



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 27 August 2025

by **H Miles BA (hons), MA, MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 5th September 2025

Appeal A Ref: APP/Y3615/W/25/3366579

Pavement outside G Live, London Road, Guildford GU1 2AF

- 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 Mr Nathan Still of In Focus Public Networks Limited against the decision of Guildford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/P/00228.
 - The development proposed is a freestanding telephone apparatus with integral defibrillator and advertisement.
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Appeal B Ref: APP/Y3615/H/25/3366582

Pavement outside G Live, London Road, Guildford GU1 2AF

- 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 Mr Nathan Still of In Focus Public Networks Limited against the decision of Guildford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/P/00229.
 - The development proposed is a freestanding telephone apparatus with integral defibrillator and advertisement.
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Decision

1. Appeal A and Appeal B are dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. For clarification, Appeal A seeks permission for the 'hub' which is also the structure on which the advertisement would be displayed. Appeal B seeks permission for the advertisement.
3. The National Planning Policy Framework (2024) (Framework) states that advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety. I have considered Appeal B on this basis.

Main Issues

4. The main issues for appeal A are the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area and highway safety
5. The main issues for appeal B are the effect of the proposed development on amenity, with particular regard to the character and appearance of the area and public safety with particular regard to highway safety.

Reasons

Public Safety with particular regard to Highway Safety

6. The appeal site is located outside G Live, a large entertainment venue in the town centre. The town centre has high levels of pedestrian footfall, and the nature of the adjoining building is that crowds enter and leave at the same time. The site is on London Road which is a busy main road including bus routes.
7. The space outside G Live includes raised planters which restrict pedestrian movement to the paved areas outside the venue and the pavement. There is also a bus stop and wayfinding sign on the footway in the vicinity. The proposed hub would be located at a part of the road where the pavement widens.
8. Although the structure is slim it includes a projecting canopy. Also, its siting means that pedestrians would be unable to pass between the hub and the raised planter. Therefore, considering its position close to the planter and bench to the southwest, it would have the effect of narrowing the usable part of the pavement across a larger area.
9. Given the high pedestrian footfall in this area, the narrower pavement and clear obstruction to pedestrian flows may lead to pedestrians stepping onto the busy road. This would not result in the efficient operation of the footway, would create unacceptable conflict between road users and would be unsafe.
10. As such, Appeal A would be harmful to highway safety. Therefore it would be contrary to D10 of the Guildford Local Plan Development Management Policies (2023) (DMP) which requires that advertisements and signage should not result in harm to public safety, amongst other things.
11. Appeal B would have a harmful effect on public safety with particular regard to highway safety. I have taken into account Policy D10 of the DMP, the aims of which are set out above. As the proposal would harm public safety, it conflicts with this policy.

Amenity, with particular regard to Character and Appearance

12. The space around the modern building at G live has a coordinated public realm with a consistent design and use of materials which is contemporary in appearance. Overall, this results in a distinct attractive and coherent appearance to the building and its surroundings. There are other commercial buildings in the nearby area, which include signage.
13. Hubs are found in other locations in Guildford and elsewhere, and there is planning permission for a unit nearby on Epsom Road. However, the proposed development would be of a utilitarian appearance, would not reflect the particular characteristics of the public realm in this location and would not provide an appropriate marker of the entrance to Guildford town centre. Although smaller than the surrounding buildings and on a wider part of the pavement, it would be in a prominent position directly outside the entrance to the publicly accessible building, and although the surroundings include lighting, the proposed illumination would add to its conspicuousness.

14. This would be visually jarring against the existing public realm in a highly prominent location, resulting in an unacceptably obtrusive appearance in this location.
15. The appeal site is within the Guildford Town Centre Conservation Area (CA). I am required to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area. With regard to Appeal B, this remains relevant insofar as it relates to the consideration of amenity. As a whole the CA derives its significance from its historic town centre use, layout and architectural features. The site is within character area 4: 19th century and later development to the north of the high street, where frontages vary and some are modern. The proposed hub is seen in the context of the contemporary G Live building. Therefore, it would not affect the appreciation of the historic features and significance of the CA, set out above. As such, in the circumstances of this appeal, it would preserve the character and appearance of the CA.
16. There are Grade II listed buildings at 24 and 28-32 (evens) London Road located to the northeast of the appeal site. Their significance appears to derive from their age and historic appearance. I have visited the appeal site, and I agree that due to the separation distance there would be no harm to the setting of these listed buildings. Nevertheless, the lack of harm to heritage assets would not outweigh the harm to character and appearance identified above.
17. As such, Appeal A would result in harm to the character and appearance of the area. Therefore, it would be contrary to Policy D10 of the DMP which, in part, requires that advertisements should not harm amenity and are of a high quality design, As well as Policy D1 of the Guildford Borough Local Plan: Strategy and Sites (2019) (LP) and Policy D4 of the DMP. Together these require development to be of a high quality design that responds to local character and distinctiveness, amongst other things.
18. Appeal B would have a harmful effect on amenity with particular regard to character and appearance. I have taken into account Policy D10 of the DMP, the aims of which are set out above. As the proposal would harm amenity, it conflicts with this policy.

Other Matters

19. The Framework states that advanced, high quality and reliable communications infrastructure is essential for economic growth and social well-being and it supports the expansion of electronic communications networks. The Government's Statement of Strategic Priorities, also expresses the aim of creating a world class digital infrastructure in the UK.
20. A defibrillator would be provided as part of the hub and the evidence with this appeal sets out that this would increase the chances of survival if someone had a heart attack. However, there are a number of other public defibrillators available in the nearby area, and there is little before me to suggest that this device could not be provided without the proposed hub.
21. The hub would provide some free services to the public. These include device charging ports, wifi and phonecalls including to emergency services with the use of solar power. These would provide a useful function to members of the public and as such are a benefit of this development. Nevertheless, such services are already

provided in other ways, albeit they may not be free. The signs could be used for Borough retailers and council initiatives as well as wayfinding, community and emergency messaging. However, no mechanism has been submitted that secures that such public messages would be displayed. Therefore, overall, the public benefits of the proposed development are modest.

22. On the other hand the proposed development would result in harm to character and appearance, and the creation of high quality places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. It would also result in danger to road users and harm to highway safety. Together the proposed developments would result in serious harm.

Appeal A

23. The modest benefits would not outweigh the serious harm described above. Consequently, Appeal A conflicts with the development plan and there are no material considerations which indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it.

Appeal B

24. Advertisements are subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety. The evidence submitted does not satisfy me that any of the other matters would amount to benefits in these regards. As such, these factors do not alter my decision.

Conclusion

25. Therefore, for the reasons given above, Appeal A and B should both be dismissed.

H Miles

INSPECTOR

Appendix 1

List of those who have appealed

Reference	Case Reference	Appellant
Appeal A	APP/Y3615/W/25/3366579	IN FOCUS PUBLIC NETWORKS LIMITED
Appeal B	APP/Y3615/H/25/3366582	IN FOCUS PUBLIC NETWORKS LIMITED