



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 14 April 2025

by **David Cross BA(Hons) PgDip(Dist) TechIOA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 7th May 2025

Appeal A: Ref: APP/M9584/W/24/3352469

Pavement outside Unex Tower, 7 Station Street, Stratford, London E15 1DA

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Urban Innovation Company (UIC) Ltd against the decision of London Legacy Development Corporation.
 - The application Ref is 24/00258/FUL.
 - The development proposed is installation of "Pulse Smart Hub" with integrated digital screens.
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Appeal B: Ref: APP/M9584/H/24/3352470

Pavement outside Unex Tower, 7 Station Street, Stratford, London E15 1DA

- The appeal is made under Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended) against a refusal to grant express consent.
 - The appeal is made by Urban Innovation Company (UIC) Ltd against the decision of London Legacy Development Corporation.
 - The application Ref is 24/00259/ADV.
 - The advertisement proposed is installation of "Pulse Smart Hub" with integrated digital screens.
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Decision

Appeal A: Ref: APP/M9584/W/24/3352469

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal B: Ref: APP/M9584/H/24/3352470

2. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

3. The proposals are located on the same site and relate to each other. I have therefore considered the appeals in a single decision letter to avoid repetition. However, I have considered each proposal on its individual merits.
4. In relation to Appeal B, the reason for refusal refers to the policies of the development plan. However, the Regulations require that decisions are made only in the interests of amenity and public safety, as appropriate to each case. Therefore, although I have taken the development plan policies into account, they have not been a decisive consideration in my determination of that appeal.
5. A revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published in December 2024 but there are no material changes relevant to the substance of the appeal.

Main Issues

6. The main issues in respect of Appeal A are the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area, and highway safety.
7. The main issues in respect of Appeal B are the effect on the amenity of the area and public safety.

Reasons

Character, Appearance and Amenity

8. The appeal site is located in an area which is subject to significant and ongoing regeneration. Although the proposal would be within a relatively busy area including a mix of commercial and other uses as well as street art, the appearance of the streetscape in the immediate vicinity of the appeal site has an understated and uncluttered appearance. There is some street furniture and other features within the streetscape in the vicinity of the proposed hub, but these are set at a low level or are relatively slim features such as lighting poles or traffic signals. There are a limited number of street trees which have a softening effect in views of the area.
9. Due to its location and orientation, the proposed hub would be a prominent feature in views along the streetscape. Within this context, the proposed hub would be an obtrusive feature, introducing clutter into what is otherwise an understated relatively open public realm in the vicinity of the appeal site. The proposed displays would add to this jarring appearance, with the illumination and changing nature of the advertisements drawing the eye.
10. The proposals are located close to Unex Tower, which has a ground floor commercial façade facing the appeal site which establishes some degree of illumination and activity on the street frontage. However, due to its location at the edge of the footway, the appeal proposal would be distinctly separate from the façade of Unex Tower and this does not establish a prevailing context which justifies the proposed hub and displays.
11. For the reason stated above, in respect of Appeal A, the proposal would lead to significant harm to the character and appearance of the area. In respect of Appeal B, the proposal would lead to significant harm to the amenity of the area. The proposals would therefore be contrary to the design and amenity considerations of Policy BN.16 of the London Legacy Development Corporation Local Plan 2020 (the Local Plan) and Policy D8 of the London Plan 2021.
12. Policies T.4 of the Local Plan and T4 of the London Plan are not relevant to this main issue as they relate to transport matters.

Highway and Public Safety

13. The proposals would be located at the edge of the pavement adjacent to the carriageway, in the vicinity of a light controlled junction and pedestrian crossing. The junction is relatively complex and well-trafficked due to its location serving a nearby bus station as well as roads including the busy Great Eastern Road. I also saw that the pedestrian crossing was well used, commensurate with its location in an area containing a variety of commercial and residential uses as well as the bus station.

14. The proposed hub would be a solid structure located close to the pedestrian crossing. Due to its bulk and location, the hub would limit the intervisibility of pedestrians approaching and waiting to use the crossing and approaching vehicles along Great Eastern Road. Even allowing for the light controlled nature of the crossing, drivers and pedestrians should be aware of each other's presence in the interests of highway safety, and the effect of the proposal on visibility in the vicinity of the crossing would be severely detrimental to this.
15. Furthermore, the digital screens and the changing nature of the images would also create a distraction for drivers and pedestrians when they should be giving their full attention to passing through this complex area.
16. Reference has been made to the width of the footway in the vicinity of the hub, and potential reliance for pedestrian movement on an area of land within private property. I saw that there was some extent of demarcation in the paving which may indicate the extent of this private land. Although there is no evidence before me that the owners of the private land are likely to prevent public access, it has also not been demonstrated that this land can be relied upon to provide for the flow of pedestrians. Given the evidence of the limited extent of footway between the private land and the carriageway, there is a material risk that the hub would not enable sufficient space for the flow of pedestrians to pass through the area without venturing onto the carriageway, including wheelchair users and those with prams.
17. I conclude that due to the siting and design of the proposals, that Appeal A would lead to significant harm in respect of highway safety and Appeal B would lead to significant harm to public safety. The proposals would therefore be contrary to the highway and transport considerations of Policies BN.16 and T.4 of the Local Plan and policies D8 and T4 of the London Plan.

Other Matters

18. I have had regard to the benefits of the proposals, including those set out in the Appellant's Planning Statement and Design, Management and Operational Statement. This includes benefits relating to connectivity; the 'Smart City, including increasing contact with the community and services; life saving features; and sharing information. However, many of these benefits are already available as part of general service provision, and may also be provided by infrastructure of a more appropriate design and location. These benefits therefore carry limited weight in favour of the appeal proposals, and they do not outweigh the significant harm I have identified.
19. A call box has previously been approved on appeal in this location in 2018. Although this approval has lapsed, I have had regard to it as a material consideration. The appellant submits that the physical environment has not materially changed since the 2018 Decision. However, whilst the previous Inspector allowed the appeal with regards to highway safety and transport issues, the circumstances of the pedestrian crossing and junction that I observed are not addressed in that Decision. Furthermore, based on the evidence before me, the call box did not include advertisements and had a greater degree of transparency compared to the proposed hub. The considerations of the previous appeal are therefore materially different to those I have identified in respect of the appeal proposals. The 2018 Decision does not therefore lead me to a different conclusion on the appeals before me, which I have determined on their own merits.

Conclusion

20. For the reasons given, I conclude that both Appeal A and Appeal B should be dismissed.

David Cross

INSPECTOR