

To: planning@runnymede.gov.uk

FAO Shafkat Alhassan

Re: RU.24/1234 for a Communications Kiosk in Magna Square, Egham (+ RU.24/1227 for advertising consent):

Egham Residents' Association objects to siting a New World Payphone advertising kiosk so prominently within the public space at the very centre of Magna Square. This is valued as high-quality public realm, expertly and so recently designed as a focus for public gathering within Magna Square – example: at last week's celebration of the Xmas Tree lights switch-on this open space was full to overflowing with people all eager for a good view. The proposed kiosk would have fallen slap bang in the middle of the crowd, obstructing people and views (unless they could have clambered up it). With a height of 2.5 m and a width 1.1 m, the kiosk would simply get in the way. Under normal circumstances the bright HD digital screen would be visually intrusive, detracting from and obstructing sightlines N/S along Magna Square, northwards towards Egham Conservation Area and southwards along Station Road to the distant oak trees of Manorcroft Road. These are the sightlines whose value was recognized back at the time of the Magna Square consultations, and the designs incorporated them - the development won a design award. To fulfill its function, the public space at the centre of the Square needs to be kept clear of clutter.

We acknowledge the potential public benefits of the kiosk and would not object to its siting in a more discreet, less prominent location. Installation of public assets would benefit from prior consultation with the public, and we would have been happy to engage with the developers. We are not aware that any consultation happened. So we now urge the Council to refuse the application, to protect the public realm in Magna Square from clutter.

W.G.Burgess

Chair: Egham Residents' Association, c/o 35 Crown Street, Egham