

[REDACTED]

Sent: 22 March 2017 09:38
To: Planning
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION 2017/1097/P

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

PROPOSAL: Installation of 1 telephone kiosk.

The Bloomsbury Association objects to the applications listed below to erect a telephone kiosk at various locations on the public highway and wishes to make the following comments.

- 1 - We note that the applications are accompanied by an uncompromising letter, that no pre-application discussions have taken place with the Council's officers and that no Design & Access Statement accompanies them.
- 2 - No consideration is given to the impact of the appearance of the kiosks from the adjoining Bloomsbury Conservation Area when it is clear from the plan and elevation that they are also intended to include full-height advertising of an unspecified nature.
- 3 - We note that no application for advertisement consent accompanies the applications although the kiosks are clearly designed to facilitate this.
- 4 - We are skeptical of the relevance of the site photographs accompanying the applications. All appear to be taken early in the morning, perhaps at weekends, the empty streets and give a false impression of the usual intensity of pedestrian use.
- 5 - The Fitzrovia Area Action Plan highlights the severe deficiency in public space provision in the area. Of the existing public open space, 80% is on streets and footpaths and it is an inappropriate balance of priority that space on Tottenham Court Road should be cluttered by privately owned kiosks, serving a commercial purpose. Open space is a civic amenity to be enjoyed by all.
- 6 - On Tottenham Court Road, in particular, there are 35 existing telephone kiosks. All are unused, unmaintained, covered in graffiti and advertisements for prostitutes; larger kiosks are used by rough sleepers and those with doors by users of crack cocaine. All make an unsightly contribution to the street scene; some are also used as urinals and present a health hazard. There is no need for more of the same. We note that no management or maintenance plan accompanies the application.
- 7 - Tottenham Court Road is excessively cluttered with street furniture and is subject to major public realm renewal as part of the Council's West End Project, which was approved by Cabinet on 21 January 2015. It is visually congested and has been declared the worst street in London. Ref YT video. The applications do not acknowledge this and we see no information submitted to explain how these proposals will be coordinated with the Council's urban realm and landscape proposals.
- 8 - The space outside the Met Building on Tottenham Court Road, known as Windmill Square, is perhaps the worst example of encroachment of kiosks onto public open space in the area. Application 2017/1090/P proposes to make this worse and the site photograph accompanying the application omits the clutter that already exists.
- 9 - The space outside Warren Street Underground Station is extremely congested and equally cluttered with existing structures. Again, we note that application 2017/1086/P proposes to make this worse and the site photograph accompanying the application omits the clutter and street stalls that already exist.
- 10 - The space that is the subject of application 2017/1081/P is a recent improvement project by the Council and is already severely cluttered as the site photograph accompanying the application shows. It is also intensively used by rough sleepers who are also shown in the photograph.
- 11 - When Crossrail becomes operational, there is expected to be a huge increase in pedestrian footfall around St Giles Circus and on Tottenham Court Road. We have previously expressed concern to the Council that not enough has been done to deal with removal of existing street/pavement clutter, including the various unsightly structures that occupy the public realm. These proposals will add more clutter, further obstruct pedestrian flow and add to what is already a serious safety hazard for pedestrians.

The Association supports good quality design that will enhance Bloomsbury's streetscape, which these proposals clearly do not. With such a demonstrable breach of the Council's planning policy and of its supplementary planning guidance, we look to the Council to refuse these applications.

We would be grateful if you would let us know of any further modification to the applications; the decisions, if they are to be decided under delegated powers, or the meeting date if they are to be decided by Committee.

Stephen Heath
On behalf of The Bloomsbury Association

Land adjacent to:
90 Tottenham Court Road, W1T 4TJ
Application for planning permission: 2017/1026/P

Land adjacent to:
23 Tottenham Court Road, W1T 1BJ
Application for planning permission: 2017/1031/P

Land adjacent to:
39 Tottenham Court Road, W1T 2AR
Application for planning permission: 2017/1090/P

Land adjacent to:
145-149 Tottenham Court Road, W1T 7NE
Application for planning permission: 2017/1198/P

Land adjacent to:
80-85 Tottenham Court Road, W1T 4TE
Application for planning permission: 2017/1199/P

Land adjacent to:
90 Tottenham Court Road, W1T 4TJ
Application for planning permission: 2017/1090/P

Land adjacent to:
Warren Street Underground Station, NW1 3AA
Application for planning permission: 2017/1081/P

Land adjacent to:
Warren Street Underground Station, NW1 3AA
Application for planning permission: 2017/1086/P

Land adjacent to:
1 St Giles High Street, WC2H 8AG
Application for planning permission: 2017/1200/P

Land adjacent to:
97 Southampton Row, WC1B 4HH
Application for planning permission: 2017/1093/P

Land adjacent to:
69-70 Russell Square, WC1B 5BA
Application for planning permission: 2017/1097/P