

**From:** Harrison, Adam (Councillor)  
**Sent:** 12 March 2018 14:58  
**To:** Carr, Seonaid  
**Cc:** Madlani, Rishi (Councillor); Francis, Sabrina (Councillor)  
**Subject:** Re: GDPO Phone Boxes

Many thanks for this, Seonaid.

I and my fellow ward councillors for Bloomsbury, Sabrina Francis and Rishi Madlani, would like to object on the following grounds to all the applications noted in your email.

– Street environment: use of space

As ward councillors for a central London ward, and one amongst us with executive responsible for street management and the environment, we are aware of the enormous demands that there are on space on the public highway. There are always a large number of competing claims from different items of street furniture. Their location can also impact on meeting other related demands, such as providing different types of parking or keeping the highway between a phonebox and nearby buildings clear. Especially as London's population only grows, with the number of jobs projected to grow in the area (increasing the daytime population), and the arrival of major transport infrastructure developments such as Crossrail and HS2, permitting these new phoneboxes to sprout up in these locations will cause significant detriment to the local authority's ability to effectively manage the streets, hindering the achievement of the very valid public aims of keeping the street clear, moving and uncluttered. When set against the virtually zero public benefit of more pay phones in the era of the smartphone – and in an area already with a preponderance of phoneboxes – the additional clutter these would bring to the area form a strong reason for refusal. While we are here, one notes the brazenness of the pretence that these items are being proposed for any reason other than to generate income through advertising, which in itself represents zero public benefit.

– Street environment: cleanliness

Phoneboxes attract litter and mess of a variety of type, both inside the structures and adjacent. Getting the companies to properly and regularly clean them is a never ending struggle, and it is not a task where they have covered themselves in glory. On occasion the council has stepped in to clean. These applications should be refused on the grounds of (lack of) cleanliness, consequent impact on the appearance of the area, and the drain this can represent to the local authority.

– Crime and antisocial behaviour

As noted by the local police, phoneboxes can attract and provide a place for crime and antisocial behaviour to take place in. Creating new semi-enclosed spaces runs counter to both good design when it comes to designing out crime, and their creation will also represent a further drain on the time and resources of the police and of the local authority whose community safety officers, we know from our experience of many years as ward councillors, are obliged to respond to residents' complaints about these on-street venues of crime.

**Adam Harrison**  
**Councillor, Bloomsbury ward**  
**Cabinet member for improving Camden's environment**  
**Labour group, London Borough of Camden**

**A:** Town Hall, Judd Street, London, WC1H 9JE