

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 June 2019 11:56
To: Planning [REDACTED]
Subject: Planning Response - 2019/2696/P - O/S 148-149 High Holborn, EC1

FAO Alyce Jefferies,

Thank you for allowing me to comment on planning application 2019/2696/P which relates to the installation of an electronic communications apparatus comprising a telephone kiosk outside 148-149 High Holborn, EC1

I have reviewed the application and object to the proposal. I have the following comments and recommendations to make in relation to the application if successful.

Comments and Recommendations

- The issues surrounding telephone kiosks and communication devices within the London Borough of Camden are numerous and as such have become magnets for crime and anti-social behaviour. The issues surrounding them range from the placement of prostitute cards, graffiti, public urination, criminal damage and a location where Class A drugs misuse can occur.
- The main reason why they are associated with crime and anti-social behaviour is because there is not the demand for their intended use anymore, as a result of the high number of the population owning a mobile phone.
- The new design does mitigate some of the faults of the existing design and does reduce the 'foot print' taking up space within the public realm. The canopy covering the main screen/handset though is not ideal though as a result of the small shelf positioned to one side. Any flat surface which is protected from the elements will be favourable for the preparation and taking of Class A drugs. Therefore I would advise that this is removed from the design to prevent this from occurring. I appreciate the canopy contains the solar panels but also does it need to be so large? Ideally it should offer protection for a short period of time whilst the device is in use but not for extended periods by someone who can just 'loiter' at the location. This should be addressed prior to any approval.
- Orientation (If approved) – Due to there being limited vision through the device I would suggest, if it can be achieved, that the screen/handset is positioned so that it faces oncoming traffic. This will mean extra natural surveillance will be on the device and will assist to reduce any anti-social behaviour that may occur.
- Emergency Button – Applicant required to further explain how this will work and also explain if there is any mitigation in place to prevent misuse.
- Payment – Applicant required to explain how calls and access to Wifi systems to be paid for as not clear within the 'Technical Specifications'. Issues have arisen with other 'communication devices' that provide free calls for users, namely the increase in people using the device to make contact with drug dealers and the associated problems this will bring to an area.
- Maintenance Strategy (If approved) – Applicant to supply details of how often the device is visited upon installation for cleaning and maintenance. I would recommend including details of who to contact in the case of anti-social behaviour or if the device is inoperable and that these recommendations be made as part of any planning conditions. The current ones always appear to be uncared for and just add to the decline of area if not properly maintained.
- Overall I do not think enough has been done to address the impact these devices have on the public realm or acknowledge their relationship with generating crime and anti-social

behaviour within a location. Certainly it appears the positioning of the existing device was never considered as they do create unnecessary street clutter. The positioning of the current device outside a major tube station entrance and in the middle of the footpath between a building (currently under construction) just causes pedestrian congestion and is a risk if there was any kind of emergency inside the tube station that required evacuation.

If the applicant wishes to question my comments I will be more than happy to be contacted.

Kind regards

Jim



Jim Cope
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