



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 2 December 2025

by **N Bowden BA(Hons) Dip TP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 05 DECEMBER 2025

Appeal A Ref: APP/Y1945/W/25/3367616

Footpath outside 23-25 Market Street, Watford WD18 0PA

- 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 Simon Warner (BT Group PLC) against the decision of Watford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/00209/FUL.
 - The development proposed is 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/Y1945/H/25/3367617

Footpath outside 23-25 Market Street, Watford WD18 0PA

- 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 Simon Warner (BT Group PLC) against the decision of Watford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/00210/ADV.
 - The development proposed is the 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 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 23-25 Market Street, Watford WD18 0PA in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 25/00209/FUL, subject to the conditions in the attached schedule.
2. Appeal B is allowed and express consent is granted for the installation of 1No. BT Street Hub Unit and associated advertisement panels on either side of the unit at footpath outside 23-25 Market Street, Watford WD18 0PA in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 25/00210/FUL, subject to the five standard conditions set out in Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended) and the additional condition in the attached schedule.

Preliminary Matters

3. The appeals relate to the same proposal. Appeal A concerns the refusal of planning permission to erect a street hub unit (the hub). Appeal B concerns the refusal of express consent for advertisement panels on either side of the hub. I have considered each appeal on its individual merits, however, as they raise similar issues, I have combined the decisions into a single decision letter.

4. In respect of Appeal B, the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (the Regulations) require that decisions are made only in the interest of amenity and public safety. Therefore, whilst I have taken account of the policies of the development plan that the Council considers to be relevant, these have not been decisive in my determination.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is the effect of the proposals on the character, appearance and amenity of the area.

Reasons

6. The appeal site is set on the edge of the town centre of Watford. This particular location forms a wide area of footpath adjacent to the ring road and outside a hotel. It is a commercial context with a variety of signage and other street furniture in the vicinity. Whilst the proposed hub would be a fairly prominent feature, it is not of an excessive size and its appearance would not be jarring in this commercial area.
7. My attention has been drawn to the proximity of the site to the listed Holy Rood Church and other associated listed buildings. These are however set on the opposing side of the ring road and appreciated in a different context to this proposal.
8. In reaching my conclusion here, I have been mindful of the concerns identified by Hertfordshire Constabulary relating to the units potentially attracting criminal activity. However, I have nothing other than anecdotal evidence to support this and in any case the proposal has been submitted with an anti-social behaviour management plan to address these concerns. As such, I am unable to apply more than very limited weight to the fear of crime. I have also considered the public benefits of the scheme including free Wi-Fi and free phone calls however as I find the proposal acceptable on its merits, I do not need to consider this further.
9. Accordingly, I conclude that the proposals would have an acceptable impact upon the character, appearance and amenity of the area and, insofar as the policies are relevant, in accordance with policies QD6.2 and QD6.4 of the Watford Local Plan 2021 – 2038 (WLP) and provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). This is due to the proposals relating well to the local context.

Conditions

10. The Council has provided a schedule of conditions in the event the appeals are allowed which I have considered against paragraph 57 of the Framework, and the advice contained in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). I have imposed these with modifications and edits to accord with paragraph 56 of the Framework and PPG.
11. A general time limit condition is imposed on appeal A to comply with the provisions of the Act, together with a plans condition for certainty, and a materials condition in the interests of the character and appearance of the area.
12. In Appeal B, all advertisements granted express consent are subject to the five standard conditions set out in the Regulations. In addition to these, to prevent visual intrusion and in the interests of highway safety it is necessary to apply a condition to control the illumination of the advertisements so they do not stand out

significantly from the background illumination in the street, particularly during hours of darkness.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above the appeals should be allowed.

N Bowden

INSPECTOR

Schedule of conditions

Appeal C: APP/Y1945/W/25/3367616

- 1) The development to which this permission relates shall be begun within a period of three years commencing on the date of this permission.
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the plans WFD-05 Rev B (4 pages).
- 3) All the external surfaces of the development shall be finished in the materials specified in the application.

Appeal D: APP/Y1945/W/25/3367617

In addition to the five standard conditions in the Regulations:

- 1) The illuminated signs hereby permitted shall be controlled a level that is within the values recommended by the Institution of Lighting Professionals in the publication Professional Lighting Guide 05: Brightness of Illuminated Advertisements (PLG05).

End of schedule