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Report of the Chief Planning Officer

CITY PLANS PANEL

Date: 4 JULY 2013

Subject: PRE-APPLICATION Reference PREAPP/13/00675 - Installation of former BT

telephone boxes across City Centre (various locations)

Electoral Wards Affected:	Specific Implications For:
City and Hunslet	Equality and Diversity
	Community Cohesion
Yes Ward Members consulted (referred to in report)	Narrowing the Gap

RECOMMENDATION: This report is brought to Panel for information. AQL's representatives will be asked to present the emerging scheme to allow Members to consider and comment on the proposals.

1.0 INTRODUCTION:

1.1 This pre-application presentation relates to the installation of some former BT kiosks (coloured blue) as part of a new telecommunications initiative by applicants and provider AQL. The proposals will be presented to Panel by AQL's representatives to allow Members to comment on the evolving scheme, and to raise any issues prior to the intended submission of 'Prior Notification' applications under Part 24 of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995, as amended.

2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS:

- 2.1 The various initial locations suggested by the applicant are listed below:
 - 1 Adjacent to Salem United Reformed Church, Hunslet Road
 - 2 Adjacent to 9-11 Hunslet Road
 - 3 Adjacent to 15 Bridge End
 - 4 Crown Point Road near to junction with Bowman Lane
 - 5 Armouries Way near to Knights Way Bridge

- 6 Corn Exchange
- 7 Adjacent to 133 135 Briggate
- 8a Headrow near to the Core Shopping Centre entrance
- 8b Dortmund Square adjacent to 28 Headrow
- 9 Calverley Street adjacent to Nelson Mandela Gardens
- 10 Victoria Gardens opposite 159 Headrow
- 11 City Square outside former Post Office
- 12 Leeds City Station outside of north entrance
- 2.2 The site specific characteristics of each chosen location are as follows:

1) Adjacent to Salem United Reformed Church, Hunslet Road

This site on the footpath is positioned adjacent to the 3 storey brick built buildings which adjoin the rear of this listed grade II former Church (which is also where the applicant's offices are based).

2) Adjacent to 9-11 Hunslet Road

This site lies on the footpath in front of individual retail units which lies adjacent / opposite to the listed Adelphi Public House and Leeds Bridge House (both grade II). This site lies in the Conservation Area.

3) Adjacent to 15 Bridge End

This site again on the footpath is positioned outside of a restaurant at its point where it meets the listed grade II bridge to the south. The site is within the Conservation Area.

4) Crown Point Road – near to junction with Bowman Lane

This site lies just away from the north-east corner of the former Tetley's Brewery site near to an intersection of road dissecting Crown Point Road and Black Bull Street. The area contains a number of residential flat developments.

5) Armouries Way – near to Knights Way Bridge

This site lies on the edge of the Conservation Area overlooking the Calder Navigation and near to Clarence (New) Dock.

6) Corn Exchange

This is situated near to the front entrance in a prominent position adjacent to this grade I listed building. The site is within the Conservation Area.

7) Adjacent to 133 – 135 Briggate

This is situated on a prominent part of the pedestrianised stretch of Briggate outside of existing retailers Costa Coffee and H & M. This is positioned in front of the listed grade II building no's 133-137. The site is within the Conservation Area.

8a) Headrow – near to the Core Shopping Centre entrance

This position lies adjacent to another provider's existing black kiosk (In-Focus) and near to planting beds which align the Headrow. The site is just within the edge of the Conservation Area.

8b) Dortmund Square - adjacent to 28 Headrow

This position also lies adjacent to existing BT kiosks (due to be removed and replaced by a single new BT kiosk) within the recently repaved Dortmund Square, an area of public realm linking the Core Shopping Centre and Headrow (south) and St Johns Centre to the north.

9) Calverley Street – adjacent to Nelson Mandela Gardens

This position is shown adjacent to this area of public realm which lies in the corner of Millennium Square. To the south is the grade II* listed Civic Court Buildings amongst other notable listed buildings in the area. The site is within the Conservation Area.

10) Victoria Gardens – opposite 159 Headrow

This site is positioned in an area of public realm amongst a variety of listed buildings, most notably the Town Hall (grade I) and Municipal Buildings (grade II*). The site is within the Conservation Area.

11) City Square – outside former Post Office

This site is intended to replace one of the two former telephone boxes currently which are immediately in front of this listed building, now a restaurant, overlooking City Square a prominent and well used area of public realm linking the station with the City Centre. The site is within the Conservation Area.

12) <u>Leeds City Station – outside of north entrance</u>

This site lies across from the City Square proposal (no11) positioned in front of the station's north entrance at the pedestrian crossing. The site is within the Conservation Area.

3.0 PROPOSAL

3.1 The applicant seeks to exercise his permitted development rights under Part 24 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended).

The proposal is to site a number of former BT telephone kiosks (Sir Giles Gilbert Scott K6 telephone boxes) around the City Centre at various pedestrianised and footpath locations. These are intended to provide a digitally interactive point of information to explain AQL's strategy and allow members of the public to leave video comments.

- 3.2 These original red K6 phone booths would be re-modeled with six interactive display screens set at two levels externally around three faces of the unit, with solar panels and the AQL brand name set in between all these within the former glazing panels. The remaining panels would feature mirrored glass. The boxes would be painted blue. A mock-up box will be shown at Panel.
- 3.3 The interactive externally mounted screens would provide information e.g. for tourists. They would also have a facility for emergency calls to be made as a statutory operator. All services are accessible from the outside of the box only. The existing doors would be locked and not accessible to the general public.
- 3.4 The boxes are sized as per their original 1935 dimensions 2.4m tall x 0.9m wide.
- 3.5 They are to have the following functionality once installed and commissioned.
 - * 999 emergency calling
 - * free telephony
 - * free wi-fi access (high speed, uncontended, unlimited access).
 - * disabled accessibility
 - * interactive kiosk way finder & public information
 - * video blogging leave video feedback the public's memories of that location

- * technology demonstrator bluetooth proximity.
- 3.6 The applicant has suggested that some boxes will glow in a 'particular colour' (depending on the model of the phone) upon a person passing. However no more detail has been provided on this for officers to consider and comment on at time of writing the report.
- 3.7 The applicant states that the main facility is the core services emergency help point and free wi-fi access all others will evolve and change over time depending on public needs.

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 None directly related to the applicant's proposals however the following history to other operators / initiatives is considered relevant.
- 4.2 BT are exercising their permitted development rights under Part 24 of the General Permitted Development Order in relation to removing a number of 'KX' designed BT telephone kiosks from around the City Centre and replacing them with a new format kiosk with advertisement panels to the rear side operated in agreement with JC Decaux. The following prior notification applications have been approved:

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13/01909/DTM (Headrow)
13/01910/DTM (Dortmund Square)
13/01911/DTM (Albion Street)
13/01913/DTM (Woodhouse Lane)
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4.3 There are also a number of recently implemented <u>'In Focus'</u> black telephone kiosks which have been the subject of the prior notification applications listed below:

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13/01972/DTM (Headrow)
12/04676/DTM (York Street)
12/04677/DTM (New Briggate)
12/04678/DTM (Vicar Lane)
12/04679/DTM (Bond Court)
12/046880/DTM (Dyer Street)
12/04682/DTM (Merrion Street)
12/04684/DTM (Woodhouse Lane)
12/04673/DTM (South Parade / Park Row)
13/01968/DTM (York Street)
13/01971/DTM (Kirkgate)
12/04674/DTM (St Peters Street)
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4.4 Furthermore, the Council are working on a potential new advertisement initiative to deploy 6 sheet advertisement panels located around the City. This project is at its early stages but Members attention is drawn to this as well in the context of the proposal and the above committed installations.

5.0 HISTORY OF NEGOTIATIONS

5.1 Discussions with the Council have concentrated on the suggested locations to be provided in regards to planning, highways and heritage issues.

6.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

6.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) came into force on 27th March 2012. The NPPF states that unless material considerations indicate otherwise development proposals which accord with the Development Plan should be approved. The NPPF identifies a presumption in favour of sustainable development and good design.

6.2 Local Development Framework (LDF)

6.3 <u>Emerging LDF Policy</u>

- The Core Strategy sets out strategic level policies and vision to guide the delivery of development investment decisions and the overall future of the district. On 26th April 2013 the Council submitted the Publication Draft Core Strategy to the Secretary of State for examination and an Inspector has been appointed. It is expected that the examination will commence in September 2013.
- As the Council has submitted the Publication Draft Core Strategy for independent examination some weight can now be attached to the document and its contents recognising that the weight to be attached may be limited by outstanding representations which have been made which will be considered at the future examination.
- 6.6 Section 3.2 (Spatial Vision) refers to the long term vision for the Leeds metropolitan district is that by 2028, Leeds will have maintained and strengthened its position at the heart of the City Region and has grown a strong diverse and successful urban and rural economy, with skilled people and competitive businesses, which are sustainable, innovative, creative and entrepreneurial. All communities will have equal chances to access, jobs and training opportunities through the growth of local businesses. In realising the objectives of the Spatial Vision, one element is that the City should be a 'connected' City.
- 6.7 <u>Spatial Policy 8</u> Economic Development Priorities (ix) refers to the desire to "support the advancement of high quality communications infrastructure to foster sustainable economic growth and to enhance business links".
- 6.8 <u>Policy CC1 City Centre Development</u> refers to amongst other issues to provide improvements to public realm.
- 6.9 <u>Policy P10 Design</u> highlights that new development for buildings and spaces, and alterations to existing, should be based on a thorough contextual analysis and provide good design that is appropriate to its location, scale and function. Proposals should accord with principles around size, scale, design, layout, character, surroundings, public realm, historic / natural assets, visual, residential and general amenity, safety, security and accessibility to all.
- 6.10 Policy P11 Conservation outlines that the historic environment, consisting of archaeological remains, historic buildings, townscapes and landscapes, including locally significant undesignated assets and their settings, will be conserved and their settings will be conserved, particularly those elements which help to give Leeds its distinct identity.
- 6.11 <u>Policy P12 Landscape</u> highlights that the character, quality and biodiversity of Leeds' townscapes and landscapes, including their historical and cultural

significance, will be conserved and enhanced to protect their distinctiveness through stewardship and the planning process.

6.12 Policy T2 - Accessibility requirements and new development - new development should be located in accessible locations that are adequately served by existing or programmed highways, by public transport and with safe and secure access for pedestrians, cyclists and people with impaired mobility. Locations should not create or materially add to problems of safety, environment or efficiency on the highway network.

6.13 Development Plan

- 6.14 Leeds Unitary Development Plan Review 2006 (UDPR)
- 6.15 The application sites comprise a variety of locations on the public highway within the designated City Centre and the following policies are considered to be of most relevance:
 - <u>GP5 Requirement of Development Proposals</u>: seeks to ensure that development proposals resolve detailed planning considerations, including amenity.
 - <u>N13 Design and New Buildings:</u> outlines that proposals should be high quality and have regard to the character and appearance of their surroundings.
 - <u>T2 Transport Provision for Development:</u> seeks to ensure developments are not of detrimental impact upon highway safety.
 - <u>CC9 Existing Public Space:</u> seeks proposals to achieve quality, safety, security and general accessibility in these spaces.
 - <u>CC11 Street and Pedestrian Corridors</u>: outlines Council will assess streets to create more and enhance existing pedestrianised corridors and street environment generally, respecting historic character, traditional paving and historic settings where dominant.

7.0 ISSUES

Background and general context

- 7.1 The principle of the proposed telecommunications development is established by the permitted development rights granted by Part 24 of the General Permitted Development Order subject to the consideration of detailed matters of siting and design which are the two matters of consideration by which Prior Notification telecommunications applications are assessed against.
- 7.2 These former red telephone boxes have been seen as an iconic British piece of heritage which totalled circa 73,000 by the 1980s many of which across the Country have been decommissioned although a high number still remain. The applicant proposes to put a modern twist and new use to these boxes and give Leeds a symbolic colour (blue) identity much like that of the cream telephone boxes used in Hull.
- 7.3 The design of the boxes could be supported subject to understanding the detailed impact of the alterations needed to provide the proposed facility.

- 7.4 It should be noted that the Council already does have a free wi-fi initiative already in place (Briggate and Millennium Square) which is to be rolled out further afield eventually.
- 7.5 It is considered that sites should generally not be supported where there is an adverse impact upon the setting of a listed building, sites where the structure could be seen to be adding to street clutter in pedestrianised areas and sites in the City's main public squares and public realm spaces.

Proposed locations

7.6 The following Officer advice on each proposed location should be noted.

1) Adjacent to Salem United Reformed Church, Hunslet Road

This siting would narrow the public footpath to around 2-2.5m width which is below standards. In consultation with Highways, a position on Salem Place may be more acceptable, notwithstanding this is closer to the listed building.

This site could be potentially supported if relocated onto Salem Place.

2) Adjacent to 9-11 Hunslet Road

This would be a prominent siting in between listed buildings either side of Hunslet Road. This is also the route of the NGT trolleybus scheme and thus a revised position would be advocated in this vicinity.

This site is not supported.

3) Adjacent to 15 Bridge End

In consultation with Highways, it is understood that this site appears to allow for sufficient footpath width to be retained with allowance made for the existing restaurant seating on the footpath. However the siting is directly adjacent to the inception of the listed bridge with a potentially negative impact on this approach route.

This site could be potentially supported subject to relocation away from the setting of the listed bridge.

4) Crown Point Road – near to junction with Bowman Lane

Again like site 2, this is also the route of the NGT trolleybus scheme and thus a revised position would be advocated in this vicinity.

This site is not supported.

5) Armouries Way – near to Knights Way Bridge

This siting may be acceptable and no objections have been raised by Highways colleagues.

This site could be potentially supported.

6) Corn Exchange

This is a very sensitive site where the Council have been actively pursuing decluttering of this area which will also open up and benefit public views of this important grade I listed building. Again like sites 2 and 4, this is also the route of the NGT trolleybus scheme and thus a revised position would be advocated in this vicinity.

This site is not supported.

7) Adjacent to 133 – 135 Briggate

Again this is a very sensitive site where the Council has been actively pursuing decluttering of this important thoroughfare – recently a former BT kiosk has been removed as part of this objective. The site is also directly in front of a listed building. Highways have further commented that due to the amount of street furniture this would not be a recommended siting.

This site is not supported.

8a) Headrow - near to the Core Shopping Centre entrance

This site is not supported in consultation with Highways and City Centre Management given the existing street furniture / planters which already give some obvious clutter in the area. Highways have also raised the issue that this siting would block desired sight lines across a busy stretch of the Headrow well used by pedestrians and vehicles alike.

This site is not supported.

8b) Dortmund Square – adjacent to 28 Headrow

This site and indeed the wider Square is subject of removal of a number of former KX BT phone kiosks. Only one modern kiosk is likely to be replaced by BT here. As also mentioned in consultation with Highways this Square has been the subject of de-cluttering of street furniture to allow for a better pedestrian environment and it is considered this would be contrary to these objectives.

This site is not supported.

9) Calverley Street – adjacent to Nelson Mandela Gardens

This is a sensitive site given the surrounding listed buildings and adjacent public space. Highways do not raise objection however there is a potentially adverse impact on the setting of the public space and surrounding listed buildings.

This site is not supported.

10) Victoria Gardens – opposite 159 Headrow

This is a very sensitive site given the surrounding listed buildings and public views of these. The City Centre Management Team have advised that consultation with the Council's Events Team would be required given the area is often used for temporary staging etc.

This site is not supported.

11) City Square – outside former Post Office

Highways raise no objections however Officers have concerns about the potential impact the proposal may have upon the setting of this prominent and striking listed building.

This site is not supported.

12) <u>Leeds City Station – outside of north entrance</u>

Highways raise objection in that pedestrian sightlines will be impeded given the flow of traffic travelling west from beyond the proposed siting and given also that an

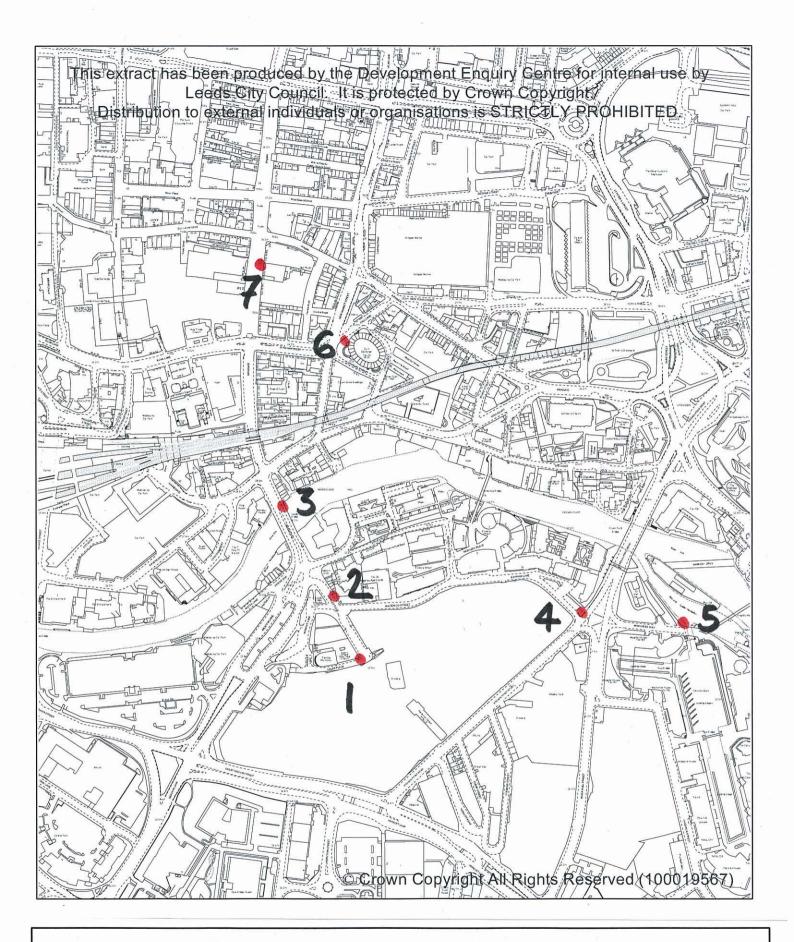
existing Council 'Walk It' sign exists already. Alternative sitings may be more acceptable in this area.

This site could be potentially supported if relocated.

- 7.7 Members general feedback on the approach outlined in paragraph 7.5 and the design of these units are welcomed, particularly in light of other telecommunications operators' equipment both existing and planned in the City Centre.
- 7.8 Do Members agree with Officers that the proposed locations at sites 1, 3, 5, and 12 could be potentially acceptable subject to addressing the detailed comments above in respect of siting?

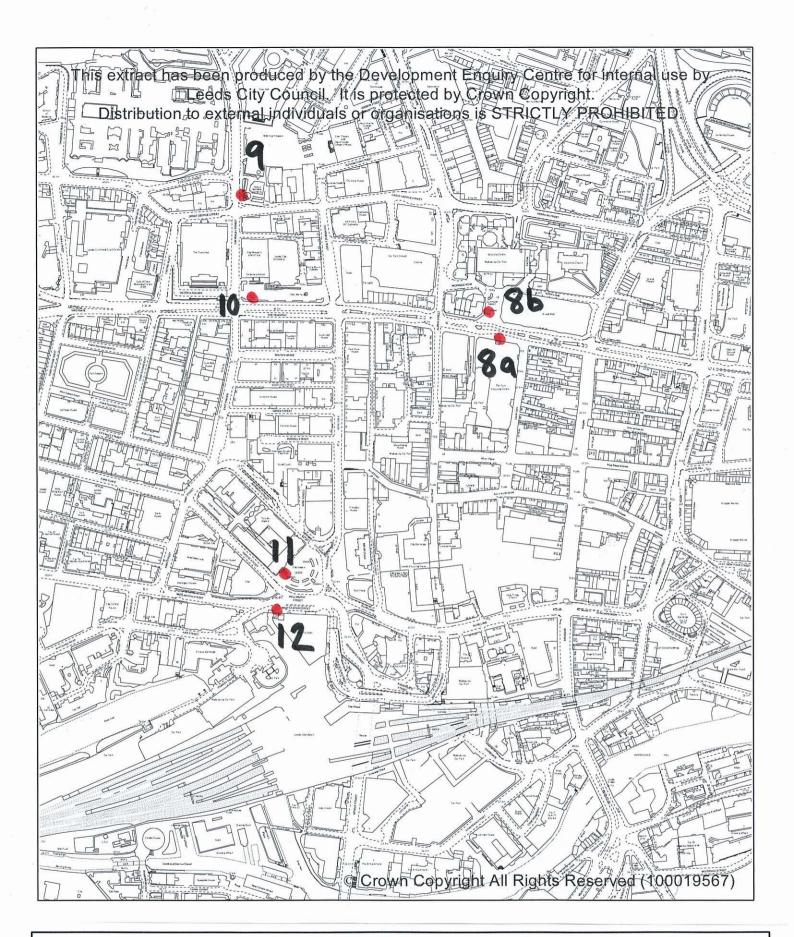
Background Papers:

Application file PREAPP/13/00675
Plans 1-12 Locations of proposed AQL telephone kiosks



CITY PLANS PANEL

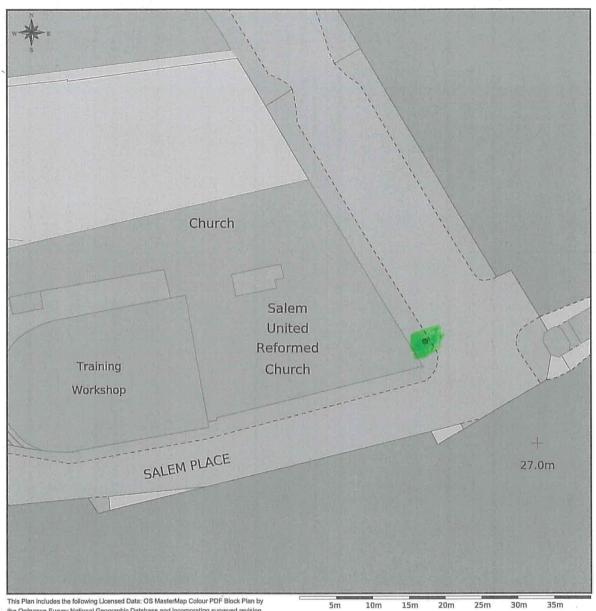
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CITY PLANS PANEL

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SCANNED Phone box 1 - Salem 0 _ JUN 2013



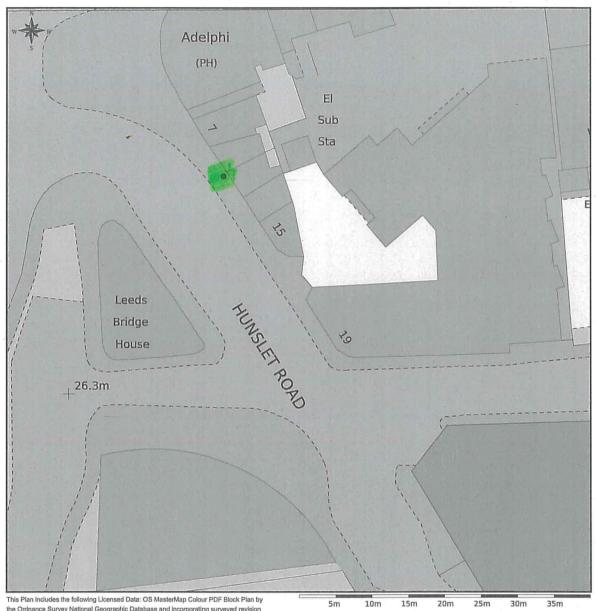
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SCANNED one Box 2 - Hunslet Road

0 _ JUN 2013



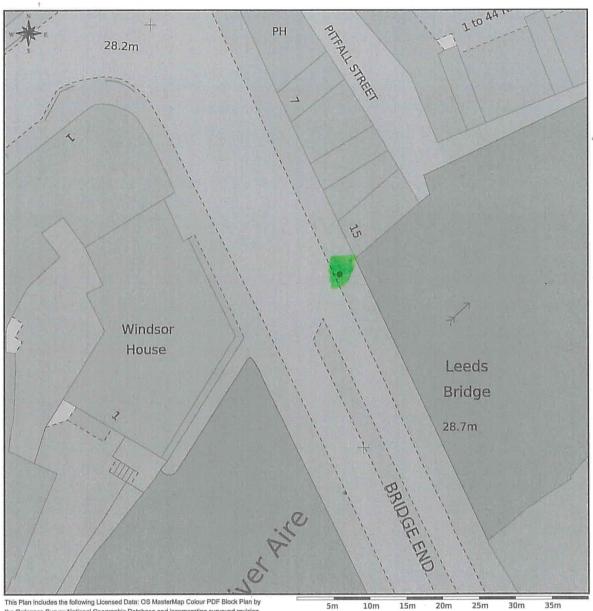
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SCANNEDne Box 3 - Bridge End

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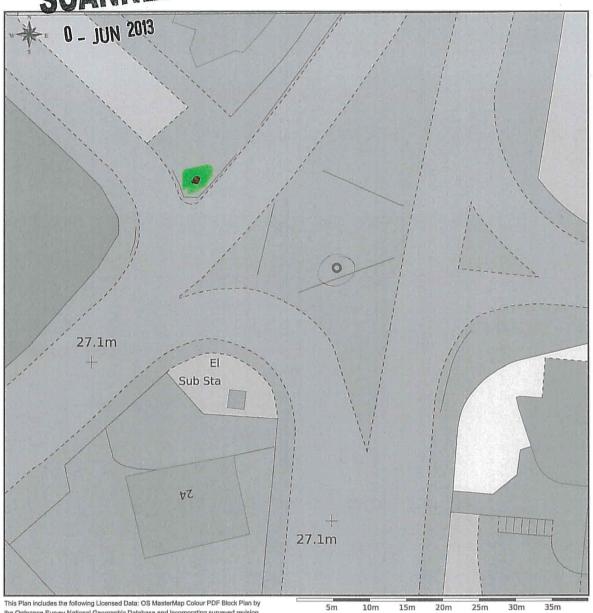
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Phone Box 4 - Crown Point Road

SCANNED

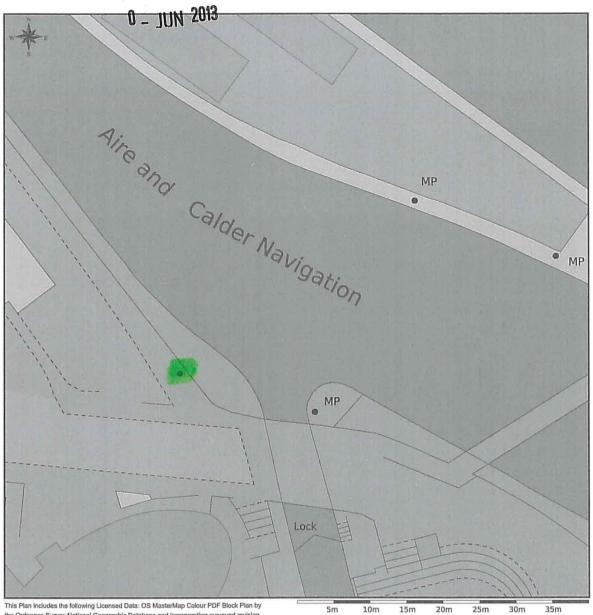


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Phone Box 5 - Armouries Way SCANNED



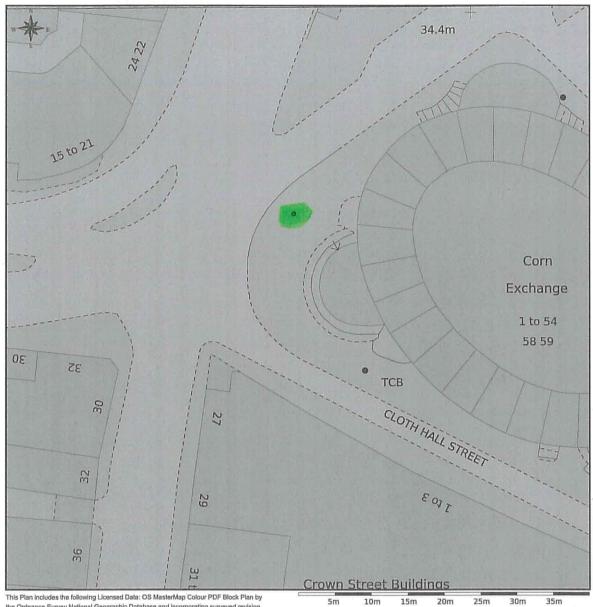
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SCARRED Box 6 - Corn Exchange

0 - JUN 2013

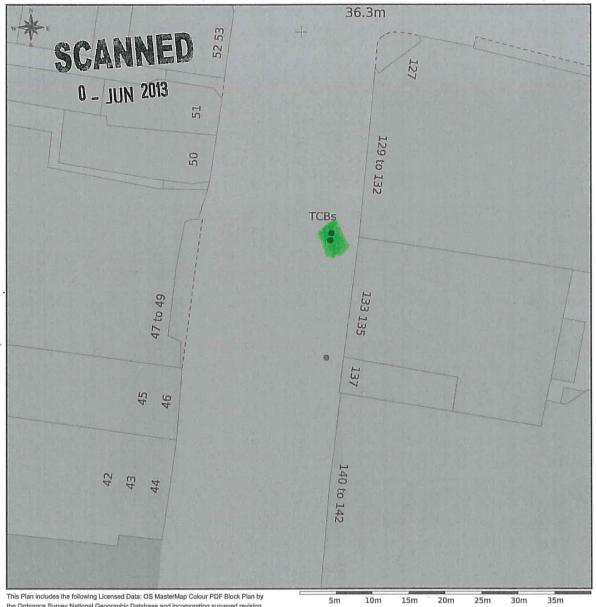


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Phone Box 7 - Briggate

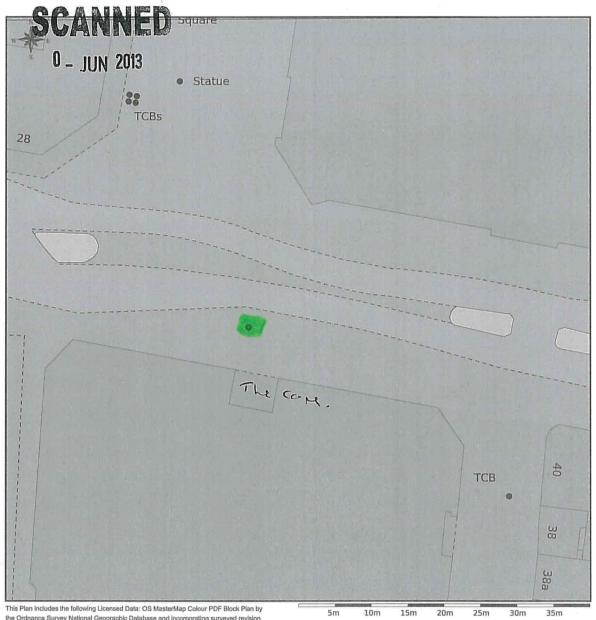


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Phone Box 8a - The Headrow



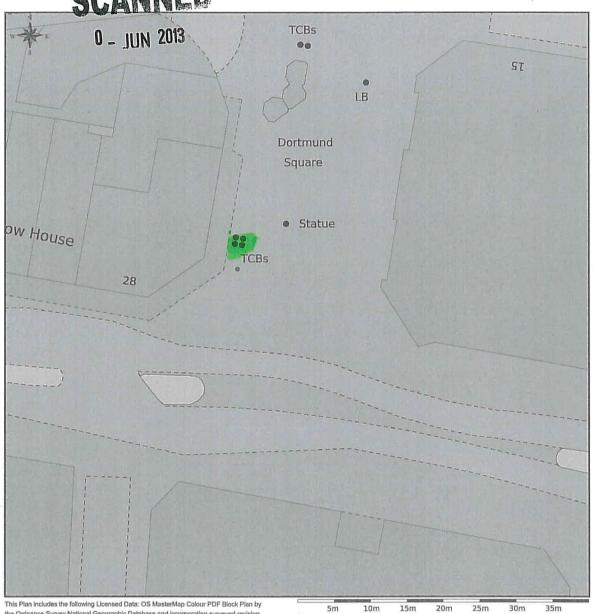
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Phone Box 8b - The Headrow

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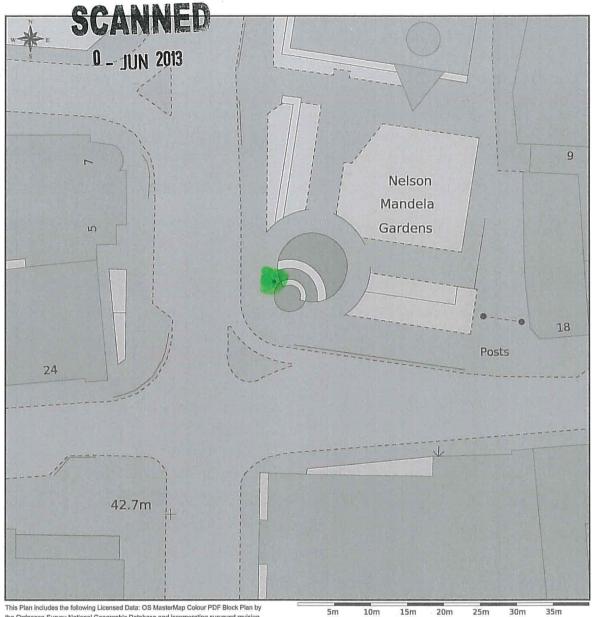


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Phone Box 9 - Calverley Street

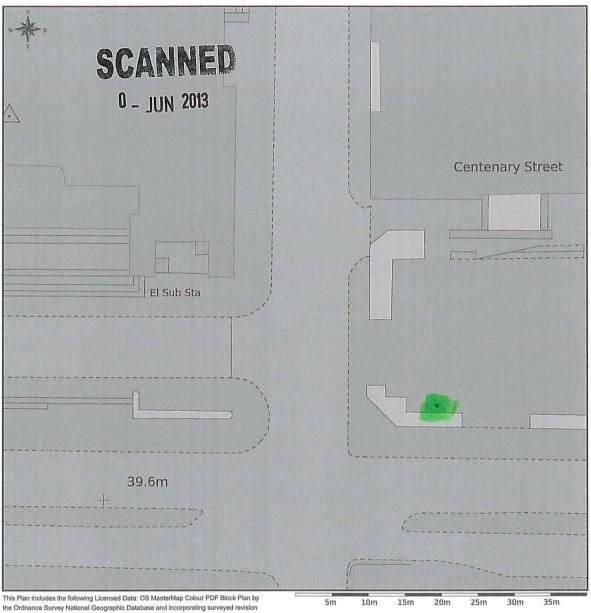


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Phone Box 10 - Town Hall

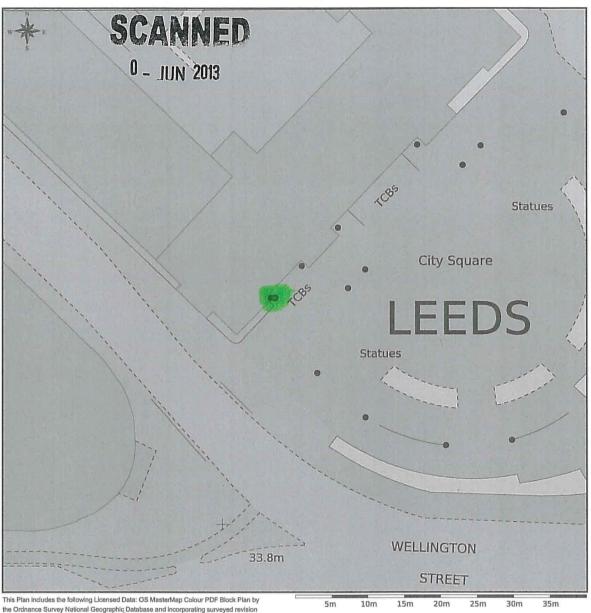


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Phone Box 11 - City Square

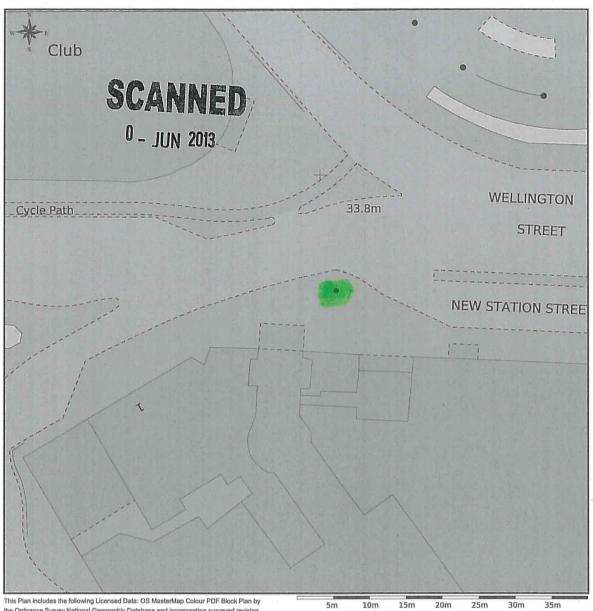


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Phone Box 12 - New Street Station



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