

<b>Delegated Report</b>		<b>Analysis sheet</b>	<b>Expiry Date:</b>	12/07/2019
		N/A / attached	<b>Consultation Expiry Date:</b>	03/07/2019
<b>Officer</b>			<b>Application Number(s)</b>	
Alyce Jeffery			2019/2690/P	
<b>Application Address</b>			<b>Drawing Numbers</b>	
Outside 81 Tottenham Court Road London W1T 4SZ			Refer to draft decision notice	
<b>PO 3/4</b>	<b>Area Team Signature</b>	<b>C&amp;UD</b>	<b>Authorised Officer Signature</b>	
<b>Proposal(s)</b>				
Installation of 1 x replacement telephone kiosk on the pavement.				
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>		Prior Approval Required – Approval Refused		
<b>Application Type:</b>		GPDO Prior Approval Determination		

<b>Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:</b>	<b>Refer to Draft Decision Notice</b>					
<b>Informatives:</b>						
<b>Consultations</b>						
<b>Adjoining Occupiers and/or residents:</b>	No. notified	<b>00</b>	No. of responses	<b>00</b>	No. of objections	<b>00</b>
<b>Summary of consultation responses:</b>	<p><u>A site notice was displayed on 14/06/2019 and expired on 08/07/2019</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Metropolitan Police – Designing Out Crime Officer</u> objects on the following groundsThe 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.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• 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. This should be removed from the design to prevent this from occurring. The canopy is too large and 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.</li> <li>• Orientation - Due to there being limited vision through the device the screen/handset should be 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.</li> <li>• Emergency Button - further information needed to explain how this will work and also explain if there is any mitigation in place to prevent misuse.</li> <li>• Payment - further information required to explain how calls and access to Wifi systems are 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.</li> <li>• Maintenance Strategy further information needed regarding the details of how often the device is visited upon installation for cleaning and maintenance.. The current ones always appear to be uncared for and just add to the decline of area if not properly maintained.</li> <li>• Overall not 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. This particular location is well known for drug dealing and anti-social behaviour due to its central location along a very busy tourist area. Insufficient thought has been shown as to where a device should be</li> </ul>					

placed within the public realm or the impact it will have for pedestrian traffic and in this case a decent size foot way is reduced in size due to the device.

Transport Strategy Team (in conjunction with the Council Highways and West End Project Delivery Teams) object as follows:

- The footway on the west side of Tottenham Court Road at the above site is characterised by a defined street furniture zone at the kerbside. This appears quite cluttered with a large retail kiosk directly to the north and a large advertising panel directly to the south. However, none of these bulky items of street furniture actually obstruct the main pedestrian desire line along the footway, as they are all located in a defined street furniture zone at the kerbside. This helps to promote clear and unobstructed sightlines along the pedestrian desire line. The street furniture zone adjacent to the pedestrian route (pedestrian desire line) has been sensitively designed to provide a clear and uncluttered environment sufficient to accommodate extremely high volumes of pedestrians walking on the footway during busy periods (e.g. morning, lunchtime and afternoon/evening peak periods). However, this street furniture zone partially obstructs sightlines along the footway. The proposal to site a replacement telephone kiosk at the proposed site would do nothing to improve matters by re-introducing a prominent feature that would look out of place and be overly dominant, even when compared against the existing kiosk. This is because the existing kiosk is largely made of glass and is therefore transparent. The proposal would therefore have an unacceptable impact on the street scene.
- Appendix B of 'Pedestrian Comfort Guidance for London (published by Transport for London) indicates that footways in high flow areas should be at least 5.3 metres wide with a minimum effective footway width of 3.3 metres. The proposed site plan fails to provide any dimensions. It is acknowledged that the footway is wider than 5.3 metres at the site. However, the loss of any available footway space at this location is considered to be unacceptable in such a high footfall area. Pedestrian footfall is exceptionally high at this location and this is predicted to increase significantly with ongoing economic growth in Central London and High Speed Two (HS2) currently under construction. The proposal should be refused on this basis.
- The proposal to install a replacement telephone kiosk at the above site would re-introduce a significant physical and visual obstruction to an already highly cluttered pedestrian environment. The proposal would fail to improve the pedestrian environment at the site. This is unacceptable in such a high footfall location in Central London (arguably the highest footfall in the Borough). The proposal should be refused on this basis.
- The proposed telephone kiosk would obscure sightlines along the footway significantly, as per the existing situation. The proposed telephone kiosk would therefore constitute an unnecessary obstruction/impediment and a hazard to road users. The proposal should be refused on this basis.
- The proposed telephone kiosk would clearly have a significant impact on pedestrian amenity, comfort and safety, as per the existing situation. For these reasons, the proposal is considered contrary to Local Plan policies A1 and T1 and should be refused on this basis.
- It is also noted that the telephone unit would be orientated perpendicular to the kerbside on Tottenham Court Road. This differs

from the existing Infocus Media telephone kiosks where the telephone units are orientated parallel to the kerbside. The Metropolitan Police has objected to the proposal on this basis as it would make users of the telephone unit more vulnerable to an incident of crime or anti-social behaviour due to not having clear sightlines along the footway in both directions.

The Council's Access Officer comments as follows:

There are a number of requirements for an accessible phone booth that need to be considered. These are all taken from the BS8300-1:2018 and BS-2:2018:

- Provision and location of accessible telephones and internet booths in buildings in which telephones or internet booths for public use are provided, at least one device mounted at a height suitable for use by a wheelchair user should be provided in an accessible location, preferably in the entrance space. Where several accessible devices are provided, they should be positioned at different heights to suit people with ambulant mobility impairments and wheelchair users.
- A fold-down seat (450 mm to 520 mm high) or a perch seat (650 mm to 800 mm high) should be provided for the convenience of people with ambulant mobility impairments. Drop-down arms should be provided for each seat.
- Where practicable, devices should be located to enable wheelchair users to approach and use the device from both the front and the side.
- Where it is only possible to approach a device from the front, a knee hole at least 500mm wide and 700mm high should be provided.
- Telephone controls on accessible telephones for wheelchair users should be angled so that they can be used by people when seated or when using a perch seat.
- Telephone controls should be located between 750 mm and 1000 mm above the floor (see Figure 15).
- To benefit people who are blind or partially sighted, telephones should be selected which have well-lit keypads, large embossed or raised numerals that contrast visually with their background, and a raised dot on the number 5.
- Instructions for using telephones should be clear. They should be displayed in a large easy-to-read.
- The proposal fails to meet the above requirements and needs to be reviewed against the guidance.

## Site Description

The site is located on the pavement outside 81 Tottenham Court Road (A400) which forms part of the strategic road network (SRN). Camden Council is the highway authority, although it should be noted that Transport for London (TfL) has a duty under the Traffic Management Act 2004 to ensure that any development does not have an adverse impact on the SRN. The site is located in a high footfall area in Central London near Goodge Street and Warren Street stations (both London Underground).

The existing pavement outside 81 Tottenham Court Road is 8.6m in width.

The site is not located within a conservation area and is not adjacent to any listed buildings. The site lies just outside the Charlotte Street Conservation Area.

## Relevant History

### Site history:

2009/1037/P - Installation of telephone kiosk on the public highway. Prior Approval refused 19/05/2009

2010/5338/A - Relocation of internally illuminated free-standing advertising column to the pavement in front of 80 & 81 Tottenham Court Road. Granted 01/12/2010.

PS9604100 - Upgrade existing telephone kiosks. Agreed in default (telecoms) 4/12/1996.

## Relevant policies

### **National Planning Policy Framework 2019**

### **London Plan 2016**

### **Draft New London Plan 2017**

### **TfL's Pedestrian Comfort Guidance for London (2010)**

### **Camden Local Plan 2017**

A1 Managing the impact of development

C5 Safety and Security

C6 Access

D1 Design

D2 Heritage

G1 Delivery and location of growth

T1 Prioritising walking, cycling and public transport

### **Camden Planning Guidance**

CPG Design (2019) - Section 7 Designing safer environments

CPG Transport (2019) - Section 9 Streets and public spaces

CPG Access for all (2019)

CPG Amenity (2018)

### **Camden Streetscape Design Manual 2005**

### **Fitzrovia Area Action Plan - Part 3: Vision and objectives (adopted March 2014)**

## Assessment

### 1.0 Proposal

- 1.1 In the recent High Court decision in Westminster City Council V SSHCLG [2019] EWHC 176 (Admin) Ouseley J noted that the effect of the GPDO was that “the whole development for which prior approval is sought must fall within the Class relied on, and no part of it can fall outside it” ([37]) — in other words, “a proposed development falls outside [the GPDO], if part of it falls outside it” ([39]). Given that the kiosk in that case was partly for the purpose of advertising — and not wholly for the purpose of the operator’s network — it was held that it fell outside the terms of the GPDO. Accordingly, the Inspector erred in allowing the appeal against the refusal of prior approval and his decision was quashed ([48]). This decision confirms that telephone boxes which include advertising capabilities do not benefit from permitted development rights, on the basis that they serve a dual purpose. In this case, the proposals include a digital interactive screen and the size of the structure compared to the telecommunications equipment indicates that it has clearly been designed to accommodate a 6-sheet advertisement. On that basis, the proposed development is considered to fall outside the terms of the GPDO. Notwithstanding the fact the Council consider the development falls outside the terms of the GPDO for the sake of completeness an assessment of the proposals has been made.
- 1.1 Confirmation is sought as to whether the installation of a telephone kiosk would require prior approval under Part 16 of Schedule 2 of the GPDO. The order permits the Council to only consider matters of siting, design and appearance in determining GPDO prior approval applications. The potential impact on crime and public safety are relevant considerations under siting, design, appearance and access.
- 1.2 The proposed kiosk would be located at the same location as the existing kiosk, approximately 600mm from the kerb. The replacement kiosk would be 1,338 mm wide, 2,630 mm high and 917 mm deep (includes 600 mm wide canopy above the telephone and associated touchscreen. The touchscreen would only be 392 mm wide, it is therefore unclear why the actual kiosk needs to be so much wider than existing. It is clear that the proposed width is significantly greater than necessary.

### 2 Assessment

- 2.1 Policy A1 of the Camden Local Plan states that the Council will seek to ensure development contributes towards strong and successful communities by balancing the needs of development with the needs and characteristics of local areas and communities, and that the Council will resist development that fails to adequately assess and address transport impacts affecting communities, occupiers, neighbours and the existing transport network. Paragraph 6.10 states that the Council will expect works affecting the highway network to consider highway safety, with a focus on vulnerable road users, including the provision of adequate sightlines for vehicles, and that development should address the needs of vulnerable or disabled users. Furthermore, Policy T1 point e) states that the Council will seek to ensure that developments provide high quality footpaths and pavements that are wide enough for the number of people expected to use them, including features to assist vulnerable road users where appropriate, and paragraph 9.10 of CPG (Transport) highlights that footways should be wide enough for two people using wheelchairs, or prams, to pass each other.
- 2.2 Pedestrian volumes are extremely high in this area and are forecast to increase significantly when Crossrail services become operational (was due to be December 2018 but now forecast for the end of 2020) along with ongoing economic growth in Kings Cross and Central London. Pedestrian volumes are also forecast to increase significantly when High Speed 2 (HS2) services become operational. Existing footway space is a scarce resource and must be safeguarded for pedestrians both now and in the future to accommodate economic growth.
- 2.3 Policy C5 (Safety and Security) requires development to contribute to community safety and security which is echoed in paragraph 7.38 of CPG Design which states that all features within

public space and elements of street furniture should be designed to make a positive contribution to community safety and discourage anti-social behaviour. Street furniture should not obstruct pedestrian views or movement or be positioned to encourage anti-social behaviour or concealed areas.

2.4 Paragraphs 7.41 and 7.42 of CPG Design provide guidance on telephone boxes (telephone kiosks). Paragraph 7.41 of CPG Design includes the following text: In all cases we will request that the provider demonstrates the need for the siting of the new facility. We will consider whether kiosks add to the street clutter and if there are existing phone kiosks in the vicinity. Paragraph 7.42 of CPG Design states: All new phone boxes should have a limited impact on the sightlines from or of the footway and should not hamper pedestrian movement. The size of the structure that the phone box is in should be minimised to limit its impact on the streetscene and to decrease the opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour.

2.5 The remaining minimum footway width should comply with the Transport for London Streetscape Guidance and Pedestrian Comfort Guidance, and with Camden's Streetscape Design Manual. Designs which are dominated by advertising space are not acceptable. Any advertising should not be placed where it significantly reduces natural surveillance or CCTV coverage of, or into, the call box. Designs should seek to maximise views into and through the phone box and along the footway. Furthermore where any phone infrastructure also includes advertising, the guidance on advertising should be taken into account.

2.6 Camden's Streetscape Design manual – section 3.01 footway width states the following:

- "Clear footway" is not the distance from kerb to boundary wall, but the unobstructed pathway width within the footway;
- 1.8 metres – minimum width needed for two adults passing;
- 3 metres – minimum width for busy pedestrian street though greater widths are usually required;

2.7 Keeping the footway width visually free of street furniture is also important, allowing clear sightlines along the street, paragraph 8.6 of CPG (Transport) seeks improvements to streets and spaces to ensure good quality access and circulation arrangements for all. Ensuring the following:

- Safety of vulnerable road users, including children, elderly people and people with mobility difficulties, sight impairments and other disabilities;
- Maximising pedestrian accessibility and minimising journey times;
- Providing stretches of continuous public footways without public highway crossings;
- Linking to, maintaining, extending and improving the network pedestrian pathways;
- Providing a high quality environment in terms of appearance, design and construction, paying attention to Conservation Areas;
- Use of paving surfaces which enhance ease of movement for vulnerable road users; and,
- Avoiding street clutter and minimising the risk of pedestrian routes being obstructed or narrowed e.g. by pavement parking or by street furniture.

2.8 The proposed replacement telephone kiosk by virtue of its proposed materials, orientation and overall scale would likely obstruct pedestrian views and encourage anti-social behaviour, contrary to the above policies and guidance.

### **3 Siting**

3.1 Section 3.01 of Camden's Streetscape Design Manual requires a minimum unobstructed pathway width within the footway, known as the 'clear footway'. This guidance and Appendix B of TfL's Pedestrian Comfort Guidance, outlines the recommended minimum footway widths for different levels of pedestrian flows.

3.2 The application site is located within an area of extremely high pedestrian flows, due to its busy

commercial and office location, as well as its close proximity to Godge Street Underground Station and the nearby Whitfield Memorial Church (American International Church) which regularly holds market food stalls. The footway on the west side of Tottenham Court Road at the above site is characterised by a defined street furniture zone at the kerbside. This appears quite cluttered with a large retail kiosk directly to the north and a large advertising panel directly to the south.

3.3 However, none of these bulky items of street furniture actually obstruct the main pedestrian desire line along the footway, as they are all located in a defined street furniture zone at the kerbside. This helps to promote clear and unobstructed sightlines along the pedestrian desire line. The street furniture zone adjacent to the pedestrian route (pedestrian desire line) has been sensitively designed to provide a clear and uncluttered environment sufficient to accommodate extremely high volumes of pedestrians walking on the footway during busy periods (e.g. morning, lunchtime and afternoon/evening peak periods). However, this street furniture zone partially obstructs sightlines along the footway. The proposal to site a replacement telephone kiosk at the proposed site would do nothing to improve matters by re-introducing a prominent feature that would look out of place and be overly dominant, even when compared against the existing kiosk. This is because the existing kiosk is largely made of glass and is therefore transparent. The proposal would therefore have an unacceptable impact on the street scene.

3.4 Appendix B of 'Pedestrian Comfort Guidance for London (published by Transport for London) indicates that footways in high flow areas should be at least 5.3 metres wide with a minimum effective footway width of 3.3 metres. The proposed site plan fails to provide any dimensions. It is acknowledged that the footway is wider than 5.3 metres at the site. However, the loss of any available footway space at this location is considered to be unacceptable in such a high footfall area. Pedestrian footfall is exceptionally high at this location and this is predicted to increase significantly with ongoing economic growth in Central London and High Speed Two (HS2) currently under construction.

3.5 The telephone kiosk would likely obstruct and impede pedestrian movement (especially for blind and partially sighted pedestrians) and visibility on and along the footway and nearby pedestrian crossings, as well as, reducing visibility for road users approaching a busy traffic signal controlled junction. As such, the introduction of a kiosk is considered to have significant pedestrian and road safety implications in this location contrary to Policies A1 and T1.

## **4 Design and Appearance**

4.1 Policy D1 aims to ensure the highest design standards for developments. Policy D1 states that the Council will require all developments to be of the highest standard of design and to respect the character, setting, form and scale of neighbouring buildings, its contribution to the public realm, and its impact on wider views and vistas.

4.2 The Fitzrovia Area Action Plan adopted in March 2014 (Part 3: Vision and objectives) promotes the creation of high quality physical environments through, "*enhancing the interaction between streets and the ground floors of buildings by removing visual clutter and encouraging high quality design.*"

4.3 It is considered that the proposal to install a replacement telephone kiosk at the above site would re-introduce a significant physical and visual obstruction to an already highly cluttered pedestrian environment. The proposal would fail to improve the pedestrian environment at the site. This is unacceptable in such a high footfall location in Central London.

4.4 It is also noted that the telephone unit would be orientated perpendicular to the kerbside on Tottenham Court Road. This differs from the existing Infocus Media telephone kiosks where the telephone units are orientated parallel to the kerbside. I note that the Metropolitan Police has objected to the proposal on this basis as it would make users of the telephone unit more vulnerable to an incident of crime or anti-social behaviour due to not having clear sightlines along the footway in both directions.



4.5 It is considered that the proposed development by virtue of its design would add to the over-proliferation of visual clutter along the streetscene to the detriment of visual amenity of the area through the creation of further unnecessary street clutter. This would also be contrary to the guidance of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which aims to keep telecommunication sites to a minimum and encourage applicants to explore shared facilities.

4.6 The proposed structure is considered to be a very poor design in terms of its excessive overall size, scale, bulk, massing and proposed materials, and is not an appropriate or acceptable addition in this location. It would be an obtrusive piece of street furniture in this location detracting from the streetscene, as such, the proposal would fail to adhere to Policy D1.

## **5 Access**

5.1 Policy C6 requires new buildings, spaces and facilities that the public may use to be fully accessible to promote equality of opportunity. Although the proposed kiosk would allow for wheelchair users to 'access' the kiosk, this does not amount to the provision of a wheelchair accessible phone. The Council's Access Officer has highlighted that there are a number of requirements which need to be considered for an accessible phone booth, including the height of the telephone controls, which should be located between 0.75m and 1.0m above the floor. The telephone controls in the proposed kiosk would be located at a maximum height of 1.7m above the floor, and so the proposed kiosk is considered unacceptable in terms of providing access for all, contrary to Policy C6.

5.1 Officers consider the proposal's design does not meet the required accessibility standards. Had the application been considered for approval, additional conditions would have been added requiring its compliance.

## **6 Anti-social behaviour**

6.1 With regards to community safety matters, a number of issues have been raised by the Metropolitan Police Crime Prevention Design Advisor in which this site is located. In particular it has been noted that existing telephone kiosks within the London Borough of Camden have become 'crime generators' and a focal point for anti-social behaviour (ASB).

6.2 It is therefore considered that the design and siting of the proposal on this busy footway would introduce additional street clutter, as well as, increase opportunities for crime within a location where there are already safety issues in terms of crime and ASB, through reducing sight lines and natural surveillance in the area, and providing a potential opportunity for an offender to loiter. The proposal would therefore be contrary to Policies C5 and CPG (Design).

6.3 The Metropolitan Police Designing Out Crime Group, in referencing the siting of recently approved communications kiosks throughout London, have highlighted a number of issues that have compromised community safety. Their objection to the proposal has advised that they hold evidence to directly correlate the siting of on street free call facilities increase in drug misuse, dealing and related anti-social behaviour in the vicinity of where they are installed.

6.4 Recent appeal decisions relating to prior-approvals to install on-street kiosks in the London Borough of Camden have referenced anti-social behaviour (reference APP/X5210/W/18/3195004, Pavement adjacent King's Cross Railway Station). Separately, the Planning Inspector, under reference APP/X5210/Z/18/3204104 297 Euston Road, referred to observations made on a site visit to the vicinity of the proposal. It was explained that kiosks are commonly associated with antisocial behaviour. The function of the structure (although an advertisement in that instance) would highlight the presence of the kiosk, and it would be likely to increase the antisocial behaviour associated with it, especially so after dark. The Inspector noted that this could discourage some pavement users from using the nearby pavement, which would harmfully diminish its function. The presence of illumination would erode the utility of local CCTV recordings made close by, which would unacceptably disrupt endeavours to detect and prevent crime in a part of the street that is

already unusually cluttered. The Inspector concluded that the proposal would harm public safety.

## **7 Conclusion**

7.1 The proposal would result in unacceptable street clutter, harmful to the character and appearance of the streetscape and to the detriment of pedestrian flows, as well as creating issues with community safety and anti-social behaviour. The proposal, by virtue of its siting and appearance, is considered unacceptable and contrary to policies A1, C5, C6, D1, G1, and T1.

## **8 Recommendation**

8.1 Refuse Prior Approval