



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 3 March 2026 by J Reed MPlan

Decision by A M Nilsson BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 May 2026

Appeal A Ref: 6002249

Pavement Outside Cadet House, Victory Parade, Plumstead Road, London SE18 6GH

- 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 In Focus Public Networks Limited against the decision of the Council of Royal Borough of Greenwich.
 - The application Ref is 25/2766/F.
 - The development proposed is installation of a freestanding communication hub with integral defibrillator and advertisement display.
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Appeal B Ref: APP/E5330/Z/25/3376594

Pavement Outside Cadet House, Victory Parade, Plumstead Road, London SE18 6GH

- 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 In Focus Public Networks Limited against the decision of The Council of Royal Borough of Greenwich.
 - The application Ref is 25/2719/A.
 - The development proposed is installation of a freestanding communication hub with integral defibrillator and advertisement display.
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Decisions

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

Appeal Procedure

3. The site visit was undertaken by a representative of the Inspector whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Preliminary Matters

4. The two appeals relate to the same site. Appeal A relates to the refusal of planning permission for the proposed communication hub. Appeal B is in respect of refusal of advertisement consent for the digital advertisement display which would be an integral part of the proposed hub. I have considered each appeal on its individual merits, but as they raise similar issues, I have combined these cases in a single decision letter.

5. In respect of Appeal B, Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (the Regulations) and the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) state that advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety. With respect to Appeal B, the development plan policies referred to by the Council are not determinative, but I have taken these into account as a material consideration.

Main Issues

6. The main issue in respect of Appeal A is the effect of the proposed communication hub on highway safety.
7. The main issue in respect of Appeal B is the effect of the proposed advertisement on public safety.

Reasons for the Recommendations

8. The appeal site is a section of pavement on Victory Parade which at this point is a dual carriageway with a central reservation. The proposed communication hub with integrated advertisement would be seen by traffic approaching the site from the west on Beresford Street as well as those joining from Woolwich New Road.
9. Planning Practice Guidance notes that all advertisements are intended to attract attention, but those located at points where drivers need to take more care are more likely to affect public safety. In this case, the approach on Beresford Street transitioning to Victory Parade toward the appeal site is straight allowing long range views of the communication hub. For drivers on this side of the road their attention is likely to be drawn to the hub and its advertisement. It would be an intervening distraction due to its visibility and illumination levels which would be inappropriate due to drivers changing lanes and merging from the adjacent junction.
10. There are a number of factors associated with the road layout in this location that require drivers to pay particular attention. Adjacent to the appeal site is a set of traffic lights which allow road users from Woolwich New Road to join the highway at Victory Parade as well as providing a crossing for pedestrians. To the opposing side of the appeal site is a bus stop as well as the introduction of a cycle lane between this bus stop and the carriageway. Traffic may be slowing down on the approach to the bus stop in order to allow buses to exit and join the highway. Whilst drivers may glance towards the integrated advertisement very briefly, their attention would be diverted away from the carriageway ahead and to the left side of the road due to the unit's proximity to the highway, where buses may be merging and vehicles may be changing lanes also.
11. The Council have also highlighted concerns regarding the proposed unit obstructing the visibility of the highway for cyclists accessing the adjacent cycle stands. Whilst the unit is located near the highway there is still a portion of pavement separating it from the road. Taking this into account as well as the cycle stands location set away from the proposed unit, I consider that cyclists would be able to gain a full view of the carriageway before merging into the cycle lane and I therefore consider the proposal to be acceptable in this regard.
12. Whilst there might be limited evidence to suggest a link between digital adverts and increased road accidents, each case's site-specific circumstances must be considered. I also have no reason to doubt that the advert would comply with

industry best practice, with limitations on brightness and controls over changing images. Regardless, the purpose of the proposed advert would be to attract attention. The advert could result in additional distraction along a section of road which requires heightened concentration. Even with the suggested controls in place, the scheme could result in additional driver distraction with an associated risk to public safety.

13. The appellant has also referenced various planning applications and appeals near to the site for other communication units. Reference has been made to a proposal for a unit on the pavement outside No.10 Victory Parade¹ which has advertisement consent and planning permission with the appellant citing this as similar to the appeal scheme. However, whilst I note that it is on the same street as the appeal scheme it is on a markedly different section of pavement adjacent to a section of the road which is not adjacent to a junction or in the foreground of a bus stop such as the appeal scheme. Furthermore, the proposed advertisement in this case faces the opposing way to the direction of traffic and therefore this example does not have the same public safety considerations as in the appeal scheme before me.
14. In regard to the appeals referenced 'Opposite 16 Plumstead Road²' these are to the opposing side of the road to the appeal scheme and are cited much further back from the highway. As a result, I do not consider there to be sufficient similarities between the site-specific circumstances of this unit and the appeal scheme before me.
15. When considering the acceptability or otherwise of proposals for advertisements, it is necessary to take account of the particular circumstances of the road layout, and the associated demands on driver concentration in that specific location. The examples provided possess different highway conditions, and do not provide a justification to allow the appeal here. With this and the above in mind, the scheme would pose an unacceptable risk to public safety.
16. I therefore conclude that the siting of the proposed hub would have a harmful effect upon highway and public safety. It would therefore conflict with London Plan (2021) Policies T2 and T4 and Royal Greenwich Local Plan: Core Strategy and Detailed Policies (2014) Policies IM(a) and IM(b). Amongst other matters, these policies refer to development proposals not increasing road danger. I also find conflict with section 9 of the Framework where it states that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety.

Other Matters

17. I have reviewed the public benefits put forward by the appellant including but not limited to the displaying of emergency messaging, advertisements for local businesses, sustainability credentials of the proposal, providing communication for the public and the supply of a defibrillator. I also acknowledge that Chapter 10 of the Framework confirms that advanced, high quality and reliable communication infrastructure is essential for economic growth and social well-being as well as supports the expansion of electronic communications networks.

¹ 23/3564/F & 23/3565/A

² APP/E5330/W/23/3316381 and APP/E5330/H/23/3316382

18. However, it is not clear from the information before me to what extent there is a need for the publicly accessible facilities such as a public phone in the area over and above the existing provision. The proposed use of the facility by the Council to promote their initiatives is also not explained in terms of whether this is needed or how it would be delivered. Furthermore, there is limited evidence in terms of the need for defibrillators within the local area or what the existing situation is in regard to provision. Whilst this is a benefit of sorts, it does not outweigh the harm I have identified to highway safety.
19. On balance, whilst I recognise that there would be some public benefits from the proposal, I find that they would be ancillary to the advertising aspect and as such only attract limited weight in this decision. I, therefore, am not satisfied that the benefits identified outweigh the highway safety harm from the proposal.
20. I have had regard to the suggested conditions proposed by the appellant, as well as the standard conditions set out in Schedule 2 of the Regulations which relate specifically to Appeal B. However, these conditions would not overcome the harm I have identified.

Conclusion and Recommendation

21. For the reasons given above, I have concluded that the proposals would have a harmful impact upon highway and public safety and the benefits arising from the proposal would not outweigh these harms.
22. The proposal therefore conflicts with the development plan taken as a whole and there are no material considerations, including the Framework, to suggest the decision on Appeal A should be made other than in accordance with the development plan.
23. Therefore, for the reasons given, I recommend that both Appeal A and Appeal B are dismissed.

J Reed

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

24. I have considered all the submitted evidence and my representative's report and on that basis Appeal A and Appeal B are dismissed.

A M Nilsson

INSPECTOR