

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT

Application Ref: F/25/100259

Site Address: PAVEMENT OPPOSITE 43 LEIGH ROAD, EASTLEIGH, SO50 9DF

Case Officer: Katie Lasham

Description: The installation of 1no. BT Street Hub and removal of the 1no associated BT payphone.

Particular Site Constraints?	Yes ☒	No ☐
• Eastleigh Town, District and Local Centres and Neighbourhood Parades • Primary Shopping Zone • Eastleigh town centre boundary • Within the urban edge • Within proximity of Historic Park • Within proximity of Eastleigh War Memorial Grade II Listed Building • Within proximity of Locally Listed Buildings including the Bandstand and Comrades Club (55 Leigh Road).		

Planning History?	Yes ☒	No ☐
An advert planning application has been submitted in tandem with this advert application to support the necessary planning permissions: A/25/100354: The installation of 1no. BT Street Hub and removal of the 1no associated BT payphone. Approved. <u>Nearby site with similar proposal at 13 Leigh Road:</u> A/25/98749 – Display of an internally illuminated digital advertised communication hub unit with defibrillator. Refuse 07/02/2025. Appeal allowed ref: APP/W1715/Z/25/3363432. F/24/98494 - Installation of an internally illuminated digital advertised communication hub unit with defibrillator. Refuse 07/02/2025. Appeal allowed ref: APP/W1715/W/25/3363431. <u>Nearby site with similar proposal at 44-50 High Street:</u> A/25/98752 – Display of an internally illuminated digital advertised communication hub unit with defibrillator. Refuse 07/02/2025. Appeal allowed ref: APP/W1715/Z/25/3363430. F/24/98496 - Installation of an internally illuminated digital advertised communication hub unit with defibrillator. Refuse 07/02/2025. Appeal allowed ref: APP/W1715/W/25/3363428. <u>Nearby site with similar proposal at Pavement o/s Swan Centre Car Park:</u> A/25/98751 - Display of an internally illuminated digital advertised communication hub unit with defibrillator. Refuse 20/12/2024. Appeal allowed ref: APP/W1715/Z/25/3363434 F/24/98495 - Installation of an internally illuminated digital advertised communication hub unit with defibrillator. Refuse 20/12/2024. Appeal allowed ref: APP/W1715/W/25/3363433		

Publicity:	Letters ☒	Site Notice ☒	Newspaper ☐
Representations:	None		
Parish Council:	No Comment		
Hampshire Highways	Object to proposal on the basis it is contrary to the local and national policy which seeks to prioritise sustainable transport modes. The		

	Highway Authority believe that the hubs are primarily an advertising board primarily generating revenue and therefore are not within the spirit of the New Roads and Streetworks Act and therefore advise the applicant they would require a suitable license for installation with agreement on how these would be maintained.
Ecology	No objection. There are records of bats in the area however due to the area already comprising existing street lighting, the low level of lighting given off by the Street hub is not of concern. The proposal does not require a 10% biodiversity net gain however biodiversity enhancements are required in accordance with Local Plan Policy DM11 and the NPPF. Specific enhancements should be agreed with the Street Scene team.
Landscape Officer	The landscape officer requested the double-sided advert board be restricted to 300candelas between dawn and dusk to minimise visual prominence during darker hours.
Heritage	No objection as proposal is not within the setting nor does not it create harm onto the Grade II Listed Building.
Environmental Health	No objection subject to a suitably worded condition to ensure the proposal accords with the submitted Noise Management Plan. No concern relating to lighting, contamination or air pollution and the EH officer is supportive of the BT Street Hub being able to provide useful supplementary data to support air quality objectives.

Site Visit:	Yes ☒	No ☐
Details: 18/12/2025		

Policy:
National Planning Policy Framework Planning Practice Guidance Development Plan: The <u>Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016-2036</u> The most relevant policies are Strategic policies S1 and S2; and Development Management policies DM1, DM2, DM11 and DM14. Supplementary Planning Documents: Quality Places; Character Area Appraisals; Eastleigh Town Centre Vision.

Assessment:
<u>Summary of site and proposal</u> The application site includes an existing telephone box and an area of pavement located opposite no.41 Leigh Road, set within a large pedestrianised area of Eastleigh Town Centre. This site is located close to where the junction of Leigh Road meets High Street and the exact siting of the telephone box is within three metres of a vehicular loading bay parking space and the road beyond. It is in proximity of Leigh Road Recreation Ground which is a designated Historic Park and Garden with a Grade II Listed Building of Eastleigh War Memorial located within the park. Locally Listed Buildings including the Bandstand within Road Recreation Ground and The Comrades Club (55 Leigh Road) are also located within the vicinity of the site. An array of existing street furniture is already situated in the area including the existing telephone box, benches, Sheffield bike stands, bollards, lampposts, signage, circular benching surrounding a large tree, mature trees, a statue and bins.

Intermittent market days occur in this pedestrianised area and just beyond this open space are a range of shops and a shopping centre serving the local community.

This full planning application is submitted in tandem with an advert application which together propose the removal of the existing BT telephone box to be replaced with a BT Street Hub that will create a double-sided digital advert display that provides free Wi-Fi and phone calls which includes a microphone and speaker system. This application relates to the structural unit including the speaker and microphone that the double-sided digital advert would be housed within, which measures 2.98m in height, 1.26m in width and 0.35m in depth. The existing telephone box measures 2.18m in height, 0.85m in width and 0.9m in depth.

Relevant to this proposal are three recent appeals which have been allowed in Eastleigh Town Centre locations for proposed internally illuminated digital advertising communicating hubs, which are duly considered within this report.

Principle of development

The development is within the urban edge where the principle of development for adverts is considered acceptable in accordance with Policy S2 of the Local Plan. The addition of a BT Street Hub which provides free Wi-Fi, free phone calls and data collection of air quality and other environmental data would also meet the aims of the Eastleigh Town Centre Vision (2014) which seeks for public realm improvements to the centre.

Character and appearance of the area

This planning application seeks permission for the structure the double-sided advert is to be housed within, which is to be made of galvanised mild steel with a powder coated external grade aluminium exterior and the glass is to be made of tempered and toughened laminated glass. The materials proposed have been added as a condition to be complied with (Condition 3) to ensure the BT Street Hub will assimilate well with existing street furniture in the vicinity. The scale of the new unit is to be 0.78m taller in height, 0.41m wider but is to be 0.55m less deep than that of the existing telephone box. The scale of the proposed unit whilst taller and wider is not so unduly larger as to be a jolting addition within the street scene. It sits alongside streetlamps which are much taller, allowing the new unit to appear subservient in scale to existing street furniture. As this proposal seeks to replace one existing street furniture with another, there is no additional clutter added to this town centre location and this will offer a modernised design, offering a betterment in replacing the tired telephone box.

Locally Listed Buildings and a Grade II Listed War Memorial are also within the vicinity of the site. The conservation officer was consulted on this proposal and confirmed that the Grade II Listed Building is located sufficiently far away from the proposed new unit as to not create any harmful impact on the designated heritage asset with the two sites separated by mature trees and with existing street furniture also within the vicinity. The Locally Listed Buildings are also set sufficiently far away to ensure there is no harmful impact on their heritage significance. Leigh Road recreation ground, a Historic Park is within the immediate vicinity of the site, but this proposal is not of such significance to harmfully impact the park, again noting the existing street furniture within the vicinity. The proposed street hub does not block any views to the park as it is within a wide-open pedestrianised area and replaces an existing telephone box which also would have partially blocked views to the Historic Park.

The BT Street Hub Product Statement submitted in support of the proposal provides a schedule for maintenance for the unit, including bi-weekly cleaning and pressure washing and whilst cleaners are on site they check for any damage. Monitoring and software repairs will in most cases be done remotely. With these measures in place, the new unit is preserved in the long term with a suitable management plan. A condition has been added (Condition 4) to ensure that this maintenance schedule is complied with.

A further condition (Condition 5) has been added to ensure that within three months of development commencing, the BT payphone shall be removed and the land around that made good. Condition 6 stipulates that prior to first use of the BT Street Hub, the pavement around it shall be made good to the same condition as the surrounding land to preserve the visual amenity of the area.

Overall, the structure is considered an in keeping unit that would preserve the character and appearance of this town central location, creating a modernised and slimmer profile of design than the telephone box it replaces which would be in accordance with the aims of Policies E3 and DM1 of the Local Plan and it would safeguard the heritage significance of designated and non-designated heritage assets in accordance with Policy DM12 of the Local Plan.

Residential Amenity

The proposed new unit will not create any harmful impacts to residential amenity by way of loss of light / overshadowing or being an overbearing development with neighbouring units set sufficiently far away.

However, a new speaker and microphone system is proposed to allow for the free phone calls to be made through the device. The Planning Statement section on Noise Management explains that a reasonable conversational volume is created in proximity to the street hub but is intended to result in minimal to no noise being noticeable from further away, with the average volume settings at 65db at a 3metre distance which is standard conversational volume and users can also choose to use headphones when making calls or plug in a tablet which deactivates the speaker. 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 environmental health officer has been consulted on this proposal and the Noise Mitigation Plan and raises no objection to the proposed noise output of the speaker and microphone subject to a condition for the unit to comply with the Noise Mitigation Plan (Condition 7).

The area is principally commercial with limited residential properties in the immediate surroundings and as such noise and light pollution are not considered to be detrimental to this town central location. The development therefore accords with guidance set out in the 'Quality Places' SPD and with the aims of Policies DM1 and E3 of the Local Plan.

Highway Safety

The proposed new unit is to replace an existing telephone box in the same location. Hampshire Highways have objected to the proposal as the new advertising board does not promote sustainable transport modes. However, a total distance of 2.5m is retained between the side of the unit and the edge of the loading parking bay to ensure there is sufficient space around the new unit to allow pedestrians and cyclists which share this road to continue to move safely through this space.

A similar planning application at no.13 Leigh Road, roughly 100metres away proposed a digital advert display board unit and was refused on highway safety grounds for the following reason:

"The proposed advertisement sign would reduce the flexibility of space enjoyed by pedestrian users and create an obstruction to the flow of pedestrian and cycle movements to the Town Centre to an unacceptable extent. As such this is in conflict with the principles of policy DM1 from the Eastleigh Local Plan (2016-2036)"

This was allowed at appeal with the inspector concluding there will be no adverse or unacceptable impact to highway safety or safety of the public. The inspector stated in their appeal decision:

“Whilst the proposal would locally reduce the width of the paved area, I find this would not have a harmful effect, owing to the significant width of paved area remaining available for pedestrians and cyclists.”

Each site must be considered within its own context, but this appeal scheme is only 100metres away from the application site, with a contextually similar location, just set to opposite sides of the pedestrianised area. With the application site also benefiting from a significant width of paved area remaining, there are no separate contextual issues of this area of Leigh Road that would make this scheme unacceptable on highway safety grounds, particularly as this replaces existing street furniture, and is not further cluttering the road. Furthermore, with a telephone box already located at the site, this has previously been selected as a suitable location where pedestrians and cyclists can move freely through the area.

Overall, with the proposal replacing one piece of street furniture with another of similar sizing, it cannot be reasonably concluded that the BT street hub will have adverse impact highway and pedestrian / cyclist movement such that it would be unacceptable due to highway safety concerns. For the reasons the application is considered acceptable in accordance with the aims of DM1 of the Local Plan.

Impact on trees

There will be no adverse impact upon trees or other natural features worthy of retention with existing utilities serving the telephone box that can be utilised for the street hub without requiring further below ground intervention, in accordance with the aims of Policy DM11 of the Local Plan.

Impacts on ecology

The new unit the advert boards are to be housed within does not create any ecological issues or concerns. The ecology officer has requested a biodiversity net gain is provided in line with Policy DM11 of the Local Plan, however due to the limited extent of red site line boundary area for providing biodiversity net gain, it is not reasonable to require a biodiversity net gain for this proposal. There are no likely significant impacts on the SPA.

Climate Change

In July 2019, the Council declared a Climate Change and Environmental Emergency. In doing so it agreed, among other things, to: (a) put in place measures to ensure the Council's own operations and functions achieve carbon neutrality; (b) work with partners to aim for all projects and services delivered in the Borough to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030; (c) ensure that the Council's procurement policy recognises carbon neutrality as one of its primary considerations; and (d) recognise the urgency of action to mitigate and adapt to climate change in every decision taken by the Council. This is underpinned by the Climate and Environment Emergency Strategy 2020–2030 and the supporting Climate and Environmental Emergency Action Plan – Update June 2020.

The declaration of the Climate Change and Environmental Emergency demonstrates a strong commitment from the Council to achieve net zero. The NPPF, development plan and adopted local plan policy do not set this as a specific target, but it is a material consideration to be considered alongside all other material considerations. In any case addressing climate change is a core part of the NPPF and local plan policy. The need to support the economy is part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment for the adopted local plan, as is an assessment of climate impacts.

The NPPF aims for the need for housing to be met, and policy S2 of the Local Plan sets a target for 14,580 dwellings to be provided by 2036. The NPPF, Policies S1, DM2 and DM3 of the Local Plan and energy and water elements of the adopted Environmentally Sustainable Development SPD require development to be sustainable in terms of resource use, climate change and energy use. When considering the impact of climate change, the

proposed development is expected to be resilient to the potential effects of climate change and is expected to reduce/limit impacts on climate emissions as a result of the development or its use.

Equalities Implications:

Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 created the public sector equality duty. Section 149 states:

- A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
 - a. eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - b. advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - c. foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

When making policy decisions, the Council must take account of the equality duty and in particular any potential impact on protected groups. It is considered that this application does not raise any equality implications

Conclusion:

Recommendation:

PERMIT ☒

REFUSE ☐

Comments ...