

Sarah Valentine

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 23 November 2025 19:49
To: planninginfo
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: DM/25/2901 & DM/25/2671 - objection

DM/25/2901 & DM/25/2671 The installation of 1no. BT Street Hub and removal of associated BT payphones. Telephone Box Church Walk Burgess Hill West Sussex

<https://pa.midsussex.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=T4FASBKT0G300>

As a frequent visitor to this beautiful town, I **object** to this installation on the following grounds:

- The proposed installation is primarily an ugly, obstructive and unnecessary advertisement hoarding with several cursory additions such as phone / wifi / defibrillator. There is no justification for its need.
- The applicant has not provided sufficient justification that the Street Hubs are necessary. At a time when the adverse effects of social media and SMART phones on children and young adults are in the spotlight with campaigns and parliamentary speeches, what is the sense is placing a supersized equivalent in the public domain?
- It would by reason of its siting and size appear cramped and would result in a cluttered streetscape in this important footway area resulting in visual harm to the character and appearance of the site and street scene in this location detrimental to the visual amenity of this public realm area and would fail to contribute positively to the local area. Unlike old BT hubs or telephone boxes, the new plans are for entirely opaque blocks reducing visibility which could make users of the pavement feel unsafe. The proposal is contrary to the NPPF which aims for well-designed and beautiful places.
- It is likely to cause an obstruction on the pavement particularly for folk with mobility issues or sight impairment.
- Consider the impacts on neighbours' sleep quality and mental health, and the ability to enjoy the area in which they live. Frequently changing illuminated screens are not conducive to calm, peaceful relaxation.
- the proposal would not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of any Conservation Area. It would be in conflict with the advice given in Streets for All: Advice for Highway and Public Realm Works in Historic Places (2018) which provides that, amongst other things, poorly sited advertising can have a degrading effect on the character of conservation areas and the setting of listed buildings, especially when digital screens and internally illuminated signs are used.
- The proposal may bring free ultrafast public Wi-Fi, 5G small-cell mobile connectivity, free UK calls, free device charging, an emergency services button, environmental sensors, insight counting, and public messaging capabilities. In this day and age what is its usefulness? The majority of the public have their own mobile phones for connectivity. There is no proposal as to how the Council may use any collected information.

- Such Street Hubs will bring ultrafast Wi-Fi, 4G/5G antennas and small cell technology (ie using millimetre wave tech) to the middle of our streets. Thus they will bring microwave radiation ever deeper into our communities where people live and work. Where is the vital public health safeguard, the ICNIRP certificate? Does the proposal show it meets the ICNIRP guidelines for telecommunications advice?

Where are the drawings or plans that should include Public Exclusion Zones?

- The proposed 'Street Hub' could potentially provide the Council with environmental, pedestrian and cycle movement data. However, limited details have been provided as to whether the Council would find this 'smart city' planning data to be useful in practice, nor the extent to which such data would be useful in terms of the delivery of the Council's services and planning functions.

- Designed to be deliberately distracting, such an installation at this busy location is likely to compromise road safety. Its size would block visibility of pedestrians and other road users from each other.

- Designed to be stimulating, the installation has no regard to those with conditions such as autism, epilepsy or mental health conditions who may be overly stimulated by the rapidly changing LED displays. 70% of disabilities are invisible and common aspects include light/noise sensibility, susceptibility to over-stimulation and attacks are common when the environment itself poses a form of psychological distress.

- The use of LED sources for lighting and display screens has an impact on human health. The registered charity LightAware says that 'the spread of new light sources has resulted in a dramatic increase in the numbers suffering light sensitivity and increased exclusion for society of light-sensitive people' who can suffer 'symptoms including eye pain, headaches and migraines, skin rashes, burning, insomnia, dizziness and nausea' from exposure to LED lighting (<https://lightaware.org/>). For some sufferers, the severity of their physical reactions to LED lighting and advertising boards requires avoidance of even minimal exposure, and the adverse impact on their day-to-day life is so extreme that they meet the test for disability under the Equality Act. For several years, LED lighting has been acknowledged to harm eyesight (Health Impacts of All Pollution – what do we know? Annual Report of the Chief Medical Officer 2017, Chapter 4 "Light pollution and health). This means that local authorities have legal duties towards them regarding planning decisions concerning the installation of lights and LED advertising boards.

- The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requires local authorities to have 'due regard' to the impact of any proposed policy – including planning decisions regarding the installation of LED advertising boards – on groups with protected characteristics, which includes light-disabled people and those susceptible to flickering digital screens.

- The LED lights are likely to negatively impact insects, moths, birds and bats contrary to any 'Biodiversity Net Gain' plan.

- Power drain. Who pays for the power to support their running 24/7? At a time of energy scarcity and unaffordability, what is the need for an energy guzzling installation running 24/7? Emissions from building and installing digital advertising screens, and running them, should be considered in planning decisions. Digital advertising screens use a great deal of electricity. A conservative estimate is that one large digital advertising screen (6.4 metres x 3.1 metres) uses more electricity than 11 average UK households. This undermines the local authorities' net zero ambitions. At this time when many are struggling to heat their homes, how does the council aim to reduce energy consumption, while permitting these power draining installations?

- It raises questions over privacy, as some structures incorporate surveillance technology. What is the range of the CCTV, what images is it capturing, will it capture and record biometric (facial recognition) data, who is the data being shared with, how is it being processed? Who has any individual's consent to store and process that data and how does that sit with people's rights or even lawsuits around police use of facial recognition technology in the UK? What about the invasion of privacy to people whose residences are within line sight of the cameras?

- Digital advertising screens have also been associated with crime and anti-social behaviour, including graffiti, hoax calls and drug dealing.
- Please provide any maintenance and management plan for the multifunction hub units, to ensure that these are serviced; kept clean, tidy and free of any vandalism; and in a working order, for as long as they are in place.
- No information provided to demonstrate how the proposed development would integrate sustainable technologies to promote sustainable design and construction. Without this information, it is difficult to accurately assess how the proposals would reduce energy demand in order to accomplish sustainable principles. Any Environment Statement should consider the implications of this infrastructure from extraction, processing, usage and disposal of the materials for streethubs, and include the effects of the radiation emitted from all the antennae on the proposed mast (which can be regarded as effluvia or as a pollutant) on public health.
- It is contrary to the NPPF that states the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps to make development acceptable to communities.
- It is contrary to the NPPF regarding advertisements, that states the quality and character of places can suffer if these are poorly sited and designed. This installation would be a visually discordant addition in an otherwise harmonious street scene.
- Defibrillators are easily attached to a nearby wall. There is no need for such a large bulky installation to justify a defibrillator. How far is the closest defibrillator?

Please apply your decisions about advertising sites to include current priorities such as climate change, biodiversity and mental health.

Kind regards,

18 Bolding House, West End, Woking, Surrey, GU24 9JJ

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