



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: 24th February 2026

Appeal A Ref: APP/N5090/W/25/3375005

Outside 30 East Barnet Road, London EN4 8RQ

- 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 25/2776/FUL.
- The development proposed is the installation of a Street Hub 3 unit.

Appeal B Ref: APP/N5090/Z/25/3374904

Outside 30 East Barnet Road, London EN4 8RQ

- 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 25/2777/ADV.
- The advertisement proposed is the installation of a Street Hub 3 unit.

Decisions

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

Preliminary Matters

3. As set out above, there are two appeals on the site. Appeal A relates to an appeal under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission. Appeal B relates to an appeal under section 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended) (the advertisement regulations) against a refusal to grant express consent. 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. 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.
6. 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

7. 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 in both appeals is the effect of the proposal on the amenity of the area.

Reasons

8. The appeal site comprises a section of public footway on East Barnet Road, close to the roundabout junction with Victoria Road and Albert Road. The area is predominantly commercial at ground floor level with mixed commercial and residential uses over upper storeys. Whilst the appeal site is not within a designated conservation area, the locality is characterised by a varied range of building types and ages, where this diversity contributes positively to the established character and visual interest of the area. Despite this variation, there is a clear consistency in building lines, with buildings set back from the road, with a footway to the front.
9. From observations at my site visit, the public realm in the vicinity of the appeal site is defined by the broad, open nature of the footway on the southern side of the road. Minimal street furniture allows for clear visibility along the footway in both directions. In front of the appeal site, the footway edge is marked by bollards, with a lamp post, bicycle stands and a street tree situated in close proximity to the proposal.
10. A supermarket is situated adjacent to the site, with an expansive wall-mounted advertisement panel fronting the footway at ground floor level. Within the wider context, I find that advertisement signage in the locality is plentiful, with large fascia boards to commercial units on the northern side of the road, as well as projecting signs and integrated advertisement screens within bus shelters to the east of the site.
11. Whilst the street hub would be sited on a wide section 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. Furthermore, with regard to materials, the use of a black, powder coated aluminium exterior finish would appear visually oppressive and discordant within the local environment.
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 of the street hub unit, combined with its proposed double-sided illuminated display screens, the proposal would be clearly visible in long vistas along both sides of East Barnet Road. It would also appear highly prominent when approaching the site from the roundabout junction with Victoria Road and Albert 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. I further find that the location of the large, double sided illuminated displays, positioned adjacent to the substantial wall mounted display at the adjoining supermarket, and their presence in combination with other illuminated advertisements within the wider locality, would contribute to a proliferation in the area. The cumulative effect would be detrimental to amenity, whereby the advertisements would dominate the public realm in this location.
14. 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 amenity of the locality. The large, illuminated displays would appear as a conspicuous and discordant feature that would undermine the established character of the area.
15. In reaching this view, 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.
16. For the above reasons, with regard to Appeal A, I conclude that the development would be harmful to the amenity of the area, which includes its character and appearance. The proposal in Appeal A would be contrary to 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.
17. Additionally, I find conflict with Policies CDH01 and CDH03 of the 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. 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.
18. 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.

Other Considerations and Matters

19. The appellant has referenced a number of other considerations in support of Appeal A, 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.

20. The appellant further sets out that two existing kiosks would be removed and replaced with a single street hub unit, thereby reducing street clutter within the wider area. This would include the removal of a 'legacy unit' around 40m from the appeal site along East Barnet Road, which is said to impede pedestrian movement. A second kiosk would also be removed near the railway bridge, East Barnet Road. I acknowledge that the removal of existing and redundant kiosks may improve pedestrian movement and the appearance of the wider locality. However, the benefit associated with removing the existing 'legacy unit' around 40m from the appeal site, and a further kiosk 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.
21. The appellant has referred to inconsistency in decision making and draws my attention to an illuminated advertising unit integrated within a bus shelter that has been granted planning permission¹. The unit is located outside 66 East Barnet Road, on the same side of the road as the appeal site. A further example is also provided where advertising panels are present within a bus shelter on the opposite side of the road to the appeal site. Each proposal must be assessed on its own merits and in accordance with current planning policy. I note from the evidence provided, that the examples predate the adoption of the current Barnet Local Plan 2021-2036 (2025) (BLP). Furthermore, from observations at my site visit, the addition of a further unit in such a prominent location would contribute to a proliferation of visual clutter in the area. Moreover, their existence does not weigh in favour of the appeal.
22. 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.
23. The additional policies referenced in the BLP and LP relating to digital infrastructure, 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, where I have given greater weight to the harm and conflicts identified.
24. 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

¹ 20/5831/ADV

before me, where I have dealt with the appeals having had regard to the relevant matters set out in the main issues.

25. 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

26. In Appeal A the proposal would conflict with the development plan, when read as a whole. In Appeal B I have found unacceptable harm to public amenity. Material considerations, including the Framework do not indicate that a decision(s) should be taken other than in accordance with the development plan. Having considered all other matters raised, I therefore conclude that Appeal A and Appeal B should be dismissed.

K Dryden

INSPECTOR