



Glasgow City Council

Planning Local Review Committee

Report by Executive Director of Neighbourhoods, Regeneration
and Sustainability

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Item 1

11th August 2026

26/00032/LOCAL – Site Opposite 794 Govan Road
Installation of 1No. BT street hub unit.

Purpose of Report:

To provide the Committee with a summary of the relevant considerations in the above review.

Recommendations:

That Committee consider the content of this report in coming to their decision.

Ward No(s): 5 – Govan

Citywide: N/A

Local member(s) advised: Yes ☐ No ☐

consulted: Yes ☐ No ☐

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1 LOCATION AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN DESIGNATIONS

Location

- 1.1 The proposal site is 20m south of 794 Govan Road (“Rhubarb and Honey Café”), across the road. Neighbouring a number of commercial uses and lying close to Govan Subway Station. The location of the proposal lies 11.2m northwest of the existing public phone box to be demolished.
- 1.2 The site is in the Govan Conservation Area, in Govan Local Town Centre and within the Govan ward.
- 1.3 Committee should note the planning appeal statement makes reference to a second location at 2.10 (“Appeal Statement”) and states that this is included in the proposal. This is not the case. Committee should only consider the above site.

Proposal

- 1.3 The proposal seeks consent for the removal of a phone box and erection of a digital kiosk (‘BT Street Hub’). This is a free-standing structure featuring digital display screen on both the north elevation facing Govan Road and the south elevation facing the Govan bus and subway hub. The dimensions of the digital kiosk are 1236mm (w) x 350mm (d) x 2980mm (h). The digital screen displays are inset within the kiosk and are 1600 (h) x 950mm (h).
- 1.5 The associated case for advertisement consent (26/000410/ADV – ‘Display of 2No. digital LCD display screens on street hub unit’) was refused on the 9th of January. Its visual amenity, impacts on the conservation area and pedestrian impacts in a busy area were considered unacceptable. This was then appealed to the Scottish Ministers, and the case 26/00031/ADVA is ongoing as of 4th of August.

2. DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

- 2.1 NPF4 was adopted by the Scottish Ministers on 13 February 2023 and is part of the statutory Development Plan. Where there is an area of incompatibility it is expected that the newest policy document will take precedence, which will be NPF4 for the time being.

In this case, the relevant policies from NPF4 are:

- Policy 1: Tackling the climate and nature crises
- Policy 2: Climate mitigation and adaption.
- Policy 9: Historic Assets and Places.
- Policy 14: Design, quality and place
- Policy 23: Health and Safety

- 2.2 The relevant City Development Plan policies are:

- CDP1: The Placemaking Principle
- CDP9: Historic Environment

- 2.3 The relevant Supplementary Guidance is:

- SG1: The Placemaking Principle (Parts 1 & 2)
- SG9: Historic Environment

- 2.4 Other relevant guidance is:

- Glasgow Central Conservation Area Appraisal 2012
- The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (Scotland) Regulations 1984
- Institution of Lighting Professionals, Professional Lighting Guide 2014

3 REASONS FOR REFUSAL

- 3.1 The reasons for refusal are set out below:

01. The proposal was not considered to be in accordance with the Development Plan and there were no material considerations which outweighed the proposal's variance with the Development Plan.
02. By reason of its siting and design, the proposed development would be a conspicuous and incongruous feature in the local townscape and would have a detrimental impact on visual amenity and character of the conservation area. It would, therefore, not be in accordance with the National Planning Framework 4 Policies 9 and 14 and the Planning Authority's guidance through the City Development Plan on visual amenity in relation to Advertising: SG1 (Part 2) (Signs and Advertising).
03. That by way of its siting and scale, the development has the potential to create an obstruction to pedestrians. As a result the development would not be considered to be acceptable in terms of public safety and as such is not in accordance with the National Planning Framework 4 Policy 23 and the Planning Authority's guidance through the City Development Plan on public safety in relation to Advertising: SG1 (Part 2) (Signs and Advertising).

APPEAL STATEMENT

4.1 A summary of the material points raised in the appeal statement are given below.

01. The proposal to which this appeal relates represents a sustainable form of development, with any perceived visual or other harm outweighed by the myriad of significant public benefits.
02. On a procedural matter whilst this appeal specifically focuses on the full planning proposal, the appellants dispute the LPAs reasons for refusal to both applications.
03. Too much weight was placed on visual amenity, the removal of 2No. existing kiosks which forms part of the appellant's estate and offers no contribution to the appearance or setting of the streetscene.

Committee should note that this item is only to consider 1No. existing kiosk in Govan.

04. The proposed upgrade to Street Hub units aligns with strategic policy by delivering high-quality digital connectivity, improving public safety through emergency service access, enhanced lighting and reduced anti-social behaviour, and providing accessible community facilities. The design is appropriately illuminated, protects the public realm, respects surrounding land uses, and is powered by 100% renewable carbon-free energy.
05. The proposed Street Hub has a slender, contemporary profile, considerably reduced in bulk compared to that of an existing phone box within the appellant's current estate. Its appearance is consistent with other freestanding communication and advertising units already present across the UK, notably elsewhere within Glasgow City Council.
06. In selecting this location, it is considered that the proposal would be commensurate with the existing form and surrounding land use of the locality in keeping with the busy, commercial area of Glasgow, even when accounting for the presence of important heritage assets.
07. As shown in Figures 2–10, this wide pedestrianized section of Govan Road contains a variety of street furniture, including bus shelters, benches, bins, lighting columns, signs, utility cabinets and BT payphones. The appellants contend that, within this established streetscape, the proposed Street Hub will integrate successfully, respect nearby heritage assets, and maintain pedestrian movement.
08. A myriad of public benefits are listed including free advertising for community groups, indirect lighting and other matters.

OTHER DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED

Committee should note the applicant submitted a series of other written submissions detailed below:

- A number of appeal decisions are enclosed which refer to cases in different councils and planning systems, committee are instructed to disregard these as not relevant to the case
 - “SUPPORTING APPEAL DECISION” – A DPEA appeal ADA-180-2017 in Dundee
 - “APPEAL DECISION” – Planning Inspectorate [England] decision in Bristol. Three other documents of the same name give other decisions for London.
 - “SUPPORTING APPEAL DECISION” – Planning Inspectorate [England] decision in Blackpool, one other document of the same name give a decision for London.
 -
- “DEVELOPERS NOTICE” – appears to be a cover letter sent to the Roads Department of the council
- “ICNIRP” - Declaration of conformity with public rf exposure guidelines of the international commission on non-ionising radiation protection (“ICNIRP”)
- “LIGHTING GUIDANCE” – Industry guidance on the level of brightness of digital displays; this is generic to the case and is not considered to be necessary to respond to by the authority.
- “BT STREET HUB PLANNING DOC” – A non-technical brochure for Street Hubs.
- “BT STREET HUBS ASBMP” - Street Hub Anti-Social Behaviour Management Plan
- “BT NOISE MANAGEMENT PLAN” - Street Hub Noise Management Plan. This is notable for giving the results of Noise tests, which give readings between 50.5-60.4dB noise from the Hub’s fans.
- “PLANNING SUPPORTING STATEMENT” – this has been factored into the above appeal statement and below where necessary.

- 4.2 The applicant did not request any further procedure in the determination of the review.

5 REPRESENTATIONS AND CONSULTATIONS

- 5.1 There were no letters of representation received to the application.
- 5.2 No letters of representation were received to this review.

6 COMMITTEE CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 Committee should consider if the following are in accordance with NPF4, the relevant City Development Plan policies and Supplementary Guidance, and if

there are material considerations which outweigh the Development Plan considerations.

6.2. The following are relevant policy considerations:

6.3 Climate change and mitigation

NPF4 Policy 1 states that: “When considering all development proposals significant weight will be given to the global climate and nature crises.”

NPF4 Policy 2 states that:

- a) “Development proposals will be sited and designed to minimise lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions as far as possible.
- b) Development proposals will be sited and designed to adapt to current and future risks from climate change.
- c) Development proposals to retrofit measures to existing developments that reduce emissions or support adaptation to climate change will be supported.”

National Spatial Strategy

Scotland’s future places will be net zero, nature-positive places that are designed to reduce emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change, whilst protecting, recovering and restoring our environment. As part of the national commitment to a **just transition**, it states:

“our journey to a net zero society and nature recovery must make best use of embodied carbon by conserving and recycling assets, including by encouraging sustainable design and the wise use of resources.”)

Committee should note that:

- The appeal statement attests that the hubs are powered by carbon-free energy, in the sense that the company pays for energy from a renewable energy provider.
- The BT Street Hub Planning performance statement does have a section on Environmental Performance, which states the LED screen consumes less power than cathode fluorescent tubes. There is also reference to the design of the hub being more energy efficient than competitor models but there is no specific kWh measurements to compare against existing traditional advertising boards.
- In January 2021 an FOI calculated that a similar sized advertising erected in Manchester would consume 11,501kWh every year, which is 4 times the average consumption of a UK household.
- Therefore the proposal does not include any measures that would reduce carbon emissions from the original use intended; which is potentially contrary to the Scottish Government’s commitment to a Just Transition.

Committee should consider whether:

- they are completely satisfied that the development takes into account the climate and nature crises; and

- they are completely satisfied that the development minimises lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions as far as possible.

6.4 Design and visual amenity

NPF4 Policy 14: Design, quality and place

Policy 14 intends to encourage, promote and facilitate well designed development that makes successful places by taking a design-led approach and applying the Place Principle. The policy required development to be designed to improve the quality of an area regardless of scale. Development will be supported where they are consistent with the six qualities of successful places:

Healthy: Supporting the prioritisation of women's safety and improving physical and mental health.

Pleasant: Supporting attractive natural and built spaces.

Connected: Supporting well connected networks that make moving around easy and reduce car dependency

Distinctive: Supporting attention to detail of local architectural styles and natural landscapes to be interpreted, literally or creatively, into designs to reinforce identity.

Sustainable: Supporting the efficient use of resources that will allow people to live, play, work and stay in their area, ensuring climate resilience, and integrating nature positive, biodiversity solutions.

Adaptable: Supporting commitment to investing in the long-term value of buildings, streets and spaces by allowing for flexibility so that they can be changed quickly to accommodate different uses as well as maintained over time.

Policy 14 states that proposals that are poorly designed, detrimental to the amenity of the surrounding area or inconsistent with the six qualities of successful places, will not be supported.

SG1 Part 2 - 8 Signs and Advertising 8.1-8.3 and 8.18-8.24

Visual Amenity - To ensure that the visual amenity (see Definition) of an advertising site or the surroundings is not adversely affected:

- a) all advertising signs should be of high quality materials. The Council will welcome innovative design and will look for the improvement of existing authorised signs where the opportunity arises;
- b) the Council will resist the accumulation of advertising clutter;
- e) on listed buildings, and within conservation areas, a higher quality of design and materials will be expected to reflect the property or area's character and appearance (signage should complement the original architectural style and features of the building); and

Committee should note:

- The materials listed include: Galvanised mild steel structure, painted powder coated cladding and anti-glare glass. The Council requests that a high quality of design and materials are expected in conservation areas.
- To the south of the site is a statue of Mary Barbour which currently frames the entrance to Govan Bus Station.
- In 2023 Glasgow Central parliamentary constituency had 917 outdoor advertisement boards, the 5th highest amount in a area in the UK, so consideration should be given to the Council's policy on accumulation of clutter.

Committee should consider whether:

- If the proposal would contribute to advertising clutter, particularly in regards to the visual framing of the Mary Barbour statue.
- In terms of energy usage and maintenance costs, whether the use would be an 'efficient' use of resources.
- Regarding the cost of construction and removal compared to traditional advertising boards (or telephone boxes), committee should consider if the use would impede the adaptability of the city's street scene.
- Committee should consider if they are satisfied that the materials of this kiosk are suitable for the conservation area.

6.5 Heritage Amenity

SG9 & CDP9: Historic Environment, Govan Conservation Area Appraisal

This policy aims to ensure the appropriate protection, enhancement and management of Glasgow's heritage assets by protecting, conserving and enhancing the historic environment for the benefit of existing and future generations.

Signs and Advertising

The intention is to balance the need for commercial exposure, against the need to protect the City's listed buildings, Conservation Areas, strongly defined townscape and its high quality of environment.

The display of badly designed or poorly situated signage and advertising in Conservation Areas can adversely affect historic character and visual amenity. Clutter and oversized adverts will not be supported. signs and adverts should not obscure or dominate the architectural details of the building by virtue of size and number;

Govan Conservation Area Appraisal - Govan Cross Character Area Appraisal

Govan features many listed buildings and structures throughout the area, with concentrations centered on the three Category "A" listed buildings around Govan Cross. Govan Cross is regarded as a key civic square to the area. The view toward Govan Cross from the underground and bus station, the main

arrival point for residents and visitors to Govan, has dramatically improved as a result of recent improvements to surfaces, the building facades of the listed tenements at Water Row and restoration of the Aitken Memorial Fountain.

Shopfront improvements at Water Row, Langlands Road and Govan Cross have enhanced the visual appeal and historic character of a number of ground floor properties.

Committee should note:

- The site is in the Govan Conservation Area and sits north of the Govan Subway station entrance. The proposal obscures views of Govan Cross including the Grade B listed Fountain, shop fronts and church.
- The area has also been subject to a prime regeneration in the Water Row development and new bridge.
- The area in question already has a bus shelter and associated pole mounted signage, a telephone box, lamppost and a bin.

Committee should consider:

- If they are satisfied this proposal would not obscure or dominate the street scene through street furniture clutter and lighting.
- They are satisfied this proposal does not detract from the historic amenity of the conservation area or the nearby visual landmark of the aforementioned Mary Barbour statue.
- The materials used are appropriate to the sitting of the proposal.

6.6 Noise

SG1 Part 1: The Placemaking Principle - Site Appraisal 2.11 -2.12

Appraisal of the site should include: **Connectivity** - existing connectivity in and through the site... **Existing Social Uses** - including informal uses such as should be regarded as the starting point of the design process. A general play, dog walking, horse riding etc and uses at good site appraisal will provide valuable information to allow the different times of day and night.

Appraisal of the **wider context** should include: **Existing Neighbourhood Character** - architectural style, building materials, building size and form, the relationship of buildings to streets, open spaces and established building lines, special features of local interest, existing landscape and vegetation, the size, location, pattern and function of open space and existing design features in terms of lighting, signage, paving, street furniture, etc;... **Land Uses** - surrounding land uses in terms of type of use, layout and density, overlooking, access and amenity implications)

NPF4 Policy 23: Health and Safety

NPF4 Policy 23 aims “to protect people and places from environmental harm, mitigate risks arising from safety hazards.”

- e) Development proposals that are likely to raise unacceptable noise issues will not be supported. The agent of change principle applies to noise

sensitive development. A Noise Impact Assessment may be required where the nature of the proposal or its location suggests that significant effects are likely.

Committee should consider:

- The site is a noted area for civic activity, with the public congregating for social reasons.
- “BT NOISE MANAGEMENT PLAN” estimates the noise of the fans will be between 50.5-60.4dB at 3m distance from the hub. This is higher than expected noise levels for a restaurant ventilation system, which the Council would typically require to be located to the rear of a property.

Committee should consider whether:

- this proposal hinders the amenity of the civic space through noise pollution.

6.7 Health and Safety

NPF4 Policy 23: Health and Safety

NPF4 Policy 23 aims “to protect people and places from environmental harm, mitigate risks arising from safety hazards.”

The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (Scotland) Regulations 1984

This legislation restricts advertisement developments on the basis of their impact on amenity (not only of the property itself but also neighbouring properties and the surrounding area); and impact on public safety (particularly the safety of pedestrians, drivers and other road users). It states that: “no such advertisement shall be sited or displayed so as to obscure, or hinder the ready interpretation of, any road traffic sign.”

SG1 & CDP1: The Placemaking Principle (Parts 1 & 2, including ‘6.11 Street Furniture’ and ‘8.3 Public Safety’ of Signs and Advertising)

All development should respect and protect the City’s heritage by responding to its qualities and character of its site and surroundings. Development should make the City an appealing place to live, work and visit for all members of society, providing high quality amenity to existing and new residents.

SG 1: The Placemaking Principle Public Realm

6.11 Street Furniture - Proposals for street furniture should:

- a) allow adequate sight lines (i.e. usually, more than 450mm from the end of the footpath);
- b) not be located on footways less than three metres wide;
- c) not result in clutter when added to existing street furniture;

- d) display an integrated approach in terms of design and siting i.e. boundary walls, railings, signage, cycle storage or stands etc should all be carefully co-ordinated and integrated into the overall design; and
- e) ensure that cycle storage is located in areas of high visibility

8.3 **Public Safety** - To ensure that public safety, see also SG1 - Placemaking, Part 1, is not adversely affected, the following will be taken into account:

- a) proximity to traffic signals; Colours and level of luminance should not interfere or cause distraction to road and cycleway users in the vicinity of signals;
- b) proximity to other hazards on the road where the advertising sign may interfere with visibility or cause driver/cyclist distraction e.g. junctions, queuing traffic and pedestrian crossing points, the approach to traffic signal controlled junctions;
- c) cumulative impact relative to existing signage, including road signs;
- d) proximity to a roundabout or complex priority junction; and
- e) the potential obstruction of paths and cycleways, including headroom (advertising signs adjacent to any pedestrian and/or cycle route should be displayed at least 2.5m above ground level).

Outdoor Advertising Displays - Advertising displays must not give rise to an adverse effect on public safety. Digital advertising where images change frequently can raise particular concern for concern for traffic, cycle and pedestrian safety. The level of illumination of digital or internally illuminated signs can also have an effect on both traffic safety and amenity. For this reason the following standards apply for internally illuminated display screens:

- a) they will only be permitted where they do not contain moving or flashing content, particularly where they are considered to have a potentially significant adverse impact on pedestrian and vehicular traffic safety;
- b) they must not use a slow dissolve between advertisements;
- c) they will only be permitted in areas which are already busy commercial areas; and
- d) the cumulative effect of such advertisements will be taken into account in assessing the impact on amenity and public safety.

Displays will not be supported where:

- a) the site lies within Conservation Areas, see also SG9 - Historic Environment (in exceptional circumstances temporary large scale outdoor displays may be permitted within Conservation Areas where they play a beneficial role in screening vacant land);
- b) in areas where the character is predominantly residential;
- c) they would be out of keeping with the scale of the buildings or land on which they are displayed, see SG1 - Placemaking, Part 1, Site and Area Analysis;

- d) they would be likely to result in advertising clutter or adversely affect streetscape or building setting;
- e) the rear of a timber hoarding would be visible and not treated to match the framing;
- f) they will have an adverse impact on public realm areas; and g) the display is on a static advertising trailer.

8.23 Smaller Format Outdoor Display - There may be locations where small format outdoor displays (see Definition), are appropriate, such as in shopping areas. However, such displays will need to be in keeping with the design and layout of the public realm and ensure that impact on the character of the area and on pedestrian safety is not compromised. Where appropriate, the Council will engage with advertising companies on the design and layout of small format advertising displays through pre-application discussions.

The following locations are unlikely to be supported:

- b) on the returns of buildings into residential side streets, substantially devoid of advertisements, which would affect the character of the area;
- c) immediately in front of, opposite or directly adjacent to ground floor residential properties;
- d) where they will have an adverse impact on public realm areas;
- e) where they could create an obstruction to pedestrians and cyclists; and
- f) where the advertisement would have an adverse effect on the character and appearance of a Conservation Area or listed building (in exceptional circumstances temporary small format outdoor displays may be permitted within Conservation Areas where they play a beneficial role in screening vacant land).

8.25 Light Projected Advertising - Illuminated advertisements projected onto buildings and streets require advertisement consent. Such advertisements will be assessed on their merits and in relation to their impact on amenity (including visual and residential amenity) and public safety. Such advertisements should generally be located adjacent to premises which they seek to advertise.

Committee should consider:

- The advertisement board proposed faces traffic along Govan Road.
- At an estimated luminance of 600cd/M2 (candelas), the advertisement would be brighter than the traffic lights, which averages 200 candelas. The lighting and obstruction could hinder visibility of pedestrians crossing the road informally or awaiting buses at the bus stop, potentially contrary to policy on public safety.

Committee should consider whether:

- this proposal hinders the safety of road users and pedestrians through unnecessary light pollution.
- whether they are satisfied the location, near an informal crossing point and proposed active travel lane, would be a safe location for an illuminated advertising display.

7 COMMITTEE DECISION

7.1 The options available to the Committee are:

- a. Grant planning permission, with the same or different conditions from those listed below; or
- b. Refuse planning permission.
- c. Continue the review to request further information.

8 Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

Financial: n/a

Legal: n/a

Personnel: n/a

Procurement: n/a

Council Strategic Plan: n/a

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2021-25? Please specify. n/a

What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report? no significant impact

Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio- n/a

*economic
disadvantage.*

Climate Impacts:

Does the proposal support any Climate Plan actions? Please specify: n/a

What are the potential climate impacts as a result of this proposal? n/a

Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target? n/a

Privacy and Data Protection Impacts:

Are there any potential data protection impacts as a result of this report
N

If Yes, please confirm that a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) has been carried out

9 Recommendations

That Committee consider the content of this report in coming to their decision.