

The Fitzrovia Partnership

Business Improvement District

Matthias Gentet
Case Officer
Planning Services
London Borough of Camden Council
Town Hall
Judd Street
London
WC1H 9JE

3 March 2015

Dear Mr Gentet,

Planning Application Number 2015/0691/P and 2015/0692/P - Telephone Kiosk to be situated on the pavement of Howland Street, adjacent to 95 Tottenham Court Road London W1T 4TW and the junction of Cleveland Mews adjacent to Tottenham Court Road.

As BID Manager for The Fitzrovia Partnership, and on behalf of our business members and residents in the area, I am writing to object to the erection of telephone kiosks at the above locations by Infocus Public Networks Limited.

We note the status that the applicant does not require full planning permission as per the GPDO Part 24 of Schedule 2 under the Communications Act 2003, section 106.

I oppose to the application on the following grounds:

- Businesses (i.e. our members) do not covet additional street furniture clutter on a busy thoroughfare adjacent to or on Tottenham Court Road. The proposed telephone box, by virtue of its size and method of illumination would constitute an obtrusive and unwelcome element and would harm the visual amenities of the area.
- It could potentially be a serious obstruction to the free flow of people on foot; a problem that is likely to be acute at peak commuting hours and in the run-up to Christmas.
- Camden Council has approved plans for a £41m investment via the West End Project for Tottenham Court Road and the surrounding area. Such an application for further telephone kiosks are detrimental to the positive effect engendered by the scheme and against both Camden's, Fitzrovia BID's, local business members' and local residents' wishes and interests, as well as going against the character of the Fitzrovia Area Action Plan (<http://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/content/environment/planning-and-built-environment/two/planning-policy/local-development-framework/fitzrovia-aap/>). We are consequently very disappointed that this application is to be permitted under the GPDO and therefore also include Councillors Sally Gimson and Phil Jones with reference to this effect.

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- The proposals would encourage litter, loitering and vandalism, creating a nuisance for local residents and businesses.
- Over 50,000 prostitute cards were removed by the BID in 2014 from telephone kiosks in Fitzrovia. These prostitute cards are explicit and offensive and very much part of the increasingly organised business of prostitution, which exploits and degrades women and children.
- Phoneboxes are also used as a mechanism to order, buy and/or distribute illegal drugs and promote anti-social behaviour.
- There is nothing in the Application that binds Infocus Public Networks Limited in an agreement to maintain or periodically clean the structures.
- The issue of graffiti has not been considered by the applicant, Infocus Public Networks Limited. Any clean up operation to remove the graffiti is unclear as per above.
- There are already 40 telephone kiosks on Tottenham Court Road alone. There is no commercial or public service value for these additional kiosks other than to generate revenue for Infocus Public Networks Limited and provide advertising space for their leaseholders. We do not see the need for any telephone unit as almost everyone has a mobile phone.
- We recognise the economic purpose for advertising space and would encourage such infrastructure to be more innovative and creative, which adds cultural or tourism value. This is not within the Infocus Public Networks Limited proposal.
- The application is not in-keeping with the BID's vision of a clean and engaging high street, and only serves to be an eyesore and a 'blockage' on the public footway and streetscape.
- Camden Street Presence Tasking Group is opposed to such telephone kiosks due to the issues outlined above, and are actively working with the BID and the Local Authority in an attempt to manage the situation.
- The issue has also been raised at the Bloomsbury Ward Panel meeting where residents and local businesses have also highlighted their concerns at the 'blight' of the phoneboxes.

Thank you very much for your consideration in this matter. In the interim, should Camden Council wish to discuss this further with us on this issue, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely


Lee Lyons
BID Manager
The Fitzrovia Partnership

Cc Cllr Sally Gimson, Cabinet Member for Sustainability; Cllr Phil Jones, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Transport & Planning, Camden Council



Existing Telephone Kiosks located on Tottenham Court Road, Fitzrovia, Camden, near to the proposed new locations.

02/03/15



