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## Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 12 May 2026

by **C Evans MTCP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 June 2026

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### **Appeal A Ref: APP/R0660/W/25/3377133**

#### **Footpath outside 47-49 Alderley Road, Wilmslow SK9 1NZ**

- 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 Verity Cheyne of BT Group Plc against the decision of Cheshire East Council.
  - The application Ref is 25/3885/FUL.
  - The development proposed is installation of 1 No. BT Street Hub Unit and associated advertisement panels on either side of the unit.
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### **Appeal B Ref: APP/R0660/H/25/3376883**

#### **Footpath outside 47-49 Alderley Road, Wilmslow SK9 1NZ**

- 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 Verity Cheyne of BT Group PLC against the decision of Cheshire East Council.
  - The application Ref is 25/3884/ADV.
  - The advertisement proposed is described as "installation of 1 No. BT Street Hub Unit and associated advertisement panels on either side of the unit".
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### **Decision**

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

### **Preliminary Matters**

3. Two appeals relate to the site. They are intrinsically linked and raise related issues, and so I have combined the cases into a single decision letter. However, each appeal has been considered on its own merits.
4. I have dealt with the appeals on the basis that planning permission is being sought for a new communications kiosk and advertisement consent is being sought for the integrated digital display.
5. With regards to Appeal B, the Regulations require decisions regarding advertisements to be made only in the interests of amenity and public safety, whilst taking any material considerations into account. The Advertisements Planning Practice Guidance notes amenity can include visual and / or aural amenity. I have had regard to the development plan policies that the Council has made reference to, but they have not been decisive in my determination of this appeal.

## **Main Issue**

6. The main issue for Appeal A is the effect of the proposed BT street hub on the character and appearance of the area. The main issue for Appeal B is the effect of the proposed advertisements on the visual amenity of the area. To avoid duplication, I have considered these main issues together.

## **Reasons**

7. The appeal site is located on a wide stretch of pavement along Alderley Road in the Primary Shopping Area of Wilmslow. This part of the town centre features modestly-scaled two storey buildings and predominantly independent businesses in smaller commercial units. These feature fascia signs, but other signage is limited, particularly illuminated advertisements. An area of green space, with mature trees separates this stretch of the road from the main traffic, creating a verdant setting.
8. Existing street furniture in this part of Alderley Road primarily includes tiered planters, bike racks, a road sign and a bin. There is little other street furniture in this area, other than temporary A-board signs from nearby businesses on the pavement. The planters are of a modest scale and have a traditional appearance. The wide and regular spacing also creates a rhythm, and these factors contribute to the spacious, verdant and understated character of the street scene.
9. Whilst the proposed hub would not obstruct pedestrians, its siting would disrupt the regular rhythm and spacing of the existing street furniture. The contemporary appearance and design would also look at odds with the traditional appearance of the tiered planters.
10. Although its depth would be limited, the proposed hub would have a substantial height and width relative to its context, resulting in a bulky appearance. The illuminated digital displays would emphasise the hub, due to their visual impact. There would be little if any screening from the planters because of their wider spacing and smaller scale. Consequently, the hub would appear as a prominent structure, which would jar with the pleasant, spacious and verdant street scene and give a cluttered appearance to the pavement.
11. In addition, the absence of advertisements in the area and the increased prominence from the illumination of the proposed integrated advertisements would be incongruous, which would harm visual amenity in this part of the Primary Shopping Area. The Framework notes that the quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited. For the reasons I have given, I find that to be the case in this instance.
12. The appellant has made reference to a pylon sign at a petrol station and an existing digital advertisement on a bus shelter. These are not viewed within the same street scene as the appeal site and as noted above, digital advertisements are not a part of the character of the area in the vicinity of the appeal site. I therefore give this consideration limited weight.
13. For the reasons highlighted above, I conclude that, for Appeal A, the proposed BT street hub would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area. It would conflict with Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (adopted 2017) (CELPS) policies SD1, SD2 and SE1; and Cheshire East Site Allocations and

Development Policies Document (adopted 2022) (CESADPD) policies GEN1 and RET9. Collectively, amongst other things, these policies require development to contribute positively, reflect, protect and enhance local character and create high quality places. Policy RET9 also requires development to avoid clutter in town centres.

14. For Appeal B, I conclude that the proposal would harm the visual amenity of the area. I have taken into account CELPS policies SD1, SD2 and SE1; CESADPD policies GEN1, GEN 3; and RET9, and Wilmslow Neighbourhood Plan policy PR1. Collectively, these policies seek to ensure high design standards, for development to contribute positively, reflect, protect and enhance the local character and improve the public realm, including visual amenity. Given my conclusion above, the proposal conflicts with these policies.

### **Other Matters and Planning Balance**

15. The proposal would provide benefits including public access to wi-fi information about local services, device charging a potential extension to 4G and 5G coverage and possible assistance with local environmental monitoring. The hub would also be powered by renewable energy. These factors would make a modest contribution towards the Framework's objectives for communication infrastructure and the environment. However, the scale of the benefits is not sufficient to outweigh the harms that I have found to the character, appearance and visual amenity of the area in this important town centre location.
16. The appellant intends for this proposal to replace the existing BT phone box on Water Lane, which is bulkier than the proposed hub. This has potential to remove visual clutter in the wider area; however, it is not close enough to the appeal site to overcome the harm that I have identified above.
17. The appellant has drawn my attention to various appeal decisions for hubs such as this. Based on the information provided, I note that two appeals were for advertisement consent only, where a kiosk and smaller advertisement had already been consented on these sites (refs: APP/N5090/Z/22/3296138 and APP/N5090/Z/21/3287033). One appeal site did not appear to be similar in character and appearance to this appeal site, as the Inspector has described the location as a major thoroughfare in front of a large commercial complex (refs: APP/Q4245/W/25/3363934 and APP/Q4245/H/25/3363936).
18. Several sites had existing payphones and the appeal was for their removal and replacement (refs: APP/Z5630/W/18/3209582 and APP/Z5630/H/18/3209488; APP/Q4245/W/25/3363942 and APP/Q4245/H/25/3363943; APP/J2373/W/22/3304941; APP/J2373/H/22/3305026 and APP/J2373/W/22/3305028; and APP/J2373/H/22/3305072 and APP/J2373/W/22/3305075). These, therefore, have a different impact on the street scene when compared to a new site.
19. Consequently, I am not persuaded that the circumstances of these appeals are directly comparable to those before me. I am required to determine this appeal on the basis of its own merits. I therefore give these other decisions limited weight.

## **Conclusion**

20. For Appeal A, the proposal conflicts with the development plan and the material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it. Therefore, for the reasons given above Appeal A should be dismissed.
21. For the reasons given above Appeal B should also be dismissed.

*C Evans*

INSPECTOR