

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Thames Ward

App Ref: PL/25/1351 Full planning permission

Address: Pavement o/s Great Brigham Mead, Caversham Road, Reading, RG1 8DJ

Proposal: The proposed installation of 1no. BT Street Hub and removal of associated existing BT payphone(s).

Applicant: Simon Warner

Received date: 24/09/2025

Target Decision date: 19/11/2025

Case Officer: Gary Miles

Ward: Thames Ward

App Ref: PL/25/1356 Consent to display an advertisement

Address: Pavement o/s Great Brigham Mead, Caversham Road, Reading, RG1 8DJ

Proposal: The proposed installation of 1no. BT Street Hub and removal of associated existing BT payphone(s).

Applicant: Simon Warner

Received date: 24/09/2025

Target Decision date: 19/11/2025

Case Officer: Gary Miles

Two applications have been submitted; one application (PL/25/1351) seeks planning permission for the installation of a BT Street Hub, whilst a separate application (PL/25/1256) has been submitted for advertisement consent. As both applications relate to the same site, I have considered them together to avoid unnecessary duplication.

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is positioned on a public footway located northeast of the adjacent Caversham Road a public highway owned and maintained by Reading Borough Council. The application site is sandwiched between the entrance to Great Brighams Mead, Brigham Road (residential street), opposite a new residential development and a busy roundabout which serves A4155 Caversham Road/Vastern Road along with The Station Shopping Park and Great Brighams Mead itself. The adjacent area is primarily residential.



Existing streetscene with existing kiosk in yellow. Existing streetscene looking south with proposed location on left.

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

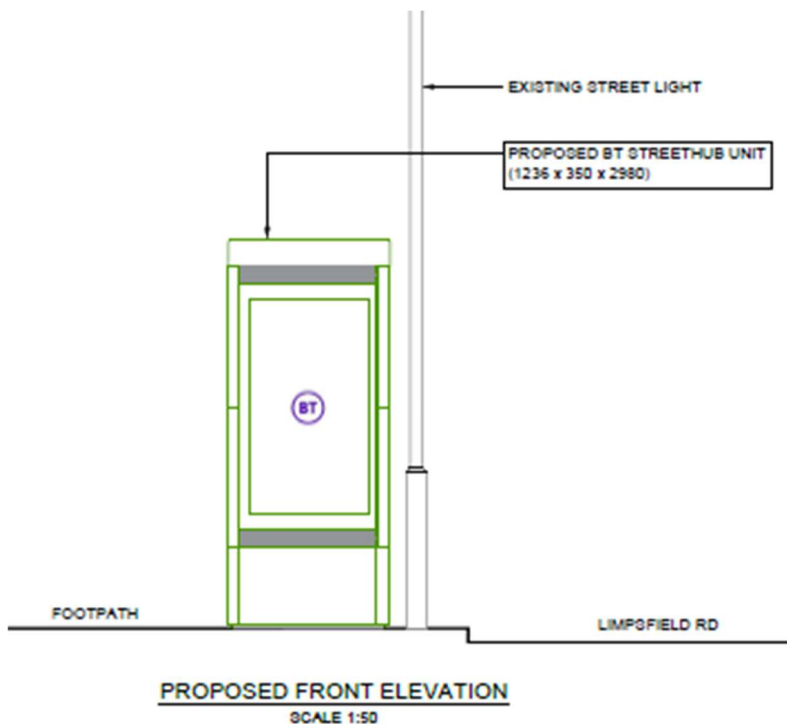
Proposed installation of 1no. black, freestanding BT Street Hub measuring 3m in height, 1.3m in width and 0.35m in depth. The BT Hub will offer Wi-Fi, free UK calls, USB charging and an emergency services button. The units include 2no. digital 75" HD LCD advert screens which provide a range of other

digital services as well as advertising to help pay for the unit, the screens will display content at 10-second intervals. The LCD screens automatically dim at nighttime to 600candela. A video camera is built into the unit, those these are not currently connected or used in the UK. The associated existing BT Phone Kiosk is to be removed.

Plans and documents considered for both applications:

Drawing no: 001-rev A-Site Location Maps, dated June 25
Drawing no: 002-rev A-Proposed Site Plan, dated June 25
Drawing no: 003-rev A-Existing and Proposed Elevations, dated June 25
Drawing No: 003-rev A-Proposed BT Street Hub (All Round Elevations) dated April 25
BT Street Hubs Product Statement V2.0, dated September 2024
BT Street Hub Planning Statement REA-106 (Mitie Telecoms) dated June 25
Over Exposure and Glare Evaluation, dated Mar 25
International Commission on Non-ionising Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) Certificate REA-106, dated June 25
BT Street Hub Developers Notice REA-106 (Mitie Telecoms) dated June 25
The Brightness of Illuminated Advertisements Including Digital Displays-Professional Lighting Guide 05/23
BT Street Hub Anti-Social Behaviour Management Plan-Version 3
Received by the LPA on 24th September 2025





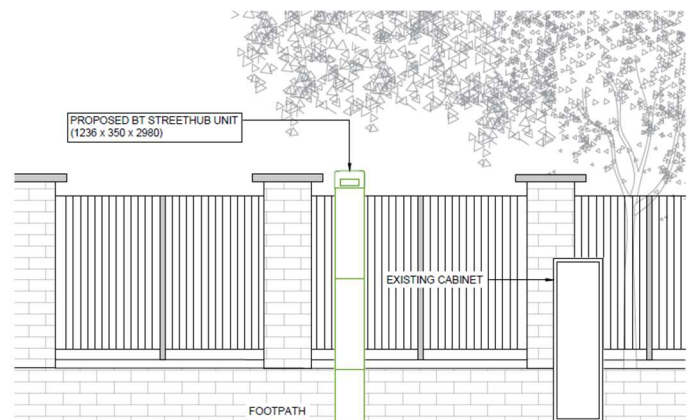
Proposed elevation.



Example of a BT Street Hub.



Proposed Photomontage



Proposed Elevation o/s Great Brighams Mead

Note: officers note that the existing BT kiosk KX100 which is to be removed, stands at 2.16m in height and the pedestrian safety railing shown in the photomontage and side elevation drawing stands at 1m in height. The drawing titled Drawing no: 003-rev A-Existing and Proposed Elevations, dated June 25- shows the proposed BT Street Hub in proximity to the pedestrian safety railing and the shopfront of St Martins Precinct. It should be noted that this drawing appears to be incorrectly drawn, the proposed BT Street Hub appears smaller than in real life. The proposed plans and montage are considered misleading.

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

PL/21/0567 - Change of use from office use Class B1(a) to use Class C3 to comprise 110 residential units. Prior Notification under Class 0, Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 – Approved June 2021

Unauthorised (JCDecaux) double sided digital advertising screen.

4. CONSULTATIONS

Internal consultation:

- Access Officer - **Object**

The access officer has concerns that the additional development will create yet another hazard for persons with disabilities, wheelchair users and the visually impaired. The access officer noted there is already an oversaturation of street furniture at this location, and the additional BT Hub is therefore not welcomed.

- Transport Development Control - **Object**

This application and advertising consent is for the installation of a BT Street Hub. In this instance, the proposed BT Street Hub does not replace an existing BT Phone Kiosk on this exact location.

The A4155 Caversham Road is a busy highway which can be described as an 'arterial route' through Reading, connecting the main town centre with areas of Caversham. High pedestrian footfall and vehicular traffic are therefore commonplace. The proposed location is approximately 23m east of the Caversham Road / Vastern Road roundabout junction and positioned on the approach to the roundabout. A review of accident data has identified that 3 accidents have occurred at the northern extent of the roundabout in the last 5 years and a further 6 accidents across the remainder of the junction in the same period, with one of those accidents being a serious incident.

It is therefore evident that drivers are required to be fully concentrating on the road at this roundabout.

Given that all advertisements are intended to attract attention, particularly if they are facing on-coming traffic, it is the Highway Authority's view that the proposed sequencing images, would cause distraction for drivers with a consequential risk of rear end shunts. As such, there would be a conflict with Local Plan Policies and paragraphs of the NPPG (highlighted below).

The National Planning Policy Guidance stipulates the following;

Paragraph: 067 Reference ID: 18b-067-20140306 Revision date: 06 03 2014

All advertisements are intended to attract attention but proposed advertisements at points where drivers need to take more care are more likely to affect public safety. For example, at junctions, roundabouts, pedestrian crossings, on the approach to a low bridge or level crossing or other places where local conditions present traffic hazards. There are less likely to be road safety problems if the advertisement is on a site within a commercial or industrial locality, if it is a shop fascia sign, name-board, trade or business sign, or a normal poster panel, and if the advertisement is not on the skyline.

Paragraph: 068 Reference ID: 18b-068-20140306 Revision date: 06 03 2014

The main types of advertisement which may cause danger to road users are:

(b) those which, because of their size or siting, would obstruct or confuse a road-user's view, or reduce the clarity or effectiveness of a traffic sign or signal, or would be likely to distract road-users because of their unusual nature;

(d) those externally or internally illuminated signs (incorporating either flashing or static lights) including those utilising light emitting diode technology:

i. where the means of illumination is directly visible from any part of the road;

ii. which, because of their colour, could be mistaken for, or confused with, traffic lights or any other authorised signals;

iii. which, because of their size or brightness, could result in glare and dazzle, or distract road-users, particularly in misty or wet weather; or

iv. which are subject to frequent changes of the display;

It is the Highway Authority's view that any additional distraction in the form of illuminated sequencing displays are more likely to affect public safety and increase the risk of incidents within the vicinity of the application site. As such, the proposed advertisement, would be a conflict with Reading Borough Local Plan Policies and paragraphs of the NPPG (highlighted above)

- **CCTV & Townsafe Radio – No Objection**

Due to the size and location of the BT hubs and the large LCD display the CCTV team were consulted as glare from the screen can affect the brightness on the CCTV iris, as the camera zooms in and out some LCD advertisements can cause the camera to lose sight of the target subject.

The CCTV and Townsafe Radio team have no objections to this proposal at this location.

External consultation:

- A planning notice for each application was attached to nearby street furniture on 7th October and left in place for a minimum of 21 days for the statutory consultation period.

No letters of representation have been received.

5. EQUALITY ACT 2010

In determining this application, the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. However, there is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application. Therefore, in terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

6. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

PL/25/1351/FUL

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. The following local and national planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:

The 'National Planning Policy Framework' ("NPPF") 2021 states clearly that its content is to be a material consideration in the determination of applications. The 'NPPF' states that due weight should be given to the adopted policies of the Local Plan according to their degree of consistency with the 'NPPF' (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the 'NPPF', the greater the weight that may be given).

PL/25/1356/ADV

Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 requires the Local Planning Authority to exercise its powers under these regulations in the interests 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. Regulation 3 states that factors relevant to amenity include the general characteristics of the locality, including the presence of any feature of historic, architectural, cultural, or similar interest. Factors relevant to public safety include highway safety and whether the advert would hinder security or surveillance devices, including speed cameras.

National Policy and Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework
National Planning Practice Guidance

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC7: (Design and the Public Realm)
CC8: (Safeguarding Amenity)
OU4: (Advertisements)
OU3: (Telecommunications Development)
TR3 (Access, Traffic & Highway-Related Matters)

7. APPRAISAL

PL/25/1351/FUL

Visual Amenity

It is considered that the size and prominent location of the proposed BT Street Hub measuring 3m in height by 1m in width along with the double sided 75inch LCD advert screens would appear as an unattractive and prominent feature which would have a visual dominance in the street scene, harmful to the visual amenity of the area. The proposal would exacerbate an undesirable proliferation of visual clutter at this location.

The proposal conflicts with Policy OU3, Policy OU4, Policy CC7 and Policy CC8 of the Reading Local Plan 2019.

Residential Amenity

Due to the function of making and receiving calls and video calls the proposed development is considered detrimental to the amenity of nearby residents in terms of noise and disturbance. Whilst BT confirm the volume can be controlled, there remains an element of nuisance associated with having a two-way conversation outside in the middle of a street (rather than inside an enclosed kiosk) at times when the streets are quieter. BT confirm the advertisement screen will dim to 600 candela at nighttime, though this is far brighter than other advertisements of similar scale.

The proposed BT Street Hub is considered detrimental to residential amenity and is in conflict with Policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

Public Safety

The siting of the proposed BT Hub measuring 3m in height by 1m in width along with the double sided 75inch LCD advert screens which will exhibit advertisement content for 10 seconds on rotation, located adjacent to a busy classified A road 23m northwest of the Caversham Road/Vastern Road roundabout junction, the entrance to Great Brighams Mead (commercial) unit, opposite the entrance to a new residential development and located close proximity to Brighams Road would distract drivers in a

location where there is conflicting vehicle movement and high flows of traffic. This could result in sudden and unpredictable vehicle movements, increasing the risk of collisions with other vehicles or pedestrians.

The siting of the proposed BT Street Hub measuring 3m in height by 1m in width at this location adjacent to other street furniture and signage is considered unacceptable as it would create additional obstacles that would be detrimental to the safety of footpath users including pedestrians with accessible needs such as wheelchair users, partially sighted and blind pedestrians.

The proposal conflict with policy TR3 of the Reading Local Plan 2019 and Policies DM12 (Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters) and DM22 (Advertisements) of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document 2012 (altered 2015) and Paragraphs 067 and 068 of the National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG).

8. CONCLUSION

Having considered the proposals, and taking all of the information from consultees, officers consider that the proposed siting of the 3m high by 1.3m wide BT Street Hub with double sided 75inch LCD advert screens located adjacent to a busy classified A road 23m northwest of the Caversham Road/Vastern Road roundabout junction, the entrance to Great Brighams Mead (commercial) unit, opposite the entrance to a new residential development and located close proximity to Brighams Road would be harmful in terms of Highway safety. In addition, the proposals would result in harm to visual amenity.

Overall, it is considered that the proposal at this site would harm the interests of visual amenity and be harmful to public safety. Whilst the unit would have a usefulness, it is dominated by the advert and similar utility could be achieved in a much less visually obtrusive manner.

9. RECOMMENDATION

REFUSE

1. The proposed BT Street Hub advertisement display screens by reason of their excessive size, garish appearance and prominent siting would appear as an unattractive and obtrusive feature which would have a visual dominance in the street scene, harmful to the visual amenity of the area. The proposal would exacerbate an undesirable proliferation of visual clutter at this location. The proposal is contrary to Policy OU3, Policy OU4, Policy CC7 and Policy CC8 of the Reading Local Plan 2019.

2. The proposed BT Street Hub advertisement display screens sited on the footpath adjacent to a busy classified A road 23m northwest of the Caversham Road/Vastern Road roundabout junction, the entrance to Great Brighams Mead (commercial) unit, opposite the entrance to a new residential development and located close proximity to Brighams Road would distract drivers in a location where there is conflicting vehicle movement and high flows of traffic. This could result in sudden and unpredictable vehicle movements, increasing the risk of collisions with other vehicles or pedestrians. By virtue of its illumination, orientation, and positioning, would create additional obstacles that would be detrimental to the safety of footpath users including pedestrians with accessible needs such as wheelchair users, partially sighted and blind pedestrians. As such the proposal is contrary to Policy TR3, Policy OU3 and Policy OU4 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 and Policies DM12 (Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters) and DM22 (Advertisements) of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document 2012 (altered 2015) and Paragraphs 067 and 068 of the National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG).