



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: 8th May 2025

Appeal A: Ref: APP/M9584/W/24/3352465

Pavement Opposite Stratford Shopping Centre, Unit K2, Stratford, London E15 1DE

- 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 24/00260/FUL.
 - The development proposed is installation of "Pulse Smart Hub" with integrated digital screens.
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Appeal B: Ref: APP/M9584/H/24/3352467

Pavement Opposite Stratford Shopping Centre, Unit K2, Stratford, London E15 1DE

- 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 24/00261/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/24/3352465

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal B: Ref: APP/M9584/H/24/3352467

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. At the time of my visit, access to the site was prevented due to a contractor's compound. However, I was able to view the site from the surrounding area sufficiently to enable the assessment of the appeals.
5. 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 this 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. The proposal would be within a relatively busy area including a mix of commercial and other uses as well as street art and trees on the opposite side of the highway.
9. Based on the appellant's evidence, the proposal would be located in a non-descript and utilitarian extent of the streetscape and viewed against an enclosed compound. However, as stated previously, at the time of my visit a contractor's compound had been placed on the site extending up to the edge of the highway.
10. The Local Planning Authority (LPA) has referred to a planning permission granted for the 'Meridian Steps' development, as well as highway works which include street furniture and planting in the vicinity of the appeal site. A plan extract of the layout has been included with the LPA's Statement of Case which shows the arrangement of pedestrian areas and landscaping, as well as the relationship with the carriageway.
11. Based on what I have seen and read, the details as shown on the appellant's plans have been overtaken by events and are no longer accurate. The circumstances I observed on my visit appear to be for a temporary period only, and the evidence suggests that the site and its surroundings will not be reinstated to their previous state. Therefore, I consider that the most appropriate way to consider these appeals is on the basis of their relationship with the Meridian Steps development.
12. The appellant's evidence, including the plans of the proposal, do not show the appeal proposals in the context of the Meridian Steps scheme and other highway works. Whilst it may be the case that the proposals would not prevent the redevelopment of the area, insufficient evidence has been provided by the appellant to determine the relationship between the proposals and the redevelopment of the site.
13. That said, the plan extract provided by the LPA allows some assessment to be undertaken. The indicated layout includes street furniture as well as extents of planting and trees. Even allowing for the provision of street furniture and signage, the proposed layout would be an open and attractive streetscape, which would be visible to the significant number of pedestrians going to and from the nearby shopping centre as well as highway users in the vicinity of the appeal site. Within this context, the proposed hub would be a prominent and obtrusive feature, introducing clutter into a well-designed area of public realm. The proposed displays

would add to this jarring appearance, with the illumination and changing nature of the advertisements drawing the eye.

14. For the reasons stated above, in respect of Appeal A, based on the evidence before me, 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.
15. 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

16. For the reasons stated previously, I have had regard to the evidence provided in respect of Meridian Steps as well as the submitted plans and the circumstances I observed on my visit.
17. The LPA's Transport consultee refers to the number of users of the highway and potential distraction for drivers at a point where they should be reading directional signage. However, whilst I saw that there is a large pedestrian crossing with a very high flow of pedestrians leading to and from the shopping centre, this is some distance from the location of the proposals and I do not consider that undue distraction would be caused to drivers and other highway users passing the proposed hub.
18. The appeal site is within an area that has a significant number of pedestrian movements, as well as vehicle movements along Great Eastern Road. Although the greatest flow of pedestrians is between the flights of steps and the shopping centre, there would have been a flow of pedestrians along the footway in the context of the site as shown on the submitted plans.
19. However, based on the evidence before me, the Meridian Steps development will add significantly to the flow of pedestrians in the immediate vicinity of the appeal site. No substantive evidence has been provided to demonstrate how the appeal proposals would affect pedestrian movements and other highway safety considerations in the context of the Meridian Steps development. Although the appeal proposals may not prevent the Meridian Steps development from being implemented, there is insufficient evidence to show how the proposals would affect pedestrian and other highways issues within the context of the proposed public realm, landscaping and associated highways works.
20. I conclude that insufficient evidence has been submitted in respect of the siting, design and setting of the proposals to demonstrate that Appeal A would not lead to significant harm in respect of highway safety and Appeal B would not 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

21. I have had regard to the benefits of the proposals, including those set out in the Appellant's Planning Statement and the 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 these benefits 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 concerns I have identified in relation to the significant harm arising from the proposals and insufficient evidence.

22. 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, for the reasons stated previously that is clearly not the case. The permitted development of Meridian Steps also represents a material change in circumstances. 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 materially different to those 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

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

David Cross

INSPECTOR