

Muthoora, Leela

From: Jim.Cope@met.pnn.police.uk
Sent: 19 November 2018 10:28
To: Planning
Subject: Planning Response - 2018/5555/P - 166 High Holborn, WC1

FAO Leela Muthoora

Thank you for allowing me to comment on planning application 2018/5555/P which relates to the installation of a telephone kiosk/communications hub outside 166 High Holborn, WC1

I have reviewed the documents and I object to this planning application for the following reasons.

Comments

- Telephone kiosks are no longer used for their original purpose due to the fact that nearly every person is in possession of some kind of mobile device thus negating the need to use fixed land line telephone. As a result of this the phone boxes in The London Borough of Camden have now become 'crime generators' and a focal point for anti-social behaviour (ASB).
- My own previous experience of policing Camden highlights the above ASB, ranging from witnessing the taking of Class A drugs, urination, littering, the placing of 'Prostitute Cards', graffiti, sexual activities and a fixed location for begging. All of which have occurred within the current telephone kiosks. Also, due to poor maintenance any that are damaged or are dirty do not get cleaned, which makes the telephone kiosk unusable and an eye sore. Following the 'Broken Window' theory, if a location looks and feels that it is uncared for and in a state of disrepair then this leads to other criminal activity occurring within that location.
- The proposed location of the device is just east of the Shaftesbury Theatre which is an extremely busy location which has a capacity for 1400 people during each performance. Due to the number of performances there is always a large amount of people either waiting to enter the building or when the performance ends and they are inhabiting a very small and narrow footpath which suffers from massive overcrowding. This is due to the theatre being situated on the corner of a very busy vehicle junction. The dispersal of these crowds will be hindered by the placement of the telecommunications device as it will restrict the footpath even further preventing the safe and smooth departure from the area. Main concern is pedestrians and vehicles coming into conflict with one another.
- The design of the unit itself appears to be an issue as the operating unit, chargers and handset are situated on one side. Therefore if a person is using the unit they cannot see what is going on around them nor who could be approaching them from further up the foot path. Therefore creating a fear of crime whilst being used. The solar panels positioned at an angle on top of the device will act as a shelter from inclement weather.
- The hand set unit appears to be recessed into the main unit and therefore appears from the picture graphic to create a flat surface and due to the fact the area suffers from minor Class A Drugs Misuse any well-lit and smooth surface is used for the preparation of such narcotics. This recess could also be used to store small objects and conceal them if police approach a suspect drug misuser preventing them from detecting crime.
- The introduction of the unit will also increase the above ASB, as it conceals the activities of what is occurring behind the actual space and prevents police or passers-by seeing what or who is in/near there. This generates for the latter a fear of crime especially in regards to begging. As they will use the phone box as a cover and as a back rest when they sit on the floor, when the footpath is reduced in width even more by

their presence pedestrians have to walk past closely and therefore this generates an uncomfortable feeling for them.

- The extra lighting produced by the kiosk and the space it uses up in the public realm will also create an added distraction to an already cluttered street space. Any CCTV monitoring the area will be effected by this and therefore any crime prevention/detection properties they produce is lost.
- Recent media reports have highlighted the increase in planning applications submitted to local planners for the construction of telephone kiosks. These were proven to have very little or no benefit to the local community especially in regards to the facilities that they are alleged to supply. The main reason busy locations with a high pedestrian and vehicle activity is chosen so that the telephone kiosk can be used as advertising space.
- For the above reasons I object to this planning application.

Kind regards

Jim



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