



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 8 September 2025

by A Knight BA PG Dip MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23rd September 2025

Appeal A Ref: APP/Q3630/W/25/3366399

Footpath outside 46A Station Road, Addlestone KT15 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 BT Group PLC against the decision of Runnymede Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is RU.24/1609.
 - The development proposed is 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/25/3366401

Footpath outside 46A Station Road, Addlestone KT15 2AF

- 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.24/1650.
 - The advertisement proposed is installation of 1No. BT Street Hub Unit and associated advertisement panels on either side of the unit.
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Decision

1. Appeal A is dismissed.
2. Appeal B is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

3. The two appeals determined hereafter relate to the same appeal site and to each other. Appeal A is made in respect of the refusal of planning permission for a freestanding street hub unit (the development). Appeal B relates to the refusal of advertisement consent for two digital display screens (the advertisements) which would be an integral part of the development. I have determined both appeals on their individual merits but dealt with the two together below to avoid duplication.
4. In both cases the application forms describe the appeal site as 'Footpath outside Smith & Western, Unit 7, Market St, Addlestone, KT15 2GB', the decision notices describe it as 'Footpath outside Unit 12, Market St, Addlestone, KT15 2GB', and the appeal forms describe it as 'Footpath outside 46A Station Road, Addlestone'. The last of these is the most accurate, and so I have used it in the banner heading above, adding the postcode for that address.
5. I am the appointed Inspector for other appeals concerning directly comparable proposals by the same appellant, both in the borough of Runnymede and in others near it. Given the similarity of the proposal, the issues involved, and the extent of

repetition in the submissions my decisions will inevitably appear similar. Each proposal has, however, been assessed on its individual merits.

6. In respect of Appeal B, Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (the Regulations) and the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) state that advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety. The Council has raised no objection in respect of the latter. Based on the evidence before me I see no reason to view matters differently.

Main Issues

7. For Appeal A, the main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area.
8. For Appeal B, the main issue is the effect of the advertisement on visual amenity.

Reasons

9. The appeal site is a section of pavement alongside Station Road, which runs on a broadly east-west axis through the commercial and cultural centre of the provincial town of Addlestone. The site is adjacent to the northern entrance to The Lane, a relatively modern commercial parade off Station Road.
10. At its western end, the southern side of Station Road forms an area distinct from the remainder of the road and from much of its surroundings. A row of relatively modern developments sit alongside each other; Within this, a building housing the Council offices, a Police station, and the local library is neighboured by two parallel buildings forming either side of The Lane parade. These buildings are set back from Station Road so as to create a continuous open area, seemingly comprised of a mix of public highway pavement and adjoining paved forecourts (the external area).
11. Whereas much of the pedestrian areas east of the appeal site have a somewhat constrained feel due to the more narrow pavements there, the external area is comparatively spacious. There is a relatively seamless join between the pavement on Station Road and the paved surface of The Lane, and the buildings marking the entrance to the parade are angled to create external space. A small number of tables and chairs are found outside one of these buildings, whilst the other appears to have its own external area, demarcated by bollards. These are found at regular spacings all along the edge of the external area. These features give the external area, including the appeal site, an open, planned feel. It is distinct from much of the rest of Station Road in these respects.
12. Near the appeal site are found a range of advertisements. These are principally found on shopfronts, including on projecting signs, as well as on upper floor glazing, and on A-boards. A freestanding display unit is found at the northern entrance to The Lane, with an identical one visible at its southern entrance. The advertisements reinforce the planned feel of the external area; each is for goods and services on offer within the premises on which they are displayed, or at least within the parade, they are generally static and unchanging, and are all located away from the edge of the highway. This gives a strong degree of legibility and clarity to the scene.

13. The development would be a freestanding hub unit some 2.9m tall and 1.2m wide, with an LCD display screen on either side. It would be relatively slim in profile but positioned at a right angle to Station Road and so be visually prominent when approached from the east or west, and from around the external area.
14. There is little of comparable height and size to the proposed development along the roadside on the external area. The hub would dominate the area visually, impinging upon views along station Road, to the detriment of the open character of the external area. The display of general advertisements alongside the road would be wholly incongruous in context of the external area and harmfully undermine its current planned feel.
15. My attention has been drawn to recent decisions by the Council to approve comparable developments further along Station Road¹. Save for the fact that two of these relate to replacements for existing signage, I have little from the Council to explain the rationale behind these decisions. However, as I have set out above, the rest of Station Road does not have the open, planned feel of the external area, and for that reason I do not consider the respective schemes to have the same effects. I therefore attach minimal weight to these previous decisions.
16. Whilst the submissions refer to the replacement of an existing kiosk, it is not evident that the proposals before me involve an undertaking of that type. Certainly, there is no existing kiosk at the appeal site. Even if one of the nearby consented schemes involves the removal or replacement of existing communications equipment, that is a matter of relevance to the schemes in question rather than the one before me, and I attach minimal weight to the prospect.
17. I have been provided with excerpts from other appeal decisions², but have been given little evidence that any of them pertain to settings directly comparable to that found at the appeal site. As a result, these previous decisions carry minimal weight in my determination.
18. Regarding Appeal A, I find that the development would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the area. It would be contrary to Policy EE1 of the Runnymede 2030 Local Plan (2020) where it requires development to create attractive places that contribute positively to townscape and the public realm.
19. Regarding Appeal B, for the reasons given, I find that the advertisement would cause harm to the visual amenity of the area. In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007, the provisions of the development plan, insofar as they are relevant, have been considered. As I have concluded that the advertisement harms the amenity of the area, the scheme does not meet with the aims of Policy EE1, given its objectives as described above. For the same reason, the proposal would also be contrary to the provisions of paragraph 141 of the Framework which states, amongst other things, that the quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited.

Planning Balance

20. The development would utilise renewable energy in providing a range of services, including Wi-Fi connection, 4G and 5G coverage, free phone calls to emergency

¹ Applications Refs RU.24/1232; RU.24/1225; RU.24/1550; RU.25/0106.

² Appeal Refs: APP/Z5630/H/3209488; APP/N5660/Z/22/3295689; APP/J2373/W/22/3304941; APP/J2373/W/22/3305075.

services, and USB ports for rapid device charging. It would be maintained regularly. These are public benefits that would contribute towards advanced, high quality and reliable communications infrastructure, which the Framework states is essential for economic growth and social well-being. The development would also be one from which other technologies may be deployed to capture environmental data and measure air quality.

21. It would be possible to display public messages on the screens, including from the Council. Whilst I acknowledge the benefits listed above, I have little to demonstrate unmet local need for any of the services that would be supplied, or to show that similar facilities could not be provided without the proposed development.
22. I do not doubt that many small businesses feel they would benefit from advertising, and that the proposed screens may be able to provide it. That said, I have little to show me that businesses around the appeal site have either the need, or any arrangement in place, to advertise through the proposed development. An initiative on the part of BT to gift advertising space is noted but appears out of date now. I attach minimal weight to these aspects.

Conclusion

23. For the reasons set out above, the proposals under Appeal A and Appeal B would harm the character and appearance and visual amenity of the area. Whilst I recognise the public benefits that would accrue, these would not outweigh the harm identified.
24. I conclude that Appeals A and B are dismissed.

A Knight

INSPECTOR

Appendix 1

List of those who have appealed

Reference	Case Reference	Appellant
Appeal A	APP/Q3630/W/25/3366399	BT Group PLC
Appeal B	APP/Q3630/H/25/3366401	BT Group PLC