

Application Reference Number:		2025/0865	
Application Type:		Full.	
Proposal Description:		The installation of 1. No BT Street Hub and removal of associated BT payphones	
Location:		46 High Street, Wombwell, S73 0BH	
Applicant:		BT Telecommunications PLC.	
Third-party representations:	None.	Parish:	
		Ward:	Wombwell

Summary:	
The applicant is seeking planning permission and advertisement consent to remove an existing BT payphone and the installation of one replacement BT Street Hub with two 75" LCD digital displays, one on each side of the unit. The proposed development would have no adverse impact on visual amenity, residential amenity, and highway safety, and is considered acceptable in policy terms. The proposal is therefore considered to be an acceptable and sustainable form of development in accordance with Section 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024). Recommendation: APPROVE subject to conditions.	

Site Description

This application relates to one existing BT payphone located on a pedestrianised street in Wombwell Town Centre and in an area which is principally commercial characterised by various uses and illuminated signage to shopfronts.



Proposed Development

The applicant is seeking planning permission and advertisement consent to remove one existing BT payphone and the installation of a replacement BT Street Hub with two 75" LCD digital displays, one on each side of the unit.

The proposed BT Street Hub would measure approximately 2.98 metres (H) x 1.24 metres (W) x 0.4 metres (D). The BT Street Hub would be constructed of a galvanised mild steel frame with a black powder coated external grade aluminium exterior. The digital displays would be made of tempered and toughened laminated glass.

The digital display panels would be internally illuminated with a proposed maximum illuminance level of 5000cd/m² but would automatically dim to 600cd/m² at night.

This application should be read in conjunction with application 2025/0866 for advertisement consent.



Relevant Policies

The Development Plan

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires development proposals to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for Barnsley consists of the Barnsley Local Plan (adopted January 2019).

The Local Plan review was approved at a full Council meeting held 24th November 2022. The review determined that the Local Plan remains fit for purpose and is adequately delivering on its objectives.

This means, no updates to the Local Plan, in whole or in part, are to be carried out ahead of a further review, which is due to take place in 2027, or earlier, if circumstances require it.

The development site is located within Barnsley Town Centre. The following Local Plan policies are relevant in this case:

- Policy SD1: Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development.
- Policy TC1: Town Centres.
- Policy D1: High quality design and place making.
- Policy GD1: General Development.
- Policy POLL1: Pollution Control and Protection.
- Policy T4: New Development and Transport Safety.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the National Planning Practice Guidance

In December 2024, the Government published a revised NPPF which is the most recent revision of the original Framework, first published in 2012 and updated several times, providing the overarching planning framework for England. The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how they are expected to be applied. The NPPF must be taken into account in the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans and is a material consideration in planning decisions. The revised document has replaced the earlier planning policy statements, planning policy guidance and various policy letters and circulars, which are now cancelled.

Central to the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 10) and plans and decisions should apply this presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11). There are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental; each of these aspects are mutually dependent. The following NPPF sections are relevant in this case:

- Section 2: Achieving sustainable development.
- Section 4: Decision-making.
- Section 8: Promoting healthy and safe communities.
- Section 9: Promoting sustainable transport
- Section 10: Supporting high quality communications.
- Section 12: Achieving well designed places.

The National Design Guidance (2019) is a material consideration and sets out ten characteristics of well-designed places based on planning policy expectations. A written ministerial statement states that local planning authorities should take this guidance into account when taking decisions.

Supplementary Planning Guidance

In line with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, Barnsley has adopted twenty-eight Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) following the adoption of the Local Plan in January 2019. The following SPDs are relevant in this case:

- Advertisements (Adopted May 2019).

The adopted SPDs should be treated as material considerations in decision making and are afforded full weight.

Representations

Whilst there is no statutory requirement for local planning authorities (LPA) to publicise applications for advertisement consent, an LPA should consider whether any application would affect the amenity

of neighbours. Where it would affect them, it is good practice for the views of neighbours to be sought before determining an application. Both applications have been advertised in accordance with Article 15 of the Town and Country Planning Development Management Procedure (England) Order 2015 (as amended).

This application has been advertised on the Council website. A site notice was displayed with a final date for comments of 24 November 2025. No representations were received.

Consultations

Urban Design Officer	No objection subject to conditions
Highways Development Control	No objection
Pollution Control	No objections subject to condition
Local Ward Councillors.	2 letters of support received
Street works	No comments received

Planning Assessment

For the purposes of considering the balance in this application, the following planning weight is referred to in this report using the following scale unless the NPPF establishes a specific weight:

- Substantial
- Considerable
- Significant
- Moderate
- Modest
- Limited
- Little or no

Principle of Development

Paragraph 141 of the NPPF: the quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited or designed. A separate consent process within the planning system controls the display of advertisements. Advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts.

Local Plan Policy D1 High Quality Design and Place Making states that development is expected to be of high quality design and will be expected to respect, take advantage of and reinforce the distinctive, local character and features of Barnsley, Complement and enhance the character and setting of distinctive places, including Barnsley Town Centre, Penistone, rural villages and Conservation Areas.

Local Plan Policy TC1: Town Centres identifies Wombwell as a large District Centre. The Policy states that the District Centres have an important role serving localised catchments and meeting more local needs including providing high quality public realm. To ensure they fulfil this role and continue to complement and support the role of Barnsley Town Centre new retail and town centre development will also be directed to the District Centres.

Advertisements are acceptable in principle if proposals would be appropriate in scale and respectful of local character and would demonstrate that it would not be likely to result, directly or indirectly, in an increase in light or other pollution which would otherwise unacceptably affect or cause nuisance to the natural and built environment or to people.

Considering the above, the proposal is considered acceptable in principle subject to an assessment of the matters discussed below.

Impact on Design and Visual Amenity

The development site is located within the pedestrianised area of High Street. The proposed BT Street Hub is viewed as a positive enhancement offering improved services and accessibility.

This application relates to one existing BT payphone located on a pedestrianised street in Wombwell and in an area which is principally commercial characterised by various uses and illuminated signage to shopfronts. High Street accommodates a variety of street furniture comprising grey/wooden seating, grey and black streetlighting/CCTV columns, grey bollards, grey and black control cabinets, a number of trees and black litter bins which contribute to a busy environment. The existing BT telephone box does not contribute positively to the character of the street scene.

The proposed BT Street Hub would measure approximately 2.98 metres (H) x 1.24 metres (W) x 0.4 metres (D). The BT Street Hub would be constructed of a galvanised mild steel frame with a black powder coated external grade aluminium exterior. The digital displays would be made of tempered and toughened laminated glass.

Within the context of the character of the street scene and surrounding street furniture, the proposed BT Street Hub would not appear bulky or overtly dominant. The proposal would result in no change to amount of street furniture present. The BT Street Hub to be installed would adopt a scale similar to the existing unit albeit with a slightly increased width and height. The BT Street Hub would also adopt a slimmer profile and would adopt a placement within the street similar as existing.

The Council's Urban Design Officer was consulted and has no initial objection to the BT Hub and its siting, however, has highlighted the need for the applicant to follow details within the Design and Access Statement, with particular importance on any re-paving re-installed to match that of the existing adjacent paving. Emphasis is placed on their being no tarmac or concrete used as surfacing following the removal of the existing BT telephone box and the matching paving needs to be specifically cut right around the edges of the base hub to ensure there are no negative design impacts on the existing high street.

While the Council would prefer to avoid new installations of street hubs and other communications kiosks alike, it would be difficult to provide a strong reason for refusal in this instance given that the proposal is for a replacement unit and would result in no increase to the street furniture present, and while the new street hub would include additional advertisement displays introducing illumination to the area, this could be reasonably controlled by conditions. The digital displays would also be seen within the context of a well-lit environment comprising various illuminated signage and streetlighting.

It is not considered that the proposal would contribute to an aggressively commercial appearance to the detriment of visual amenity. The colour would reflect the finishes of existing street furniture and would likely better deter potential vandalism than the existing.

A submitted product statement states that the BT Street Hub would be inspected weekly and cleaned at least every two weeks. This could be conditioned should this application be approved.

Considering the above, on balance, this is considered to weigh moderately in favour of the proposal.

The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Local Plan Policies TC1: Town Centres and D1: High Quality Design and Placemaking and is considered acceptable regarding visual amenity.

Impact on Residential Amenity, Health and Safety and Pollution Control

The proposed BT Street Hub would not contribute to significant increased levels of overshadowing, overlooking and loss of privacy or reduced outlook.

Potential anti-social or criminal behaviour is not a material planning consideration. Nevertheless, this application is supported by an anti-social management plan which is welcome. The submitted details could be conditioned should this application be approved.

The proposed BT Street Hub would be installed in an area of Wombwell District Centre that is principally commercial with limited residential properties within the immediate locality. While there are no residential properties on the side of the road which the development is located on, it is likely that there are residential properties opposite the proposed development, above the commercial premises. Therefore, there is potential for there to be an impact from noise for the development on residents, particularly at night.

The Council's Pollution Control Team were consulted as part of this application. They requested a noise impact assessment which concluded that the noise levels from the development will have a low impact of the health and quality of life for people living in the area if the submitted noise management plan is adhered to.

As such, the illumination and potential noise impacts is not considered to be detrimental to residential amenity. Nevertheless, this application is supported by not only the noise assessment but also a planning, design and access statement that includes a dedicated section to noise management. It states that the Street Hub would include controllable volume levels with average volume settings being 65dB within three meters which is standard for conversational speech. While volume could be increased or decreased based on the preference of the user during the day, volume cannot be increased to greater than 60% of the maximum volume during the night. Potential noise complaints can be raised to BT, and the maximum volume level of the Street Hub could be adjusted to address any potential issues. The maximum illumination levels could also be conditioned. Pollution Control were consulted, and no objections were received.

This application is supported by a declaration of conformity with the ICNIRP guidelines. There could be some potential disturbance and disruption because of construction works, and while any potential impact is anticipated to be temporary; a condition could be used to control construction hours should this application be approved.

Considering the above, this is considered to weigh moderately in favour of the proposal.

The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Local Plan Policy GD1: General Development and Local Plan Policy POLL1: Pollution Control and Protection and is considered acceptable regarding residential amenity.

Impact on Highways

Paragraph 116 of the NPPF states development should only be prevented and refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety or the cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, considering all reasonable future scenarios.

Local Plan Policy T4: New Development and Transport Safety states that new development will be expected to be designed and built to provide all transport users within and surrounding the development with safe, secure and convenient access and movement.

This proposal involves the removal of an existing BT payphone box and the installation of a new BT Street Hub. The Hub design is slimmer and takes a more compact profile than the existing BT payphone boxes being replaced.

The Council's Highways Development Control Team were consulted, and no objections were raised given the proposal would not result in an overall increase in street furniture and that the proposed BT Street Hub would be positioned away from the road edge on a wide section of pavement without impeding pedestrian movements with amply footway width being retained.

While the proposal is considered acceptable from a Highways Development Control perspective, it should be noted that the proposal would also require a Street works permit. Separate concerns could be raised at this time. As such, the proposal is not considered to be prejudicial to highway safety.

Considering the above, this is considered to weigh modestly in favour of the proposal.

The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Local Plan Policy T4: New Development and Transport Safety and is considered acceptable regarding highway safety.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

In accordance with the provision of paragraph 11 of the NPPF (2024), the proposal is considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. For the reasons given above, and taking all other matters into consideration, the proposal conforms with the relevant local and national planning policies and supplementary guidance and planning permission should be granted subject to necessary conditions.

RECOMMENDATION: Approve subject to conditions.

Justification

Statement of compliance with Article 35 of the Town and Country Development Management Procedure Order 2015.

In dealing with the application, the Local Planning Authority has worked with the applicant to find solutions to the following issues that arose whilst dealing with the planning application.

Due regard has been given to Article 8 and Protocol 1 of Article 1 of the European Convention for Human Rights Act 1998 when considering representations, the determination of the application and the resulting recommendation. It is considered that the recommendation will not interfere with the applicant's and/or any objector's right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence.