

Application No:	Consultees Name:	Consultees Addr:	Received:	Comment:	Response:
2017/2492/P	Meredith Whitten on behalf of the Covent Garden Community Association	Covent Garden Community Association 42 Earlham Street WC2H 9LA	24/05/2017 21:09:32	OBJ	<p>The CGCA objects to the installation of a public call box at this location adjacent to the conservation area. This would be a new structure on the public highway, e.g. it is not replacing an existing phone box.</p> <p>(1) The proposed public call box presents a safety hazard, as it obstructs the flow of pedestrian traffic, as well as wheelchairs and prams, at this location, which experiences high footfall.</p> <p>Research and data contradict the need for increasing the number of call boxes. According to Ofcom, the money that BT received from phone boxes went down by nearly half between 2000 and 2006. Further, Ofcom's 2016 Communications Market Report found that 93 percent of UK adults own or use a mobile phone in the UK; 71 percent of adults own a smartphone. Research in 2013 also found that only 3 percent of UK residents made a call from a public phone box in the previous month.</p> <p>The evidence strongly supports that the number of public call boxes should be reduced, not increased.</p> <p>(2) The phone box would create an obstruction on the pavement. The Council recently has had to notify businesses adjacent to this site to remove A-boards and other obstructions on the pavement because they create a hazard and impediment to the heavy footfall on the public highway. Given this, it is counterintuitive to subsequently permit an unnecessary structure on the pavement at this location.</p> <p>(3) The proposed telephone box would result in visual street clutter that goes against Camden's aim of reducing visual street clutter (see Streetscape Design Manual, Chapter 4). Such street clutter has a significantly adverse effect on the appearance of the streetscape and the amenity of the area. CS17.5 also specifies that the design of streets, public areas, and the spaces between buildings needs to be uncluttered.</p> <p>(4) The proposed telephone box would further continue to visual clutter as its primary function would be to serve as an advertising presence. CPG1 para 8.9 says advertisements in conservation areas and on or near listed buildings require detailed consideration given the sensitivity and historic nature of these areas or buildings. Any advertisements on or near a listed building or in a conservation area must not harm their character and appearance.</p>