



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 2 February 2026

by K Dryden BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13 February 2026

Appeal A Ref: APP/N5090/W/25/3375006

Outside 126 High Road, London N2 8AG

- 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 25/2766/FUL.
- The development proposed is the installation of a Street Hub 3 Unit and the removal of an existing telephone kiosk.

Appeal B Ref: APP/N5090/Z/25/3374881

Outside 126 High Road, London N2 8AG

- 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 25/2767/ADV.
- The advertisement proposed is the installation of a Street Hub 3 Unit and the removal of an existing telephone kiosk.

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 National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) (the Framework) and there is no proposed change to the consent process for advertisements. As such, it has not been necessary to consult the parties on the proposed reforms.
5. Whilst the Council has referred to the site address as outside 126 to 128 High Road, London, N2 9ED, the appeal address consistent with the application forms and submitted plans is outside 126 High Road, London, N2 8AG, and the appeals have been considered on this basis.

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 the InLink Unit'. As this is a more accurate description, that specifies the advertisements proposed, 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 Issue

8. The Council has raised no objection in respect of public safety or 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 issue in dispute is the effect of the proposal on the visual amenity of the area.

Reasons

9. The appeal site comprises a section of public footway on High Road, opposite its junction with Beresford Road. The area is predominantly commercial at ground floor with mixed commercial and residential over upper storeys. Whilst the appeal site is not located within a designated conservation area, the locality displays a coherent pattern of development, with consistent building lines and attractive, period properties. Mature tree planting further contributes to the area's established character and visual interest.
10. A telephone kiosk, lamp post, street signage and a non-controlled pedestrian crossing point are located within close proximity to the appeal site, which is situated to the front of 126 High Road. Whilst not explicitly clear from the plans provided, the appellant states that the existing telephone kiosk would be removed from the appeal site as part of the proposal. From observations at my site visit, I find that street furniture and advertisement signage is plentiful in the wider locality. Alongside fascia boards and projecting signs, integrated advertisements are present within multiple bus shelters along High Road, as well as several large free-standing integrated advertisement units. External seating areas are also located to the north of the site, comprising an enclosed build out onto the road, in addition to an enclosed area to the front of 130 High Road, both with associated low-level planters.
11. Whilst the street hub would be sited on a wide area of public footway, the substantial size and height of the proposed advertisements within their associated structure would appear excessive and visually intrusive in this location. The height of the street hub unit would sit just below the lower fascia signage height at No 126 and would therefore dominate the setting of the adjacent building and the adjoining terrace of properties. Furthermore, with regard to materials, the use of a black, powder coated aluminium exterior finish would appear visually oppressive and discordant within the street scene.
12. The proposal would be sited near the highway edge of the footway and consequently would appear unduly prominent within the street scene. Given the substantial size and scale of the street hub structure, combined with its proposed

double-sided illuminated display screens, the proposal would be clearly visible in long vistas along both sides of High Road. It would also appear highly prominent when approaching the site from the junction with Beresford Road. I therefore find that the proposal would result in a conspicuous and incongruous feature that would undermine the established character of the area.

13. Whilst 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, such measures would not overcome the harm I have found to the siting of the proposal in this prominent and sensitive location on the visual amenity of the locality.
14. I have 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 and siting and located to avoid visual clutter. The proposal would conflict with this guidance, which is a material consideration and thus reinforces my findings.
15. For the above reasons, with regard to Appeal A, I conclude that the development would be harmful to visual amenity. This is contrary to Policy CDH09 of the Barnet Local Plan 2021-2036 (2025) (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.
16. Additionally, I find conflict with Policies CDH01 and CDH03 of the BLP which together seek to 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. Furthermore, the proposal would be contrary to 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.
17. With regard to Appeal B, for the above reasons, I conclude that the proposed advertisements would have an unacceptable effect on the amenity of the area. 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

18. 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. I do not dispute that meaningful public benefits would be provided through the proposal. However, I have been provided with insufficient information to demonstrate that the benefits of the proposal could not be provided in a less harmful way and/ or in a less sensitive location. Moreover, their existence does not overcome the harm that I have identified.

19. Further benefits are also claimed by the appellant whereby two existing kiosks would be removed and replaced with the single street hub unit, thereby reducing street clutter within the wider area. The appellant states that this would include the removal of the existing kiosk at the site, in addition to a further kiosk within the Council area at High Road, opposite Bedford Road N2 8AJ.
20. I acknowledge the public benefits of the proposal, where the removal of existing and redundant kiosks may enhance the appearance of the area and the wider locality, and I find that the existing kiosk at the site appears weathered. However, the proposed street hub would be significantly taller and wider than the existing kiosk and, together with its materials and large integrated display screens, would appear discordant and of an excessive scale within its immediate context and in wider views along High Street. Furthermore, the benefit associated with removing a second 'legacy' unit within the wider locality does not relate to the appeal site itself and does not overcome the harm that I have identified arising from the siting of the street hub, with its large double-sided illuminated displays, in this prominent location. Therefore, whilst the benefits of removing two existing kiosks have been taken into account, this does not alter my findings or justify the harm that I have identified.
21. The appellant has referred to inconsistency in decision making and draws my attention to free standing advertising units that have been granted planning permission in the locality, in addition to examples of integrated advertisement panels within bus shelters. The examples provided include an electric vehicle charging point with integrated double sided LCD screens sited on the opposite side of High Road¹, in addition to an integrated double sided advertisement unit² around 90m south of the appeal site, on the same side of the road. Two further examples of free-standing advertising units are also referenced, situated to the southwest of the site on High Road.
22. Although I do not have full details of all the examples provided, each proposal must be assessed on its own merits and in accordance with current planning policy. From observations at my site visit, the area contains several large free standing illuminated advertisement units, alongside other illuminated advertisements and street furniture. I find that the introduction of a further unit in such a prominent and sensitive location would contribute to a proliferation of visual clutter, where the cumulative effect would be detrimental to visual amenity. Moreover, their existence does not alter my findings.
23. The appellant has set out that there have been planning permissions granted across a number of council areas in London where existing InLink Units are removed and, in their place, street hub 3 units are installed within the public highway. However, any proposal must be assessed on its own individual merits in accordance with the specific case and site circumstances.
24. The additional policies referenced in the BLP and LP, alongside the London Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2050 (2014), and any support offered by it to the installation of the street hub have been taken into account, but do not lead me to a different finding overall.

¹ 24/0276/FUL and 24/0277/ADV.

² 20/4457/ADV.

25. 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 any such suggestions are 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.
26. The appellant has cited the Council's delegated report as referencing compliance with Policy CDH01 of the BLP, however, reference to noise and disturbance relates to aural amenity and not visual amenity, the basis of the dispute in this appeal.

Conclusion

27. 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