
Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 19 November 2025

by **M Aqbal BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 06 January 2026

Appeal A Ref: APP/H5960/W/25/3365759

Pavement o/s 295-297 Lavender Hill, London SW11 1LP

- 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, Infocus Public Networks Limited against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Wandsworth.
 - The application Ref is 2025/0220.
 - The development proposed is a multifunctional communication hub including defibrillator and advertisement display, as illustrated in the attached documentation.
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Appeal B Ref: APP/H5960/H/25/3365760

Pavement o/s 295-297 Lavender Hill, London SW11 1LP

- 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 Mr Nathan Still, Infocus Public Networks Limited against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Wandsworth.
 - The application Ref is 2025/0229.
 - The development proposed is a multifunctional communication hub including defibrillator and advertisement display, as illustrated in the attached documentation.
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Decisions

1. Appeal A Ref: APP/H5960/W/25/3365759, is dismissed.
2. Appeal B Ref: APP/H5960/H/25/3365760, is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

3. The Council determined the appeal scheme as two separate applications, one for the proposed communication hub unit ('Appeal A') and the other for the proposed advertisement display ('Appeal B') and accordingly issued two separate decision notices.
4. Both appeals relate to the same site and to each other. I have considered each on its individual merits, but as they raise similar issues and to avoid duplication, I have dealt with them in a single decision letter.

Main Issues

5. Regarding Appeal A, the main issues are the effect of the proposed communication hub on the character and appearance of the area and highway safety.
6. Regarding Appeal B, the main issues are the effect of the proposed advertisement on visual amenity and public safety.

Reasons

Background

7. The site of these appeals is a section of pavement along Lavendar Hill.
8. The proposed 'communication hub' is a standalone installation. In addition to facilitating free calls to landlines, this offers additional connective functions that includes free Wi-Fi, USB and wireless device charging, a 32inch touch screen to enable wayfinding, direct access to local webpages and a 24/7 publicly accessible defibrillator. The communication hub includes a larger advertisement display on one side.
9. The communication hub would measure approximately 1338mm in width, 317mm in depth (with the protective canopy projecting a further 600mm), and 2630mm in overall height. It would occupy a footprint of around 0.50m². The structure would be finished in powder-coated aluminium (black or grey), with an LCD display panel set behind toughened, laminated safety glass.

Character and appearance

10. The stretch of Lavender Hill where the appeal site is located is part of a busy, commercial shopping area, which lies outside but close to the Clapham Junction Conservation Area ('CA').
11. The Framework requires me to identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset). Based on my observations the significance of the Clapham Junction CA is derived from its history and architecture. Indeed, the terrace broadly to the northwest of the appeal site at 242–272 Lavender Hill forms a cohesive Victorian Gothic group, stepping up the hill with three storeys plus attics, which because of its design and detailing contributes positively to the streetscape and the Clapham Junction CA.
12. The appeal site sits on the south side of Lavender Hill and is framed by a multi-storey block that incorporates ground-floor commercial uses and frontages with residential accommodation above. This block is of a traditional and simple design.
13. There have also been improvements to the public domain along Lavender Hill and towards Clapham Junction. In particular, the provision of new surfacing to the pedestrianised area, have resulted in uncluttered and visually cohesive spaces and streets within this shopping environment. This also enhances the Clapham Junction CA and its setting.
14. Notably, near the appeal site, street furniture is limited, the lighting columns, signals and street tree and occasional wayfinder totems, are tall slender features that sit comfortably within the streetscape and do not intrude upon views at ground level. Similarly, the cycle racks are modest, low-profile elements whose scale and placement preserve the openness and visual quality of the area.
15. There is also clear intervisibility between the appeal site and the Clapham Junction CA, in particular the above mentioned terrace. In this context, the visually open nature of the appeal site is a positive factor to the setting of the Clapham Junction CA.

16. In contrast, owing to its sizeable scale due to its considerable width and height, contemporary design and resulting visually assertive form, the communication hub would appear as a dominant and intrusive addition near to an existing street tree. Rather than maintaining the existing sense of openness, it would introduce a visually bulky and modernised element that contributes to visual clutter within the streetscape and sits uncomfortably alongside this natural street feature and the modest, traditional street furniture that currently define the area. This would erode the street scene's open and cohesive character.
17. The introduction of the communication hub would also disrupt the currently positive relationship between the appeal site and the Clapham Junction CA. In views from the east along Lavender Hill, the insertion of a modern, bulky structure into a streetscape defined by historic form and architectural consistency would appear conspicuously out of place. Its presence would draw attention away from the established rhythm and character of the surrounding townscape, in particular the aforementioned terrace, thereby detracting from and diluting the architectural quality and setting of the Clapham Junction CA and its significance.
18. The harm the proposal would cause to the significance of the Clapham Junction CA would be less than substantial. The Framework states that where a proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of the heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.
19. As set out in the Framework that despite finding the harm to be less than substantial, I still attach great weight to this. Such harm can be outweighed by public benefits. However, the benefits in this instance¹, in particular from the single communication hub would be limited and do not outweigh the less than substantial harm that I have identified.
20. Accordingly, I find conflict with Policy LP3 of the Wandsworth Local Plan (2023) ('LP'). Amongst other things this Policy requires proposals to respect heritage assets and their settings, ensuring that development preserves or enhances their significance.
21. For the above reasons, the communication hub would harm the character and appearance of the area and fails to accord with policies LP and LP22 of the LP. Together, these policies aim to secure high-quality, well-designed places that respond positively to local character; Support the installation of required utility and digital connectivity apparatus, where amongst other things this does not detract from the character and appearance of the surrounding area, minimise its visual impact on the street scene, camouflaging its appearance wherever possible, and must not lead to an over accumulation of visual clutter; and do not create road safety hazards.

Visual amenity

22. As already noted, the stretch of road alongside the appeal site has a commercial character, with shopfront advertisements such as fascias, projecting signs and window displays. However, these advertisements are generally contained within the building façades rather than appearing as freestanding features within the pavement or detached from other street furniture. In addition, the signage typically

¹ Appendix C -Appellant's Statement of Case

takes the form of painted or applied lettering, and where illumination is present it is subtle and visually restrained.

23. In contrast, the advertisement panel would occupy a large section of the wider structure and, owing to its considerable size, would form a prominent and visually assertive element. Its freestanding position, further emphasised by illumination, would heighten its presence within the street scene. The combined effect would be a visually intrusive addition that disrupts the established character of the townscape, diminishing its attractive qualities and resulting in clear harm to visual amenity.
24. While I am aware that the wider area contains other communication hubs and bus shelters incorporating advertisement panels, the hubs are noticeably smaller in scale, and the panels on bus shelters are visually absorbed into the larger structure. As a result, neither form of advertisement is as prominent nor visually assertive as the proposed display.
25. For the above reasons, the proposed advertisement would harm the visual amenity of the area. In accordance with the Regulations, I have also taken into account the provision of the development plan as far as it is material.

Highway safety

26. Lavender Hill is used by pedestrians and other users. Despite its siting, the location plan demonstrates that 3m clear footway would remain between the communication hub and the building frontage, with 1.8m clearance to the kerb. The retained width ensures that pedestrian desire lines are preserved, even during peak footfall periods.
27. Consequently, the proposal would not compromise highway safety. Accordingly, I find no conflict with LP Policy LP50, which amongst other things requires that proposals demonstrate that developments would not cause a road safety hazard.

Public safety

28. The proposed advertisement display would be visible to pedestrians, cyclists and other users of the highway. Based on my findings on highway safety and because the illuminance, the display time of an advertisement and intervals between advertisements can be controlled by conditions, I am not persuaded that the proposed advertisement raises any significant public safety concerns in this particular location.
29. Therefore, the proposed advertisement display would not harm public safety. In accordance with the Regulations, I have also taken into account the provision of the development plan as far as it is material.

Other Matters

30. I acknowledge that advertisements are part of commercial areas and can contribute to vitality and could be utilised to promote initiatives for the benefit of the public. Also, the proposed communication hub and the services this offers, including a defibrillator would be further benefits associated with the proposal. Nevertheless, such benefits arising from a single unit would be modest.

31. The Framework identifies that an advanced, high quality and reliable communication infrastructure is essential for economic growth and social well-being. It also seeks to support the expansion of electronic communications networks. However, these considerations are not without regard to the Framework as a whole and this is only of limited weight in favour of the proposal.

Conclusions

32. In respect of Appeal A, although the proposed communication hub would not harm highway safety, this would harm the character and appearance of the area.
33. Appeal A – I have taken account of the potential benefits of the proposal detailed by the appellant, and the support given elsewhere and by the Framework for high quality and reliable communications infrastructure, in supporting economic growth and social well-being. However, and although I attach considerable weight to the support and benefits identified for the proposal, these do not outweigh the significant harm that I have found arising from the proposal on the character and appearance of the area and the setting of a heritage asset.
34. For Appeal B, I have found that although the proposed advertisement would not harm public safety, this would harm visual amenity and therefore would be unacceptable.
35. For the above reasons, I conclude that Appeal A and Appeal B should be dismissed.

M Aqbal

INSPECTOR