



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 6 January 2026

by F Rafiq BSc (Hons) MCD MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24 February 2026

Appeal A Ref: APP/N5660/W/25/3372052

Pavement outside 39 Parry St, Lambeth, London SW8 1RT

- 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 Urban Innovation Company (UIC) Ltd against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Lambeth.
 - The application Ref is 25/01566/FUL.
 - The development proposed is the installation of "Pulse Smart Hub" with integrated digital screens.
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Appeal B Ref: APP/N5660/H/25/3372053

Pavement outside 39 Parry St, Lambeth, London, SW8 1RT

- 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 Urban Innovation Company (UIC) Ltd against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Lambeth.
 - The application Ref is 25/01567/ADV.
 - The advertisement proposed is the display of a double-sided, internally illuminated digital LED screen.
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Decisions

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

Preliminary Matters

3. There are two appeals relating to the site, one for a proposed 'Pulse Smart Hub' and the other for a digital advertisement display. I have considered each on its own merits but have dealt with both in a single decisions letter.
4. I have utilised the description of the advertisement proposed in Appeal B from the decision notice as this more accurately describes the proposal than the description on the application form.
5. The Council's reasons for refusal in Appeal B refers to development plan policies and the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework). However, the 2007 Regulations require that decisions are made only in the interests of amenity and public safety, as appropriate to each case. Therefore, although I have taken the development plan policies, the Framework and the National Planning Practice Guidance into account, they have not been decisive considerations in my determination of this appeal.

Main Issues

6. The main issues in respect of Appeal A are:
 - the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area and whether it would preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Vauxhall Conservation Area (CA) and the setting of a locally listed building, and;
 - the effect of the proposal on pedestrian and public safety.
7. The main issues in respect of Appeal B are:
 - the effect of the proposed advertisement on amenity, and;
 - the effect of the proposed advertisement on public safety.

Reasons

Appeal A - Character and appearance

8. The appeal site is located on a small island pavement area between Parry Street, South Lambeth Road and South Lambeth Place. It is adjacent to the Vauxhall Station railway viaduct, an imposing piece of historic transport infrastructure which is locally listed. Together with the busy and extensive road network, this contributes to the area's long-standing industrial and transport character and forms an important part of the CA's significance.
9. This section of the pavement where the proposal would be located is generally free of larger items of street furniture and mainly consists of more slender items such as lighting columns and street signs. The proposed hub would by contrast be a substantial structure that would appear visually intrusive in this relatively clear area of pavement that contains discrete items of street furniture.
10. As a modern structure, which would be formed in materials including glass, metal and fibreglass, it would draw the eye to its incongruity in the context of its historic surroundings. It would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area, to the setting of the nearby locally listed structure and would also harm the significance of the CA.
11. My attention has been drawn to a prior approval scheme on this site which was granted on appeal. Although it was in the same location, it related to a telephone kiosk with open or glazed sides, which differs from the proposal before me which is for a solid structure. As such, whilst consistency in decision-making is important, there are clear differences between the referenced previous appeal scheme and that which is before me. I have determined this appeal on its own merits, which for the reasons set out would be harmful.
12. Reference has been made to the listed buildings at 27 and 29 South Lambeth Road (Grade II listed) but given the substantial distance between the appeal proposal and these buildings which are situated across the wide highway, I am satisfied that the proposal would not give rise to any harm to the setting of the listed buildings.

13. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would have an unacceptable harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area, would fail to preserve the character or appearance of the CA and the setting of a locally listed building.
14. Where less than substantial harm would arise, such as in this case, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use. The proposal would provide improved connectivity through public WIFI and charging for mobile devices, opportunities for information sharing, the provision of a defibrillator and other lifesaving features, in addition to an emergency call facility and CCTV monitoring. These are public benefits that weigh in favour of the proposal and receive support from the development plan.
15. Although the advertising on the digital displays is said to be required to make the scheme viable, it is not clear to me that the benefits set out could not be achieved by other means. The Council has also indicated an alternative way to secure some of these benefits without necessarily giving rise to the identified harm. As such, the benefits would not outweigh the harm identified.
16. Accordingly, the proposal would conflict with the Framework in terms of its aims to sustain and enhance the significance of heritage assets and the desirability of development to make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. I conclude that it would be contrary to Policies Q8, Q22, and Q23 of the Local Plan, which seek, amongst other matters, to respect and reinforce positive characteristics of the CA and to sustain or enhance the significance of non-designated heritage assets.

Appeal B – Amenity

17. The displaying of advertisements on the double sided illuminated digital screen in this historic townscape setting, and close to the viaduct would be visually intrusive and appear unsympathetic in this sensitive location.
18. Whilst there are other advertisements in the area, they are predominantly advertisement hoardings and other signage attached to the viaduct which are situated broadly perpendicular to the flow of traffic, unlike the proposal which would be more conspicuous in views along South Lambeth Road. There is a free-standing advertisement nearby, but this is seen most closely in the context of a modern building.
19. I therefore conclude that the proposal would have an unacceptable harmful effect on amenity. Although not determinative, the proposal would be contrary to Policy Q22 of the Local Plan and Paragraph 141 of the Framework, which, sets out that the quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed.

Appeal A and B - Pedestrian and Public safety

20. The proposed hub would be situated on a wide area of pavement and away from the edge of the vehicular carriageway. Although the submitted plans do not identify the cycle lane, from my site observations, there would be sufficient space for a pedestrian to pass by the hub without bringing them into conflict with cyclists, even if a person was standing at the end of the proposed hub using the facilities it provides.

21. There are other items of street furniture nearby, but these are slender elements such as lamp posts, and the introduction of the proposal would not create an undue hinderance to pedestrians. I was able to see that nearby businesses also have fire exits and there is the external storage of fencing that takes place, but having regard to the position of these and the siting of the proposed hub, they would not give rise to any potential conflict with pedestrian movements, despite there being a regular flow of pedestrians along the footway.
22. The proposed advertisement would be visible from various vantage points on the highway network. Although reference has been made to a number of accidents at junctions from where the proposal would be visible, there is no further information before me on the cause of the accidents, and nor have I been provided with any evidence that the advertisement proposed would give rise to a distraction to road users beyond it being in the field of view of the signal head for approaching drivers. Although the nearby highway along South Lambeth Road consists of four lanes, there is a one-way system in operation. With the proposal being set back from the edge of the vehicular carriageway, I do not consider that it would be unduly distracting for drivers, particularly as the display time, the rate of change and other aspects of the advertisement can be controlled by condition, had it been otherwise acceptable.
23. Reference has been made by the Council to the proposal, due to its siting and design, providing opportunities for anti-social behaviour and 'laying-in-wait' criminal behaviour. Whilst being a solid structure, and not being raised off the ground, it is in a busy, well-lit location with frequent passing traffic. This provides a high degree of natural surveillance unlike existing traditional telephone boxes cited by the Council which are typically partially enclosed. I therefore consider that the proposal would not give rise to crime and anti-social behaviour to the detriment of public safety.
24. Given the above, I conclude that the proposal would not have an unacceptable adverse impact on pedestrian or public safety in relation to Appeal A or public safety on Appeal B. As such, in relation to Appeal A, it would not be contrary to Local Plan Policies Q3, Q6, Q17, T1, T2, T3 and T9, which seek, amongst other matters, to encourage walking amongst other sustainable forms of travel and to design out opportunistic crime and anti-social behaviour. Although not determinative, the proposal would not conflict with these policies in relation to Appeal B.

Other Matters

25. Consistency in decision-making is important, as set out in the various case law referenced by the Appellant. In this decisions letter I have noted the differences between the previous appeal scheme, which was made under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 and the appeals before me, which comprise refusals of planning permission and express consent for an advertisement. Given the differences, I attribute limited weight to the previous appeal decision and can confirm that I have dealt with the appeals before me on their own merits.

Conclusion

26. For the reasons set out above, whilst I have found no harm in relation to pedestrian and public safety, the proposals would harm the character and appearance/amenity of the area, the CA and the setting of a locally listed building. As such, I conclude that the appeals should be dismissed.

F Rafiq

INSPECTOR

Appendix 1

List of those who have appealed

Reference	Case Reference	Appellant
Appeal A	APP/N5660/W/25/3372052	Urban Innovation Company (UIC) Ltd
Appeal B	APP/N5660/H/25/3372053	Urban Innovation Company (UIC) Ltd