



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 7 July 2026

by Jane Smith MA MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16 July 2026

Appeal A Ref: 6008589

Section of footpath adjacent to 53-55 High Street, Ruislip HA4 7BD

- 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 Safia Rana-Jaswal against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref is 79854/APP/2026/10.
 - The development proposed is Installation of 1No. BT Street Hub Unit and associated advertisement panels on either side of the unit.
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Appeal B Ref: 6008588

Section of footpath adjacent to 53-55 High Street, Ruislip HA4 7BD

- 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 Safia Rana-Jaswal against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref is 79854/ADV/2026/5.
 - The advertisement proposed is Installation of 1No. BT Street Hub Unit and associated advertisement panels on either side of the unit.
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Decisions

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

Preliminary Matters

3. There are two appeals, both in relation to the same proposal. In Appeal A, planning permission is sought to erect the proposed street hub unit, while in Appeal B advertisement consent is sought for the advertisement panels. I have considered the appeals on their individual merits. However, I have dealt with them together where the issues raised are similar, to avoid duplication.
4. In respect of Appeal B, the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (Advertisement Regulations) require that such applications are considered in terms of amenity and public safety, taking into account the provisions of the development plan so far as they are material and any other relevant factors. The reason for refusal relates to the effect on amenity and no harm to public safety has been alleged. Consequently, for purposes of Appeal B, I have taken the development plan policies referred to by the Council into account only to the extent that they are relevant to the effect of the proposed advertisements on amenity.

5. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that special attention is paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Ruislip Village Conservation Area. That is relevant to both appeals.

Main Issue

6. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the visual amenity of the area including whether it would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Ruislip Village Conservation Area.

Reasons

7. The proposed street hub would replace an existing telephone kiosk on Ruislip High Street. It would be in a fairly wide pavement, close to a crossroad junction. As well as the telephone kiosk, there are already several other items of street furniture within the same section of pavement, including a parking meter, road signs, benches, a litter bin and cycle racks. Similar street furniture, as well as street trees, can be found to a greater or lesser extent along the rest of the High Street.
8. As is described in the Ruislip Village Conservation Area Appraisal 2010 (CAA), the High Street is a busy shopping street, which forms the retail and commercial core of the Conservation Area (CA). It is characterised by predominantly two and three storey, purpose-built commercial parades, as well as some good quality individual buildings and more recent infill of varied quality. The decorative detailing on the floors above the shopfronts, particularly on buildings dating from the 1920s and 1930s, provides considerable visual interest.
9. While the High Street has a different character from the historic village core, it contributes to the significance of the CA as a whole through its historic street pattern and the good quality, but relatively restrained, architectural detailing of the shopping parades. Those buildings help to reveal a specific period of historic growth following the arrival of the railway line and there are good examples directly opposite the appeal site and on three corners of the nearby crossroads. There are also some less appropriate modern shopfronts and signage, and the amount of street furniture and other clutter is sometimes visually intrusive. However, on the whole, those less positive features are modest in scale and/or at a low level, so the form and detailing of the shopping parades can still be readily appreciated.
10. The existing telephone kiosk is looking dated, and the proposed street hub would be more up to date in function and appearance, with a smaller, narrower footprint. However, it would present a considerably taller and more solid elevation in views along the High Street. The adjacent street tree would provide some limited screening, but only in one direction and not at ground level where the trunk is bare. Although the pavement is wide enough to accommodate the street hub unit without obstruction, it would be disproportionately large and conspicuous in relation to the other street furniture. It would be of an entirely different scale and character to the café seating and pavement signage which the CAA acknowledges as having some positive role in the street scene.
11. In respect of Appeal B, the proposed advertisement panels would draw attention, as they are designed to do. There is some existing illuminated signage within the High Street, but it is generally restrained, being mainly confined to highlighting the signage for individual businesses. There are a few illuminated poster

advertisements, including some digital displays beyond the crossroads. Nevertheless, digital display units are not prevalent along the High Street as a whole or within this particular section of it. Even if the level of illumination and forms of animation were controlled by condition, the digital form of the displays would be inherently eye-catching. That would compound the visual intrusion arising from the scale and prominence of the unit.

12. Overall, even if the current condition of the telephone kiosk is taken into account, the proposal would increase the level of intrusive street clutter. It would draw attention away from the relatively restrained and well detailed buildings in the shopping parades. I therefore conclude that it would have a materially harmful effect on the visual amenity of the area and would not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Ruislip Village Conservation Area.
13. That being the case, the proposal would not accord with relevant requirements in Policies HE1 and BE1 in the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 1, Policies DMHB 1, 4, 11, 12, 13A and 21 in the Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2 and Policies D3 and HC1 of the London Plan. Those policies collectively require that development, as proposed in Appeal A, contributes positively to the public realm, local townscape character and distinctiveness, including by conserving and enhancing relevant designated heritage assets. Those aspects of the development plan are also relevant to the consideration of amenity in Appeal B. In particular, the proposed advertisements would be inconsistent with relevant requirements in Policy DMHB 13A, which include that advertisement proposals complement visual amenity and character, enhance historic assets and not lead to visual clutter.

Heritage Balance

14. Taking into account the pre-existing street furniture and the extent of the proposal in relation to the CA as a whole, the harm to heritage significance would be towards the lower end of the less than substantial category as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). Paragraph 215 of the Framework requires that where a development proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, that harm should be weighed against any public benefits.
15. Various benefits of the proposal have been highlighted. Some of those lie outside the scope of Appeal B, since they do not relate to the relevant issues of amenity or public safety. Nevertheless, the benefits are relevant to Appeal A and the application of the heritage balance as articulated in the Framework.
16. The provision of free public Wi-Fi and telephone calls, including calls to essential and emergency services, and mobile device charging would be of some public benefit. Evidence has been presented that BT street hubs at a national level have facilitated significant levels of calls to services for vulnerable people. However, there are other modern telephone boxes on the High Street, so shoppers, workers and residents do not apparently lack access to help in an emergency. Nor is there any specific evidence of a deficiency in digital connectivity in the vicinity of the proposed street hub. That limits the weight which should be attached to the general benefit of providing high quality digital infrastructure, as articulated in the London Plan and the Framework.
17. The area has been described a busy shopping centre, and it was bustling with people at the time of my site visit. Therefore, there is no clear evidence that a

facility of this nature would materially increase the vitality of the secondary shopping area. The High Street is open and linear in character, within what appears to be a straightforward and easily navigable wider street layout, and there is no clear need to improve public wayfinding or other public information. That being the case, there would be little benefit from the avoidance of reliance on public funding to provide street-level communications and advertising.

18. The multi-functional nature of the unit would arguably make optimal use of its relatively small footprint within the pavement. However, since the need for the whole range of services provided has not been convincingly demonstrated, that is of very limited benefit.
19. No harm has been alleged to public safety, including pedestrian flow and highway safety, or living conditions for nearby occupiers. Nor were there any objections from interested parties. The nearest listed building is further along the High Street and set back from the street frontage, and it has not been alleged that there would be any effect on its setting or significance. However, those are neutral considerations which do not carry positive weight in the overall balance.
20. Even when considered collectively, the public benefits of the proposal are modest, when the characteristics of this particular location, including the other communications infrastructure, are taken into account. Those benefits would not outweigh the less than substantial harm to the designated heritage asset, to which I have given considerable importance and weight, in accordance with paragraph 212 of the Framework and Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Conclusion

21. For the reasons given above, the appeals should be dismissed.

Jane Smith

INSPECTOR