

DELEGATED DECISION CHECKLIST AND REPORT

APPLICATION NO.

24/00419/ADV

CASE OFFICER

Michael Atkinson-Smith

DETERMINATION DATE 18.07.2024 **EXT OF TIME**

Address: Pavement O/S Number One Riverside Smith Street Rochdale OL16 1XU

Proposal: Integrated advertisement display within Communication Hub unit comprising of an LCD portrait screen presenting static illuminated content

PUBLICITY	Weekly list expired?	N/A	Site notice expired?	N/A
	Neighbour letters expired?	N/A	Press Notice expired?	N/A

DELEGATION	Significant departure from local plan?	N/A	Contrary to national policy?	N/A
	Applicant a Council Member or officer?	NO	Contrary to previous decision?	NO
	Major with 10 or more objections and recommending approval?	N/A	Called in or Planning Panel objection?	N/A

COMMENTS	Planning Panel comments received?	N/A
	Neighbour comments received?	N/A

EIA	Screening opinion completed and saved to Onbase?	N/A
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CONDITIONS	Pre-commencement conditions proposed?	N/A
	Pre-commencement conditions agreed (or notification period expired)?	N/A

RECOMMENDATION	REFUSE
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CHECKED AND SIGNED OFF BY: RG

DATE: 18 July 2024

SITE

The application relates to the paved area outside Rochdale Borough Council's Number One Riverside offices which forms part of the Lviv bridge over the River Roch. The Rochdale Riverside retail and leisure complex lies to the north of the site, the Council's Offices lie to the east, a slipway to the River lies to the south and Rochdale bus station lies to the southwest. The predominantly pedestrianised shared surface in the area extends to the Metrolink tram stop to the northwest.

PROPOSAL

Advertisement consent is sought for the installation of a 'communication hub' branded as the 'Digital 86" Smart City Unit'. The proposed unit would stand at 2.6m in height and 1.3m wide, occupying a site area of approximately 0.5m² and would include 13.5mm thick anti-vandal toughened safety laminated glass on all glazed surfaces.

The supporting information states that one side of the unit would include a 32" touch screen, hands free phone functionality alongside a traditional telephone handset, induction and USB charger and defibrillator. The opposite side of the unit would include an 86" LCD screen, commonly referred to as a six sheet display, designed to show commercial and community information in a series of static images.

The hub unit would be installed so that the advertising screen faces west, with the communications equipment and defibrillator facing east.

This application sits along an associated application for full planning permission ref. 24/00418/FUL which is to be determined concurrently with this application.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (CS):

Sub-Regional Policy

Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (PfE)

The Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan was adopted and became part of the statutory development plan for each of the 9 authorities covered by the plan on 21st March 2024. The following policies are relevant to the determination of this application:

Places for People

JP-P1: Sustainable Places

Connected Places

JP-C1: An Integrated Network

JP-C2: Digital Connectivity

Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (CS):

SO1	To delivery a more prosperous economy
E1	Establishing thriving town, district and local centres
SO3	To improve design, image and quality of place
P1	Improving Image
P3	Improving design of new development
DM1	General development requirements

Unitary Development Plan (UDP):

G/D/1	Defined Urban Area
G/S/1	Hierarchy and Role of Centres

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

N/A

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Bridges And Structures Team - No comments received to date

Conservation and Design – No heritage comments.

Greater Manchester Police - Design for Security - No comments received to date.

Greater Manchester Ecology Unit - No comments received to date

Highways & Engineering – Objection the basis of the public highway being used for advertisements.

Public Protection (Noise / Odours) - This section has no objections to the proposals.

Transport for Greater Manchester –

- It is observed that all locations are within pedestrianised areas of public realm.
- All locations are set back a sufficient distance from the highway.
- The positioning of the apparatus does not impair pedestrian movements or sightline visibility at any of the locations.
- Any works in the adopted footway will need to be carried out in accordance with the Local Authority.
- Service vehicles associated with the installation and maintenance of the apparatus will need to park appropriately and safely.

Transport for Greeter Manchester (Metrolink) - The proposed developments are sufficiently remote or sufficiently set back from the tramway that we have no comments to make from a Metrolink perspective in respect of the abovementioned applications.

Urban Design Officer - No standalone comments are required as the Urban Design Officer is acting as Planning Officer in respect of this application.

REPRESENTATIONS

N/A

ANALYSIS

This section should be read alongside the analysis section of the Officer's report for the corresponding application for full planning permission ref. 24/00418/FUL.

All advertisements must comply statutory provisions, including the Listed Building Regulations which for the purposes of this application includes the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act (1990).

Paragraph 141 of the NPPF states that quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed, whilst also noting that advertisements should be subject to control for planning purposes only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts.

It is well established that poorly placed advertisements can have a negative impact on the appearance of the built and natural environment. As such, with all applications for advertisements an assessment should be made as to the impacts on visual amenity and to accord with policy P3 of the Core Strategy, signs should be compatible with the surrounding area and protect the character and appearance of the host building and street scene.

Particular concern is raised in relation to the visual impact of the large digital display screen when viewed in the context of the surrounding attractive built form and the sense of expansiveness afforded by the layout of the area which takes its form from the traditional passage of the river. The siting of the advertising screen is considered to be particularly harmful given that it would stand out and be highly visible from far along Smith Street, thus dominating the view on this particularly well used pedestrian footpath and blocking the attractive view of the Number One Riverside building which was specifically designed to have a strong architectural presence within the street scene. The proposal would sit directly in front of the open views of the River Roch corridor which provides space and openness between the landmark buildings of Number One Riverside and the Interchange.

No pedestrian or road safety issues have been identified in respect of the proposed advertisement.

Of note in respect of this application is that in 2022 six BT 'communication hubs', primarily comprising advertising displays on two sides, were approved by the LPA within Rochdale Town Centre. In the immediate vicinity of the proposed hub there are two extant planning permissions for BT communication hub units, one proposed on the pavement opposite Number 4 Smith Street (24/00445/FUL) and one proposed on the north side of the front entrance of Number One Riverside (24/00489/FUL). Whilst neither of these units has been installed to date, the planning permissions remain extant until 14th July 2025 and 19th August 2025 respectively. Were either or both of those permissions to be enacted, there would result a clear over proliferation of digital display boards in a very small area of the town centre which would be particularly harmful to the street scene and the character and appearance of the area.

Therefore, in light of the above assessment, it is considered that the public benefits of the ancillary telephone and internet communications functions of the proposal do not outweigh the harm visual harm to the street scene in that would arise in this

particular location both as a result of the proposed siting of the hub and the risk of over proliferation. On this basis, proposed development would fail to comply with adopted Places for Everyone joint development plan policy JP-P1, policies DM1 and P3 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, the National Planning Policy Framework.

RECOMMENDATION

1. The proposed advertisement, by reason of its siting, design and illumination, would be harmful to the street scene of Smith Street by occupying a key vantage point of a highly trafficked pedestrian walkway that offers clear uninterrupted views of the Number One Riverside building which was specifically designed to provide a strong architectural prominence within this area of Rochdale Town Centre. The identified harm to the character and appearance of the area as a result of the proposed development, either on its own or cumulatively, is not justified, mitigated, or outweighed by public benefit. On this basis, proposed advertisement would fail to comply with adopted Places for Everyone joint development plan policy JP-P1, policies DM1, & P3 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Notes for Applicant:

INFORMATIVES:

1. For the avoidance of doubt, this decision relates to the following plans and supporting documents:
 - Hub Detail – New Sites
 - Site Plan and Images
 - Power of the Public Screen
 - Hub Unit Appendix D
 - Unit Management Plan
 - Community Channel – Examples of Campaigns
 - NHS England / OHCA Charities Advisory Committee / Letter of Community Heartbeat Trust Charity Letter of Support
 - Defibrillator Product Specification