

APPLICATION NUMBER: 22/01205/ADV

DELEGATED DECISION CHECKLIST AND REPORT

APPLICATION NO.	CASE OFFICER	DATE
22/01205/ADV	Majid Mir	30 November 2022

Address: Land To The South Of Water Street Water Street Rochdale OL16 1TL

Proposal: Replacement of two double sided advertising hoardings with one double sided internally illuminated digital advertising hoarding

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

DELEGATION	Significant departure from local plan?	N	Contrary to national policy?	Y
	Applicant a Council Member or officer?	N	Contrary to previous decision?	N
	Major with 10 or more objections and recommending approval?	N	Called in or Planning Panel objection?	N

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

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

RECOMMENDATION	REFUSE
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CHECKED AND SIGNED OFF BY: AT

DATE: 09.12.2022

SITE

The application relates to a plot of land on Water Street. The plot of land has two double sided advertisement hoardings on the western and eastern side of the land. Between the two sets of advertisement boards is a car parking area. To the northeast of the site, the plot of land adjoins a car park and to the south west the plot of land adjoins another plot of land. To the south is Robinson Street which is part of the adopted highway. However, Robinson Street has restricted access for only pedestrians. Robinson Street connects Water Street and Kenion Street/Robinson Street which is set on substantially higher ground. Kenion Street/ Robinson Street is capable of carrying motor vehicles and pedestrians. When travelling along Robinson Street from Water Street towards Kenion Street/Robinson Street, the highway gradually rises. A line of trees separates Robinson Street and the land to the north of it.

Approximately 29.8m to the west of the site is Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area. Additionally, the grade II listed building of Waterside House is also located to the west of the site. 10 Water Street, a non-designated heritage asset is also located to the west.

PROPOSAL

The application seeks advertisement consent to replace the four existing externally illuminated 48 sheet paper advertising display units with two 48 sheet digital LED-lit advertising display units. The existing arrangement is of two double sided display units located to the east and west of the site. The application proposes to replace these with one pair of double sided digital display units placed to east of the site. The advertisement would be approximately 3m in height, 6m in width. The boards would be set approximately 2.65m above ground floor level and would have a maximum height of approximately 5.9m. The boards would be approximately 0.3m in depth.

The proposed display units would be internally illuminated with a maximum illuminance level of 500 cd/m², and 300cd/m² at night time. The displays would be static.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

National Guidance

Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas Act) 1990 (as amended)

Section 66 of the above Act states that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority, or as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Section 72 of the above Act states that in the exercise of planning functions with respect to any buildings or other land in a Conservation Area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (CS):

SO3 Improving design, image and quality of place

P2	Protecting and enhancing character, landscape and heritage
P3	Improving design of new development
DM1	General Development Requirements
T2	Improving Accessibility

Unitary Development Plan (UDP):

G/D/1 Defined Urban Area

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

Not applicable.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Highways And Engineering

The application site already has advertisement hoardings established on it.

The site is away from the existing junctions on Water Street and therefore should not interfere with their safe operation.

We would not envisage that this application would have any detrimental impact on the surrounding highway network therefore we raise no objection to it.

Env Health - Noise/Odours

No comments received to date

Conservation Officer

Summary: The proposal would result in less than substantial harm to the significance of the heritage assets, as a result of the sign's increased prominence. This is a material consideration when assessing the impact on amenity

The application site is located on Water Street to the east of the Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area and Waterside House, a grade II listed building. The site is also located just outside of the Drake Street High Street Heritage Action Zone.

Waterside House is the engine house and warehouse range of Water Street Mill, an early steam-powered woollen mill. The mill and engine house were built in the late 1820s and the warehouse was built in two main phases in the mid-to later-C19.

Waterside House is listed for its architectural and historic interest, being an early surviving engine house for a steam-powered beam engine in a woollen mill context, having a well-detailed decorative façade. It is also the last surviving remnant of a mill structure in central Rochdale.

Along Water Street, there are currently two sets of advertising boards. These are both traditional style billboards, with paper adverts, externally illuminated by trough lighting. Each of the signs is double-sided facing east and west along Water Street. It is not clear whether advertisement consent was ever granted for the existing boards, however, they appear to have been in-situ for a number of years.

The proposal is for the removal of these existing billboards and the installation of a single double-sided internally illuminated billboard. This would be sited broadly in the same location as the existing billboard closest to Waterside House and the

Conservation Area. The proposed signs would have overall dimensions of 6m by 3m and would be set off the ground by 2.8m. This is similar to the existing signage.

NPPF paragraph 136 acknowledges that the quality and character of places can suffer when adverts are poorly sited and designed. It confirms that advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts.

The display of insensitively designed or sited adverts can harm the appearance of a listed building or detract from its setting. It can also impact on the character and appearance of a conservation area. These are important aspects to be taken into account when considering an advertisement's impact on amenity.

The existing signs are externally illuminated by way of a trough light, rather than being internally illuminated as currently proposed. The internal illumination of the proposed advertising board would make it a more prominent feature on the approaches to the Conservation Area and Waterside House. The changing images rather than the static paper signs would also increase the adverts' prominence.

It is noted that the overall number of signs would be reduced from four to two. However, the double sided billboard to be removed is the one furthest away from both the Conservation Area boundary and Waterside House. The removal of this sign would only have a very limited impact on the setting of these heritage assets.

The proposed adverts would be more prominent than the existing billboard closest to the heritage assets, due to their means of illumination and the changing nature of the images. As a result of the proposed sign's increased dominance on approaches to the listed building and conservation area, it would cause less than substantial harm to the significance of these heritage assets. This harm should be taken into account when assessing the impact of the proposal on the amenity of the area.

REPRESENTATIONS

In line with the Council's Publicity Code for Applications, no direct publicity was undertaken and no representations have been received.

ANALYSIS

Amenity and Heritage

In assessing applications for advertisement consent, paragraph 136 of the NPPF establishes that advertisements should be subject to control 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. In addition, Policy DM1 sets out the Council's general development requirements and establishes that proposals should not adversely impact on highway safety.

Paragraph 195 of the NPPF continues; *'Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take*

this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.'

Paragraph 199 of the NPPF states *'When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.'*

Paragraph 203 of the NPPF adds that *'the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.'*

To the east of the applicant site is Rochdale Town Conservation Area. On the opposite of Water Street and to west of the applicant site is the Engine House, a grade II listed building. The Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal (adopted 2011) notes that Waterside House marks the entrance of the conservation area to the east and possesses a high architectural value that contributes to enhance the character the conservation area. Waterside House, an engine house and mill warehouse is dated from the 19th century, and are the surviving elements of Water Street Mill. The designation of the building is due to its architectural interest: and historic interest. Additionally, no. 10 Water Street is located to the west on Water Street. No. 10 Water Street and Waterside House creates a prominent entrance to the Conservation Area.

On the site presently, there are two pairs (four in total) of externally illuminated 48 sheet paper advertising display units. There is no history available for the display units. Display unit A and B are located to the eastern edge of the site whereas display unit C and D are located to the western side of the site. The display units are back to back. Display unit A and C face east along Water Street and display units B and D face west along Water Street. Water Street itself is not completely straight and there are curvatures in the road. Nevertheless, the display units are clearly visible from the junctions on either side of Water Street. When viewing from the junction with Molesworth Street (to the east), due to the curvature in the road and the existing buildings, from some positions display units C and D are not clearly visible. However, due to the lack of building forms on the southern side of Water Street (the same side as the existing and proposed display units), the display units along with the Conservation Area and Listed Building are clearly visible from Molesworth Street. When travelling along Water Street (east to west), the display units and the heritage assets are clearly visible. From the junction with Drake Street, the display units and the listed building are clearly visible.

The application originally proposed to remove display units A and B and replace display units C and D with two 48 sheet digital LED-lit display units (signs E and F). After concerns were raised, the applicant amended the proposal to remove display units C and D and replaces display units A and B with 48 Sheet digital –LED-lit display units. The display units would face east and west along Water Street and be located in a similar position to the existing display units A and B. The amendments to the proposal would mean that the proposed display units would be set further away from the heritage assets and it would reduce the number of display units from four to two. However, the proposed display units would be internally illuminated with a maximum illuminance level of 500 cd/m², and 300cd/m² at night time. The internal illumination of the proposed display units would make the signs more prominent feature on the approaches to the Conservation Area and Waterside House.

Additionally, as noted by the Conservation Officer, the changing images rather than the static paper display units would also increase the proposed display units' prominence.

The addition of the illuminance and the changing displays would lead to the proposed digital display units appearing visually prominent in close proximity to the Grade II listed building, Conservation Area and Non-designated Heritage Asset. Additionally, the proposed digital display units would appear visually prominent across a considerable distance along Water Street, and would increase the dominance on approaches to the listed building, conservation area and non-designated heritage asset. Therefore it is considered that proposal would be unsympathetic to the significance and historic value of the adjacent heritage assets and would detract from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area as well as the setting of the listed building. The proposed digital display units would cause less than substantial harm to the significance of these heritage assets.

When viewed from the pedestrian path of Robinson Street, the existing trees that line the highway would screen the proposed digital display units.

The surrounding area is commercial in nature. The signage would not be directed toward any residential properties, and as such the proposals are not considered to unduly affect the residential amenity or surrounding occupiers. Nevertheless, Officers would consider it appropriate to attach various conditions in the event of an approval including limiting the illuminance and type of advertisement to ensure this level of impact on the amenity of surrounding occupiers is ongoing.

The proposal would therefore conflict with policies P2, P3 and DM1 of the Rochdale Core Strategy and the guidance contained within the NPPF.

Public Safety

Policy P3 and Policy T2 of the Core Strategy requires all development proposals, to adhere to high standards of design and principles relating to accessibility and highway safety. Policy DM1 sets out the general development requirements and establishes that proposals should not adversely impact on highway safety. The proposed advertisements would be erected adjacent to a heavily trafficked road. Whilst it is accepted that the purpose of an advertisement is to attract attention, it is important to consider whether such adverts would have the potential to have an adverse impact on road safety

The highways department noted that the applicant site already has advertisement display units and the site is away from the existing junctions on Water Street. As such the highway department concluded that the proposal would not have a detrimental impact on the surrounding highway network therefore do not raise an objection the proposal.

The proposal is therefore considered to have an acceptable impact on public and highways safety and is therefore in accordance with Policy P3, T2 and DM1 of the Rochdale Core Strategy and the guidance contained within the NPPF.

RECOMMENDATION

Refuse

1. By virtue of their size, siting, illumination and display, the proposed digital advertisement hoardings would cause less than substantial harm to the

setting of the Grade II Listed Waterside House, Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area, and no. 10 Water Street which is a non-designated heritage asset. No public benefits exist that may outweigh the harm caused to the designated heritage assets. As such, the proposal fails to accord with policies P2, P3 and DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas Act) 1990 (as amended) and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Notes for Applicant:

Informatives:-

For the avoidance of doubt, this Decision Notice relates to the following drawings:-

Site Location Plan. Drawing no: 15613 PA 01. Received by email on 14/11/2022

Existing Site Plan. Drawing no: 15613 PA 02. Received by email on 14/11/2022

Proposed Site Plan. Drawing no: 15613 PA 03. Rev: 01. Received by email on 14/11/2022

Existing and Proposed Elevations. Drawing no: 15613 PA 04. Rev: 01. Received by email on 14/11/2022

Existing and Proposed Elevations. Drawing no: 15613 PA 05. Rev: 01. Received by email on 14/11/2022

Existing and Proposed Elevations. Drawing no: 15613 PA 06. Rev: 01. Received by email on 14/11/2022

Existing and Proposed Elevations. Drawing no: 15613 PA 07. Rev: 01. Received by email on 14/11/2022

Report Author Majid Mir