

Application Reference Number:	2025/0858
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Application Type:	Full.
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Proposal Description:	Removal of associated BT payphones and the installation of 1no. BT Street Hub 2no. digital 75" LCD display screens, one on each side of the unit. (Planning Consent).
Location:	Pavement of Queen Street, Barnsley.

Applicant:	BT Telecommunications PLC.
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Third-party representations:	None.	Parish:	
		Ward:	Central.

Summary:
<p>The applicant is seeking planning permission and advertisement consent to remove two existing BT payphones and the installation of one replacement BT Street Hub with two 75" LCD digital displays, one on each side of the unit.</p> <p>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).</p> <p>Recommendation: APPROVE subject to conditions.</p>

Site Description

This application relates to 2no. existing BT payphones with advertising displays located to the south of Halifax Bank in an area of pedestrianised street in Barnsley Town Centre at the northeast end of Queen Street. The surrounding area is principally commercial characterised by illuminated and non-illuminated signage to shopfronts and existing communications kiosks and advertisement displays at either end of Queen Street. Queen street is regularly used for hosting outdoor market stalls and is relatively open with limited street furniture following refurbishment works.



Planning History

The most recent and relevant applications are:

2008/1109	Erection of two replacement BT kiosks with integral advertising panel.	Approved.
2008/1210	Replacement of four BT Payphones kiosks with two new BT Payphones kiosks (prior notification by telecommunications).	Prior Approval – Not Required.
2025/0857	Removal of associated BT payphones and the installation of 1no. BT Street Hub 2no. digital 75" LCD display screens, one on each side of the unit. (Advertisement Consent).	Under consideration.

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 and at the southeastern extent of the Regent Street, Church Street and Market Hill Conservation Area.

The following Local Plan policies are relevant in this case:

- *Policy SD1: Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development.*
- *Policy TC1: Town Centres.*
- *Policy BTC3: Public Spaces.*
- *Policy HE1: The Historic Environment.*
- *Policy HE3: Developments affecting Historic Buildings.*
- *Policy HE4: Developments affecting Historic Areas or Landscapes.*
- *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.*
- *Policy BIO1: Biodiversity and Geodiversity.*

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 10: Supporting high quality communications.*
- *Section 12: Achieving well designed places.*
- *Section 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment.*
- *Section 16: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.*

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.

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

- *Section 16: Decision on application.*
- *Section 66: General duty as respects listed buildings in exercise of planning functions.*
- *Section 72: General duty as respects conservation areas in exercise of planning functions.*

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.

Other Material Considerations

- *Barnsley Town Centre Public Spaces Strategy (September 2010).*

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, and a site and press notice were used, expiring 31st October 2025. No representations were received.

Consultations

Urban Design Officer	<i>No objection(s) subject to condition(s).</i>
Conservation Officer	<i>No objection(s).</i>
Highways Development Control	<i>No objection(s).</i>
Pollution Control	<i>No objection(s).</i>

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.

Policy BTC3: Public Spaces, establishes that new development must make a positive contribution to public spaces through its design, siting and use of materials.

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, Heritage and Visual Amenity

The development site is located at the southeastern extent of the Regent Street, Church Street and Market Hill Conservation Area and is in proximity of several grade II-listed buildings including former Yorkshire Bank (Paddy Power) to the north Yorkshire Bank (Virgin Money) to the northwest.

During the application process, the Council's Conservation Officer initially considered the proposed digital displays to be inappropriate for this sensitive location and potentially harmful to the character and setting of the area and nearby listed assets. It was recommended that further clarification would need to be sought regarding the unit's elevations and overall appearance. It was noted that in similar proposals nearby, advertising screens facing heritage assets have been rotated to reduce the visual impact. It was recommended to explore whether the unit's appearance could be adapted – specially whether the black finish could be changed to anthracite to better complement the surrounding paving and townscape. Following the removal and installation of these units, the Town Centre paving should be reinstated, and any new paving should match the existing adjacent land. Considering this, it was stated that from a conservation perspective, and subject to further clarifications, the proposal could be seen as a positive addition – enhancing accessibility and services within Barnsley Town Centre. The removal of two existing units is also welcomed, contributing to the reduction of visual clutter and improving the overall streetscape.

Following further clarifications from the applicant regarding potential adaptations to the appearance of the proposed BT Street Hub in that none could be accommodated, and subsequent discussions with the Council's Conservation Officer, it was reiterated that the proposed digital displays may have some impact in this area, but the removal of the existing units and overall reduction in street furniture

with the installation of one new unit is a clear benefit of the proposal. Plus, the future uses of the unit provide a wider benefit to the area. Consequently, no further objections were raised.

The Barnsley Town Centre Public Spaces Strategy aims to create calming, cohesive and clutter free spaces. Queen Street and the surrounding area has been recently refurbished with works to improve the public realm aligned with the strategy principles. The strategy also includes a section dedicated to street furniture that establishes it will be a key feature in Barnsley and will have a functional role and help to create a distinctive sense of place. A single style of furniture will unite the inner core and outer core areas creating a cohesive town centre. Within this style it may be appropriate to vary the quality of finish depending on location (i.e. stainless steel vs. powder coated).

Policy BTC3: Public Spaces establishes that new development must make a positive contribution to public spaces through its design, siting and use of materials.

This application relates to 2no. existing BT payphones with advertising displays located to the south of Halifax Bank in an area of pedestrianised street in Barnsley Town Centre at the northeast end of Queen Street. The surrounding area is principally commercial characterised by illuminated and non-illuminated signage to shopfronts and existing communications kiosks and advertisement displays at either end of Queen Street. Queen street is regularly used for hosting outdoor market stalls and is relatively open with limited street furniture following refurbishment works.

Works have been recently undertaken to refurbish Queen Street and the surrounding area to provide high quality public realm, approved under application 2018/0279. As part of the refurbishment works new paving and new street furniture was installed. The pedestrianised street is now relatively open with minimal street furniture comprising lampposts and benches of a slim profile and materiality that is intended to complement and lift the cool tones of surfacing materials. This work was undertaken in alignment with the principles of the Barnsley Town Centre Public Spaces Strategy (2010).

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 an overall reduction of street furniture with two existing units removed and only one new unit installed. The BT Street Hub to be installed would adopt a scale similar to the existing units albeit with a slight reduced width and increased height. The BT Street Hub would also adopt a slimmer profile and would adopt a northwest-southeast orientation and similar placement within the street as existing.

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, would result in an overall reduction of street furniture and would result in no net change to amount of advertising displays in this area. While the new digital displays could introduce some harm by way of illumination, 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 to shopfronts and LED streetlighting.

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.

The reinstatement of the public realm following removal could also be secured by conditions 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 conserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Regent Street, Church Street and Market Hill Area and nearby listed buildings in accordance with Sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and would comply with Local Plan Policies BTC3: Public Spaces, D1: High Quality Design and Placemaking, HE1: The Historic Environment, HE3: Developments affecting Historic Buildings, and HE4: Developments affecting Historic Areas 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 Barnsley Town Centre that is principally commercial with no residential properties within the immediate locality. As such, the illumination and potential noise impacts is not considered to be detrimental to amenity. Nevertheless, this application is supported by 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 the 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. The maximum illuminations levels could also be conditioned. Pollution Control were consulted, and no objections were received.

Radiofrequency electromagnetic fields (EMFs) enable a number of modern devices, including mobile telecommunications infrastructure and phones, Wi-Fi, and Bluetooth. The requirements for the radio frequency public exposure guidelines are set out in the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) and the European Union (EU) Council recommendation dated 12 July 1999 (Ref: 1999/519/EC).

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.

Highways Development Control 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 ample 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 Streetworks 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.

Impact on Biodiversity and Geodiversity

In England, Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) became mandatory from 12 February 2024 under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021) and means developers must deliver a BNG of 10%. This proposal is exempt from BNG under the de minimis exemption.

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 BIO1: Biodiversity and Geodiversity and is considered acceptable.

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:

- Clarification regarding potential amendments to external appearance.

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.

Conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In order to comply with the provision of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. The development hereby approved shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved plans:

001 Rev. A Site Location Maps.

002 Rev. A Proposed Site Plan.

003 Rev. A Existing and Proposed Elevations.

Street Hub Product Statement V2.1 dated February 2025.

Planning, Design and Access Statement ref. 3-BNY005 and dated 24th September 2025.

Street Hub Anti-Social Behaviour Management Plan Version 3.

and specifications as approved unless required by any other conditions in this permission.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the locality and in accordance with Local Plan Policy HE1: The Historic Environment and Local Plan Policy D1: High Quality Design and Place Making.

3. The BT Street Hub hereby permitted shall receive bi-weekly inspections, cleaning and maintenance to ensure it remains in good working order.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the locality and in accordance with Local Plan Policy HE1: The Historic Environment and Local Plan Policy D1: High Quality Design and Place Making.

4. Prior to the BT Street Hub hereby permitted coming into use, any pavement surrounding the Street Hub or affected by the removal of existing BT payphones shall be made good to the same condition as the adjacent land.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the locality and in accordance with Local Plan Policy HE1: The Historic Environment, Local Plan Policy D1: High Quality Design and Place Making and Local Plan Policy BTC3: Public Spaces.

5. Construction or demolition-related activity shall only take place between the hours of 08:00am – 18:00pm Monday to Fridays, 09:00am – 14:00pm Saturdays and at no time on Sundays and Bank Holidays.

Reason: To reduce or remove adverse impacts on health and the quality of life, especially for people living and/or working nearby, in accordance with Local Plan Policy POLL1: Pollution Control and Protection.

Informative(s):

1. The granting of planning permission does not in any way infer that consent of the landowner is given. Therefore, the consent of all relevant landowners is required before proceeding with any development, including that of the Council as landowner.

If it should transpire that the applicant does not own any of the land included in this consent, then it is the responsibility of the applicant to seek all necessary consents and approvals of the landowner.

2. The development hereby approved includes the carrying out of work on the adopted highway. You are advised that before undertaking this work you must enter into a highway agreement with the Council under S278 of the Highways Act, 1980, specifying the extent of works, the works, and the terms and conditions under which these are carried out. Fees

are payable for the drafting of the agreement, approval of the highway details and inspection of the works. For more information or to apply, please contact Highways Development Control at email HighwaysDC@barnsley.gov.uk or call to 01226 773555.

3. Planning permission does not infer any other consent is given and it is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that all other permissions are in place before development commences. The developer must contact Highways, Engineering & Transportation on 01226 773555 prior to any work commencing on site, to gain all necessary technical and legal approvals relating to the creation/alteration/reinstatement and removal of vehicular accesses to the highway.
4. It is recommended that measures are taken to prevent a nuisance/ or effect the quality of life of local residents. Please note that the Council's Pollution Control Team have a legal duty to investigate any complaints about noise, smoke or dust. No waste should be burnt. If a statutory nuisance is found to exist, they must serve an Abatement Notice under the Environmental Protection Act 1990. Failure to comply with the requirements of an Abatement Notice may result in a fine of up to £20,000 upon conviction in Magistrates' Court. It is therefore, recommended that you give serious consideration to the steps that may be required to prevent a noise, dust or smoke nuisance from being created.
5. The applicant/contractor should note that to deposit mud/debris on the public highway, or anything which may cause a nuisance or possible danger to road users, is an offence under provisions of the Highways Act 1980.