



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 4 February 2026

by A Owen MA BA(Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 1st May 2026

Appeal A Ref: APP/X5990/H/25/3376158

Telephone Call Box outside Channel 4 Television, 124-126 Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2TX

- 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 Nathan Still of In Focus Public Networks Limited against the decision of the City of Westminster Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/06574/ADV.
 - The advertisement proposed was originally described as “installation of an open access Communication Hub, following the removal of an existing communication apparatus.”
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Appeal B Ref: APP/X5990/W/25/3376159

Telephone Call Box outside Channel 4 Television, 124-126 Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2TX

- 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 Nathan Still of In Focus Public Networks Limited against the decision of the City of Westminster Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/06573/FULL.
 - The development proposed is installation of an open access Communication Hub, following the removal of an existing communication apparatus.
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Decisions

1. Appeal A is allowed and express consent is granted for the display of internally illuminated LCD portrait screen on communication hub measuring 0.935m x 1.67m outside Channel 4 Television, 124-126 Horseferry Road, London, SW1P 2TX in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 25/06574/ADV. The consent is for five years from the date of this decision and is subject to the five standard conditions set out in Schedule 2 of the 2007 Regulations and the following additional conditions:
 - 1) The advertisement permitted by this consent shall only be illuminated during the hours of 0600 to midnight.
 - 2) The intensity of the illumination of the advertisement permitted by this consent shall be no greater than 300cd/m² during hours of darkness.
 - 3) The advertisements displayed shall individually feature no moving images, animation, video or full motion images and no images shall resemble any official road traffic sign or traffic light.
 - 4) The minimum display time for each advertisement shall be 10 seconds and the interval between successive advertisements shall be no greater than 1 second.

2. Appeal B is allowed and planning permission is granted for installation of an open access Communication Hub, following the removal of an existing communication apparatus outside Channel 4 Television, 124-126 Horseferry Road, London, SW1P 2TX in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 25/06573/FULL, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the Location Plan received 15.09.2025, Proposed Site Plan received 15.09.2025 and A/489467/05 Rev A.
 - 2) The Hub shall be managed and maintained in line with the 'Communication Hub: Unit Management Plan' V4 dated June 2023.
 - 3) The footway and carriageway of the concerned public highway must not be blocked during the installation and maintenance of the proposal. Temporary obstruction during the installation / maintenance must be kept to a minimum and should not encroach on the clear space needed to provide safe passage for pedestrian or obstruct the flow of traffic.
 - 4) The existing In focus kiosk outside 124 to 126 Horseferry Road shown on the Proposed Site Plan drawing received 15.09.2025 shall be removed and the land made good prior to activation of the Communications Hub hereby approved.

Preliminary Matters

3. The proposed Communications Hub would have a phone on one side under a protective canopy, and a digital screen for displaying adverts on the other. Appeal A relates to the digital screen and Appeal B refers to the whole structure.
4. In my decision on Appeal A above I have used the description given on the appeal form and used on the Council's decision notice as that describes the proposal more accurately than the description used on the original application form, but I have removed reference to 107 Horseferry Road as that is superfluous. I also have taken the site address from the appeal forms as that describes the site more accurately than the address given on the application forms.
5. Since the time of the Council's decision a Partial Review of the City Plan has been adopted. The policies referred to in the decision letter have been superseded by policies in the Partial Review which the appellant has seen. I have therefore considered the proposals in the context of those newly adopted policies.

Main Issues

6. In appeal A, the Council do not suggest the advert would have any harmful effect on public safety, and I have no reason to consider otherwise. Accordingly, the main issue is the effect of the advert on the amenity of the area including the setting of the Peabody Estate: South Westminster Conservation Area, the Medway Street Conservation Area, and the Grade II listed Channel 4 Television building.
7. In Appeal B the main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area including the setting of the Peabody Estate: South Westminster Conservation Area, the Medway Street Conservation Area, and the Grade II listed Channel 4 Television building.
8. I have dealt with both Appeals together as the main issues are similar.

Reasons

9. The appeal site is located on the pavement on the east side of Horseferry Road and the proposal would replace an existing phone box around 5m to the north. It is understood that the existing phone box has been in situ for around 13 years. It has an advert on its north facing side, though it is not digitally illuminated. An appeal determined in 2018 related to the provision of a LED advert on the side of that phone kiosk. This was granted though the Council advise it was not implemented and the consent has now expired. From my site visit it was apparent that there is not a LED display at the site.
10. The proposed Hub would be slightly narrower and shallower than the existing phone box but would be marginally taller. It would be sited around 8m from the side elevation of the Channel 4 building, which is a similar distance as the existing phone box. The area is distinctly urban with a mix of commercial, residential and other uses nearby. Horseferry Road is a busy thoroughfare, but the line of street trees alongside the Channel 4 building adds a verdant element.
11. The Channel 4 Television building was listed in March 2023, so was not listed at the time of the previous appeal decision. Its significance lies in its historical interest as the purpose-built offices of one of the country's major broadcasters, and in its architectural interest being a good example of the late 20th century high-tech movement. The elevation facing the appeal site is clad in grey painted metal panels and glass and is four storeys high. There is a taller element at the northern end by the main entrance incorporating external lift shafts with some red painted elements, and there is a large, distinctive, green painted '4' sculpture in front of the entrance to the building. Its modern design and materials contrast with the surrounding buildings which are mostly brick. As a result of these factors, its setting contributes little to its significance.
12. Due to the materials to be used in the Hub, which would also be glass and metal, the structure would not appear incongruous in the context of the materials used in the listed building. Moreover, because of the commercial nature of the listed building, and given its use, it is likely to have lights on in the evening which would be a key feature in the night time street scene given the amount of glazing the building has. In that context the illumination of the advert would not be likely to be prominent. Indeed, in view of the scale of the Channel 4 building, and the relatively small scale of the advert and hub, it would not compete with the listed building. As such I do not consider the Communications Hub nor the illuminated advert would harm the setting of the listed building and therefore its significance would be preserved.
13. The Peabody Estate: South Westminster Conservation Area (PESWCA) accommodates a number of historically significant blocks of flats stretching from opposite the Channel 4 building northwards towards Victoria Street. Any view of the Hub and the advert either from within the PESWCA, or as being in the foreground of views into the PESWCA, would be affected by the street trees to the north and south of the Hub. Indeed the advert, which would face this conservation area, would be partly hidden by the trunk of the tree to its north. Furthermore, the proposal would be separated from the PESWCA by Chadwick Street, the service bay in front of the Channel 4 building, a lamp post and numerous bollards. Consequently, there would be no harm to the setting of the PESWCA.

14. The Medway Street Conservation Area (MSCA) comprises a small area to the south of the Channel 4 building accommodating some attractive and modestly sized brick buildings and some churches. Similar to the PESWCA, this conservation area would be separated from the appeal site by the row of mature street trees and other items of street furniture including a bin, bike shelter, bollards and a lamp post. This, combined with its relatively small size and distance from the MSCA, leads me to consider that any view of the Hub from the conservation area would be limited, and the conservation area would appear only distantly behind the advert and Hub when seen from the north. There would therefore be no harm to the setting of the MSCA.
15. In summary, it is not considered that the Hub or the advert would harm the setting of the nearby conservation areas or the Channel 4 listed building. Overall, it would not harm the character or appearance of the area as a whole given its small scale and the busy, partly commercial area in which it would be sited.
16. Although not included to in the reason for refusal, the Council, in their officer report, refer to the advert being prominent in views of the Grade II listed London Scottish House, which is to the southwest of the appeal site. This is an attractive red brick building built in the 1980s, associated with the London Scottish Regiment. It is positioned between buildings of similar scale, form and materials which contribute to its setting. These contrast with the more modern materials of the Channel 4 building which therefore contributes less to its setting. As the proposal would be on the opposite side of the road and have a closer relationship with the Channel 4 building, it would not affect the setting of London Scottish House.
17. The Hub would therefore accord with policies 42 and 45 of the City Plan (2026) which aim to ensure that development positively contributes to the streetscape and townscape having regard to the character and appearance of the area and heritage assets, and policy 44 which states that development must ensure that heritage assets and their settings are conserved and enhanced.
18. In my consideration of the advert I have taken into account policies 42, 44 and 45 as described above, as well as part G of policy 48 which aims to ensure that adverts make a positive contribution to amenity including in terms of their size, location, illumination and the street scene. As I have concluded that the advert would not harm amenity, it therefore would accord with these policies.
19. The Council have referred to an appeal decision relating to a similar development on Marylebone Road. Whilst the siting of that hub and advert may have some similarities to the scheme before me, particularly in terms of the presence of street trees, it is in a different part of the City and I have determined these appeals on the basis of their own specific location.

Conditions

20. In respect of Appeal A, and in addition to the five standard conditions set out in the regulations, I have imposed conditions limiting hours of illumination, brightness and the type and frequency of adverts displayed, in the interests of protecting the amenity of the area and public safety. They reflect the concerns expressed by the Council's Highway Planning Officer.

21. In respect of Appeal B the Council have suggested a number of conditions which I have considered against the advice in the Planning Practice Guidance and the National Planning Policy Framework. I have included a condition specifying the approved plans in the interests of certainty, and that the Hub is maintained in accordance with the submitted Management Plan to ensure the character of the area is maintained. I have also included conditions preventing the unnecessary obstruction of the public highway during the installation of the Hub, and requiring the removal of the existing phone box to minimise street clutter.
22. I have not imposed the suggested conditions relating to hours of works, as this would be unnecessary given the small scale of the development. Likewise, it would be unnecessary to specify the allowable locations and times of the parking of vehicles in association with the installation and maintenance of the Hub given other legislation can be used to control parking. The condition requiring that the Hub shall be maintained in a manner that does not impair the visual amenity of the site is not precise, and in any case the same aims would be achieved by ensuring the Hub is maintained in accordance with the submitted Management Plan. The Council also suggest two further conditions relating to the function of the Hub in respect of CCTV and USB/QI charging, to reduce the opportunity for crime. But there is no evidence to suggest the intended functions of the Hub would be likely to exacerbate any risk in this regard and so these conditions are unnecessary.

Conclusions

23. The proposed advertisement would not harm amenity or public safety. Therefore, for the reasons given above, I conclude that Appeal A should be allowed.
24. The proposed Communication Hub would accord with the development plan and there are no other considerations to indicate a decision other than in accordance with the development plan. Therefore, for the reasons given above, I conclude that Appeal B should be allowed.

Andrew Owen

INSPECTOR