



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 15 July 2025 by E Street BSc (Hons) MSc

Decision by John Morrison BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 08 AUGUST 2025

Appeal A Ref: APP/Q3630/W/25/3363957

Footpath outside 87-89 Station Road, Addlestone KT15 2AR

- 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 BT Group PLC against the decision of Runnymede Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is RU.24/1608.
 - The development proposed is described as the “installation of 1No. BT Street Hub Unit and associated advertisement panels on either side of the unit”.
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Appeal B Ref: APP/Q3630/H/25/3363958

Footpath outside 87-89 Station Road, Addlestone KT15 2AR

- 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 BT Group PLC against the decision of Runnymede Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is RU.24/1645.
 - The advertisement proposed is “two digital 75 inch LCD display screen, one on each side of the Street Hub unit”.
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Decision

1. Appeal A is allowed, and planning permission is granted for the “installation of 1No. BT Street Hub Unit and associated advertisement panels on either side of the unit” at Footpath outside 87-89 Station Road, Addlestone KT15 2AR in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref RU.24/1608, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with drawing numbers: ADL – 102 Proposed Site Elevation, ADL-102 Proposed Site Plan, BT Street Hub Unit Dimensions.
2. Appeal B is allowed, and express consent is granted for two digital 75 inch LCD display screen, one on each side of the Street Hub unit at Footpath outside 87-89 Station Road, Addlestone KT15 2AR in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref RU.24/1645. The consent is for five years from the date of this decision and is subject to the five standard conditions set out in Schedule 2 of the 2007 Regulations and the following additional condition:
 - 1) The intensity of the illumination of the advertisement permitted by this consent shall be no greater than 600 candela per metre and the illumination shall be static.

Appeal Procedure

3. The site visit was undertaken by a representative of the Inspector whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeals.

Preliminary Matters and Main Issues

4. The description on the application forms differ to the decision notices. I am however, satisfied that they accurately describe the proposals in each case and the main parties would not be prejudiced by my use thereof.
5. Appeal A relates to planning permission and Appeal B advertisement consent. To avoid duplication, I have dealt with the two schemes together. For Appeal B, the above regulations set out the relevant considerations for this type of appeal. These are amenity and public safety. The main issues of Appeal A are the effect of the installation on the a) character and appearance of the area and b) highway safety with particular regard to the free flow of pedestrians. The main issues of Appeal B are the effect of the advertisement in terms of a) amenity and b) public safety.

Reasons for the Recommendation

Character and Appearance/ Amenity

6. The scheme would replace an existing telephone box. The wider area is a town centre high street with commercial units on the ground floor with what appears as residential uses on the upper floors. Typical signage seen within the locality appear to be above shop fronts and some instances on bus shelters. There is some other street furniture in amongst some street trees such as bicycle stands and benches.
7. The appeal scheme is to be free standing and situated on the pedestrian highway. Whilst it is to be taller than the existing telephone box, its modest land take and width would be only marginally larger than the existing structure which is a well-integrated feature of the public environment. The hub and signage together would be modest within the otherwise bustling and vibrant context and sit recessively within a colourful and busy main shopping and dining area. There are minimal instances of street signage besides the bus stop on the other side of the road with which this proposal would assimilate. Additionally, the previous telephone box has some form of advertisement signage, and this would be somewhat similar. The level of illumination the signage would provide is consistent with the wider street and would not detract from the commercial context.
8. The Council have referred to other examples which have been granted planning permission for other advertisement consents within the local vicinity. I have however only been given limited information. They are not directly comparable to this appeal scheme and therefore would not contribute to a level of visual cluttering which would be seen as unacceptable in this location. Moreover, the map provided showing the locations of the other advertisements show that there is a sufficient separation distance to not warrant a concern over cluttering and over concentration of advertisements.
9. In terms of Appeal A, the scheme would therefore comply with Policy EE1 of the Runnymede Local Plan 2030 (LP) with the above in mind. This policy seeks to ensure that development proposals are of a high-quality design and standard. In terms of Appeal B and owing to the advert being acceptable and an integral part of

the hub installation, it would not harm amenity and thus it would comply with the regulations.

10. The Council has drawn my attention to Policy EE1 which seeks to ensure that proposals are of a high quality with particular regard to amenity. The policies are a material consideration in regard to appeal B. As a result of the above the scheme would sit appropriately with their aims. They have not been decisive.

Highway/ Public Safety

11. The appeal proposal is to be sited primarily on public pedestrian highway. However, the full range of footpath incorporates both privately owned and publicly controlled space. The width of the proposal is larger, yet as detailed above, the increase therein would be minor and would sit in the same position as the existing phone box. It was observed on the site visit that members of the public use both parts of the footpath with no stopping or awareness of the different ownerships.
12. Therefore, users of the pathway are adept with manoeuvring round an obstacle in this location. Moreover, and on this portion of the pathway, there are no other instances of street furniture leading to a largely uncluttered street and thus largely unincumbered experience for pedestrians.
13. I have not been provided any evidence that the private land traversed is at risk of closure. Moreover, and due to the nature of the land being directly adjacent to shop frontages, the likelihood of this is low as it would block access to units. There may be some interventions within the pathway such as seating for cafes, but I am satisfied that there would still remain plenty of passing space without entering the carriageway for both able and less abled bodied users.
14. Even if the private land was blocked off, I am sufficiently convinced that even though the pathway would be narrower than 3m where the hub would be located, as per the Surrey County Council's Healthy Streets Guidance (SCCHSG), it can be reduced for short sections to 1.5m. The gap between the hub and the edge of the pathway would marginally exceed this figure and therefore would comply with the SCCHSG. Moreover, and for the short amount of smaller pathway it would provide, pedestrians would not be required to enter into the carriageway as there would be enough space to pass by or pause for a moment should there be passing pedestrians.
15. With the above in mind, in terms of Appeal A, the proposed hub would not have a detrimental impact on the free flow of pedestrian traffic and would not impede on highway safety for users. It would therefore comply with Policy SD4 of the LP, the Surrey County Council Local Transport Plan and SCCHSG and the relevant paragraphs of the Framework. In terms of Appeal B, the advertisement signage as a whole is acceptable in public safety terms since it would be an integral part of the hub installation. It would comply with the 2007 regulations. The provisions of the development plan, so far as they are relevant have been considered, the scheme would also meet with the aims of the LP and the Framework as detailed above.

Other Matters

16. The main parties have discussed the need for the street hub in terms of the benefits of communication infrastructure. The Framework details that planning decisions should support the expansion of electronic communication networks such

as this one. As I have found the proposal to be acceptable, I need not consider whether the benefits are sufficient to justify the proposal in this location. I have no reason to question the need for the development.

17. I appreciate concerns that the development has not submitted an ICNIRP (International Commission on Non Ionizing Radiation Protection) certificate. However, the installation is neither a mast nor a base station. Moreover, the evidence provided does not suggest it is required for this scale and type of installation.
18. There is a lack of substantive evidence to demonstrate that the hub would be harmful in terms of adding further screens. There are not a great number locally. I am also unconvinced, based on what I have seen, that installations such as the one proposed would encourage anti-social behaviour. The appellant has submitted an anti-social behaviour management plan, but in the absence of any crime statistics for the area, I do not see that such would be necessary.

Conditions

Appeal A

19. The time limit condition and reference to the approved plans are required for enforcement purposes. I have not included a matching materials condition since details thereof are shown on the plans and I consider them acceptable. The Council have not recommended any additional conditions to be placed on the permission and I have not deemed any others necessary.

Appeal B

20. The standard conditions should apply as per Schedule 2 of the 2007 Regulations. As the signage is illuminated, in the interest of public amenity and the context of the wider street scene, it would be necessary to apply a condition to limit the illuminance level with regard to the nighttime. The Council have recommended a condition that the development is secured by the plans. However, as the application is for express consent, any deviation would require a new one and therefore the condition is not necessary.

Conclusion and Recommendation

21. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeals should be allowed subject to the conditions I have referred to.

E Street

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

22. I have considered all the submitted evidence and my representative's report and on that basis the appeals are allowed, subject to the conditions specified.

John Morrison

INSPECTOR