



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: 26th February 2026

Appeal A Ref: APP/N5090/W/25/3375236

Outside 451 High Road, London N12 0AW

- 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 25/2784/FUL.
- The development proposed is the removal of an existing telephone kiosk, and the deployment of a replacement Street Hub 3 unit.

Appeal B Ref: APP/N5090/Z/25/3375163

Outside 451 High Road, London N12 0AW

- 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 25/2785/ADV.
- The advertisement proposed is the removal of an existing telephone kiosk, and the deployment of a replacement 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. Whilst the Council has referred to the site address as outside Solomons Court, 451 High Road, London, N12 0AW, the appeals have been considered on the basis of the address in the banner heading, which is consistent with the application forms.
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 'installation of two digital internally illuminated, intermittent, double sided display screens to BT street hub'. 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 in both appeals is the effect of the proposal on the amenity of the area.

Reasons

9. The appeal site comprises a section of public footway on High Road, adjacent to the low boundary wall with railings and pedestrian entrance to the residential flat development at No 451. The area is predominantly residential to the west of High Road, with substantial commercial uses to the east, which are set back from the public highway behind a landscaped strip and car parking area. Whilst the appeal site is not within a designated conservation area, the area is characterised by a varied range of building types and ages, where this diversity contributes positively to its visual interest. Mature tree planting further contributes to the area's established character.
10. 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. Minimal street furniture allows for clear visibility along the footway in both directions. An existing telephone kiosk is located within the appeal site and whilst it is not explicitly clear from the proposed site plan provided, the appellant states that the existing telephone kiosk would be removed from the appeal site as part of the proposal and this is set out in the description of development. Street signage is present in the vicinity of the site alongside established street trees and planting within the front garden area of the adjoining residential development, No 451. Within the wider context, integrated advertisement panels are present in bus shelters along High Road, as well as several large free-standing totem advertisement units positioned at the junction of High Road with Leisure Way.
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 residential setting, immediately adjacent to the entrance of No 451. 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 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. 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. 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.
15. 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 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.

Other Considerations and Matters

18. 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.

19. The appellant further sets out that the existing kiosk would be removed and replaced with the single street hub unit. I acknowledge that the removal of an existing and redundant kiosk 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 wider than the existing kiosk and, together with its prominent siting, materials and large integrated display screens, would appear discordant and of an excessive scale within its immediate residential context and in wider views along High Street. Therefore, whilst the benefit of removing the existing kiosk has been taken into account, this does not alter my findings or justify the harm that I have identified.
20. The appellant has referred to inconsistency in decision making and draws my attention to examples of integrated advertisement panels within bus shelters; in addition to illuminated and non-illuminated advertisements associated with the commercial units to the east of High Road. Details have also been provided of a large 48 sheet digital internally illuminated LED advertising display around 200m south of the site at the central reservation, where High Road passes over the North Circular Road¹.
21. 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, whilst the wider area contains examples of illuminated advertisements, the examples provided do not have the same site context, nor are they located outside the entrance area to a residential property and are sited a significant distance from the appeal site. Moreover, their existence does not alter my findings.
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. Additionally, they state that the Council are intending to implement a programme of electric charging units, which are comparable in size and function to the proposed street hub. 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, 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 before me, where I have dealt with the appeals having had regard to the relevant matters set out in the main issues.

¹ 18/3315/ADV

25. The appellant has cited the Council's delegated report² 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

² 25/2784/FUL