadel Road. Whilst the appeal site is some distance away from these, I find that the proposed BT Street Hub and digital advertisements would appear so dominantly as to be read together with this street furniture, particularly when seen from a distance and that this would result in what is currently a notably clutter-free area around the appeal site, appearing unduly cluttered.
118. Taking all of the above into account, I find that the proposed development would fail to conserve the identified attributes of The Hoe Conservation Area and the setting The Hoe Grade II Listed Park and Garden.
119. The appeal site is located within a wide area of pavement and consequently, I am satisfied that there is little risk of any significant harm arising in respect of public safety, having regard to highway and pedestrian safety. However, I find that the proposed BT Street Hub would, for the reasons set out above, harm the character and appearance of The Hoe Conservation Area and the setting of The Hoe Grade II Listed Park and Garden. This would be contrary to the NPPF and to Local Plan Policies SO3, PLY6, DEV20 and DEV21 which together amongst other things, seek to protect local character.
120. The harm arising would be localised and in respect of the significance of the heritage asset, would be less than substantial. Public benefits may arise from the proposal, including community benefits in terms of access to free Wi-Fi and other information and I note above that possible benefits might arise from the removal of phone kiosks elsewhere. However, 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.
121. The proposed advertisement would harm visual amenity.
122. Taking the above into account, Appeals K and L are dismissed.

Appeals M and N

123. The appeal site is located in a prominent and very busy location, at the edge of the public square formed where New George Street crosses with Armada Way.
124. This part of Plymouth city centre comprises a pedestrianised precinct located within one of the city's main shopping areas. Surrounding buildings are in retail, leisure and commercial use and range in height from three to five stories.
125. The appeal site and its surroundings are located within the City Centre Conservation Area, characterised by the presence of large, attractive and distinctive mid-Twentieth Century buildings set within a spacious grid pattern of streets. During my site visit, I observed the surrounding presence of numerous impressive Post-War buildings, with notable facades at upper floor levels.
126. The appeal site is located close to a long, raised planter, which itself forms one of a series of planters, set out in two rows along New George Street. These contain plants and mature trees and dominate the appearance of the street. They combine with open and largely clutter-free areas of paving to provide a green and spacious character.
127. The pedestrian routes between and along each side of the planters appear clear and clutter-free, providing space for the very significant pedestrian footfall in the area and allowing for the appearance of the planters and surrounding buildings to be enjoyed within an open and spacious setting.
128. The busy square, formed by the meeting of New George Street and Armada Way, comprises a focal point and is characterised by the presence of the numerous temporary and more permanent features one might expect to see in a square at the heart of a bustling city centre. However, the submitted plans indicate a transition between the square and New George Street, effectively denoted by the presence of a feature "totem pole"-type advertisement, comprising a tall cylindrical feature, at the very edge of the square where it meets New George Street.
129. During my site visit, I noted that, immediately beyond the identified location of the totem pole, one enters New George Street and is struck by a sense of transition – from a busy central square into a sense of calmness, afforded by the ordered, green and spacious attributes of this area of the street.
130. The proposed BT Street Hub and digital advertisements would be located at the entrance to New George Street. The large dimensions and impactful appearance of the BT Street Hub and its large digital advertisement screens, designed to draw attention to themselves, would appear as an alien feature in the context of New George Street beyond, out of keeping with the clean, uncluttered and spacious qualities identified above.
131. Further, I find that the harm arising from the above would be exacerbated as a result of the proposed BT Street Hub and its digital advertisements appearing

entirely different in form to any other feature in the area, adding to the proposal's incongruous appearance.

132. Given all of the above, I find that the proposal would detract significantly from the City Centre Conservation Area's attributes.
133. The appeal site is located in one of the city's busiest pedestrianised shopping locations where the free-flowing movement and safety of all users is an important consideration.
134. During my site visit, amongst other pedestrians, I observed the presence of elderly and infirm people and people with pushchairs, and I find that the proposed development would introduce a significant physical barrier at a busy pedestrian intersection, which, at the busiest times, would be likely to result in an impediment to pedestrian flows.
135. The proposed development would inevitably reduce the amount of space for the movement of people within and around the appeal site. I find that this would serve to narrow the public highway and create a potential hazard for, amongst others, the elderly, the infirm, people with pushchairs and wheelchair-users.
136. Further to the above, the features provided by the BT Street Hub may result in the gathering of people next to and/or around it and I find that this could result in an exacerbation of the harm identified above.
137. Consequently, I consider that the proposal would result in potential harm to pedestrian safety within in a particularly busy location.
138. Taking all of the above into account, I find that the proposed BT Street Hub would harm the character and appearance of the City Centre Conservation Area. This would be contrary to the NPPF and to Local Plan Policies SO3, PLY6, DEV20 and DEV21 which together amongst other things, seek to protect local character. The proposed BT Street Hub would also harm highway safety, contrary to the NPPF and to Local Plan Policies PLY6, SO3, DEV1, DEV20 and DEV29 which together amongst other things, promote safe streets.
139. The harm arising would be localised and in respect of the significance of the heritage asset, would be less than substantial. Public benefits may arise from the proposal, including community benefits in terms of access to free Wi-Fi and other information and I note above that possible benefits might arise from the removal of phone kiosks elsewhere. However, all the public benefits identified in support of the proposal do not amount to something that would outweigh the significant harm identified in this case.
140. The proposed advertisement would harm visual amenity and would harm public safety, having regard to pedestrian safety.
141. Appeals M and N are dismissed.

Appeals O and P

142. The appeal site is located towards the edge of the pavement along Derry's Cross, which forms part of a large roundabout around an expansive green public open space, in Plymouth city centre.
143. The appeal site is located in a mixed-use area of the city centre, characterised by the presence of commercial, hotel, entertainment, retail and leisure uses.
144. Whilst the appeal site itself is located just outside the City Centre Conservation Area, much of its surroundings fall within it. During my site visit, I observed the presence of a number of tall and impressive Post-War buildings set within an open and spacious environment, reflective of the City Centre Conservation Area's characteristic presence of large, attractive, distinctively mid-Twentieth Century buildings set within a spacious grid pattern of streets.
145. Some of the attributes of the City Centre Conservation Area are to some degree, mirrored by the area adjacent to the appeal site, which is situated along a wide and spacious pavement, adjacent to a tall and impressive Post-War building. The appeal site is close to a street tree and lamppost and nearby to where the pavement opens out to cover a more expansive area.
146. During my site visit, I observed nearby to the appeal site, an attractively designed modern glazed bus stop with covered seating, along with wastebins and a post-box of prosaic and unassuming appearance.
147. Taking all of the above into account, the appeal site and its surroundings appear uncluttered and in keeping with the attractive, open and spacious qualities of the City Centre Conservation Area, within the setting of which the appeal site falls.
148. I find that the proposed BT Street Hub would appear as a highly incongruous feature within an open and spacious area of pavement. Further, the harm arising from this would be exacerbated as a result of the visual impact of the proposed large and changing advertisements, designed by their very nature to draw attention to themselves.
149. These would be located within an area where no other such advertisements are present and I find that they would draw the eye to an undue extent, appearing visually intrusive, jarring with the simplicity of other features along the pavement within the wider setting of the site and emphasising the alien appearance of the proposal within its surroundings.
150. Consequently, I find that the proposed development would detract from the setting of the City Centre Conservation Area.
151. I note that the proposed BT Street Hub would take up space along the pavement. However, in this case, I consider that there appears to be sufficient room for both pedestrians and street furniture and that whilst the proposal might impede pedestrian flows to a very limited degree, any harm arising in respect of public safety, having regard to highway and pedestrian safety, would not be significant.

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APP/N1160/W/22/3303283; APP/N1160/H/22/3303285.

152. Taking all of the above into account, I find that the proposed BT Street Hub would harm the character and appearance of the setting of the City Centre Conservation Area. This would be contrary to the NPPF and to Local Plan Policies SO3, PLY6, DEV20 and DEV21 which together amongst other things, seek to protect local character.

153. The harm arising would be localised and in respect of the significance of the heritage asset, would be less than substantial. Public benefits may arise from the proposal, including community benefits in terms of access to free Wi-Fi and other information and I note above that possible benefits might arise from the removal of phone kiosks elsewhere. However, 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.

154. The proposed advertisement would harm visual amenity.

155. Taking the above into account, Appeals O and P are dismissed.

Conclusions

156. 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 should fail.

N McGurk

INSPECTOR