

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT FOR ELECTRICITY NORTH WEST

Highway Verge Opposite Owd Betts, Edenfield Road

This Design and Access Statement is provided in conjunction with the Supplementary Information, drawings and supporting material included with this planning application.

Introduction

The proposed development is a 10m monopole on the highway verge. The ground based equipment will comprise of an equipment cabinet, meter cabinet and crash barrier. The pole will house 2 small flat panel antennas.

The site location is an established highway verge that already houses street furniture, hosting a weather station, bollards and a road sign, with a telegraph pole on the verge opposite.

The proposed development site is not within an area at risk of flooding.

Pre Application Discussions and Negotiations

Pre Application Discussions were requested from the Highway Authority with regard to siting but no response was received.

Documentation Submitted with Application

- Plans and elevations
- Technical Justification
- Design and Access Statement
- ICNIRP Statement

Design Component

- Use proposed - Telecoms Pole for ENW internal telemetry network, as per supporting Technical Justification.
- Amount – in this case a height of 10m is required to enable the necessary Line of Sight to be achieved to link in the Tottington and Scout Moor sites as per the Technical Justification. It is not possible to reliably achieve the required line of sight below this height. The cabinets at ground level will be coloured green, and the crash barrier grey.
- Layout – the layout is simply the location of the pole in the verge with the cabinets adjacent. The crash barrier will provide protection to the equipment.
- Scale – the proposal is considered to be visually of very limited impact given the location amongst other vertical structures, and in a non sensitive highway verge.
- Landscaping – There is no tree screening at this location due to the exposed conditions. There is a stone wall behind which provides a backdrop at lower level.
- Appearance – The design proposed is a 10m high monopole. It will be of galvanised steel which will blend in with the landscape and match existing structures nearby. The cabinets will be olive green. The pole will house two small flat panel antennas painted white.

Access

Access to the site can be obtained directly from the highway and such access will only be required infrequently. There is also an existing parking area adjacent that provides a safe location for parking vehicles.

Alternative Site Options

The location here is very specific and needs to be somewhere very close to this location to meet the line of sight requirements. Alternative locations along this road were considered but it was concluded that the selected area was the least visually sensitive being beyond the parking/viewing area and adjacent to an existing piece of street furniture in the weather station.

There are no available existing structures that could be shared by the applicant to provide the required coverage in this specific location.

National Planning Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework supports high quality communications and acknowledges that such development is essential for social wellbeing. Sites should be kept to a minimum and sympathetically designed. Technical evidence should be provided to justify the proposed development, and the use of existing buildings and structures should be investigated. This proposal complies with this policy.

Local Planning Policy

The following Rochdale Borough Council Core Strategy Policies are considered relevant to this application;

SO3 – Improving Design, image and Quality of Place

This policy seeks to preserve and enhance the best aspects of the borough's heritage and make any development more attractive. In this respect the proposal has sought to find a location that is not over prominent or within a particularly sensitive area in the context of the general location. The chosen site is beyond the parking and viewing area over the reservoir and adjacent to other pieces of similar street furniture.

P3 – Improving Design of New Development

This policy seeks to require all new developments to be of a high standard design. In this respect there are clearly limits to how such a site can be designed and built given the height and operational requirements. However, utilising the galvanised steel pole does produce a weathered grey finish that will merge in with the landscape and visual backdrop. The suggested olive green cabinets will be in keeping with the vegetation at lower levels. If however the Council would prefer an alternative colour this can be arranged. The 10m height is not dissimilar to the telegraph and power poles on the opposite side of the road near the Owd Betts Public House and is not therefore considered out of scale, context or over prominent in comparison.

Summary

The visual impact of the proposal in this case is considered to be very limited and any harm thereto will be minimal in the context of the need for the site. – this is due to the slimline pole design and the limited height. Additionally the roadside location, and presence of the existing vertical structures will further limit any detrimental impact that this development will have on the surrounding area.

The Electricity Network in this area should also be continually improved for the benefit of customers and the local (and particularly the rural) economy. This is currently only possible if ENW can develop the communication network described in this application. On this basis it is considered that the planning balance should be in favour of this development in the context of the very slight impact that the pole may have on the local environment.