



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 19 January 2026

by **K Dryden BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 February 2026

Appeal A Ref: APP/N5090/W/25/3375248

Outside 104 Golders Green Road, London NW11 8HR

- 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 Simon Warner of BT Telecommunications plc against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Barnet.
- The application reference is 25/2788/FUL.
- The development proposed is the deployment of a Street Hub 3 unit.

Appeal B Ref: APP/N5090/Z/25/3375221

Outside 104 Golders Green Road, London NW11 8HR

- 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 Simon Warner of BT Telecommunications plc against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Barnet.
- The application reference is 25/2789/ADV.
- The advertisement proposed is the deployment of a Street Hub 3 unit.

Decisions

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

Preliminary Matters

3. The two appeals relate to the same site and to each other. I have considered each on its individual merits, but I have combined these cases into a single decision letter as they are intrinsically linked and raise the same issues.
4. On 16 December 2025 the Government published a consultation 'Proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and other changes to the planning system', together with an accompanying Written Ministerial Statement. The proposed reforms are draft and therefore may be subject to change. Whilst the draft Framework is a material consideration, insofar as it is relevant to the appeals, there is little change to the direction of thrust of the policies within the Framework and there is no proposed change to the consent process for advertisements. I have therefore treated the consultation draft with limited weight and made my decisions with regard to the current Framework. It has therefore not been necessary to consult the parties on the proposed reforms.
5. In determining Appeal A, I have a statutory duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Golders Green Town Centre Conservation Area (CA)¹.

¹ Section 72 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

6. The description of the proposal in the banner heading for Appeal B is taken from the application form. However, the Council has described the proposal as 'insertion of two internally illuminated digital LED screens, one on each side of new BT street hub'. As this is a more accurate description, I have determined the appeal on this basis.
7. In respect of Appeal B, the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 require that decisions are made only in the interest of amenity and public safety. Therefore, whilst I have taken account of the policies the Council considers to be relevant, these have not been decisive in my determination of this appeal.

Main Issues

8. The Council has raised no objection in respect of noise (aural amenity) and based on my observations at the site visit and the evidence provided, I have no reason to take a different view. The main issues in dispute are:
 - the effect of the proposal on the visual amenity of the area, having particular regard to its effect on the character and appearance of the CA and the setting of other heritage assets.
 - the effect of the proposal on public safety.

Reasons

Visual amenity

9. The appeal site comprises a section of the public footway on Golders Green Road which is situated to the front of a restaurant unit, No 104. The surrounding area is predominantly commercial at ground floor level, with residential uses on the upper storeys. The site is located within the designated CA, and the locality displays a coherent pattern of development, with consistent building lines and attractive, terraced period properties that contribute positively to its established character and visual interest.
10. Within close proximity to the proposal is a railway bridge which spans Golders Green Road, supported by a substantial brick abutment to the north of the appeal site. From the evidence provided, an existing kiosk, with integrated advertisement panel, has been removed from the appeal site, and the proposal seeks to instal a street hub unit. A free-standing digital screen is located opposite the site, to the southern side of Golders Green Road with another in place beyond the railway bridge, to the west of the site. From observations at my site visit, whilst there were a small number of free-standing digital screens, payphones and bus shelters with integrated illuminated screens present within the locality, advertisement signage generally consists of modestly sized fascia signage and projecting signs that are proportionate to the scale of the shopfronts.
11. The Golders Green Town Centre Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Proposals (GGCA) sets out that the appeal site is situated within Area 3 of the GGCA, which relates to Golders Green Road Parades. The key characteristics of this area include two long, distinctive and cohesive three and four storey shopping parades of high-quality design, with apartments above, and sets out that 104 Golders Green Road is within a two-storey parade of lesser quality. The document also identifies issues and threats within the CA. In (7.4)

development pressures are referenced setting out that advertisements are sometimes of an inappropriate design, size, material and colour, and where internally illuminated signs can look unsightly. In section 2 of the GGCA, recommendations for the CA reinforce the use of appropriate design and materials when considering proposals for advertisements, with an aim to reduce the number and differing styles of street furniture and create a more cohesive, attractive setting for the buildings in the CA.

12. Whilst the Council has identified the site as being located opposite a row of locally listed buildings, I have not been provided details of these local listings. Statutory listing details have been given for 'The Promenade', (Grade II listed), which relates to 25 to 89 and 91 to 103 Golders Green Road. Additionally, I have been provided statutory listing details of 'Cheapside', (Grade II listed), which relates to 10 to 90 Golders Green Road.
13. From my site visit, I observed that the listed buildings are located a significant distance from the proposal, beyond the junction of Golders Green Road with Hoop Lane and Armitage Road. The distance is such that the site does not contribute towards the heritage significance of these listed buildings, where the proposal would be experienced within the immediate context of the railway bridge and its substantial brick abutment. Consequently, there would be no adverse effect on the setting of these designated heritage assets.
14. Furthermore, the scale and height of the proposal would be perceived within the immediate context of the railway bridge and its prominent, substantial brickwork abutment to the rear of the site. In this setting, the street hub would integrate with the established built form and would not appear discordant, either within its immediate setting or in wider views along Golders Green Road. Additionally, with regard to materials, the use of a black, powder coated aluminium exterior finish would assimilate within the wider context of the weathered brickwork of the railway bridge abutment and the dark painted exterior finish of No 104 and would not appear visually intrusive in this context.
15. I acknowledge the proposed use of non-glare glass and planning conditions could be used to control the level of brightness, frequency of image change, and hours of illumination which would mitigate concerns regarding the proposed advertisements visibility within the street scene.
16. Whilst I acknowledge the aims of the GGCA to reduce the number and differing styles of street furniture and create a more cohesive, attractive setting for the buildings in the CA, I also find that the document sets out that the site is located in an area considered of lesser quality, where the proposal would not cause harm to the setting of locally listed, or statutory listed buildings. Having had regard to the site context where the proposal would be framed within the setting of the adjacent railway bridge and its substantial brickwork abutment, I do not find harm to the visual amenity of the area and the proposal would preserve the character and appearance of the CA.
17. I have also had regard to the Barnet Design Guidance Note 1, Advertising and Signs (1993) which reinforces local policy with guidance requesting advertisements to be well related to their surroundings in terms of size, scale, siting and located to avoid visual clutter. Whilst I note that there are other free standing illuminated displays in the locality, including one opposite the site on the southern side of

Golders Green Road, given the site context, as set out above, I do not find that the proposal would be highly visible or give rise to visual clutter in the street scene.

18. For the above reasons, with regard to Appeal A, I conclude that the proposal would not harm the visual amenity of the area or the setting and significance of heritage assets and would preserve the character and appearance of the CA. Accordingly, I find no conflict with Policies CDH01 and CDH03 of the Barnet Local Plan 2021-2036 (2025) (BLP), which promote high quality design which responds sensitively to the distinctive local character and requires proposals to contribute positively to the public realm by relating to the local and historic context and incorporate high quality design and street furniture.
19. Additionally, I find no conflict with Policy CDH09 of the BLP which requires that advertisements do not cause unacceptable harm to the area and are sensitively designed and located within the street scene and wider townscape, along with an appropriate size and siting. Furthermore, the proposal would accord with Policy D3 of The London Plan (LP) (2021) which requires new development to enhance local context by positively responding to local distinctiveness through layout, orientation, scale, appearance and shape.
20. I find the proposal to comply with Policy CDH08 of the BLP which requires that special regard will be given to the desirability of preserving the setting of statutory listed buildings with special attention paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of conservation areas. Furthermore, I find no conflict with Policy HC1 of the LP where development proposals affecting heritage assets, and their settings, should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to the assets' significance and appreciation within their surroundings.
21. With regard to Appeal B, for the above reasons, I conclude that the proposed advertisements would not be harmful to the amenity of the area. Although not determinative to this appeal, there would be no conflict with the development plan.

Public safety

22. During my site visit, I found the footway to be busy with pedestrian activity. A bus stop serving several local routes is located to the west of the site, along the same side of Golders Green Road beyond the railway bridge. When approaching the site from the west, the footway narrows significantly beneath the railway bridge, restricting pedestrian movement; this is further exacerbated by a lamppost positioned within this already constricted section of footway. The proposal would be sited immediately upon egress from the railway bridge and, due to its substantial width and presence within the pedestrian environment, would significantly impede pedestrian flow.
23. Furthermore, when approaching the site from the east, the railway bridge abutment sits forward of the local building line, creating a pinch point for pedestrians. The size and positioning of the proposal would exacerbate this existing constraint and introduce an obstacle that pedestrians would need to navigate around. I therefore find that the scale and siting of the street hub would create an unsafe obstruction to pedestrian movement at this location, endangering the safety of disabled and visually impaired pedestrians using the footway where the sight line would be disrupted.

24. I have not been provided evidence to demonstrate that the proposed advertisements would be a distraction to highway users or that this section of the public highway is particularly susceptible to vehicular accidents. I therefore do not find harm from obstruction of view for motorists and there would be limited opportunities to distract drivers and cyclists. Furthermore, conditions could be used to control the minimum display time for each advertisement, the use of visual effects between successive displays and to ensure appropriate illumination levels are met.
25. Whilst I acknowledge that the proposal replaces a kiosk which has already been removed at the site, and a second kiosk would also be removed at 140 Golders Green Road as part of the proposal, which may improve pedestrian movement in the wider locality, this does not justify the harm that I have found arising from the siting of the Street Hub in this location and the potential to obstruct pedestrian movement.
26. Furthermore, I note the Department for Transport's guidance on pedestrian flow, 'Inclusive mobility – a guide to best practice on access to pedestrian and transport infrastructure', (2021), which outlines appropriate levels of width and height clearance for pedestrian footway. However, I note that this document is guidance and does not overcome the site-specific harm that I have found in this location with regard to restricting pedestrian movement.
27. The appellant has referred to inconsistency in decision making and draws my attention to free-standing advertising units that have been granted planning permission along Golders Green Road². Whilst I do not have full details of these cases, including the relevant existing and proposed plans, based on my observations during the site visit, I find that these examples are positioned in areas of the footway which appear less constricted than the context of the appeal site. In any event, each proposal must be assessed on its own merits and in accordance with current planning policy. I note that all of the examples provided predate the adoption of the current BLP. Moreover, their existence does not weigh in favour of the appeal.
28. I acknowledge the public benefits raised by the proposal, where the appellant has referenced a number of public benefits which in summary include the provision of improved and cost-free digital connectivity for the local community including wi-fi and UK calls, together with wayfinding assistance and an emergency services button. Additional digital services are also cited as supporting economic growth and productivity. The appellant further states that a proportion of screen time would be reserved for the display of public messages issued by the Council. Safeguarding benefits have also been raised where charity phone lines could be accessed from the installation. Whilst I acknowledge these public benefits, I have given them limited weight as I have been provided with insufficient information to demonstrate that the benefits of the proposal cannot be provided in a less harmful location for safe pedestrian movement.
29. For the above reasons, with regard to Appeal A, I conclude that the proposal would have a harmful effect on public safety. This is contrary to Policy TRC01 of the BLP which seeks to ensure a healthy, safe and attractive walking environment within, through and in the immediate vicinity of the development. Additionally, I find conflict

² 20/4504/ADV, 16/6101/PNT and 16/4613/ADV, 16/6110/PNT and 16/4645/ADV.

with Policy CDH09 of the BLP which sets out that proposals for advertisements should be subject to control in the interests of public safety and will be resisted where a physical or visual obstruction is caused, or have an unacceptable impact on highway safety. I also find conflict with Policy CDH03 in so far as it seeks development proposals to contribute positively to the public realm. Furthermore, the proposal is contrary to Policy T2 of the LP which, amongst other things, requires development proposals to be permeable by foot and connect to local walking networks.

30. With regard to Appeal B, for the above reasons, I conclude that the proposed advertisements would have a harmful effect on public safety. The policies of the development plan have been considered as far as they are material, and in this respect, the scheme would conflict with the development plan.

Other Matters

31. The appellant has set out that there have been planning applications granted across a number of councils in London where existing InLink Units are removed and, in their place, street hub 3 units are installed within the public highway. However, this does not outweigh the harm to public safety that I have identified in this location.
32. The policies referenced in the BLP and LP in addition to details from the London Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2050 (2014) in support of the installation of the street hub have been taken into account but do not lead me to a different finding overall.
33. The appellant has claimed that the Council has engaged in long term partnerships with advertising companies and that they should not be favoured over others. I find that this is not relevant to the planning merits of the proposal before me, where I have dealt with the appeals having had regard to the relevant matters set out in the main issues.

Conclusion

34. For the reasons given above and having regard to all relevant material considerations, I conclude that Appeal A and Appeal B should be dismissed.

K Dryden

INSPECTOR