



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 27 October 2025

by **R Major BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 4th November 2025

Appeal A Ref: APP/B4215/W/25/3369519

Footpath outside 661 Altrincham Road, Wythenshawe, Manchester M23 9AA

- 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 Simon Warner of BT Group PLC against the decision of Manchester City Council.
- The application Ref is 142713/FO/2025.
- The development proposed described as installation of 1no. BT Street Hub Unit and associated advertisement panels on either side of the unit.

Appeal B Ref: APP/B4215/H/25/3369521

Footpath outside 661 Altrincham Road, Wythenshawe, Manchester M23 9AA

- 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 Simon Warner of BT Group PLC against the decision of Manchester City Council.
- The application Ref is 142714/AOH/2025.
- The advertisement proposed is described as installation of 1no. BT Street Hub Unit and associated advertisement panels on either side of the unit.

Decision

1. Appeal A is allowed and planning permission is granted for installation of 1no. BT Street Hub Unit and associated advertisement panels on either side of the unit at footpath outside 661 Altrincham Road, Wythenshawe, Manchester M23 9AA in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 142713/FO/2025, subject to the conditions in the attached schedule.
2. Appeal B is allowed and express consent is granted for display of 1no. BT Street Hub Unit and associated advertisement panels on either side of the unit at footpath outside 661 Altrincham Road, Wythenshawe, Manchester M23 9AA in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 142714/AOH/2025. 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 conditions in the attached schedule.

Preliminary Matters

3. The two appeals relate to the same proposal on the same site. Appeal A concerns the refusal of planning permission to erect a street hub unit (the hub). Appeal B concerns the refusal of express consent for advertisement panels on either side of the hub. I have considered each appeal on its individual merits, however, as they raise similar issues, I have combined both decisions into a single decision letter.
4. In respect of Appeal B, the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (the Regulations) require that decisions are made only in the interest of amenity and public safety. Therefore, whilst I have taken account of the policies that the Council considers to be relevant, these have not been decisive in my determination of this appeal.

Main Issues

5. The main issues in respect of Appeal A are the effect of the proposal on:
 - the character and appearance of the area;
 - the living conditions of occupiers of number 641 Altrincham Road; and
 - highway and pedestrian safety.
6. Whilst the Council's Decision notice in respect of the advertisement consent does not include a reason for refusal in respect of public safety, in view of the public safety issues raised in both parties' evidence this matter is a main issue in Appeal B. Consequently, the main issues in respect of Appeal B are the effect of the proposed advertisement on amenity and public safety.

Reasons

Character, appearance and visual amenity

7. The appeal relates to a section of pavement on the southern side of the busy Altrincham Road (A560). The immediate surroundings comprise of a mix of both commercial and residential uses with the appeal site situated adjacent to a McDonald's restaurant and its associated car park. Directly opposite, on the other side of the highway, are separate health centre and pharmacy buildings. Also, on the opposite side of this road, to the northwest, is a convenience store / post office.
8. Residential properties are located to the east of the appeal site, as well as to the west, on the other side of the McDonald's. Additionally, behind the commercial buildings on the opposite side of the highway there are further residential properties, including a high-rise block of flats which is a prominent building on the street scene. Furthermore, when looking west from the appeal site, down Altrincham Road, a petrol filling station and a six-storey apartment block are visible.
9. On the appeal site's side of the highway existing street furniture within the immediate vicinity is limited to lighting columns, a traffic light and a telegraph pole. On the opposite side of the highway there are lighting columns, a telephone kiosk, a bus shelter, a bin and street trees.
10. However, given the mixed-use character of the area there are various advertisements and signage on nearby buildings, as well as on the bus shelter and kiosk opposite. There is also a tall freestanding advertisement for the adjacent restaurant and the pharmacy opposite has a freestanding totem sign which has a digital element. The petrol filling station to the west also has a tall totem sign with digital numbers. As such, advertisements are not an uncommon feature along this busy highway and within the street scene in general.
11. The appeal proposal seeks to remove the existing payphone kiosk on the opposite side of the road and erect a street hub unit with advertisement panels on either side. The proposed installation would be an upstanding rectangular structure and would house features that provide free Wi-Fi, free UK calls, USB charging, access to emergency services and other facilities.
12. The submission also details that an existing kiosk at 89 Floatshall Road would be removed. This kiosk is located a significant distance from the appeal site and within a more predominately residential setting. Thus, I found it to be visually unrelated to

the appeal site. The potential benefits of the removal of the kiosk at 89 Floatshall Road have therefore not factored into my determination of this appeal.

13. Nonetheless, whilst acknowledging that the existing kiosk on the opposite side of the road is not located on the same pavement as the proposed hub, it is clearly visible from the appeal site and due to the visually open, two-lane nature of the highway I found it to be visually related to the appeal site. The removal of this kiosk, which could be secured by condition, would ensure that the proposal would not result in an overall increase in street clutter along this part of Altrincham Road.
14. I acknowledge the proposed hub would be taller, wider and more modern in appearance than the existing kiosk, and the introduction of illuminated digital displays would increase the prominence of the proposal in comparison.
15. Nevertheless, given the mixed character of the area; the large scale and size of some nearby buildings; and the existence of freestanding signage in this locality, the increase in height and prominence resulting from the proposal, as well as its more modern appearance, would not be such that it would lead to harm to the visual amenity of the area. The proposal would not therefore adversely affect its immediate surroundings and would not represent a visually intrusive and incongruous feature within the street scene.
16. Furthermore, given the commercial aspect of the adjacent McDonald's restaurant and the building's directly opposite, the proposed hub, as well as the introduction of rotating digital advertisement displays, would not appear incongruous, either on its own or in combination with other nearby advertisements. I do not therefore consider the proposed advertisements would be harmful to visual amenity or result in an over proliferation in this setting. The proposal would also not unacceptably harm views along this busy highway.
17. In view of the above, I conclude that the proposal would not harm the character, appearance and visual amenity of the area. I therefore find no conflict with Policies DM1, EN1 and SP1 of Manchester's Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document (adopted 2012 and amended 2024) (CS), saved Policies E3.3 and DC15 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester (1995) (UDP) and Policy JP-P1 of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (2024), where they together seek to ensure, amongst other things, that development is appropriate, respects and acknowledges the character and identity of the locality in terms of design, siting, size, scale and materials used; upgrades the appearance of major radial and orbital roads; and incorporates high quality in the design and finish of the public realm. The proposal would also accord with the relevant provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which have similar aims.
18. I have also had regard to the principles to produce high quality and inclusive design set out within the Guide to Development in Manchester Supplementary Planning Document and Planning Guidance (2007) (SPD). Given that I have concluded that the proposal would not harm visual amenity for the reasons detailed above, I therefore conclude the proposal would not conflict with this guidance.

Living conditions

19. The Council's first reason for refusal in relation to the hub, the associated Officer Report and the Appeal Statement all refer to the proposal harming residential amenity, and in particular the residential property at 641 Altrincham Road (no. 641). The Council's submissions do not however clearly identify what specific harm the appeal proposal would cause to the living conditions of occupants of this dwelling.
20. Nevertheless, the proposed hub would be positioned to the side of no. 641 and would be set at an oblique angle from the front elevation of this property. This therefore limits the visual impact of the proposal on the occupants of this dwelling in terms of loss of outlook and overbearing impact from its principal front elevation. Furthermore, existing vegetation and fencing along the shared boundary of this residential property and the adjacent car park also provides some screening from the windows within this dwelling.
21. In terms of light and illumination, the appeal site is located on a busy highway which contains nearby lighting columns. It is also adjacent to a McDonald's which has external lighting. As such, and with no evidence submitted to the contrary, subject to the imposition of planning conditions to control the levels of illumination from the digital display, I find that lighting from the proposal would have no significantly greater impact upon the occupants of no. 641 than existing sources of artificial light I observed in this area.
22. With regard to noise, the appeal proposal is accompanied by a noise management plan which details how the proposed hub would operate. Again, a condition can be imposed to ensure the hub operates in accordance with this document.
23. Furthermore, during my visit I observed that when stood on the appeal site background noise from ongoing activities in this area was significant. Audible sources of this background noise included the almost constant sound of vehicles on Altrincham Road, as well as the more infrequent noise associated with the comings and goings of cars and people at the adjacent McDonald's restaurant.
24. As such, given my observations on the existing background noise in this location, I find that noise from users interacting with the proposed hub would be unlikely to be discernible above the general activities that currently take place in this area. Furthermore, I have been presented with no substantive evidence that noise generated from the machinery and fans within the unit, if properly maintained, would be unduly noisy, or that they would cause disturbance to the nearest residential properties.
25. In view of the above, I am satisfied that the proposal would not have an unacceptable impact upon the living conditions of nearby residents, and in particular the occupants of no. 641. I therefore find no conflict with the relevant sections of CS Policies DM1 and SP1, and UDP Policy DC17.1 which together require development to have regard to effects on amenity; the wellbeing of residents; and be sited and designed to minimise the impact on residential amenity. The proposal would also adhere to the provisions of the Framework where it seeks to ensure a high standard of amenity for existing users.

Highway, pedestrian and public safety

26. To the west of the appeal site is the vehicular access for the adjacent restaurant. The Council assert that insufficient information has been submitted to demonstrate

that the proposed hub would not harm or compromise pedestrian and highway safety with regards to sightlines from this access onto Altrincham Road.

27. Whilst acknowledging that the application is not supported by visibility splays, the proposed hub would be set back 2.6m from the edge of the carriageway. As such, the hub would be outside of any visibility splay taken at a distance of 2.4m from the edge of the carriageway at this access point.
28. I also observed there is a car parking layby on this side of the carriageway. This layby results in traveling vehicles being positioned further away from the edge of the carriageway and this improves visibility of oncoming traffic at this access point when there are no cars in the layby.
29. As a result of these matters, and based on my observations on site, as well as the distance between the proposed hub and the access point, I find that the proposal would not unacceptably affect the visibility of oncoming vehicles, pedestrians and cycles as road users leave this access to join Altrincham Road. The Council has not provided any compelling evidence to suggest otherwise.
30. In addition, given the set back and distance of the proposal from the pedestrian crossing point, I also find that the proposed hub would not obscure visibility between road users and pedestrians using this crossing.
31. I note the Council's reason for refusal in respect of highway and pedestrian safety refers to conflict with UDP Policy DC17.1. However, as this policy does not refer to highway and pedestrian safety matters, I do not find it to be determinative in respect of this main issue.
32. In view of all the above, I conclude that the proposal would not be harmful to highway, pedestrian and public safety. I therefore find no conflict with CS Policies DM1 and SP1, where they together seek to ensure, amongst other things, that development has regard to road and community safety. The proposal also accords with the provisions of the Framework where it states that development should only be refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety.
33. In coming to my conclusion, I have also taken into consideration paragraph 141 of the Framework in so far as it is material in respect of its aim of controlling advertisements in the interests of public safety.

Other Matters

34. The appellant has drawn my attention to a number of allowed appeal decisions¹ for hubs and associated advertisements throughout the country. Whilst I have had due regard to these decisions, issues relating to the impact of a proposal upon the character, appearance and visual amenity of an area are matters of planning judgement based on the site-specific circumstances and surroundings.
35. In this regard, I have been provided with limited information in respect of these decisions that would enable me to draw any direct comparisons with the specifics of the appeal site and scheme before me. These appeal decisions therefore carry limited weight in my determination of this appeal.

¹ APP/N5090/Z/22/3296138; APP/N5090/D/22/3296141; APP/N5090/Z/22/3295689; APP/J2373/H/22/3305026; APP/J2373/W/22/3304941; and APP/J2373/W/22/3305075.

Conditions

36. The Council and the appellant have provided some suggested conditions for both appeals which I have considered against paragraph 57 of the Framework, and the advice contained in the Planning Practice Guidance. I have edited the suggested conditions to improve precision and enforceability where necessary.
37. In Appeal A, in addition to the statutory time condition (1), a condition listing the approved drawings (2) is needed to ensure clarity of what has been permitted. I have also imposed a condition which requires the development to be carried out in accordance with the details included within the submitted supporting documents (3). This condition is necessary in the interests of visual and residential amenity, and to ensure that the development operates as per the submitted details.
38. A condition requiring the removal of the existing BT telephone box on the opposite side of the highway within three months of the commencement of development has been attached to ensure there would be no excess street clutter in the area (4).
39. The Council suggested a condition be imposed that requires a verification report to be submitted to confirm compliance with the noise levels detailed within the submitted documents. However, provided that the requirements of condition (3) are adhered to a verification report is not necessary. This condition has therefore not been included.
40. The Council has also suggested a condition relating to the digital display. These matters have however been covered via conditions attached to Appeal B and therefore have not been imposed on Appeal A.
41. Furthermore, I note within their consultation responses that the Highway Service requested a condition requiring a Construction Management Plan (CMP) be submitted and Transport for Greater Manchester requested a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) be employed.
42. Given the limited scale of the proposed development, I find that conditions requiring the submission of a CMP and CTMP would not be reasonably necessary to make this development acceptable. Consequently, these suggested conditions have not been imposed.
43. In Appeal B, all advertisements granted express consent are subject to the five standard conditions set out in the Regulations. In addition to these, to prevent visual intrusion it is necessary to apply conditions (1 & 2) to control the illumination of the advertisements so they do not stand out significantly from the background illumination in the street.
44. Conditions to ensure there are no moving images (3); the minimum display time is 10 seconds with the interval between successive displays being instantaneous and that the display will switch off in the event of a malfunction (4); and that no content on the display shall resemble a traffic sign (5), have been imposed. These are all necessary to avoid the risk of distraction to passers-by.
45. The appellant has suggested additional conditions be attached to Appeal B with respect to any advertisement being maintained in a condition that does not impair the visual amenity of the site, and that any advertisement hoarding or structure is to be kept in a condition which does not endanger the public. These suggested conditions however reflect two of the five standard conditions set out in the

Regulations, which are automatically imposed, and therefore do not need to be repeated.

Conclusion

46. For the reasons given above, and taking into account all matters raised, both Appeal A and Appeal B are allowed.

R Major

INSPECTOR

Schedule of Conditions

Appeal A Ref: APP/B4215/W/25/3369519

- 1) The development must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.
- 2) The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:
 - 002 – Proposed Site Plan (Rev A)
 - 004 – Proposed Site Elevation (Rev A)
 - BT Street Hub Unit Dimensions
- 3) The development hereby approved shall be installed and maintained at all times thereafter in accordance with the details specified within the documents titled:
 - Street Hub Product Statement (V2.0, September 2024);
 - Street Hubs Anti-Social Behaviour Management Plan (Version 3);
 - Street Hub Noise Management Plan (Version 2)
- 4) Within three (3) months of development commencing, the existing BT payphone box on the footpath opposite 661 Altrincham Road, as indicated for removal within the submitted document titled “Planning Supporting Statement” – Ref: TRF-115-A, shall be removed in its entirety and the land made good to the same condition as the adjacent land.

Appeal B Ref: APP/B4215/H/25/3369521

In addition to the five standard conditions in the Regulations:

- 1) In daylight hours, the intensity of the illuminance of the advertisements shall be controlled in order to reflect ambient light conditions (to ensure it is neither too bright or too dull), and shall at all times be no greater than the recommended maximum daytime luminance values (in cd/m²) set out in Table 10.5 within the Institution of Lighting Professionals - Professional Lighting Guide (PLG 05) 'Brightness of Illuminated Advertisements including Digital Displays' (2023) (or its equivalent in a replacement guide).
- 2) In the hours of darkness (between dusk and dawn), the intensity of the illuminance of the advertisements shall be no greater than the maximum night-time luminance value (in cd/m²) set out in Table 10.4 within the Institution of Lighting Professionals - Professional Lighting Guide (PLG 05) 'Brightness of Illuminated Advertisements including Digital Displays' (2023) (or its equivalent in a replacement guide).
- 3) The digital display screens shall not display any moving, or apparently moving, images (including animation, flashing, scrolling three dimensional, intermittent or video elements).
- 4) The minimum display time for each piece of content on the digital display screens shall be 10 seconds. The interval between successive displays shall be

instantaneous and the complete screen shall change with no visual effects (including swiping or other animated transition methods) between displays, and the display will include a mechanism to switch to a blank screen with a black background in the event of a malfunction.

- 5) No content on the digital display screens shall resemble traffic signs, as defined in section 64 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

*****End of Conditions*****