Advert Towers, Chiswick Roundabout Ref: P/2026/1536

Comments from the West Chiswick and Gunnersbury Society

The West Chiswick and Gunnersbury Society's main concern with respect to this application relates to any potential negative impact on the local community within the surrounding residential properties, including those of the Wellesley Road Conservation Area. Our main focus is therefore on any proposed changes that would affect the public realm in any way that would worsen the experience of those living near to the roundabout.

Context

The large green space of the roundabout with its informal tree cover is an important positive feature helping to draw attention from the flyover, to soften its appearance and mitigate its influence. The "green and natural" roundabout also performs an important function of signalling a change of scale and character to those approaching from the high-rise buildings of the Great West Corridor to the west. At the roundabout, one is entering a different zone - a mosaic of low-to-medium rise commercial/light industrial properties and mainly Victorian residential properties (including two conservation areas) leading towards Chiswick town-centre. As noted in the Inspector's report for the 2012 Appeal (Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/H/12/2169784) for the current structures "To the south and east the character is residential with low rise houses and flats of domestic scale. The Wellesley Road Conservation Area includes some of the residential properties that lie close to the roundabout. The roundabout is overlooked by houses at4 and 6 and 30 to 40 even Surrey Crescent and is seen from higher levels of some nearby flats and houses." Since that report the residential component of the surroundings has increased with the addition of Wheatstone House (95 units, 9 storeys) and planning consent for Holly House (255 units, 24 storeys)

Many people live in the surrounding streets and frequently negotiate the roundabout on foot, by bike and in cars; they do not want the A4/M4 and its flyover to be the defining feature of their neighbourhood.

Proposals

Design We endorse the proposal that the replacement screens and support structures will be essentially the same size, have the same established footprint and utilise the original structural foundations of the existing towers, avoiding new groundworks. These are important design features to prevent an increase in the negative impact of the scheme on residential amenity and the natural environment of the roundabout.

We do, however, object to the proposal to incorporate illuminated (2 m wide) side panels connecting the front and rear displays on the side facing the M4 carriageway. We consider that such additional "non-functional" illumination will add to the overall light pollution of the area and introduce a confusing element to the driver experience.

Will the wooden elements of the structures be graffiti and vandal resistant? The current towers as well as the concrete supports of the flyover are frequently graffitied.

Operating conditions We note that some changes from those currently in force have been proposed. We request that the current operating conditions are maintained These include:

The displays **on all panels shall be identical at all times*** and shall be static and two dimensional only with no moving or apparently moving images, devices, words or emblems and shall not depict any images that resemble road signs or traffic signals.

The advertisements shall not change more frequently than **once every 30 seconds**** and the **advertisements on all four panels shall change simultaneously**.

*ie on all four display panels not, as proposed, only on the two display panels facing drivers travelling in one direction

** not 10 seconds as proposed; see 2012 Appeal Inspector's report.

Public Realm

Trees As noted under Context above the trees on the roundabout are critical features of the local townscape. They provide a welcome "natural" counterpoint to the brutal, alienating overhead intrusion of the flyover. They help to extend the domestic, human scale of the surrounding residential streets to the roundabout. The trees partially screen and soften the overhead structure and traffic, when viewed from the residential streets.

In addition to this visual role, the trees provide important environmental services including in relation to air quality, temperature and noise Their protection is therefore of the utmost importance. We request Conditions for their protection during construction, maintenance and operation of the advertising towers. Such Conditions should prohibit any pruning other than that strictly necessary on tree health or safety grounds and include measures relating to root protection areas (RPAs). Adherence to such Conditions will need to be monitored and enforced. During the construction of the current towers in 2012 several of the trees on the roundabout were severely loped and pruned (see photos on page 3) and took a long time to recover. Others were badly damaged with broken branches etc.

Planting Past attempts at under-storey planting on the roundabout itself have been unsuccessful. We would therefore request an s106 contribution to improving the surrounding public realm, in particular soft landscaping (spring bulbs etc) of the green areas in front of Surrey Crescent and on the corner of Clarence Road. A suitable scheme should be agreed in collaboration with the local community, including WCGS.

Similarly the green walls installed on the concrete supports of the flyover as part of the 2013 scheme have failed. Rather than any replacement, we request a Condition to require regular graffiti removal from these structures.

Lighting The two lighting columns installed under the flyover as part of the 2013 scheme no longer function. We request that they are either repaired and maintained or removed.

WCGS June 2026



October 2012



February 2013