
Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 16 September 2025

by **V Simpson BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 06 October 2025

Appeal A Ref: APP/Z0116/W/25/3367561

Pavement at A38, near jcn w/ St. James Barton Roundabout, Bristol BS1 3PR

- 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 Telecommunications Plc against the decision of Bristol City Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/10722/F.
 - The development proposed is the installation of 1no. new BT Street Hub, incorporating 2no. digital 75" LCD advert screens, and associated BT Phone Kiosk removals.
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Appeal B Ref: APP/Z0116/H/25/3367563

Pavement at A38, near jcn w/ St. James Barton Roundabout, Bristol BS1 3PR

- 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 BT Telecommunications Plc against the decision of Bristol City Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/10723/A.
 - The development proposed is the installation of 1no. new BT Street Hub, incorporating 2no. digital 75" LCD advert screens, and associated BT Phone Kiosk removals.
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Appeal C Ref: APP/Z0116/W/25/3367571

Pavement o/s 28-30 The Horsefair, Bristol BS1 3DS

- 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 Telecommunications Plc against the decision of Bristol City Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/10668/F.
 - The development proposed is the installation of 1no. new BT Street Hub, incorporating 2no. digital 75" LCD advert screens, and associated BT Phone Kiosk removals.
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Appeal D Ref: APP/Z0116/H/25/3367573

Pavement o/s 28-30 The Horsefair, Bristol BS1 3DS

- 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 BT Telecommunications Plc against the decision of Bristol City Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/10669/A.
 - The development proposed is the installation of 1no. new BT Street Hub, incorporating 2no. digital 75" LCD advert screens, and associated BT Phone Kiosk removals.
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Appeal E Ref: APP/Z0116/W/25/3367578

Pavement o/s 165 East Street, Bedminster, Bristol BS3 4EJ

- 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 Telecommunications Plc against the decision of Bristol City Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/10662/F.
 - The development proposed is the installation of 1no. BT Street Hub and removal of 3no. associated BT payphones.
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Appeal F Ref: APP/Z0116/H/25/3367579**Pavement o/s 165 East Street, Bedminster, Bristol BS3 4EJ**

- 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 BT Telecommunications Plc against the decision of Bristol City Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/10663/A.
 - The development proposed is the installation of 1no. BT Street Hub and removal of 3no. associated BT payphones.
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Appeal G Ref: APP/Z0116/W/25/3368134**Pavement o/s Beacon Tower, 602-604 Fishponds Road, Fishponds, Bristol BS16 3HQ**

- 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 Telecommunications Plc against the decision of Bristol City Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/10672/F.
 - The development proposed is the installation of 1no. BT Street Hub and removal of 2no. associated BT payphones.
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Appeal H Ref: APP/Z0116/H/25/3368135**Pavement o/s Beacon Tower, 602-604 Fishponds Road, Fishponds, Bristol BS16 3HQ**

- 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 BT Telecommunications Plc against the decision of Bristol City Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/10673/A.
 - The development proposed is the installation of 1no. BT Street Hub and removal of 2no. associated BT payphones.
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Appeal I Ref: APP/Z0116/W/25/3368136**Pavement O/S Sainsbury's Local, 256-258 Gloucester Road, Bristol BS7 8PB**

- 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 Telecommunications Plc against the decision of Bristol City Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/10678/F.
 - The development proposed is the installation of 1no. BT Street Hub and removal of 2no. associated BT payphones.
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Appeal J Ref: APP/Z0116/H/25/3368137**Pavement O/S Sainsbury's Local, 256-258 Gloucester Road, Bristol BS7 8PB**

- 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 BT Telecommunications Plc against the decision of Bristol City Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/10679/A.
 - The development proposed is the installation of 1no. BT Street Hub and removal of 2no. associated BT payphones.
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Appeal K Ref: APP/Z0116/W/25/3368751**Pavement o/s Brislington Hill, Brislington, Bristol BS4 5BE**

- 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 Telecommunications Plc against the decision of Bristol City Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/10732/F.
 - The development proposed is the installation of 1no. BT Street Hub and removal of 2no. associated BT payphones.
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Appeal L Ref: APP/Z0116/H/25/3368752**Pavement o/s Brislington Hill, Brislington, Bristol BS4 5BE**

- 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 BT Telecommunications Plc against the decision of Bristol City Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/10733/A.
 - The development proposed is the installation of 1no. BT Street Hub and removal of 2no. associated BT payphones.
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Appeal M Ref: APP/Z0116/W/25/3368873**Pavement opposite Sofa Project, 19-21 Gloucester Road, Bishopston, Bristol BS7 8AA**

- 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 Telecommunications Plc against the decision of Bristol City Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/10730/F.
 - The development proposed is the installation of 1no. BT Street Hub and removal of associated BT payphones.
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Appeal N Ref: APP/Z0116/H/25/3368874**Pavement opposite Sofa Project, 19-21 Gloucester Road, Bishopston, Bristol BS7 8AA**

- 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 BT Telecommunications Plc against the decision of Bristol City Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/10731/A.
 - The development proposed is the installation of 1no. BT Street Hub and removal of associated BT payphones.
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Decisions

1. The appeals are dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. 7 planning applications were submitted. Each proposed the erection of a BT street hub (hub) in different locations in the Bristol area. The Council issued 2 decisions for each application, one for the proposed hub and the other for associated advertisement displays. The 14 subsequent appeals (A-N) are the subject of this decision letter. The pairs of appeals at A&B, C&D, E&F, G&H, I&J, K&L and M&N, each relate to one of the different sites.
3. Each appeal has been considered on its own merits. However, given the similarities in the proposed schemes and the issues raised, and in the interests of conciseness, a single decision letter is issued.
4. In reaching my decisions on the appeals related to advertisement displays – i.e. appeals B, D, F, H, J, L, and N, I have had regard to the development plan policies cited in the evidence, but only insofar as they are material to amenity and public safety considerations.
5. The address in the banner for appeals C&D has been amended to better reflect the location of the appeal site shown on the submitted plans.

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6. Amended plans have been provided in support of appeals G&H, on which the position of the proposed hub is altered a little. While these amended plans were not before the Council when it determined the application, the changes proposed would not substantially alter the scheme. Furthermore, the Council and interested parties would not be prejudiced by my decision to accept the amended plans, as they had the opportunity to comment on them at the appeal stage.
 7. As part of my consideration of these appeals, I visited an existing hub on Merchant Street. It was not operational.

Main Issues

8. The main issues are the effect of the developments/advertisements on:
 - the character and appearance, and the amenity of the areas - all appeals;
 - risk of crime – appeals A, C, E, G, I, K and M;
 - the convenience and ease of movement for users of the nearby pavement – appeals A, C, G, I, K and M; and
 - public safety, with particular regard to highway safety – appeals A&B, C&D, E&F, H, I&J, K&L and M&N.

Reasons

Character, appearance, and amenity

Appeals C&D, G&H, I&J, and K&L

9. These appeal sites are all in built-up areas of the city, and close to a range of commercial and/or retail premises. The generally rectangular prism-shaped hubs would be erected on the pavements. They would be orientated such that their largest illuminated faces would be highly visible from nearby locations on these pavements and the adjacent carriageways.
10. Although not as tall as many nearby buildings, lamp posts and/or signposts, and despite having a sleek design, the hubs would have a bulky appearance. They would also add clutter and harmfully erode the openness of the parts of the pavements they would be sited on.
11. Even if some advertisements under the deemed consent regime may have a maximum night-time luminance of 600 candelas per square metre (cd/m²), express consent is sought for the advertisements subject of these appeals. As such, it is appropriate to consider the effect of the proposed levels of luminance of the hubs in considering this main issue.
12. The appeal sites are in areas with street lighting, where there would be varying degrees of additional light from retail/commercial frontages and vehicles. Consequently, the lighting environments in these areas are fairly typical of what may ordinarily be expected in urban or suburban environments.
13. In the absence of compelling evidence to the contrary, I accept the maximum recommended luminescence levels set out by the Institute of Lighting Professionals (ILP) in their lighting guide for adverts (guidance)¹.
14. I have considered the effect that conditions restricting the luminance of the lit panels between dusk and dawn to no more than 600 cd/m² would have. However,

¹ Institution of lighting professionals- Professional lighting Guide 05/23 – The brightness of illuminated advertisements including digital displays - 202

even with such conditions, at night the panels could still be substantially brighter than the recommended maximum nighttime luminance levels for urban and suburban environments, as identified by the Institute of Lighting Professionals (ILP) in their guidance. Moreover, during the daytime, the lit panels would all have the potential to be significantly brighter than the ILP's guidance for maximum recommended luminescence for overcast days. For the hubs at appeals C&D, I&J, and K&L, the proposed luminance level would also significantly exceed their recommended maximum luminance for bright sunny days.

15. Notwithstanding the ambient lighting of the appeal sites, at night and at many times of day, the lit panels and the associated advertisement displays would be highly conspicuous and incongruous additions to the parts of the streets they would be located on. This would be because of their high levels of luminance, their size, and their prominent locations within the public realm.
16. Although there are digital lit advertisement displays and/or unlit advertisement displays on nearby bus shelters, some of these display panels are at least partially obscured by the rest of the bus shelter structure, and they are all at a lower height than the proposed schemes. Consequently, these other advertisement displays are less prominent than the appeal schemes would be. Therefore, their presence does not lead me away from my previous findings.
17. To restrict the luminance of the advertisements to no more than 300cd/m² for the lifetime of the development, and to prevent the source of the illumination from being directly visible to users of the adjacent adopted highway via conditions, would not be reasonable. This is because the LED display panels would be visible from the adjacent highway. It is also because restricting the luminance to this extent would be too onerous in relation to the schemes that have been put forward.
18. At least 2 kiosks would be removed as part of each hub scheme. However, and despite many of these existing kiosks being in poor repair and subject to flyposting and/or vandalism, they are substantially less prominent than the proposed hubs would be. For some, this is because they are close to the walls of nearby buildings, off the main throughfare parts of pavements, and/or at the rear of the pavement, and for all, it is because they have low levels of light emittance. As such, and even though the schemes would lead to a small overall reduction in the amount of street furniture, the benefit to the character and appearance of the area from their removal would be less than the associated harm from the proposed hubs.

Appeals A&B, E&F and M&N

19. The site at appeals M&N is on a vibrant and largely commercial street within the Gloucester Road Conservation Area (CA). The significance of this CA stems partly from the historic use of Gloucester Road as a route into Bristol. The subsequent growth of Bristol during the industrialisation period led to speculative development alongside this road. Consequently, the often-large buildings constructed adjacent to the road during that time also contribute to the significance of this CA. Much of the historic layout and form of development in the area remains evident. Nevertheless, high levels of traffic, some of the more contemporary ground-floor shop fronts, and large commercial signs and hoardings, all detract from the distinctive qualities of this area.

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20. The site at appeals E&F is also in a busy commercial area. However, this site is within a part of the Bedminster CA. The significance of this part of the CA is at least partially informed by its street layout and plot structure, which I understand to be of pre-Saxon origin, and to be rare both within Bristol and nationally. It is also from those buildings within it that provide a good example of a circa Victorian era townscape. However, the value of this townscape is somewhat undermined by some more recent poor-quality shopfronts and associated signage.
 21. The site at appeals A&B passes under a large building and forms part of a wide footway adjacent to a highly trafficked multi-lane road that approaches a large and busy roundabout. This site is adjacent to the Stokes Croft CA which is a generally lively area with a vibrant local community and some good quality architecture of different eras. However, there is also a sense of neglect within parts of this CA. This appeal site is also close to the Grade II listed building known as the Full Moon Public House. The significance of which arises both from its historic interest - with an inn thought to have been present on the site since the 13th Century, and its architectural interest - as 17th century public house which was refenestrated in the 18th century. Given the historic use of this building, the nearby public approaches to it, which include the appeal site, form part of its setting and contribute in a small way to its significance.
 22. These hubs would all be erected in areas with high levels of activity and where there is much surrounding development, including a fairly wide range of nearby street furniture. Moreover, these appeal sites are all generally well-lit both during the day and night. However, the proposed hubs at E&F and M&N would be located close to the roadside edge of the pavement, and all of the hubs would be set away from lit shop windows/displays and other sizable lit advertisements. Therefore, and despite the sleek form and simple design detailing of the proposed hub structures, their large and bright LED panels would make them prominent and incongruous additions to the parts of the streets on which they would be erected.
 23. While a decluttering benefit would arise from the reduction in the number of existing telephone kiosks, those that would be removed do not include lit advertisements, and they are more subtly located within the street-scene. As such, and even if some removals would be within the setting of listed buildings and/or within CA's, those kiosks are not as prominent as the proposed hubs would be. Consequently, and in respect of this main issue, the benefits associated with their removal would be less than the harm that would be caused by the new hubs.
 24. Therefore, when considered as a whole, all of these schemes would cause harm to the character and appearance of the area they form part of and, albeit to a small extent, the appeals at E&F and M&N would erode the contribution that the sites make to the significance of the CA's they form part of. In addition, due to its brightness and because it would add clutter to the pavement on the approach to the Full Moon public house, the hub subject of appeals A&B would reduce the contribution that the setting of the listed buildings makes to its significance – albeit to a very small extent.
 25. The harm that would be caused to the significance of each of these heritage assets would be at the lower end of the scale of less than substantial. However, in accordance with paragraph 212 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the framework), great weight is given to the conservation of these assets.

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26. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) provides support for the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next-generation technology, such as 5G. However, it also states that the number of communications masts and the sites for such installations should be kept to a minimum. Even if the proposed hubs would help boost 5G coverage, it has not been satisfactorily demonstrated that the possibility of erecting antennas on an existing building, mast or other structure has been sufficiently explored. Very little weight is therefore attributed to the public benefit that would arise from any boost to 5G services in the area.
27. Another public benefit would arise from the provision of free digital information and communication services at or close to the hubs. However, given the general prevalence of mobile phone availability and usage for communication and information purposes, little weight is given to this benefit. Little weight is also given to the benefit that would arise from being able to charge devices at the hub. This is because doing so would put the user at increased risk of theft or other related criminal action, and is not therefore likely to be a common or frequent occurrence.
28. Overall, the public benefits do not outweigh the harm that would be caused to the significance of the previously referenced heritage assets.

Character, appearance and amenity conclusions

29. For these reasons, all of the appeal schemes would cause harm to the character and appearance, and the amenity of the area in which they would be located. Consequently, they would all conflict with SADMP² policies DM26, DM27, and DM28, and Core Strategy³ policy BCS21. In addition, the schemes at appeals A&B, E, and M&N would conflict with SADMP policies DM31 and DM36 and Core Strategy policy BCS22, and the appeals at A&B, C, and N would conflict with BCAP⁴ policy 30. Together, and amongst other things, these policies require development to be of a high quality of design that contributes positively to local character and distinctiveness; to safeguard heritage assets; and to conserve and where appropriate, enhance heritage assets or their settings.

Crime - appeals A, C, E, G, I, K and M

30. The solid hubs would be large enough to conceal persons/activity, and the light and glare from the screens would, in some cases, prevent the effective use of local CCTV monitoring. I have no doubt that the developments subject of these appeals would further increase the risk of criminal activity both at the hub sites and in the areas close to them. This is because of the significant volume of criminal incidents reported close to the hubs, and the associated range of reported crimes that include theft, anti-social behaviour, criminal damage, and drug offences. It is also because similar hubs have been; used for criminal purposes; targets for criminal damage; and/or a focal point for anti-social behaviour.
31. The implementation of measures such as restricting hub usage and ensuring the hubs are monitored, regularly inspected and cleaned – as identified in The Street Hub Anti-Social Behaviour Management Plan – version 3 (SHASBMP) would undoubtedly reduce the risk of criminal activity associated with their presence and

² Bristol City Council – Bristol Local Plan – Site allocations and development management policies local plan – Adopted July 2014

³ Bristol City Council – Bristol Development Framework – Core Strategy – adopted June 2011

⁴ Bristol City Council – Bristol Local Plan - Bristol Central Area Plan – Adopted March 2015

use. However, even if all the measures in the SHASBMP were fully implemented, there would still be a residual increased risk of crime in the area surrounding the hubs, which would be to the detriment of street safety. Additionally, and even if other Inspectors have previously determined that the implementation of an anti-social behaviour management plan would reduce the risk of a hub being used for crime to an acceptable degree – as was the case in appeal ref APP/L5240/W/21/3285401, I do not have enough information about the crime rates in that or other areas to draw comparisons with those schemes.

32. For these reasons, the developments at appeals A, C, E, G, I, K and M are likely to increase the risk of crime. Consequently, they would conflict with policies Core Strategy policy BSC21, and SADMP policies DM27 and DM28. Amongst other things, these seek to ensure safe environments and appropriate natural surveillance.

Convenience and ease of movement for users of the pavements – appeals A, C, G, I, K and M

33. These appeal sites are all in locations within Bristol where either a moderate or high volume of pedestrians and/or other footway users can reasonably be expected to use the pavements.
34. The hub in appeal M would be in general alignment with nearby bike storage racks, and the size of the gap between them both and the inside edge of the pavement would be similar. As such, the hub would not lead to a further material reduction in the depth of the unobstructed parts of the pavement in this area. Nevertheless, be they with or without mobility aids, those future users requiring some physical contact with the hub, could block part of the pavement past it. However, such instances are likely to be infrequent and for short periods of time. Furthermore, at such times, the unobstructed parts of the footway would remain wide enough to enable other users to pass the hub with relative ease. This would be irrespective of whether such users would be travelling in the same direction or passing each other, and be they on foot, with a bicycle, or in a typically sized wheelchair or pushchair.
35. The type and frequency of use of the hubs in appeals A, C, G, I, and K would be likely to be similar to that of the hub in appeal M. Moreover, a decent depth of footway would remain to one side of the hubs in each of these other schemes. As such, and even if the hubs were in use during times of peak pavement usage, there would be sufficient space to enable convenient passage for other footway users past the hub.
36. For these reasons, the developments subject of appeals A, C, G, I, K and M would not cause harm to the convenience and ease of movement for users of the nearby pavement. In this respect, these schemes would all comply with Core Strategy policies BCS10 and BCS13, and SADMP policies DM23 and DM28. In addition, the schemes at appeals A, C, and M would accord with BCAP policy 30. Amongst other things, these policies require developments to provide for convenient pedestrian movement, to protect the function of public rights of way and to encourage walking, and to prevent harm to the accessibility of primary or secondary pedestrian routes.

Public safety – appeals A&B, C&D, E&F, H, I&J, K&L and M&N.

37. The schemes subject of these appeals would all be located close to sections of busy roads where there are features that require the particular attention of road users to ensure the safe operation of the highway. These features include;

pedestrian crossings; traffic lights; complicated junctions with multiple movement desire lines; the commencement of bus lanes; bus stops, and bike storage areas. Even if the hubs would not directly block road users views of approaching road signs, traffic lights or other features in the highway, they would be located such that they would be close to and highly visible from the nearby carriageways. As a result, and because of their high levels of illumination and the potentially frequent changing of the advertisements, the hubs would be likely to distract road users at times when greater than usual amounts of attention would be required on the road and road environment. Such distractions would harmfully increase the risk of conflict between vehicle drivers, cyclists, pedestrians, and other road users, which would be to the detriment of highway safety.

38. Given my previous findings regarding the effect of the schemes at appeals A, C, I, K and M on the convenience and ease of movement for users of the pavements, there would be no ordinary need for pavement users to step out into the adjacent road to pass the hub unit. In this sense, the hubs subject of these appeals would not cause harm to highway safety.
39. Nevertheless, and although the developments subject of appeals A, C, I, K, and M would not cause harm to public safety, with particular regard to highway safety, for the reasons given, the schemes subject of appeals B, D, E, F, H, J, L and N would cause such harm. As such, these latter schemes would conflict with SADMP policy 23 and Core Strategy policy BCS10. In addition, the scheme subject of appeal J would conflict with SADMP policy 28 and Core Strategy policy BCS13. Collectively and amongst other things, these policies seek to ensure that development provides safe streets and safe access to all sections of the community, and to encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport.

Other Matters

40. The public benefits previously identified would apply to all of the proposed hubs. However, and for the same reasons given above, either little or very little weight can be attributed to each of these benefits.
41. Advertising revenue would undoubtedly help fund the ongoing running and maintenance costs of the hubs. However, it is not clear that this revenue source is essential to ensure the communications and information benefits associated with the street hubs.
42. The appeal decision letters provided relate to sites outside of Bristol and have different planning policy contexts. Furthermore, the evidence before me is insufficient to enable direct comparisons to be made between those schemes and the ones subject of these appeals. Consequently, these decision letters do not lead me away from my previous findings.

Conclusion

43. Notwithstanding my findings on the 3rd main issue, in all of the appeals harm would be caused in respect of at least one main issue. These harms and the associated development plan conflict are prevailing considerations.
44. The developments subject of appeals A, C, E, G, I, K, and M would therefore conflict with the development plan when read as a whole. Moreover, in this case, material considerations do not indicate that these appeals should be determined other than in accordance with the development plan.

45. I therefore conclude that all the appeals should be dismissed.

V Simpson
INSPECTOR