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Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Planning and Building Control
PO Box 634
Barnsley
S70 9GG

3-BNY006B

05th March 2026

Dear Planning,

BT Street Hub Project
Full Planning and Advertising Application
BNY-006B Pavement o/s 48 Cheapside, Barnsley S70 1RU (NGR: E 434626, N 406223)

We write on behalf of our client, BT, relating to various sites across your authority for the installation of BT Street Hubs and the associated removal of BT payphones. BT are moving forward with this particular case and are applying to Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council for full planning permission and advertisement consent for the installation of 1no. BT Street Hub and removal of 1no associated BT payphone kiosk.

InLink Project

The InLink UK service was first launched in 2017 and since then 494 InLink structures were rolled out in 23 cities. These units offer 1Gbps free public Wi-Fi, free UK calls, USB charging, an emergency services button and a range of other digital services for those in the vicinity. HD displays on the sides are used to carry advertising, which helped to fund the units, but the screens can also show local content free of charge. After the suppliers of the InLinks went into administration in 2019 and are no longer able to supply units to BT, this product is no longer available. Since then, BT have been working on a new and improved unit, the BT Street Hub, that they are keen to rollout across Barnsley and all major UK areas.

BT Street Hub Project

BT is continuing to move forward with public connectivity and benefits in which Street Hubs will provide a sleek and modern answer to the demands of a digitally connected society. BT Street Hubs include the ability to house 5G small cells which is very much in line with current UK Government's guidance on communications infrastructure and the National Infrastructure Strategy. This is echoed in the Government's commitment towards telecommunications deployment which has been strengthened since the conception of InLinks and NPPF in particular, confirms that, *"Advanced, high quality and reliable communications infrastructure is essential for economic growth and social well-being. Planning policies and decisions should support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next generation mobile technology (such as 5G)."*

Since the rollout of InLinks, there has been increased focus on green initiatives and environmental monitoring. Street Hubs take this into account and can house sensors that count pedestrian, cyclist and vehicle movements as well as monitor air, sound and light. This free information will help the planning system actively manage patterns of growth in support of national air quality objectives and the Governments ten-point plan for a Green Industrial Revolution. It will be a useful source of real-time data in the delivery of the Council's own green agenda, travel plans and can be used to present a business case for carbon offset credit.

Overall, Street Hubs will help future-proof the high street making them smarter, safer, and more sustainable. Investment in the high street is at an all-time low, but that has not slowed BT down as they look to ramp up their rollout of new Street Hubs across the UK. They are continuing their commitment to invest and improve in the high street, with one Street Hub at a time, and with that, decluttering these environments with the associated removal of existing and redundant BT phone boxes.

This submission is comprised of the following documents:

- Site specific Planning and Design & Access statement;
- 1App forms and certificates generated by the Planning Portal;
- The prescribed fee of £1,176 (plus VAT) paid directly to the Council via the Planning Portal;
- Drawings including location plan map, proposed site plan, existing and proposed elevations;
- BT Street Hub Product Statement giving full details of the proposed structure;
- BT Anti-Social Behaviour Management Plan;
- 'The Institute of Lighting Professional's 'Professional Lighting Guide 05: The Brightness of Illuminated Advertisements' 2023 for your reference;
- International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) certificate.

The application site and proposal is within adopted highways-controlled land, maintained at public expense. As BT are a statutory undertaker on such land, a developer's notice has been served on the Highways Authority and any others who have been identified from Land Registry records as being an owner of the land.

We trust the application can be registered at your earliest opportunity, in which should you require any further information or have any queries, please do not hesitate to email me.

Yours faithfully,

[redacted]

Lewis Baldwin MRTPI
Senior Acquisition & Planning Surveyor at Mitie
[redacted]

Contents

Planning, Design and Access Statement

Our Ref.'s	**3-BNY006B**
Address	**Pavement o/s 48 Cheapside, Barnsley S70 1RU**
Lat/ Long	**53.551502, -1.478844**
Site Type	**Relocation**

As part of our collaborative approach to connecting and improving local streets, Full Planning Permission and Express Advertisement Consent is sought for the installation of 1no. BT Street Hub and removal of 1no of associated BT payphone kiosk.

Photomontage of Proposed Installation

Proposed Kiosk Removal

Tel: [redacted]

Address: Pavement o/s 42 Cheapside, Barnsley S70 1RU (NGR: E 434615, N 406237)

UK Digital Strategy

Digital connectivity in 2026 is now considered to be a utility, and modern life is increasingly impossible without it. Connectivity drives productivity and innovation and is the physical underpinning of a digital nation. Being connected is fundamental to the success in our modern world and Street Hub provides a cost-free way for communities to get online and take advantage of available opportunities. The Government has committed that every individual and every business should have the skills and confidence to seize the opportunities of digital technology and have easy access to high-quality internet wherever they live, work, travel or learn.

National Infrastructure Strategy

Published in November 2020, the Government acknowledges in its National Infrastructure Strategy that investment in our infrastructure is critical as the UK seeks to recover from the Covid-19 pandemic. The Strategy puts innovation and new technology at its heart, in which the BT Street Hub is at the forefront of this technological revolution. The Government's ambition is to support fast and reliable digital connectivity that can deliver economic, social and well-being benefits because new technologies have enormous potential to improve the environment and the daily lives of people across the UK. BT Street Hub can contribute to this with its suite of features, including Wi-Fi and small 5G cell capabilities, air monitoring and much more.

Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007

This application is for full planning permission under section 62 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 [the 1990 Act] and express advertisement consent under regulation 9 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 [the Regulations]. Applications for full planning permission must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise (Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and section 70(2) of the 1990 Act). Under the advertisement Regulations, Express Consent is required for the advertisement element, notably the 2no digital screens on each side of the Street Hub. As per regulation 3 of the Regulations, applications for Express Advertisement Consent must be determined in the interests of amenity and public safety, considering (a) the provisions of the development plan, so far as they are material, and (b) any other relevant factors.

The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 state the following specifically in relation to advertisement control:

PART I - General

Powers to be exercised in the interests of amenity and public safety

3. (1) A local planning authority shall exercise its powers under these Regulations in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking into account;
(a) the provisions of the development plan, so far as they are material; and
(b) any other relevant factors.
(2) Without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (1)(b);
(a) factors relevant to amenity include the general characteristics of the locality, including the presence of any feature of historic, architectural, cultural or similar interest;
(b) factors relevant to public safety include;
(i) the safety of persons using any highway, railway, waterway, dock, harbour or aerodrome (civil or military);
(ii) whether the display of the advertisement in question is likely to obscure, or hinder the ready interpretation of, any traffic sign, railway signal or aid to navigation by water or air;

(iii) whether the display of the advertisement in question is likely to hinder the operation of any device used for the purpose of security or surveillance or for measuring the speed of any vehicle.
(3) In taking account of factors relevant to amenity, the local planning authority may, if it thinks fit, disregard any advertisement that is being displayed.
(4) Unless it appears to the local planning authority to be required in the interests of amenity or public safety, an express consent for the display of advertisements shall not contain any limitation or restriction relating to the subject matter, content or design of what is to be displayed.

National Planning Guidance

Planning policy is provided at the national level by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). It is a material consideration in planning decisions.

It is not necessary to quote extensively from this document but the following points are highlighted.

National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024)

The Government's latest National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on the 12th December 2024 and the Government's approach is to continue to strongly support communications infrastructure.

2. Achieving sustainable development

Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):

a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and

c) an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

It is considered that the existing payphone kiosks, which the proposed Street Hub will replace, will provide valuable services such as free Wi-Fi, which the general public increasingly expects and therefore contributes to the needs of the community. The presence of the existing kiosk acts as a precedent for a public service at this location and will not compromise the identity of the area.

The Street Hub project seeks to justify the proposed development by removing the of existing BT telephone kiosks that are no longer fit for purpose and do not provide a public service that supports their continued presence in the public realm. The Street Hub provides a host of free services compared to the existing kiosks that only offer a service for voice calls that require payment. Therefore, the proposal represents a significant improvement to the efficiency of the use of public space with an improved public service. The service of calls that require payment clearly no longer provides a tangible benefit to the community, so the proposed kiosk will contribute to meeting the future needs of the community.

In terms of the contribution to economic success of the centre of Vastern , which is an important tenet of sustainability, whilst the services offered do not directly attract visitors to the area, they will improve the experience by helping to project a positive experience that will inevitably lead to return visits. The benefits will be available to the local community and to visitors, with wayfinding services that will support the retail sector and tourism, which in turn leads to visitors returning to the area and further investment to the area.

Street Hubs connect their communities to the fastest and most robust free public Wi-Fi service in the UK, 1Gbps within 150m. Full fibre connectivity enables speeds up to 13.9 times faster than standard fixed line home broadband and can handle large numbers of connected users without any reduction in speed.

An omnidirectional outdoor Wi-Fi access point at the top of each Street Hub is connected directly to the fibre broadband network, with co-channel interference mitigated by directing Wi-Fi signals away from neighbouring access points. Our full fibre solution allows capacity upgrades by orders of magnitude (e.g. 1Gbps to 10Gbps) without street works. This will provide a social service to the local area and residents who may not have access to broadband in an inclusive and non-exclusionary way, which will contribute to economic success and reduce isolation in the area. The proposed Street Hub will therefore provide an important economic and social benefit outlined in the Product Statement that accompanies the application.

The proposed development supports the aims of the environmental facet of sustainable development by being powered by 100% renewable, carbon-free energy. In addition, the Street Hub kiosk supports the reduction in the use of private car and increase the use of public transport, cycling and walking through its touch screen wayfinding services that are supported by Government advise. Inclusive Mobility: A Guide to Best Practice on Access to Pedestrian and Transport Infrastructure (Appendix E) states on Chapter 12 as follows;

'*Digitally provided information and communications technology (ICT) is increasingly enhancing the accessibility of public transport infrastructure and the pedestrian environment. This section focuses on ICT commonly used in public transport: touchscreens, contactless ticketing, real-time information and wayfinding technologies. ICT has the potential to greatly improve and enhance the journey experience for public transport users. This includes supporting wayfinding, supporting intra-station navigation, and providing passengers with accessibility data about stations and stops so they can make informed travel choices regarding accessibility of services.*'

The NPPF remains very supportive of high-quality communications. Indeed, a whole chapter is dedicated to high-quality communications, emphasising the importance that the Government attaches to digital connectivity. Paragraph 119 states that *"advanced, high quality and reliable communications infrastructure is essential for economic growth and social well-being."* This wording echoes the guidance set out in paragraph 42 of the 2012 version of NPPF. However, it also includes the importance of *reliable* communications infrastructure for both economic growth and social well-being.

The NPPF continues to support the expansion of electronic communications networks at paragraph 119. It notes that policies should set out how high-quality digital infrastructure, providing access to services from a range of providers, is expected to be delivered and upgraded over time. The economic and social benefits of providing high-quality and reliable communications infrastructure are well documented and can be found later in this Supporting Information Statement.

The NPPF supports the provision and promotion of sustainable transport at section 9. These relevant policies are set out below:

Paragraph 116 – *"Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios."*

Paragraph 117 - Within this context, applications for development should: [...] *"c) create places that are safe, secure and attractive, which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter, and respond to local character and design standards."*

The NPPF states the following specifically in relation to advertisement control in section 12:

Paragraph 141 - T*he quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed. "A separate consent process within the planning system controls the display of advertisements, which should be operated in a way which is simple, efficient and effective. Advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts."*

The NPPF makes reference to 5G and electronic communications systems:

"Planning policies and decisions should support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next-generation mobile technology (such as 5G)."

With the above in mind, the Government is already forward-thinking the evolution of data networks and seeks planning decisions to take account of this. 5G technology provides increased speed of data and more capacity in the network, to ensure that handheld devices can continue to be used for the purposes in which they were purchased. This will bring even greater economic and social benefits to the area.

Paragraph 120 of the NPPF retains the requirement to minimise the number of installations consistent with the efficient operation of the network but also includes being consistent with the needs of consumers and providing reasonable capacity for future expansion.

Paragraph 123 of the NPPF retains the guidance set out in paragraph 46 of the 2012 NPPF version which relates to determining applications on planning grounds only. *"They should not seek to prevent competition between different operators, question the need for an electronic communications system, or set health safeguards different from the International Commission guidelines for public exposure."*

At the heart of the NPPF is the retained presumption in favour of sustainable development (para 11). For decision-taking, this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay or where there are no relevant development plan policies or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission, unless the application of policies within the revised Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed or any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the revised Framework taken as a whole.

The NPPF continues to provide guidance on decision-making. At paragraph 39 it states that:

"Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available, including brownfield registers and permission in principle, and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible."

The NPPF builds on the aspiration to build a strong, competitive economy. Paragraph 85 states:

"Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken, should

allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future. This is particularly important where Britain can be a global leader in driving innovation[42]'…"

Footnote 44 of the NPPF states:

"The Government's Industrial Strategy sets out a vision to drive productivity improvements across the UK, identifies a number of Grand Challenges facing all nations, and sets out a delivery programme to make the UK a leader in four of these: artificial intelligence and big data; clean growth; future mobility and catering for an ageing society. HM Government (2017) Industrial Strategy: Building a Britain fit for the future."

Code of Practice for Wireless Network Development in England (March 2022)

The Code of Practice provides guidance to Code Operators (referred to as 'operators' throughout the Code of Practice), including the Mobile Network Operators and wireless infrastructure providers, their agents and contractors, local planning authorities, and all other relevant stakeholders in England on how to carry out their roles and responsibilities when installing wireless network infrastructure. It is also a useful tool for other interested stakeholders such as community groups, amenity bodies and individuals with an interest in mobile connectivity.

The aim of the Code of Practice is to support the government's objective of delivering high-quality wireless infrastructure whilst balancing these needs with environmental considerations. It also has an important role in making sure that appropriate engagement takes place with local communities and other interested parties.

The Code of Practice covers all forms of wireless infrastructure development, including mobile towers and cabinets. It is recommended that other wireless communications operators follow the principles of this Code of Practice, where appropriate.

Unlike previous iterations this Code of Practice has been led by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and developed in collaboration with representatives of the mobile network industry, other government departments and public bodies, local planning authorities, and protected landscapes. This document replaces the previous Code of Best Practice on Mobile Network Development, which was published in 2016 and is now published by DCMS.

The Code of Practice sets out the legal and policy framework for the delivery of wireless infrastructure development.

Paragraphs 8 – 12 of the Code of Practice set out the importance of connectivity:

8. "Digital connectivity is vital to enable people to stay connected and businesses to grow. Fast, reliable digital connectivity can deliver economic, social and well-being benefits for the whole of the UK."

9. "As the demand for mobile data in the United Kingdom is increasing rapidly, it is important that everyone has access to dependable and consistent mobile coverage where they live, work and travel."

10. "The Future Telecoms Infrastructure Review (FTIR) and the National Infrastructure Strategy set out the government's long-term strategy for meeting its digital connectivity targets and delivering high-quality, the reliable digital infrastructure that works across the UK."

11. "The government has committed to extending mobile coverage across the UK. The government has committed to extending mobile coverage across the UK. The government's Levelling Up White Paper has set a mission that the UK will have nationwide 4G coverage, with 5G coverage for the majority of the population by 2030. In support of this, the government and the UK's mobile network operators agreed to a £1 billion Shared Rural Network deal to extend 4G mobile geographical coverage to 95% of the UK by the end of the programme."

12. "Next Generation Mobile Technologies: A 5G Strategy for the UK, and the update to this, set out the government's ambition for the UK to be a global leader in 5G to take early advantage of its potential and help to create a world-leading digital economy that works for everyone. The government also wants businesses and communities to benefit from investments in 5G as soon as possible. Through the government's 5G Testbeds and Trials programme we have seen its value to manufacturing, farming, transport networks and healthcare."

The Government recognises the key role that the Planning System plays in delivering the digital infrastructure that we need, in a sustainable and well-designed way, especially as households and businesses become increasingly reliant on mobile connectivity.

The Code of Practice sets outs 'How wireless networks function'.

Para. 16 states *"Cellular wireless networks use base stations to provide an area of radio coverage. Wireless technology uses the radio spectrum to broadcast radio waves between base stations and devices. Different radio frequencies have different characteristics which, along with the density of cell site locations, affect the extent of coverage and how much data can be carried over the network. Depending on the radio frequencies used, base stations can deliver coverage over a wide area or provide extra network capacity in areas where there is a high demand for network bandwidth."*

Para. 17 sets out that *"Wireless technology continues to evolve rapidly, and mobile devices are now capable of much more. Second-generation (2G) technology gave us voice calls and text messages, 3G led to the launch of smartphones, and 4G, which enabled faster browsing, allowed us to do things like watching videos on the move. 5G, the latest generation of wireless technology, is much faster than previous generations of wireless technology and can offer greater capacity and lower latency, allowing thousands of devices in a small area to be connected at the same time. 5G networks, and future mobile generations, will be vital for a range of Internet of Things uses (IoT) and Smart City applications."*

The Code of Practice establishes 'Principles and commitments' by which operators should develop their networks and that Local Planning Authorities should demonstrate their support.

Paragraph 18 of the Code of Practice sets out the principles and commitments that operators should follow when developing their networks inter alia:

- Site sharing and use of existing structures: make use of existing structures, sites and towers wherever possible to reduce the need for new development.
- Consultation with local planning authorities, local communities and other stakeholders.
- Standardised and high-quality approach to planning applications, and the notification procedure: provide standardised supporting documentation for planning applications (where appropriate) within the context of national and local requirements.
- Compliance with guidance laid out in the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation (ICNIRP) public exposure levels guidance.

The Code of Practice also sets out the requirements of the LPA in relation to the deployment of digital infrastructure:

- Incentivising connectivity: support the expansion of telecommunications networks and take a 'joined-up' approach to the wireless infrastructure planning process, including ensuring that Local Plans effectively support the deployment of digital infrastructure.
- Facilitating sites: engage with operators when new sites have been proposed and discuss site requirements.
- Engagement with operators: respond positively to requests for engagement and make decisions in line with national policy and Local Plans. For planning applications, find solutions to issues and ensure timely decisions are made.

The added emphasis on support from Local Planning Authorities in the deployment of digital infrastructure is even more evident in the revised Code of Practice. The Code of Practice recognises the importance of collaboration and partnership to help drive network coverage across the country. It goes on to state that *"In all instances, it is important for all parties involved in the process to take a positive approach to consultation and engagement."*

Local Planning Policy

The Barnsley Local Plan Adopted January 2019

The Local Plan covers the planning process for the Barnsley area up to the year 2033. It is considered the following policies are applicable and in accordance with this case:

- Policy SD1 Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development
- Policy GD1 General Development
- Policy D1 High Quality Design and Place Making
- Policy HE1 The Historic Environment
- Policy HE3 Developments affecting Historic Buildings
- Policy TC1 Town Centres
- Policy TC2 Primary and Secondary Shopping Frontages
- Policy BTC1 The daytime and evening economies
- Policy BTC3 Public Spaces

"Policy SD1 Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development

When considering development proposals, we will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. We will work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions, which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area."

"Policy GD1 General Development

Proposals for development will be approved if:

- *There will be no significant adverse effect on the living conditions and residential amenity of existing and future residents;*
- *They are compatible with neighbouring land and will not significantly prejudice the current or future use of the neighbouring land;*
- *They will not adversely affect the potential development of a wider area of land which could otherwise be available for development and safeguards access to adjacent land;*
- *They include landscaping to provide a high quality setting for buildings, incorporating existing landscape features and ensuring that plant species and the way they are planted, hard surfaces, boundary treatments and other features appropriately reflect, protect and improve the character of the local landscape;*

"Policy D1 High Quality Design and Place Making

Design Principles: 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, including:

- *Landscape character, topography, green infrastructure assets, important habitats, woodlands and other natural features;*

- *Views and vistas to key buildings, landmarks, skylines and gateways;*
- *and Heritage and townscape character including the scale, layout, building styles and materials of the built form in the locality.*

Through its layout and design, development should:

- *Contribute to place making and be of high quality, that contributes to a healthy, safe and sustainable environment;*
- *Complement and enhance the character and setting of distinctive places, including Barnsley Town Centre, Penistone, rural villages and Conservation Areas;*
- *Help to transform the character of physical environments that have become run down and are lacking in distinctiveness;*
- *Provide an accessible and inclusive environment for the users of individual buildings and surrounding spaces;*
- *Provide clear and obvious connections to the surrounding street and pedestrian network;*
- *Ensure ease of movement and legibility for all users, ensure overlooking of streets, spaces and pedestrian routes through the arrangement and orientation of buildings and the location of entrances;*
- *Promote safe, secure environments and access routes with priority for pedestrians and cyclists;*
- *Create clear distinctions between public and private spaces;*
- *Display architectural quality and express proposed uses through its composition, scale, form, proportions and arrangement of materials, colours and details;*
- *Make the best use of high-quality materials; Include a comprehensive and high-quality scheme for hard and soft landscaping; and*
- *Provide high quality public realm*

In terms of place making development should make a positive contribution to achieving qualities of a successful place such as character, legibility, permeability and vitality."

The BT Street Hub has been designed to have a minimal appearance within the surrounding character and setting of the areas in which they are sited. The border of the main display consists of darker shades to soften the visual impact of each unit and to keep the impacts of amenity and setting to an acceptable level. Lighting is reduced at night to reduce the impact on light pollution and to keep from being an overbearing visual addition to the street scene.

There is a frequent maintenance schedule for each unit wherein they are cleaned regularly and kept in working condition. Unlike the predeceasing phone boxes which have fallen into disrepair and accommodate anti-social behaviour, the new BT Street Hubs will act as a modern, clean and usable street furniture replacement. This proposal will be of a high-quality design and usability, directly improving the street scene of the area by replacing a dilapidated, and anti-social item of street furniture. The removal of dilapidated boxes will remove threats to positive character of areas, whilst the installation of the new street hubs presents an opportunity to enhance areas local distinctiveness by highlighting Folkestone's status as a regional centre.

BT Street Hubs also support DH1's aim of enhancing the appearance of sites and to improve access to surrounding areas. This is done by reducing the total footprint of street furniture and placing replacement Street Hubs away from pedestrian footfall flows. The footprint of each existing telephone kiosk is 1 meter squared(100cmx100cm) whilst the footprint of each Street Hub is 0.43 meters squared (123.6cmx35cm). This represents an additional 0.57 meters squared of pavement space returned to the public realm for every replaced phone booth and an additional 1.57 meter squared when two kiosks are replaced with one street hub. Returning this space for pedestrian movement, whilst positioning new hubs away from foot traffic flows clearly supports GD1 and D1 in 'enhancing the permeability' and therefore amenity of Barnsley's streets.

"Policy TC1 Town Centres

Support will be given to maintaining and enhancing the vitality and viability of the following hierarchy of centres:

- *Barnsley Town Centre is the dominant town centre in the borough. To ensure it continues to fulfill its sub regional role the majority of new retail and town centre development will be directed to Barnsley Town Centre.*
- *The District Centres have an important role serving localised catchments and meeting more local needs. 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.*
- *The Local Centres serve smaller catchments and development here will be expected to meet the needs of the local area and not adversely impact on the vitality or viability of other nearby centres.*
- *All retail and town centre developments will be expected to be appropriate to the scale, role, function and character of the centres in which they are proposed. A sequential approach will be used to assess proposals for new retail and town centre development. This will help to achieve the spatial strategy for the borough and will focus development on identified centres in the first instance."*

Policy TC2 Primary and Secondary Shopping Frontages

Proposals for retail (A1-A5) uses will be allowed on Primary and Secondary Shopping frontages in Barnsley Town Centre and the District Centres provided that:

- *Within each primary shopping frontage in Barnsley Town Centre and the District Centres, ground floor uses would remain predominantly retail (Class A1) in nature.*
- *Other uses may be acceptable, especially where they diversify and improve provision in a centre, provided that it can be demonstrated that the vitality and viability of the primary shopping area concerned would not be negatively affected and that ground floor uses on the Primary Shopping Frontages remain predominantly retail (Class A1) in nature.*

With regard to Policy TC1 and TC2, it is considered that the proposal will contribute to the vibrancy of the area by replacing an item of street furniture that no longer provides tangible value, with a modern and well designed street kiosk. The primary benefits have been outlined (free Wi-Fi, call, wayfinding and improved 5G coverage) but there are also significant secondary benefits.

The proposal will act as a focal point that will encourage diversity by contributing to retail, leisure and tourism goals. It is not suggested that the proposal will directly improve those goals, but the services provided will improve the experience of the town and therefore contribute in a positive manner. The removal of a redundant payphone kiosk and replacement with an improved version will directly improve the public realm that will enhance the visitor experience. In addition, the services provided will improve connectivity by providing a means for visitors to plan their travel and destinations with the area.

It is important to highlight that BT has an Electronic Communications Code license and Universal Service Obligation (USO) governed by Ofcom to provide and maintain publicly accessible call boxes on the street, irrespective of whether or not there is a perception that they are used or not. The proposal is a means for BT to meet its obligations under the USO with Ofcom to provide a universally available service at this location, by locating the required services in an area that would be of most benefit to the public. This aspect of the justification for the proposal and the project is important, as the service that the USO requires means that BT are obliged to meet this obligation with their own infrastructure. As such, if existing kiosks no longer provide a beneficial service and fall into disrepair, they must be replaced with an alternative type of kiosk that provides a universal service. In order to meet this requirement, it is obvious that new telephone kiosks are untenable, in the same way that

KX100 units, for example, replaced red telephone boxes and as such, the Street Hub is the design that allows BT to provide its service in an era of advanced communications.

"Policy BTC1 The daytime and evening economies

We will work with developers and operators to diversify the daytime and evening economies (particularly early evening) Preference will be given to pubs, clubs, restaurants, cafés and night time entertainment uses which:

- *Cater for a range of customers and are family friendly; Are open throughout the day and evening;*
- *Maintain an active street frontage throughout the day and evening;*
- *Serve food; and Complement other leisure activities.*

Planning permission will be granted for pubs, clubs, restaurants, cafés and night time entertainment uses in the town centre provided that they:

- *Add to the range and diversity of uses on offer and increase customer choice;*
- *Do not harm amenity or give rise to increased noise, disturbance, or antisocial behaviour;*
- *Can be adequately accessed, serviced and ventilated; and*
- *Are designed with public safety, crime prevention and the reduction of anti social behaviour in mind. All such uses should have regard to the principles and practises of 'Secured by Design' and planning applications must be supported by a design statement."*

"Policy BTC3 Public Spaces

New development must make a positive contribution to public spaces through its design, siting and use of materials."

BT Street Hubs provide a network service to the immediate area without the requirement for harsh, utilitarian street additions (e.g. Telecommunication Masts) while simultaneously acting as an advertisement, interactive tourist information hub, air quality monitoring hub with an ability to connect with emergency services. This proposal sensitively integrates telecommunications equipment through a valuable addition to the street scene.

The BT Street Hubs have been designed to be a minimal addition to the surrounding character and setting of the areas in which they are sited. The border of the main display encompasses darker shades to soften the visual impact of each unit and to keep the impacts of amenity and setting to an acceptable level. Lighting is reduced at night to reduce the impact on light pollution and to prevent being an overbearing visual addition to the street scene. There is a frequent maintenance schedule for each unit wherein they are cleaned regularly and kept in good working condition. The new BT Street Hubs will act as a modern, clean and usable street furniture replacement. This proposal will be of a high-quality design and usability, directly improving the street scene of the area.

As outlined in the following section, the proposed Street Hub will provide the Local Authority with valuable environmental data to assist the Council in their own green agenda and is considered to assist the Authority in shaping the planning system.

Pre-application advice

A formal pre-application consultation request was not sent to Barnsley Council, introducing the BT Street Hub project and to obtain feedback as the project has been underway since 2021 in the Borough.

We understand advice is subject to a fee and timescales; therefore, in the interests of the most efficient rollout, the decision has been made to progress without seeking advice. However, the client is keen to ensure communication channels remain open throughout the planning process to ensure that any areas of concern are addressed.

Planning History

Over the course of 2025, applications for Full Planning and Consent to Display and Advertisement at seven locations were submitted for approval for a Street Hub development. The following are relevant to the proposed location:

- Address: Pavement, o/s 42 Cheapside, Barnsley, S70 1RU

  Proposal: Removal of associated BT payphones and the installation of 1no. BT Street Hub with 2no. digital 75" LCD display screens, one on each side of the unit. (Planning Consent) / LPA Reference: 2025/0860 & 2025/0876 - Refused: 25th November 2025

  Reasoning: "The proposed BT Street Hub would be located on a pedestrianised area directly in front of a bench in manner that would appear awkward and would make the seating area less attractive to use. This is contrary to Local Plan Policy BTC3 which indicates that new development in public spaces must make a positive contribution through its design, siting and use of materials, and contrary to paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework which indicates that development should function well and add to the overall quality of the area."

- Address: Pavement, o/s 14 - 16 Cheapside, Barnsley, S70 1RR

  Proposal: Removal of associated BT payphones and the installation of 1no. BT Street Hub with 2no. digital 75" LCD display screens, one on each side of the unit. (Planning Consent) / LPA Reference: 2025/0859 & 2025/0878 – Approved with conditions: 27th November 2025

  Reasoning: "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."

  This latest application takes into account the reasons for refusal provided in the previous planning application and proposes an application which is more amenable to the Council. It removes the existing kiosk and establishes a new site nearby which is located away from the seating that was referenced in the decision notice. It is considered that this should be provided significant weight in the determination of this planning application.

- Address: Pavement o/s 66 Market Street, Barnsley, S70 1SN

  Proposal: Removal of associated BT payphones and the installation of 1no. BT Street Hub with 2no. digital 75" LCD display screens, one on each side of the unit. (Planning Consent) / LPA Reference: 2025/0861 & 2025/0862 – Approved with conditions: 20th November 2025

Reasoning: "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."

Relocation

In this instance the proposed Street Hub has moved slightly away from the position of the nearest associated BT phone box to be removed. This was done to be more in keeping with the immediate street scene and improve pedestrian manoeuvrability along this stretch of pavement. Albeit a subtle change, the siting and appearance of the Street Hub is a clear improvement from the existing arrangement. The existing kiosk is located immediately adjacent to some fixed seating and significantly diminishes the appearance of the redeveloped public realm. We consider the removal of this apparatus will encourage more members of the public to use the facilities.

Siting Justification against Planning Policy

At the conception stage, we have sought locations with wide pavements, and where a sites relationship with existing street furniture avoids undue proliferation of clutter.

It is appreciated that streets are ever-evolving environments, amidst society's changing connectivity demands. BT has a universal service obligation with Ofcom to provide a street level phone service, whilst the need for Wi-Fi and mobile coverage has increased significantly. In this respect we have tried to build a sequence of Street Hub sites wherever possible, so that this can improve the user connectivity experience as they travel through an area.

Likewise, as Street Hubs can provide the Council with valuable data with each unit housing environmental sensors that can monitor air, sound and light, we have tried to plan a sequence of Street Hub sites along key routes, so that the information gathered can be better analysed. This free environmental data has its own dashboard and will help the planning system actively manage patterns of growth in support of national air quality objectives and will be a useful source of real-time data in the delivery of the Council's own green agenda. In a similar vein, Street Hubs have the capability to monitor pedestrian, cyclist, and vehicle movements, hence in building a strategic network of Street Hub units, it will help the Council to monitor and develop travel plans for the area.

The introduction of any form of development within a particular environment will always be, to some degree, a noticeable addition or change to those residents, businesses and regular passers-by found closest. However, it should be appreciated that the visibility of something that is new does not automatically result in an overwhelming adverse harm occurring.

In progressing new Street Hub sites, so far as practicable, we have sought to minimise the contrast between the development itself and its immediate environment through appropriate siting and design. The siting of each Street Hub has been considered having regard to the available footpath widths and the visual character of that particular street scene where the new Street Hub is proposed. With regards to its associated advertisement screens, thought has been given to its immediate context and public safety in terms of pedestrian and vehicular movements. The criteria have been adjusted where necessary on a site-by-site basis to account for local context and policy requirements when reassessing the site's suitability to accommodate a new Street Hub unit.

Justification for the siting and appearance of the proposed Street Hub has been assessed against up-to-date national and local planning policies and any other material considerations. Our assessment

has concentrated on whether the removal of the existing BT call box, when balanced against the replacement of a new Street Hub at the application site, creates a significant visual harm as to outweigh the public benefits.

In this regard, matters of siting, appearance and advertisements are discussed as follows: -

Siting

The proposal involves the removal of 1no. BT existing kiosk in association with 1no proposed new Street Hub. In addition, and as previously highlighted at a strategic level, there are generally 2no BT call boxes removed with every Street Hub proposed. The removal of these existing call boxes will declutter street scenes throughout the authority and when compared with the footprint of the proposed Street Hub, it will declutter pavements and free up space.

The application 2025/0860 & 2025/0876 was refused on 25th November 2025 due to the impact that the proposed Street Hub would have on the amenity of the seating area, which the Council assessed as being a deterrent to people wishing to use the facilities. The relocation of the proposed Street Hub seeks to resolve this issue by moving the proposal 20m to the southwest to create a greater sense of separation.

The development site is within the main high street of Cheapside Road within Barnsley. The location is pedestrianised with ample space for the safe passing of pedestrians. The street scene context immediate to the proposed BT Street Hub site is generally commercial and comprises a number of shops, restaurants and commercial services. The proposed BT Hub would match the character of this modern area and presents a seamless transition in place of an existing phone box.

The proposed site will be positioned to other street fixtures including a streetlighting pole, bollards and a tree. The position of the installation, by replacing the existing kiosk will maintain visual consistency with existing street furniture while enhancing the overall functionality of the public realm.

Appearance

The proposed BT Street Hub unit is an advanced, modern development which has been designed following significant improvements in technology and digital content over recent years. It can promote the image of the authority as a vibrant place, and we believe it will improve the quality of the immediate streetscape for residents, businesses and visitors to the area.

The proposed design is slimmer and takes a more compact profile than a conventional phone box, which many of these units are replacing. The user interface is located at a low level and is a similar height to an existing BT payphone unit to ensure that it is accessible to all users.

The appearance of the BT Street Hub unit has a vertical emphasis and by reason of its reduced footprint, will give a slender more elegant form of development when compared to an existing payphone unit. The appearance of the structure is not considered to be harmful to the wider street scene, especially when taking into account the nature of the existing payphone(s) to be removed. We believe the appearance of the area and street scene will not be compromised by the proposed new unit.

The new structure will sit within a commercial retail setting in the town centre and busy stretch of road that is dominated by pedestrian movements; hence it is well-lit throughout the day. While it is accepted that the BT Street Hub advertisements will be more visible during the hours of darkness or in dull conditions, its appearance will not be out of keeping with this stretch of road which is well lit by streetlights and window displays. In this context, the BT Street Hub design will not appear detrimental to the amenity of this particular stretch of Cheapside.

It is concluded that the design of the proposed Street Hub is justified, and its appearance is an improvement when compared to the BT call boxes that are to be removed as part of the proposed scheme. Overall, we considered the appearance of the proposed Street Hub is acceptable and in accordance with national and local planning policies.

It is concluded that the design of the proposed Street Hub is justified, and its appearance will blend into the surrounding shop frontages. Overall, we consider the appearance of the proposed Street Hub is acceptable and in accordance with national and local planning policies.

Pavement Width

The existing pavement at this location is over 16 metres wide. The total width of the Street Hub is 1.236 metres. The Street Hub will be positioned some 3.5 metres from the front of 48 Cheapside and will retain the clear and safe passage of pedestrians. It is of note the structure only has a depth of 350mm, so any minor narrowing of the footway will occur for just a few centimetres.

Advertisements

When seen in the overarching context of the street scene, it is considered that the location, size and height of the digital advertisement panels will on balance be acceptable. As previously discussed, it is believed that the siting and appearance of the BT Street Hub will not create significant harm to the amenity of the area that will outweigh the public benefits and other material factors of consideration.

In terms of public safety, the site of the BT Street Hub and the display of digital advertisements on its sides will allow for the continued safe movements of motorists and pedestrians. In this regard, its presence within the street scene will not endanger public safety of those people who are taking reasonable care for their own and others' safety.

It is recognised that all advertisements are intended to attract people's attention, however in this case their siting and size will not create an untoward feature within the street scene. The position where the BT Street Hub is to be located and the orientation of the advertisements in relation to the road will not cause unacceptable interference with nearby road signs and or navigational lights. Viewed within the street scene setting, the digital advertisements shall be seen by passing motorists but not create confusion nor influence the behaviour of drivers to such a degree that they cause a hazard by reason of their presence. The proposed Street Hub will be sited away from road junctions so as not to unduly interrupt any visibility splays or sightlines. When viewed within the street scene context of the wider environment, it is not considered that the Street Hub will appear as an untoward feature to passing motorists.

Regarding pedestrian safety, the Street Hub is positioned on a particularly wide section of pavement without impeding pedestrian movements as ample footway width will be retained. Allowing for the orientation of the BT Street Hub's user interface in relation to passing motorists, the public safety of those using it will not be put at risk as they shall be set away from the kerb edge.

The area surrounding this specific site is visually busy with many retail premises and shop fronts, including the extensive retail premises of O2, the Opticians and the Jewellery shop. The proposal shall be an addition to the ground elevation and in context with the surrounding street furniture.

The proposed usage for the screens has been set in accordance with Schedule 1 of The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 1984:

1. Any advertisements displayed, and any site used for the display of advertisements, shall be maintained in a clean and tidy condition to the reasonable satisfaction of the local planning authority.

2. Any structure or hoarding erected or used principally for the purpose of displaying advertisements shall be maintained in a safe condition.
3. Where an advertisement is required under these Regulations to be removed, the removal shall be carried out to the reasonable satisfaction of the local planning authority.
4. No advertisement is to be displayed without the permission of the owner of the site or any other person with an interest in the site entitled to grant permission.
5. No advertisement shall be sited or displayed so as to obscure, or hinder the ready interpretation of, any road traffic sign, railway signal or aid to navigation by water or air, or so as otherwise to render hazardous the use of any highway, railway, waterway or aerodrome (civil or military).

The Transport for London's (TfL) policy document 'Guidance for Digital Roadside Advertising and Proposed Best Practice – 2013' [the TfL Guidance] has also been a key document in the design and site selection process.

In addition to the above conditions, each Street Hub location has been assessed against and comply with the following additional criteria from the TfL Guidance.

• There would be no conflict with any traffic signs, signals, crossing points, schools, hospitals or low bridges.
• No sightlines or clearances would be affected.
• The TfL guidance states that 'Static digital advertising is likely to be acceptable in locations where static advertising exists or would be accepted.' There is existing traditional advertisement on similar sections of the respective roads in many cases.
• The geometry of the roads is not complicated, and the driving conditions are not considered to be demanding or complicated.
• The advertisements would not be experienced by a driver in conjunction with any other similar digital advertisements.
• As per the TfL guidance, the advertisements would be located as close to the driver's natural eye line as possible and facing as head-on to the traffic as is practical.

The lighting levels noted above are within the levels set for this type and size of screen (those under 10m2) as set by the Institute of Lighting Professionals, Professional Lighting Guide 05: The Brightness of Illuminated Advertisements (2023). A copy of this document is appended for clarity.

Noise Management

As one of many features, Street Hubs provide free phone calls via a speaker and microphone system. The following document identifies the steps we are able take to ensure that these calls, like all the features of the Street Hub, help improve the amenity of a local area whilst also respecting the expectations of local community over time. Please note: this noise management plan refers specifically to the noise from the Street Hub. Noise from pedestrians, users of the Street Hub, or from other nearby sources are not included and would typically be considered matters for the Police and other authorities who have the appropriate and relevant powers to act on such issues if necessary.

We have designed our Street Hub so that they create a 'sound cloud' for the person making a call with noise levels sufficient to make calls with background noise for the surroundings. Whilst this generates a reasonable conversational volume in proximity to the Street Hub, it is intended to result in minimal to no noise being noticeable further away. The average volume settings are 65dB average at 3m distance from each Street Hub. Users may also choose to use headphones when making calls or using the tablet, which deactivates the speaker for the duration of their use.

It is worth noting that the Street Hubs are situated on public streets, in the most part close to roads where high volumes of traffic will be seen, examples of background noise experienced on streets are details below:

Noise Level, dB	Example
60-70	Conversational Speech
70-80	Average traffic on Street Corner
80-90	Heavy lorries at 6m

Daytime (07:00 – 21:00)
Street Hub have controllable volume levels. This will default to 50% at the start of any user activity during the day and can be increased and decreased based on the preferences of the user.

Nighttime (21:00 – 07:00)
Between the hours of 21:00 to 07:00 all Street Hub will be governed so that the volume cannot be increased to greater than 60% of the maximum volume.

Exceptional Circumstances

We manage noise by exception based on feedback from users and the local community. If we receive any feedback that the Street Hub may be causing detrimental environmental impact, we take the following actions:

1. Understand the reason for the issue and any extenuating circumstances. At this point we will separate out any Police or community safety matters and work directly with the relevant authorities, and support the local residents in raising these issues through official channels where appropriate.
2. We will then verify the evidence provided against the Street Hub's call history and other operational data as required. This will allow us to understand the number, time, and frequency of outbound calls being made and better understand the severity of the reported situation.
3. Once we have verified the situation, we will typically look to apply local bespoke volume governor controls appropriate to the situation. We have found that reducing the Street Hub's maximum volume to 40% during relevant periods tends to resolve issues where they have been identified.
4. We will continue to monitor the situation and listen to ongoing feedback from the community as we do take matters seriously. We continue to learn as part of our roll out how Street Hubs are fitting into the community.

Further information

We want each Street Hub to provide the best possible experience for users and the communities around them, and will continue to work with councils, police, and the wider community to make sure they do. For more information on Street Hubs and how they are managed, please contact [redacted]

Conclusion

BT Street Hubs have the potential to significantly enhance the provision of local community communications facilities and services. It is precisely the type of high-speed digital infrastructure that the government is seeking to support as part of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. It will deliver social, economic, and environmental benefits by providing a suite of essential urban tools/services, including free ultrafast Wi-Fi to residents, businesses and visitors in this area. Overall BT Street Hubs will help future proof the high street making them smarter, safer, and more sustainable through their adaptable design and function.

The proposed BT Street Hubs structures are of a high quality, accessible design that will be a significant improvement when compared to the existing payphones that shall be replaced. Modern signage which is interactive and multi-faceted in its use has become more acceptable on the street scape due to its functionality, clean and modern look. We consider the proposal in this case to be appropriately sited; to reduce street clutter, to improve available footway widths, not to negatively affect heritage assets nor adversely affect amenity or public safety. The proposed site is not within a conservation area or within proximity of listed buildings/heritage assets.

We believe this statement has demonstrated that the BT Street Hub proposal is in accordance with national policy set out in the NPPF and local development plan policies, in which we hope this application can be supported by your Council.

Planning Conditions

To give assurance that each Street Hub will operate as intended and the associated payphone removals will occur, we would be pleased to accept the following conditions or a mutually agreed version of them to be included as part of any planning consent:

a. Within three (3) months of development commencing the existing BT payphone shall be removed in its entirety and the land made good to the same condition as the adjacent land.
b. The pavement surrounding the Street Hub shall be made good to the same condition as the adjacent land.
c. The intensity of the illumination of the two digital display screens shall not exceed 600 candelas per square metre (cd/m2) between dusk and dawn in line with the maximum permitted recommended luminance as set out by 'The Institute of Lighting Professional's 'Professional Lighting Guide 05: The Brightness of Illuminated Advertisements'.
d. No content on the digital display screens shall resemble traffic signs, as defined in section 64 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

Should your department wish to append any other conditions to either the full planning or advertisement application, we would be most grateful if you could discuss these with us at your earliest opportunity during the course of the determination process.